

INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH

UNIT-I

1.Looking For A Cousin On A Swing by AK Ramanujan Summary

By: Litinbox June 20, 2024

'Looking for a Cousin on a Swing' describes the speaker's first romantic excitement, the moment of blossoming, and her experience of climbing tree during childhood. As a child, when she was approximately four or five years, she frequently went to and swing on a village swing while her slightly elder cousin swinging against her.

This immature sexual encounter and the reflection of in the speaker's later part of life sets the theme of the poem. Let's see line by line:

Lines 1-14

The speaker and her cousin used to swing and play on the village swing when they were children. At that time the speaker was around four or five years old approximately and her cousin around seven years. They used to swing against each other and during which they touched each other. She experienced a sexual arousal at every touch. This was the first romantic feelings in her life. She was excited to experience the feeling often.

With each touch or the physical contact with her cousin during the swinging, she could feel the sexual awakening. The Lunge, the poet mentions here, is not the literal lunge, but the sexual arousal. After swinging, they also climbed a small tree full of leaves, a tree similar to a fig tree. The poet says that they were very innocent about what they were doing.

The mention of fig tree and leaves has some Biblical significance where Adam and Eve used to wear fig tree leaves when they felt ashamed of their nakedness for the first time. So, here the poet symbolically means their transformation from innocence to maturity.

Lines 15-23

Now in the present the speaker, living somewhere in a city probably with her husband, longs for the same swing she had in her childhood. It is a longing for the same physical touch she had with her cousin in childhood.

Although she is aware that the childhood innocence would never come back as she is now a matured woman probably running a household, she longs for the same innocent physical encounter she had once.

It can be interpreted that after she has lived a boring life of adulthood in large cities with many suburbs, she wants to go back to the happy childhood and live a life of innocence. She seeks for the same kind of feelings which she once had in the swing.

The last 6 lines are interesting. The speaker as an adult longs for the childlike wonder or she wants to recapture the childhood innocence. This effort is compared to looking for a special place in a fig tree laden with juicy ripe fruits.

The figs are overripe that even a sneeze or any such slight movement can make the figs burst open, spilling out their contents. This is an imagery that the poet employs to describe how weak is the hope to recapture the innocence of childhood in the world of an adult as it can be easily shaken by even small issues.

2.The Poems of Nissim Ezekiel Summary and Analysis of "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher"

Summary

In "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher," the speaker describes the process of writing poetry and compares it to being a lover or a birdwatcher. The speaker notes that "to force the pace and never to be still" will not get one very far if one wants to "study birds / or women" (lines 1-3). The speaker then reveals the point of these comparisons: "The best poets wait for words" (3).

The speaker notes that this waiting should not be strenuous and instead should be as peaceful as "patient love relaxing on a hill" (5). From this relaxation, the poet/lover/birdwatcher can notice details, like a bird's wing or the moment a woman gives in to love.

The speaker moves on to say that he finds much more meaning from "slow movement" (11). In order to find the rarer birds, the speaker advises, one must go off the beaten path toward areas that are "remote and thorny" (15). Once one arrives at such a location, the bird or

woman one was chasing will "slowly turn around" (16). Poetic creativity is discovered in this place, a power so transformative that because of it, "the deaf can hear, the blind recover sight" (20).

Analysis

"Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher" is known as one of Ezekiel's more 'serious' poems, as is evidenced by the content and the form. Ezekiel does not use an ironic tone at all in this poem, which is relatively rare for him. The seriousness of the content is reflected in a strict meter and rhyme scheme. The capitalizations at the beginning of each line have returned. Additionally, the poem is broken up into two stanzas with two lines each, which visually signals symmetry and perfection for the reader. All of these formal elements slow the reader down and force her to digest that which she is reading and in turn take it more seriously.

Because this poem is essentially about writing poems, it can be classified as an *ars poetica*. Ezekiel has written many an *ars poetica* throughout his career, but "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher" is by far his most famous. Perhaps this is because it is only partly about the writing process; the rest of the poem is about nature and love. In fact, the transition from one image to another is so seamless in this poem that the poet (and his poem), lover (and his woman), and birdwatcher (and his birds) melt into one persona in order to carry the poem to the end.

This poem contains the theme of self-examination, which pops up again and again throughout Ezekiel's work. He notes that his process is hardly orthodox: "and sense is found / By poets lost in crooked, restless flight" (18-19). It is this "restless" flight that the poet is forced to complete in the search for inspiration. Likewise, the bird in the poem is symbolic for the quest for self-knowledge, which turns out to be elusive, restless, and often rare in Ezekiel's writing. In the same vein, the female image can be read as representing a fertile creative impulse. No real advancements are made in the poem, however, until the poet, lover, and birdwatcher become one.

3.Sri Aurobindo : I have a Hundred Lives

Analysis :

The poem expresses an unyielding pursuit of a spiritual connection with an unnamed "Spirit." The speaker's determination is unwavering, evident in their promise to "pursue thee like a hunter" through countless lives. This relentless chase suggests a sense of purpose and longing.

The poem's language is straightforward, conveying a message of unwavering dedication and anticipation of eventual union. The speaker's optimism is palpable as they envision the Spirit turning back and welcoming them with a "smiling" acknowledgment of past errors.

The poem's sentiment differs from other works by the same author, which often explore themes of mysticism and the complexities of the human condition. Its singular focus on the pursuit of a spiritual connection sets it apart while still echoing the author's preoccupation with the quest for transcendence.

Furthermore, the poem reflects the spiritual aspirations prevalent during its time. The longing for connection with the divine was a common thread running through the works of many poets and thinkers of the era. In this regard, the poem is a testament to the enduring power of spiritual themes in literature.

4. Gieve Patel : On killing a Tree:

On Killing a Tree Summary – “On Killing a Tree” is a sensitive poem. The poet persuades the reader not to destroy trees and equates it with “killing” a human being. He says that a plant takes sunlight, water, air, and nutrients from the soil to gradually become a huge tree. It develops a strong trunk and gets numerous leaves.

Merely cutting the trunk of the tree does not kill it. When a tree is cut, the sap flows out just like a wounded man bleeds. Once the wound heals, new branches and tiny leaves grow from there which grow into trees.

In order to destroy a tree, it has to be uprooted. The roots which are white in color and are damp due to the moisture that they get from the soil are hidden in a pit in the Earth. These roots are the most sensitive part of the tree as they bind it to the earth. In order to kill the tree, these roots have to be detached from the soil.

Once the roots are detached, the tree starts dying. It withers, dries up with the action of heat and wind, twists, hardens and finally, dies.

