THE ĀLAMKĀRIKAS AND THE SEMANTICS OF SUGGESTION

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‘Kavyasyātma Dhvanih’ — Anandavardhana
‘Tātparyameva vacasi dhvanireva kāvye’. — Bhoja

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter. — John Keats

Rien de plus cher que la chanson grise
où l’indecis au precis se joint. — Paul Verlaine

‘The machinations of ambiguity are among the very roots of poetry’. — William Empson

The Indian thinkers of the various schools were very much alive to the problems arising from the nature and structure of the language which they had to employ for the expression of their theories. Verbal testimony was a legitimate source of knowledge and the Sabdakhandha formed an important part of their metaphysics. Every system found language not a mere neutral instrument, but discovered in its form and content features which illustrated the major principles of its particular metaphysique. But however deep and revealing their speculations on language might have been, with the exception of the grammarians, the interest of these thinkers in language was still secondary and incidental. Language was, for them, only a means for the expression and communication of factual and theoretical information. Apart from its adequacy and usefulness for these purposes, it had hardly any other appeal for them. They would not have considered that any purely syntactic variation or synonymic substitution in their formulae would affect the value of their conclusions in any significant manner. Language, in their view, was merely the dress of thought, necessary, no doubt, for civilized life, but, in reality, only an external appendage not organically related to the personality of the wearer, quite easily changed or discarded at every turn of his will and flight of his fancy. This conception of language is responsible to a great extent for their method of classification and recognition of the types and number of the modes of meaning.

But in literature the place and function of language are quite different, and are revealed in the very definition of literature. This is seen
in the following definitions of literature given by some of the leading Sanskrit critics. Literature is defined as ‘the union of word and sense’, ‘the distinguished structure of words’, and ‘word and meaning, free from defects and possessing fine qualities’. ‘Any sentence containing rasa’ and even ‘the word expressive of beautiful meaning’ are put forth as more satisfying definitions of literature. The poet employs language as a tool for the expression of his vision, but his use of it is rather unique. It is not thrown away at the end of the work as all mechanical tools are, but merges into the work and becomes a part of the product created. In the literary work the expression is as important as the expressed, and the relationship between the two is not a loose form of coexistence, but that of the unity of a living organism, distinguishable for the purposes of general analysis but fundamentally inseparable. The metaphorical description of language as the body of literature is far more descriptive than is usually realised. As it is the substantial body which provides the wandering spirit with a local habitation and a name, making its being on this earth possible, so also it is language which helps the ‘airy nothings’ of imagination assume visible shapes and offers them a permanent abode in its structure. The relationship between language and literature is unique in some other respects also. The meanings of other systems of thought can be discovered even without the aid of the linguistic formulae embodying them, that is by direct experience or inference, but the poetic meanings cannot be apprehended apart from the linguistic

1 ‘Śabdārthau sahitam kāvyam’—Bhamaha; Kavyalāṅkara. I. 16.
2 ‘Namū śabdārthau kāvyam’—Rudrata. II. 1.
3 ‘Ritirātma kāvyasya, Visishta padaracanā rītīḥ. Visesavatī padānām raçaṇā rītīḥ’—Vamanav: Kavyalakarnasutravṛtti, I. 2. 6-7. Compare Coleridge’s definition that poetry is ‘the best words in the best order’; A. E. Housman’s, ‘Poetry is not the thing said but a way of saying it;’ and Mallarme’s ‘Poetry, my dear Degas, is not made with ideas, but with words’.
4 ‘Tadadoshau śabdārthau sagunau’—Mammata, Kavyaprakasa (Mysore Oriental Library publication 1922). I. 4. This work will be mentioned as K. P.
5 ‘Adoshau sagunau sālamkārau śabdārthau kāvyam’—Hemacandra. ‘Śabdārthau niradoshau sagunau prāyah sālamkārau kāvyam’—Vagbhata. ‘Gunalamkārasahitau śabdārthau ... kāvyam’—Vidyānatha.
6 ‘Vākyam resātmakam kāvyam’—Viswanatha: Sahityadarpana (Nirmayasagar, Bombay, 1931). I. 3. This work will be referred to as S. D. ‘Kavyam rasādimadvakyaṃ’—Kesavamisra.
7 ‘Ramanīyārthapratiṣdakah śabdah kāvyam’—Jagannatha; Rasagangadhara.
9 ‘Ṣārīram tavadhishṭarthaḥ kavyavacchinā padāvāli’—Dandin, Kavyadarsa I. 10. ‘Śabdārthau te śārīram’—Rajasekhara.
structure in which they are embedded. The poetic experience is confined at the very moment when it finds an outlet. Hence language might be expected to reveal new functions and powers in literature, and it is reasonable to look to the literary critics to discover, distinguish and elucidate them. The extent to which the Ālambārikas did this will be described in this essay. Although it may not lead to the view that ‘of all the branches of learning that stem from the genius of India, few are as profoundly Indian as aesthetics’, yet it will be found that their contribution to the semantics of poetry has a significant value even today.