Explanation of the Poem: simple cut does not destroy a tree. A tree grows gradually, it is rooted in the soil. A plant takes nutrition from the soil to grow into a big tree. The tree is firmly bound with the soil. It takes in sunlight, water and air to grow into a strong trunk and have numerous leaves.

Humans cut and chop the bark of trees into many pieces but that is not sufficient to destroy the tree. The point of the tree which gets cut gives out sap just like a human being bleeds. Gradually, this would heal and from there new branches start growing again.

The poet says that in order to kill the tree, it has to be uprooted. One has to separate the tree from the Earth which supports it. The roots of the tree bind the tree with the soil in the pit of the Earth. From there, the most sensitive and hidden part of the tree – the roots have to be detached. The roots are white in colour and are damp.

Once the tree has been uprooted, then gradually it withers and dries up with the action of heat and wind. The trunk will become brown, twist and will harden. Finally, the tree will die this way.

5.Meena Alexander : Natural Difficulties:

“Natural Difficulties” is a reflective poem by Meena Alexander that explores the emotional and psychological struggles of a woman negotiating identity, memory, and displacement. The poem draws attention to how personal pain is intertwined with larger social and historical forces.

Central Themes:

Displacement and Exile: The poem reflects the poet’s experience of living between cultures.

Migration creates a sense of rootlessness and inner conflict.

Female Identity: Alexander presents the difficulties faced by women in articulating their voices within restrictive social and cultural frameworks.

Memory and Loss: Memories of the past—home, childhood, and history—surface as both a source of comfort and pain.

Survival and Resilience: Despite hardships, the poem suggests endurance and the quiet strength required to live with “natural difficulties.”

Title Significance:

The phrase “Natural Difficulties” suggests that suffering and struggle are inherent parts of life, especially for women and migrants. These difficulties are not accidental but arise naturally from lived experiences.

Style and Language:

The poem uses free verse, reflecting fragmented identity and emotional tension.

Imagery is subtle and symbolic, often drawing from nature to express inner turmoil.

The tone is introspective, subdued, and lyrical.

6.VikramSeth :A Little Distance:

We are clueless as for what the poem is about. Is it about love and loving or the suppression of the fact at the internal level? Is it about friendship just as there is a female persona too with him and he is addressing to say the things of his heart? The things are happening just a little distance away from and he is watching it all with sensuality. Sometimes she comes and he likes to sit with her and view, but what has it happened that still loves her not from his heart nor has the courage and guts to? Is she just a partner for the pleasure sake? We do not know all that as the story is just like the ones we see them in foreign countries. She is a friend for the time being, not a life friend.

A Little Distance is about the joys of swimming and bathing together with; is all about a pleasurable trip and sojourn. Both of them go for a sunbath and enjoy the pleasures of sunbathing. The sea shore, the swimming pool, stones, and the waterfall add to the beauty of the poem and make it scenic and landscape presenting the whole panorama. Seth as a co-visitor captures the photos shared together

with, the moments lived with. Just as the travellers travel with, the foreigner tourists come and go away, just as the friends mix up so are the things herein. There is nothing special about it. It is just about a sunbath and roaming of the beach. Everything appears to be hollow and superficial. There is nothing as deep to be felt inwardly. Vikram Seth has failed to grasp what is Indian love.

A little distance away from the waterfall there lies a yellow beach towel by the pool on a long warm rock and this is how the poet starts his poem and nearer to it the azaleas grown and the shadows of the thin fish falling across the spectacled stones. A breeze blows rippling the skin of the pool. A blue-tailed lizard suns itself and a sunniness is spread all around.

The poet feels tired and his mind melts in the sun. An ant crawls over his ankle and he sits up. But there on the white pebbles lies she half-nude the female protagonist with the cream-coloured breasts open to the breeze and the sky and a few lines of silver hair in the brown. To speak frankly, it is difficult to be chaste here. How the days pass by! Just as the friends they take the breakfast and go on chatting.

After the expiry of six days, nothing takes place in between them. They remain as they were. They are friends but are unsettled. This is what the poet has said it all and as thus the days keep running. There is nothing as that to kiss her and show affection. Just the goodnight is the last word bade during the night time and they take leave of each other. They are just friends, modern friends and nothing more. But we do not know it what it the interest of the poet if she is just a friend. They sit by the pool and keep watching the things around. What do they want to do, this he says it not. What does he want to do, he also says it not. What is in their hearts it is very difficult to take out? What partners or friends are they, we do not know it.

A Little Distance as a poem is all about temporary love and friendship, a visit to the sea-beach enjoying a sunny warmth spread all over the landscape spanning the waterfall, the pool and the near-by rocks and stones. There is nothing of proposition and disposition, everything is hidden under the wrap of it.

The poem is an exploit of the live-in relationship. Seth is in doldrums if he should love or not and this forms the crux of his life-story. This is the reason for which he prefers the gay as well as the bisexual relationships and is a votary of that. To be or not to be is the Hamletian drama of his, should he love that girl or not, is she likeable and lovely or not? On the one he likes and loves her while on the other takes to her differently. What is the spectacle of his love and loving we do not know it at all nor can we say about. This is but a personal matter. When we read the poem, we get reminded of Goa where the foreigners come for a sojourn, a sunbath, a tour and a change.

Though we call him an Indian English poet, he is very much like an NRI, shuttling in between America and India. A student of economics, he has got his maximum schooling in foreign and has visited many Asian and European countries. While in China for research, Chinese poetry drew him so close. The manuscript of his first of poetry was not accepted in the West, but was brought out finally by Writers Workshop, Calcutta before being popular. Call him the suitable or unsuitable boy of Indian English poetry, he has come far, very far from where one cannot look behind, such is the name and accolade of his.

A Little Distance is a modern love story where hearts matter it not, only partnerships make a way for. They are fellow travelers, tourists, visitors, not life partners, nor lovers of any kind. Just as the holidayers, picnickers and hoteliers go for an outing similar is the case herein. One who often keeps visiting from place to place remains it not attached to anyone. A foreigner girl bathing on the sea-beach too may be the point of deliberation and he looking her with so much so love and affection. The blonde beauty, she is perhaps not of India, but of the West, which but only Vikram can say it if enquired and he says it in response to. Where did he meet her by the Atlantic or the Pacific? Where? We do not understand if she is some ex-girlfriend of his.

UNIT -II

1.Badal Sircar : Evam Indrajit

Evam Indrajit is a 1963 three-act play by Indian dramatist and theater director Badal Sircar, first translated in 1975. Known for his anti-establishment plays written during the Naxalite movement in 1970s, his plays were often performed in the public arena and challenged conventions of Indian theater. His plays were heavily inspired by traditions of folk theater, while developing an identity of its own rooted in contemporary politics. Many of his plays lack a plot or concrete characterization, and the actors often chose their roles from performance to performance and even exchange them in the middle of the play. Audience participation is usually encouraged. Evam Indrajit is an abstract, absurdist play with a central theme of the monotony of a mechanical existence. It explores the writing process and the search for inspiration and something exciting to motivate creation. It was Sircar's first drama after a string of comedies, and remains one of his most enduring works, especially outside of his native India.

The story of Evam Indrajit focuses on a writer, who narrates the story without ever being given a firm identity of his own. He struggles with writer's block, striving to write his play but falling short and unaware of the root causes. He has never experienced life in its most primal way, instead being focused on his own experience as a writer. As such, he doesn't have the material to write about, and instead focuses on the audience of the play. He attempts to write about them, but is frustrated there as

well. He frequently becomes enraged and tears up his manuscripts. He finally finds inspiration in a woman named Manasi.

Like the writer, Manasi is not a character with her own characterization, but a representation. She represents the Indian counterpart of Carl Jung's concept of Anima. This refers to an entity that serves as a pointer to the collective consciousness. Both the main characters and their concept of identity is frequently questioned, especially the writer Indrajit. He changes his preferred name multiple times in the play, and frequently expresses discontent with his identity. His persona splits between three names, Amal, Kamal, and Vimal. He feels compelled to write, even at the cost of neglecting important bodily functions that he needs to live. He is obsessed with seeking a purpose in life. The play focuses on his life, his love and obsession with Manasi, and his growing revolutionary leanings against society. However, soon the ruling class and their attempt to impose order on his life begin to crush his spirit. His three personalities, Amal, Kamal, and Vimal each play different roles in society and are played for laughter as they struggle against society. Indrajit, in his persona as the writer, continues to resist, but eventually he becomes convinced that there is no escape from society's clutches.

As the play reaches its final act, Indrajit attempts to seek meaning in exploring the world. He travels to London, but finds the world just as unsatisfying as the life he left behind. He soon finds himself contemplating suicide but decides he is incapable of this as well. The play ends without bringing his story to any sort of conclusion, as Indrajit comes to the realization that the past and present are two ends of a single rope. The play is ultimately about the futility of life and the roles we all play in society.

Badal Sircar is considered one of the most prominent and influential modern Indian playwrights, having written more than fifty plays in a career that spanned fifty years. Born Sudhindra Sarkar in Calcutta, he received a degree in comparative literature from the Jadavpur University. However, it was while he was working as a town planner around the world that he entered theater. He is considered the founder of what is known as Third Theater, an experimental form of theater that involves direct communication with the audience and emphasizes expressionist acting along with realism. His first play, *Bara Trishna*, was performed in 1951 with him in the initial cast. He wrote *Evam Indrajit* a little over a decade later, and it was performed by the Shatabdi theater group, which he founded. As the years passed, he became one of the leading figures in street theater in Bengal, and his angry, anti-establishment plays became the voice of a generation. He criticized the government, the caste system, and overall problems in societies. His later plays, including an adaptation of the Howard Fast novel *Spartacus*, moved into traditional arena theater. He is one of India's most decorated playwrights, winning the 1971 Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship in 1971, the Indian government's Padma Shri award in 1972, and a 1997 lifetime achievement award by India's National Academy for Music, Dance, and Drama. In 2009, two years before his death, Badal Sircar's life was celebrated in a five-day festival by India's most prominent theater directors. Several of India's most prominent film directors today have cited Sircar as their most significant inspiration.

2. Manjula Padmanabhan : Harvest

Summary of the Play:

As we have discussed, the play deals with human organs selling whose recipients are from first world countries like North America and donors from the third world countries like India. The facilitator is a US based transnational corporation called Inter Planta Services. The selling of organs takes place for money. Ginny, a woman from America is the organ receiver and Om, the donor, is from India who is selling his organs to her. Ginny is not present on the stage and visible only in the video dictating hygienic and healthy lifestyle to Om and his family members. Through Om the whole family especially Jeetu and Jaya also gets into the contract. Thus, the four donors belong to the same family that is Om, Jaya, Ma and Jeetu.

When Om discloses the nature of his new job to Jaya, she tries to make him understand the consequences of it. However, Om never tries to understand what Jaya says. He tells the same thing to his mother and she seems to be happy on the prospect of getting money and first world comforts. However, Om hides his marital status from the company as the contract demands unmarried donor. Thus, he introduces Jaya as Jeetu's wife and Jeetu as his brother-in-law. Ginni does not demand any of Om's organs instantly. She gradually makes the family's small apartment sanitize and install all the necessary devices including a conduct module and multi coloured pellets, the sole food source for the family. The conduct module is installed to interact with Om whenever Ginni wants to instruct something to him. A video couch is also brought for Ma to enjoy and to devoid her of any human interaction.

Gradually the plan unravels when the company mistakenly takes Jeetu instead of Om for organ donation. Jeetu brings home dirt and disease with him this repulse Om and Ma.

They also fear how Ginni might react to this. Thus they derive him out of home but Jaya feels for him. However, when the guards appear to take the donor, Om fears and hides. They forcibly take Jeetu mistaking him as Om. Jaya remains unsuccessful

in trying to make the guards understand that the person to whom they are taking away for organ donation is not Om, the real organ donor but his brother Jeetu. Thus, they take away Jeetu with them. Jeetu is a gigolo and Jaya shares a clandestine relationship with him. Jeetu returns home blind. The ordeal does not end here. Now Jeetu can only see whenever Ginni projects images directly into his mind through the contact module. He is now enchanted with the Ginni's voice and he begins to feel sexual gratifications in the possibility of a very important part of his body getting transplanted into her body. His ordeal ends when he is taken for the second time. However, Jeetu never realises that on the prospect of sexual gratification he is gradually deprived of his body parts.

Ma is busy watching TV in her video couch and Om has escaped from the scene leaving Jaya to face the consequences. Now Jaya is shocked when she realizes that Ginni is only a computer generated wet dream. It is old Virgil who is the actual recipient of the organs. Virgil is hungry of youth and who is not satisfied with Jeetu's body. Now the old man, Virgil, with new body organs craves for female. He seduces Jaya but she dislikes the idea of conceiving for a computer image and wants her man to be real. However, Virgil refuses the idea as he cannot take the risk of physically entering into and get infected by the diseases of the third world country.

UNIT -III

1.Letters from a Father to his Daughter – Jawaharlal Nehru - (1- 15 letters)

In "Letters from a Father to his Daughter," Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, shares a collection of letters he wrote to his young daughter, Indira, during his imprisonment in 1930-1933. These letters serve as a personal guide and provide a glimpse into Nehru's thoughts on various aspects of life, history, and the world. Through these letters, Nehru

imparts his wisdom, values, and ideals to his daughter, offering readers a unique perspective on the world.

Brief Synopsis

The book is divided into several letters, each addressing different topics. Nehru covers a wide range of subjects, including history, science, nature, religion, and politics. Through his letters, he not only educates his daughter but also encourages her to think critically and develop a broader understanding of the world.

Nehru begins by explaining the significance of history and the importance of understanding the past to shape the future. He discusses various historical events, personalities, and civilizations, providing a comprehensive overview of human history. In each letter, he emphasizes the values of compassion, justice, and equality.

The setting of the book varies as Nehru discusses different countries and cultures. He shares stories from India's rich history, delves into the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Greece, and explores the wonders of science and nature across the globe. Nehru's letters transport his daughter (and the readers) to different places and time periods, fostering a sense of curiosity and adventure.

Main Characters

Character	Description
Jawaharlal Nehru	The author and father who writes letters to his daughter, sharing his wisdom and knowledge.
Indira	Nehru's young daughter and the recipient of the letters.

Summary of Different Story Points Over Chapters

Chapter 1: The Importance of History

Nehru discusses the significance of history and the lessons we can learn from it. He introduces Indira to various historical figures and events, emphasizing the importance of understanding the past to shape a better future.

Chapter 2: The Story of Ancient India

Nehru takes Indira on a journey through ancient India, exploring its rich history, culture, and contributions to the world. He shares stories of great empires, philosophers, and scientists, instilling in his daughter a sense of pride for her country's heritage.

Chapter 3: The Wonders of Nature

Nehru encourages Indira to appreciate the beauty and wonders of nature. He discusses various natural phenomena, such as mountains, rivers, and forests, and highlights the importance of preserving the environment for future generations.

Chapter 4: Exploring Science and Discovery

Nehru introduces Indira to the world of science and discovery. He explains scientific concepts and inventions, inspiring his daughter to develop a curious and inquisitive mind.

Chapter 5: Understanding Different Religions

Nehru explores the diversity of religions and their role in society. He teaches Indira about various faiths, promoting tolerance, respect, and understanding for different belief systems.

Chapter 6: The Struggle for Freedom

Nehru shares the story of India's struggle for independence and the importance of fighting for justice and freedom. He instills in Indira a sense of responsibility and encourages her to contribute to the betterment of society.

2.The Dance of Shiva – Ananda Coomaraswamy:

Three significant dance- poses are referred to: The evening dance in the Himalayas, at Kailash. This has been mentioned in the ‘Shiva Pradosha Stotra’. It shows Shiva as two- handed, accompanied by divine figures like Saraswathi, Lakshmi, Vishnu, Bhrama and other celestial beings like Gaandharvas, Yakshaas and the like. The Second dance, known as the ‘Tandava’ depicts Shiva as ‘Bhairava’ and is portrayed as being performed in the burning grounds. Here, Shiva appears as awe- inspiring lord with ten arms. The awe- inspiring dance is depicted in the ancient: sculpture available at Ellora, Elephanta and Bhubaneswar. This origin of this dance is traced to the pre- Aryan God who is depicted as half- God and half- demon, having his reveals with the other spirits on the burning ground symbolically, the ‘Tandava’ represents those possessed with wrath and anger. Coomaraswamy makes special mention of the mystic dance of Shiva performed at Thillai. Chidambaram is also called ‘Thillai’, after the Thillai trees growing in ‘Thillaivanam’. They represent the heart of this universe.

This dance- pose is popular and artistically enchanting. The ‘Panchaloha’ image of Nataraja is a sculptural wonder.

Coomaraswamy cites copious reference to saivite literature to illustrate its symbolic significance. ‘Unnmai

Vilakam’, ‘Chidambaram Unnmai’ and ‘Thirukoothu Dharisanam’ give minute details of the dance- image. The Lord has four hands and the lower

locks of hair depict a whirling movement. On his head are a writhing cobra, a skull and the Ganga. The Crescent moon rest upon the figure of Ganga. The right ear is adorned with a man's earring. The upper right hand holds drum 'Damaru' and the lower right hand signifies 'Abhaya' (Do not fear). The upper left hand holds a tongue of fire while the lower one points down to the dwarf. Demon under the foot. Thiruvaasi, the encircling glory that springs from a lotus pedestal borders the ends of the flame from the left hand. Shiva is omnipresent and his dance is being performed in every heart. Those who are enlightened and free from karmas are blessed with a vision of this dance and experience supreme bliss. God dwells within every being and only those who have transcended the Maya can identify himself with the eternal. 'Unnmai Vilakkam', 'the lamp of truth' is a crisp portrayed of saivite principles, written by Manavaasakam Kadanthar, a disciple of Meikandaar. 'Koil Puranam' is written by Mahavidvan Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai. Thirumandiram is by Thirumoolar, who asserted 'only one god and one clan' The central motif of the dance is Cosmic activity. The dance represents Shiva's five activities performed by the duties. They are: 'Shrishti'(creation), 'Sthithi'(preservation), 'Samhara'(destruction), 'Thirobhava'(illusion), 'Anugraha'(Salvation). The 'Damaru'(drum) held in the upper right hand represents 'Nada' (sound) the evolution of the universe. The shape of the drum, with its two conical parts, tells us of nature and energy which combine for all creation. The tongue of flame in gesture of protection is seen by the right hand held in front. The left foot is raised, telling man that he can raise himself and attain salvation. The right foot, upon which the body of the universe balances, is not on firm ground, but on top of a struggling dwarf- an embodiment of all that veils truth from falsehood.

Chidambaram(sabha) symbolizes the universe and the five- fold acts have correspondence with the five elements of Nature (Pancha Bhuta)- Sky, Land, Wind, Water and fire. Shiva, undisturbed by their activity, depicts the Mortal life and the Divine self wonderfully. The image is the combination of God, the solitary one, master of meditation, with the frenzied dance, the yogi and the artist. Ananda Coomaraswamy brings to light the deeper significance of Shiva's dance by referring us to the sacred verses of Thirumoolar and 'Unnmai Vilakkam'. He gives poetic expressions of the self identifying itself with the Lord. In 'Unnmai Vilakkam', the saint conceives Lord Shiva's dance to be the destruction of the three- fold bond(between the soul and the senses, mind and matter, heaven and earth). Shiva's cosmic function is that of a 'destroyer' and this associates him with the burning ground. It is not just a symbol of death ruling over body and soul. The cremation ground represents the heart of enlightened beings when their ego or self- attachment is destroyed. In this blessed state, they experience 'Ananda'(Supreme bliss) through their vision of Dance. Lord Shiva is known as 'Sudalaiaandi', the dancer of the 'burning ground', i.e., the purified heart of wordly beings.Coomaraswamy reiterates the role of 'Shakti', an integral part of Shiva. In Bengal, this mother aspect of Shiva is manifested in 'Kali'- the goddess of destruction of evil. References are obtained from Bengali hymns. Ananda(Bliss) is obtained through the scattering away of illusion(Maya), causality(Karma), Evil(Avidya) and thereby, the vision and experience of the cosmic dance in the soul. The 'Ananda Thandavam' represents the eternal cycle of creation, preservation and destruction. It merges meta-physics, art and science. 'Unnmai Vilakkam' links Shiva's dance with the Panchakshara

‘Shi va ya na mah’ which is identified with the mystic syllable ‘Om’. The ‘Thiruvaasi’ is itself a visible representation of the book of the letter ‘Om’. This arch is ‘Omkaara’. The dance of nature is the action of matter representing the rhythm of seasons, light and fire. Chidambaram symbolizes the centre of the Universe and metaphysically, the domain of the heart. ‘Koil Puranam’ has it that Lord Shiva, along with Vishnu and Adishesha subdued the ferocious heretical Rishis who were out to destroy him. The demonical rishis hurled a fierce tiger at Shiva. The Lord stripped off its skin and wrapped it around Himself. The monstrous serpent sent by them became his garland. A devilish dwarf that threatened to destroy Him was floored and Lord Shiva, pressing His feet on the dwarf, performed the ‘Dance of victory over the evil’ before the Gods and the Rishis. At the juncture, Adishesha prayed that he should be blessed with a vision of that cosmic dance. Koil puranam relates that Lord Shiva performed the mystic dance in Thillai (Chidambaram) to please Adishesha.

UNIT-IV

1.Amish Tripathi : The Immortals of Meluha

Shiva's life at Mansarovar Lake

In the year 1900 BC, Shiva, a tribal leader, finds himself at the tranquil Mansarovar Lake, reflecting on his tumultuous life. Despite the beauty surrounding him, Shiva is plagued by the relentless conflicts with rival tribes. His confidant, Veerbhadra, shares these concerns, and together they yearn for peace. Their lives take a turn when a foreigner arrives, offering them a chance to relocate to Meluha, a land of prosperity and tranquility. Enticed by the promise of a better future, Shiva contemplates leaving his role as a chief behind.

Invitation to Meluha's Paradise

Meluha's promise of a new life

Shiva's tribe accepts the foreigner's offer, seeking refuge from their harsh existence. They embark on a journey to Meluha, a land described as a paradise on earth. Upon arrival, they

are awestruck by the advanced civilization and the promise of a peaceful life. However, Shiva remains skeptical, sensing that Meluha's invitation might have hidden motives. The tribe undergoes a mysterious medical treatment, and Shiva experiences strange changes, including the emergence of a blue throat.

The Enigmatic Blue Throat

Shiva's transformation and its implications

Shiva's blue throat becomes a beacon of hope for the Meluhans, who believe he is the prophesied Neelkanth, destined to save them from their enemies. Confused by the sudden reverence, Shiva grapples with the expectations placed upon him. He learns about the Somras, a miraculous potion that grants longevity and vitality, realizing it is the cause of his transformation. Despite his doubts, Shiva is drawn into the Meluhan way of life, intrigued by their culture and technology.

Secrets of the Somras Revealed

Understanding the power of the Somras

Shiva meets Brahaspati, the chief scientist, who explains the science behind the Somras. The potion neutralizes harmful oxidants in the body, slowing aging and enhancing health. Shiva is fascinated by the blend of science and spirituality in Meluha. However, he is also aware of the potential dangers and responsibilities that come with the Somras. As he delves deeper into its secrets, he begins to understand the stakes involved in protecting this powerful elixir.

The Burden of Destiny

Shiva's internal conflict and responsibility

As Shiva grapples with his newfound identity, he is pressured by Emperor Daksha to lead Meluha against their enemies, the Chandravanshis. Shiva is torn between his desire for a peaceful life and the burden of being a savior. He questions his ability to fulfill the prophecy and fears the consequences of failure. Despite his reservations, Shiva agrees to travel through Meluha to understand its people and their struggles, hoping to find clarity and purpose.

A Dance of Fate and Love

Shiva's growing bond with Sati During his journey, Shiva encounters Sati, a captivating woman who challenges his perceptions. Their interactions are marked by a mix of admiration and tension, as Sati is bound by societal laws that prevent her from pursuing a relationship.

Shiva is drawn to her strength and grace, and their shared moments become a source of solace amidst the chaos. As they dance together, Shiva realizes that his destiny might be intertwined with Sati's, adding a personal dimension to his mission.

The Attack and the Aftermath

A battle that tests Shiva's resolve

The caravan is ambushed by Chandravanshi soldiers led by a mysterious hooded figure. Shiva's leadership and combat skills are put to the test as he defends the royal family. The attack reveals the ruthlessness of their enemies and the challenges ahead. Despite the victory, Shiva is haunted by the violence and the expectations of being the Neelkanth. He questions the morality of the war and the true nature of good and evil, setting the stage for his internal and external battles.

The Burden of the Neelkanth

Shiva grapples with his destiny

Shiva, now recognized as the Neelkanth, struggles with the expectations placed upon him. The Meluhans see him as a savior, but Shiva is tormented by the weight of this responsibility. He questions the fairness of the laws, particularly the vikarma law, which ostracizes those deemed to carry bad fate. His internal conflict is exacerbated by his love for Sati, who is bound by these societal norms. Shiva's journey is not just about leading a people but also about understanding his own role in this complex world.

A Clash of Cultures

Meluha and Swadweep's contrasting worlds

As Shiva and his companions travel to Swadweep, they encounter a society vastly different from Meluha. The Chandravanshis, with their vibrant and chaotic way of life, challenge Shiva's perceptions. The stark contrast between the disciplined Meluhans and the free-spirited Chandravanshis highlights the cultural divide. Shiva is forced to confront his biases and the simplistic notion of good versus evil. This journey becomes a metaphor for Shiva's internal struggle to reconcile these opposing forces within himself.

The Revelation of Truth

Shiva's awakening to a deeper understanding

In Ayodhya, Shiva meets a Pandit who reveals the duality of the universe. The Pandit explains that the Chandravanshis and Suryavanshis represent two balancing life forces, neither inherently evil. This revelation shatters Shiva's previous beliefs and forces him to reconsider his actions. He realizes that his role as the Neelkanth is not to destroy but to understand and balance these forces. This newfound understanding sets Shiva on a path of introspection and self-discovery.

Plot Summary

Arrival at the Sacred Lake

Shiva's life at Mansarovar Lake

In the year 1900 BC, Shiva, a tribal leader, finds himself at the tranquil Mansarovar Lake, reflecting on his tumultuous life. Despite the beauty surrounding him, Shiva is plagued by the relentless conflicts with rival tribes. His confidant, Veerbhadra, shares these concerns, and together they yearn for peace. Their lives take a turn when a foreigner arrives, offering them a chance to relocate to Meluha, a land of prosperity and tranquility. Enticed by the promise of a better future, Shiva contemplates leaving his role as a chief behind.

Invitation to Meluha's Paradise

Meluha's promise of a new life

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The Weight of Guilt

Shiva's remorse over the consequences of war

Haunted by the devastation caused by the war, Shiva is consumed by guilt. He questions the righteousness of his actions and the lives lost in the conflict. The burden of being the Neelkanth weighs heavily on him as he grapples with the moral implications of his decisions. Shiva's journey becomes one of redemption as he seeks to atone for the unintended

consequences of his leadership. This chapter delves into the psychological turmoil of a leader burdened by the cost of his choices.

The Path to Redemption

Shiva's journey towards healing and balance

With a deeper understanding of his role, Shiva embarks on a path of redemption. He seeks to heal the wounds caused by the war and to bring balance to the world. This journey is not just about external peace but also about finding inner harmony. Shiva's transformation from a reluctant leader to a wise and compassionate Mahadev is a testament to his growth. This chapter highlights the themes of forgiveness, reconciliation, and the power of understanding in overcoming conflict.

2.Manju Kapoor : Custody:

The novel *Custody* highlights the cost of Shagun's quest for freedom, illustrating the breakup of a modern marriage burdened by individualism. People often turn a blind eye and seek justifications for the drawbacks of individualism and the exercise of free will. Shagun's rebellious behavior intensifies as a result of the patriarchy's repression and oppression she has experienced since childhood. She chooses to rebel and achieve what she wants rather than continue to suffer in silence and make compromises. As a postcolonial writer, Manju Kapur gives her protagonists a postcolonial touch, reflecting the breaking down of age-old traditions and the attempt to be liberal, progressive, or radical. The novel is replete with authenticity. Ishita, another main character, pays the price for her infertility. Every plot and subplot in the book addresses the issue of loneliness in marriage, highlighting how women typically deal with loneliness in their lives. The home, the primary site of a woman's oppression, remains a crucial base for women's subordination. Men, especially those in the capitalist class, benefit economically by deeming women's work as non-productive and unpaid. This theory suggests that women's subordination persists because it serves the interests of capital and the ruling class by pitting men against women. This dynamic provides working-class men with relative advantages within the capitalist system, offering the capitalist class a legal cover to refuse payment for domestic labor assigned to women, which remains unpaid. In their effort to forge identities, women aspire to participate in intellectual activities. Shagun strives to live an honest life, which, for her, means rebelling. She rebels against her marriage and relishes her independence. Kapur portrays modern-day women like Ishita, who value family and are content to care for other people's children, while Shagun is depicted as an independent

woman seeking her lost identity. Kapur elevates both protagonists from their lowly status, showing that they gain emancipation through psychological and spiritual growth, not through larger occupations or feminist revolts. *Custody* reveals the unimagined uncertainties of matrimony and the sufferings of children during a divorce. It evokes the wife's sense of suffocation, the husband's fear of loneliness, and the constant shifting of children with painstaking sincerity. The novel becomes more than a social commentary; it practically depicts the true nature of modern marriages struggling with the burden of individualism. As India joins the fast-paced world and undergoes rapid changes, all segments of society must dismantle the hegemonic model of the minimal family and reinforce democratic values that challenge patriarchal norms. Women in Kapur's novels strive for identity in a positive manner, seeking to carve niches for themselves and obtain social status. For example, Asha tries to elevate her position, though her means are not always fair. Another character, Nisha from the novel *Home*, feels liberated for the first time when she joins college for English Honors. Coming out from the enfolds of her family, she experiences a sense of adventure and modernity. Her interactions with an unrelated man and her decision to cut her hair—traditionally considered a family treasure—represent her defiance of tradition. Nisha's thoughts about her appearance intensify: "It was no longer enough to have fair skin and good features. She needed to stand out. Could she cut her hair, face the storm this would create?" (*Home*, p. 147). Eventually, Nisha's pursuit of marriage with Sureish does not yield results, and she requests her family to allow her to pursue a course. Despite her mother's initial resistance, Nisha's determination leads her to work at a playschool, breaking away from the confines of tradition.

Ishita, too, undergoes significant transformation. Her life becomes so pathetic that she has no choice but to leave her marriage to Suryakanta. Despite suffering a major setback, she does not give up easily. Ishita's indifferent husband exacerbates her problems, but she snaps out of her situation and decides to make an identity for herself. She starts teaching slum children, which broadens her horizon and makes her realize the futility of cribbing over her condition when others have greater problems. She also decides to pursue further studies and adopt a child. Had Ishita not suffered the pain of separation from her husband due to her inability to conceive, she might have continued leading a contented life without searching for an identity for herself. In Kapur's novels, women do not necessarily seek to become part of the elite society but strive to break free from the web of tradition within their own setup. Breaking from the confines of tradition is never easy, and these women face many difficulties during their transitional phase. However, they persist in their quest for identity and social status.

UNIT -V

1. Introduction

The custom of Indian aesthetics is the most established and vastest of any, with works radiating from the far north in Kashmir to the profound south in Tamil Nadu. As of now Indian aesthetic theories have crossed the areas and have become helpful to practically all researchers and scholars of different fields and especially in the field of Literature.

Natya Shastra, a first-millennium BCE Sanskrit Literature on the arts that is credited to Bharata Muni, contains a chapter (Chapter 6) devoted to the rasa concept. The works of Kashmiri Shaivite philosopher Abhinavagupta (about 1000 CE), illustrating the endurance of a long-standing aesthetic tradition in ancient India, provide its most thorough exposition in theatre, music, and other performing arts. The primary goal of performance art, according to the Rasa theory of the Natya Shastra, is to take spectators into a different, perpendicular reality filled with wonder and delight where they are able to experience the core of their own perception and reflect on religious and ethical concerns. Rasa is thoroughly discussed by Bharata in his Natyashastra. He also talks about Rasanispatti and Rasasvada, which refer to the creation of Rasa and the process of appreciation, respectively.

According to Bharata, rasa is produced by the sthayibhava of vibhava, anubhava, and vyabhicharibhava. It is the anantya of rasa process. The experience of tasting rasa is the other procedure. The created rasa, also known as “siddhi,” is tasted. Some believe that ananda is what arises through rasasvada. In actuality, rasa is made at the conclusion of the rasanispatti process. Music is used in the play in stage production techniques. The spectator is not listening to music. According to Bharata, rasas are where varas are attained. Bharata also notes that various rasas might elicit siddhi, indicating that rasa is distinct from siddhi.

In Indian Aesthetic theory, the Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica define rasa which in Sanskrit means essence, taste, or flavour, literally sap or juice. The Indian concept of aesthetic flavour is an essential element of any work of visual, literary, or performing art that can only be suggested, not described. It is a kind of contemplative abstraction in which the inwardness of human feelings suffuses the surrounding world of embodied forms.

Rasa theory essentially looks at different emotions, as well as the rationale of their evocation in a thoughtful reader, or how they are portrayed, proposed and communicated through a work. The central target of a poet is to depict feelings and auxiliary sentiments which oversee the activities of a person. Rasa, therefore, means poetic pleasure i.e. an aesthetic experience after reading any text or poem. The theory of Rasa can be explained in one sutra as given by Bharata, as he says, “vibhava anubhava-vyabhichari-samyogad rasa- nisapattihi”

(Natyashastra Ch 6). It means that because of the merging of vibhava, anubhava, and vyabhichari, rasa is created. Here sthayibhavas are the permanent emotions or feelings, vyabhicharibhavas are the transitory (fleeting) emotions, vibhavas are the excitant or stimulating determinants and anubhavas are the consequent or ensuing response.

According to Bharata, nine sthayibhavas further gives rise to the rasas. These are rati (love), hasa (laughter), soka (grief), krodha (anger), utsaha (enthusiasm), bhaya (fear), jugupsa (disgust), vismaya (astonishment), nirveda (indifference/renunciation). The respective rasas evoked by stayibhavas are sringara (erotic), hasya (comic), karuna (compassionate), raudra (wrathful), vir (heroic), bhayanaka (terrifying), bibhatsa (odious), adbhuta (marvellous), shanta (tranquil). The various genres of English Literature contain all of these rasas. While appreciating Literature or any work of art, one can obtain an enormous level of pleasure from these rasas.

1. Emotional Experience: Rasa theory helps to explore and comprehend the emotional experiences elicited by artistic expressions. It identifies a range of emotions, known as rasas, including love (sringara), humor (hasya), compassion (karuna), anger (raudra), heroism (vir), fear (bhayanaka), disgust (bibhatsa), and wonder (adbhuta).
2. Artistic Creation: Rasa theory provides guidelines for creators to evoke specific emotions in their audience through their work. Artists use various techniques such as language, rhythm, melody, gesture, and form to convey these emotions effectively.
3. Audience Response: The theory emphasizes the role of the audience in the artistic experience. It suggests that the audience participates actively in the creation of rasa by empathizing with the characters or situations portrayed in the artwork.
4. Philosophical Underpinnings: Rasa theory is deeply rooted in Indian philosophical traditions, particularly in the concept of aesthetic enjoyment (rasavada) and the idea of transcending the mundane through artistic experience.
5. Application in different Art Forms: While rasa theory originated in the context of Sanskrit Literature and classical Indian dance and theatre, its principles have been applied to various art forms worldwide. It has influenced not only Indian classical arts but also contemporary Literature, theatre, film, and even aspects of psychology and neuroscience.
6. Interdisciplinary Relevance: Rasa theory has implications beyond the arts and aesthetics. Scholars have explored its connections with psychology, cognitive science, and philosophy of mind, examining how artistic experiences shape human emotions, cognition, and consciousness. Overall, the scope of rasa theory is expansive, encompassing both theoretical

exploration and practical application in the creation and appreciation of art across cultures and disciplines.

9. Evolution of Rasa Theory Rasa theory has evolved over centuries, undergoing changes and adaptations in response to cultural shifts, philosophical developments, and the exploration of new artistic forms. Here are some key aspects of its evolution:

1. Ancient Origins: Rasa theory finds its roots in ancient Indian texts such as the *Natyashastra* attributed to Bharata Muni (around 2nd century BCE to 2nd century CE). Initially, it focused on the performing arts, particularly classical dance and theatre, outlining principles for actors, playwrights, and musicians to evoke emotions in the audience.

2. Development of Rasas: The original *Natyashastra* described eight primary rasas, or emotional flavours. Over time, scholars expanded the list to include additional rasas, sometimes numbering nine or even twelve. Each rasa was associated with specific emotional states and aesthetics.

3. Philosophical Interpretations: Rasa theory became intertwined with various philosophical schools in India, including Vedanta, Buddhism, and Tantra. Philosophers such as Abhinav Gupta (10th – 11th Century CE) and Rupa Goswami (15th – 16th Century CE) provided deep philosophical interpretations of rasa theory, linking aesthetic experience with spiritual transformation and the quest for self-realization.

4. Regional Variations: As Indian culture diversified across different regions, rasa theory underwent regional adaptations. For example, in South India, scholars like Matanga and Sarangadeva contributed to the development of Carnatic music theory, incorporating rasa principles into musical composition and performance.

5. Influence on Literature and Fine Arts: Rasa theory extended its influence beyond performing arts to Literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture. It provided a framework for understanding and appreciating various forms of artistic expression, guiding artists in conveying emotions and evoking aesthetic pleasure.

6. Modern Interpretations: In the modern era, scholars and artists have revisited rasa theory in light of contemporary aesthetics and global cultural exchanges. They have explored its relevance to Western art forms, contemporary Literature, theatre, and cinema, adapting its principles to new contexts and creative practices.

7. Interdisciplinary Connections: Rasa theory has also intersected with other disciplines such as psychology, neuroscience, and cognitive science. Researchers have investigated how artistic experiences influence human emotions, cognition, and brain activity, drawing parallels between rasa theory and contemporary theories of emotion and perception.

Rasa theory thereby, has evolved from its ancient roots into a dynamic framework that continues to inspire, artists, scholars, and thinkers across disciplines, reflecting the enduring relevance of aesthetic experience in human culture and consciousness.

10. Conclusion Initially 'beauty' was the concept of the west and was confined in the writings starting from Plato. However, Indian aesthetics was first explored internationally when the importance of oriental studies came to light in more recent years. Many western artists and critics concluded that Western art could learn a lot from Eastern practices as a result of finding significant insights into oriental aesthetics that apply to art and aesthetic experience everywhere. From the earliest beginnings of 'Bharata' and 'Bhamah' up until the modern day, numerous books have been composed in Sanskrit to illuminate the reader on the characteristics and scope of poetry as well as on the essence of poetic pleasure. Sanskrit literature is known for its abundance of writings of a philosophical and speculative nature. The development of rasa theory is considered the pinnacle of Sanskrit poetics, and the rasa school is unquestionably the most influential among those who study the essence of poetry. Similar to this, the dhvani-theory of Sanskrit poetry is well known and prominent in many ways. In a nutshell, rasa is that sensation of contentment experienced after a person has generalized himself to include all the circumstances and emotions of an actor. The rasa generalization allows a poet to experience poetry with the same degree of pleasure as a real actor did during their original acting. This rasa transports the poet's enjoyment to the same context, drive, and setting in which only those sentiments are experienced for the first time by the aesthetic enthusiast.

2.Indian Aesthetics

Indian art evolved with an emphasis on inducing special spiritual or philosophical states in the audience, or with representing them symbolically. According to Kapila Vatsyayan, "Classical Indian architecture, sculpture, painting, literature (kāvyā), music, and dancing evolved their own rules conditioned by their respective media, but they shared with one another not only the underlying spiritual beliefs of the Indian religio-philosophic mind, but also the procedures by which the relationships of the symbol and the spiritual states were worked out in detail." In the Pan Indian philosophic thought the term 'Satyam Shivam Sundaram' is another name for the concept of the Supreme. 'Sat' is the truth value, 'Shiv' is the good value & 'Sundaram' is the beauty value. Man through his 'Srabana' or education, 'Manana' or experience and conceptualization and 'Sadhana' or practice, through different stages of life (Ashramas) comes to form and realize the idea of these three values to develop a value system. This Value-system helps develop two basic ideas 1) that of 'Daksha' or the

adept/expert and 2) of Mahana/Parama or the Absolute and thus to judge anything in this universe in the light of these two measures, known as 'Adarsha'. A person who has mastered great amounts of knowledge of the grammars, rules, & language of an art-form are adepts (Daksha), whereas those who have worked through the whole system and journeyed ahead of these to become a law unto themselves is called a Mahana. Individuals idea of 'Daksha' and 'Mahana' is relative to the development of the concept of 'Satyam-Shivam-Sundaram.' For example, Tagore's idea of these two concepts should be above any common man's and many perceive Tagore as a 'Mahana' Artist in the realm of literature. This concept of Satyam-Shivam-Sundaram, a kind of Value Theory is the cornerstone of Indian Aesthetics.

Of particular concern to Indian drama and literature are the term 'Bhava' or the state of mind and rasa referring generally to the emotional flavors/essence crafted into the work by the writer and relished by a 'sensitive spectator' or sahrdaya. Poets like Kālidāsa were attentive to rasa, which blossomed into a fully developed aesthetic system. Even in contemporary India the term rasa denoting "flavor" or "essence" is used colloquially to describe the aesthetic experiences in films; "māsala mix" describes popular Hindi cinema films which serve a so-called balanced emotional meal for the masses, savored as rasa by these spectators. Rasa theory blossoms beginning with the Sanskrit text Nāṭyashāstra (nāṭya meaning "drama" and shāstra meaning "science of"), a work attributed to Bharata Muni where the Gods declare that drama is the 'Fifth Veda' because it is suitable for the degenerate age as the best form of religious instruction. While the date of composition varies wildly among scholars, ranging from the era of Plato and Aristotle to the seventh century CE. The Nāṭyashāstra presents the aesthetic concepts of rasas and their associated bhāvas in Chapters Six and Seven respectively, which appear to be independent of the work as a whole. Eight rasas and associated bhāvas are named and their enjoyment is likened to savoring a meal: rasa is the enjoyment of flavors that arise from the proper preparation of ingredients and the quality of ingredients. What rasa actually is, in a theoretical sense, is not discussed and given the Nāṭyashāstra's pithy wording it is unlikely the exact understanding of the original author(s) will be known. The theory of the rasas develops significantly with the Kashmiri aesthetician Āṇandavardhana's classic on poetics, the Dhvanyāloka which introduces the ninth rasa, shānta-rasa as a specifically religious feeling of peace (śānta) which arises from its bhāva, weariness of the pleasures of the world. The primary purpose of this text is to refine the literary concept dhvani or poetic suggestion, by arguing for the existence of rasa-dhvani, primarily in forms of Sanskrit including a word, sentence or whole work "suggests" a real-

world emotional state or *bhāva*, but thanks to aesthetic distance, the sensitive spectator relishes the *rasa*, the aesthetic flavor of tragedy, heroism or romance.

The 9th–10th century master of the religious system known as "the nondual Shaivism of Kashmir" (or "Kashmir Shaivism") and aesthetician, Abhinavagupta brought *rasa* theory to its pinnacle in his separate commentaries on the *Dhvanyāloka*, the *Dhvanyāloka-locana* (translated by Ingalls, Masson and Patwardhan, 1992) and the *Abhinavabharati*, his commentary on the *Nāṭyashāstra*, portions of which are translated by Gnoli and Masson and Patwardhan. Abhinavagupta offers for the first time a technical definition of *rasa* which is the universal bliss of the Self or Atman colored by the emotional tone of a drama. *Shānta-rasa* functions as an equal member of the set of *rasas* but is simultaneously distinct being the most clear form of aesthetic bliss. Abhinavagupta likens it to the string of a jeweled necklace; while it may not be the most appealing for most people, it is the string that gives form to the necklace, allowing the jewels of the other eight *rasas* to be relished. Relishing the *rasas* and particularly *shānta-rasa* is hinted as being as-good-as but never-equal-to the bliss of Self-realization experienced by yogis. Aestheticism (or the Aesthetic Movement) is an art movement supporting the emphasis of aesthetic values more than social-political themes for literature, fine art, music and other arts. It was particularly prominent in Europe during the 19th century, but contemporary critics are also associated with the movement, such as Harold Bloom, who has recently argued against projecting social and political ideology onto literary works, which he believes has been a growing problem in humanities departments over the last century. In the 19th century, it was related to other movements such as symbolism or decadence represented in France, or decadentism represented in Italy, and may be considered the British version of the same style.