The modes of meaning generally accepted by all the systems are the Abhidhā and Lakshanā, while some admit of the Tātparya also. The Abhidhā or the designation or denotation is that which is directly known from convention, the usage of the elders, dictionaries and such well-known ways. It is the meaning which first strikes our mind when we hear any word and is least dependent upon any particular context. The Lakshana or Indication is the meaning resorted to whenever there arises incompatibility between the denoted meanings of the words, and the conflict is to be resolved by a total or partial rejection of those meanings. These two modes are the functions of words considered in their isolation. But all communication being in the form of sentences, a separate mode is advocated for it by some thinkers. The Bhāttas propose the Tātparya vṛtti which is nothing more than the peculiar capacity of the constituent words of a sentence in bringing about a unified meaning for the whole. This was not accepted by all and some of the


2 ‘Through poetry language stands revealed as something other than a mere system of denotative signs.’—Helmut Kuhn; (Philosophy and Phen. Research. Vol. III. P. 429). ‘Criticism is the science of these meanings and the meanings which larger groups of words may carry.’—I. A. Richards; Coleridge on Imagination. (Routledge and Kegan Paul. Lond. 1955). Pp. 231-32. Cf. also p. 230 where the positive task of criticism is said to be ‘to explore, with thoroughness, the intricacies of the modes of language’.

3 Louis Renou: Diogenes. No. 1. p. 130.

4 K.P. II. 1; S.D. II. 4; Siddhāntamuktāvalī on Bhāṣāpariccheda verse 81.

5 ‘Śrutimātrasya yatrasya tādārthamvamvasīyatam tama mukhyamardin mar the manyante’—Mahima Bhatta, Vyaktiviveka (Kasi Sanskrit Series. 1936) p. 39. This work will be referred to as V.V. cf. also William Empson on the ‘head’ meaning in The Structure of Complex Words (Chatto and Windus, Lond. 1951) Pp. 38, 47 and 48. This work will be referred to as S.C.W. cf. also W.M. Urban; Language and Reality (Allen and Unwin, Lond. 1938). p. 137-138.

6 K.P. II. 4. SD II. 5. Bhāṣāpariccheda verse 82.

S.C.W. Pp. 46-48, equation of Type I.

7 K.P. II, i and the vṛtti on it.
logicians reject this as an independent mode, but retain the name for another characteristic meaning in a sentence, the intention of the speaker. These three modes are on the whole deemed to be sufficient to explain the whole phenomena of meaning. They are, as far as the use of language in their systems are concerned, but prove themselves inadequate to explain the ways of words in a field like literature. Not that these writers are blind to these distinctions, but they do not hold them serious enough to be given separate names. They err not from ignorance but from the effort to force into their classification modes of meaning which, on closer examination, are found to deserve an independent status. It is to the credit of the ālamkārikas that they have recognised one such mode and given it its due place. And that mode is called Dhvani or Suggestion.

It is in a work of the ninth century, the Dhvanyaloka of Anandavardhana, that we find this theory for the first time defined and described in a scientific and logical way, and it already appears quite mature and fully grown. But there is evidence enough to prove that its origin was neither so abrupt nor in the perfect form in which it is embodied. “Suggested” semantics is not at all in Sanskrit the phantasy of some daring writer; it is from the very root of the language it draws its resources. Already the “etymologies” of the Brahmana, the lists of the Vedic Nighantu, the interpretations of the Nirukta, attest the permanent pre-sense of a dhvani, that is to say of a secondary latent signification, suggested by the context or by the general exigencies of the poetic composition. The earlier writers on poetics were aware of it in a general way and used expressions like ‘gamya,’ ‘suvyanjita,’ ‘avagama’ and ‘gunavratti,’ to describe it. Ananda himself does not claim to be the originator of this theory and says definitely that the theory is an ancient one, and mentions by name at least one critic, Udbhata, who had a dim awareness of it. Even if it had not struck the sharp intellects of the ancient critics, he contends that it is everywhere patent in all the great works of literature like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Moreover Ananda explicitly declares that he is writing the work only to expound and defend an old theory which has come in for a great deal of adverse criticism from various quarters. Although the spirit of the

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1 Bhāshāpariccheda verse 84 and Muktāvali on it. Also compare Empson’s description of ‘moods’ S.C.W. p. 17.
2 Dhvanyaloka with the Locana of Abhinavagupta. (Nirmayasagar Bombay, 1911). These will be referred to as DA and DAL respectively.
4 Bhamaha. Q by Dr. V. Raghavan; Bhoja’s Srngara prakasa Vol. I. Part I. (Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay. 1940.) P. 146. This work will be referred to as S.P.
5 Dandin. Ibid.
6 Udbhata. Ibid.
7 Dandin. Ibid., p. 147
8 DA. I. 2.
9 DA. p. 108.
10 Ibid. Vṛtti on I. i. p. 11. 11 Ibid. I. i. and Vṛtti on it.
but to the bank of the stream. The conflict of meanings is resolved by resorting to an indirect meaning. This meaning is called the indicated meaning and the mode, indication. The sense of the sentence is now complete and no incongruity remains to be removed. Yet the word ‘Ganges’ might, in the minds of some, give rise to additional meanings like coolness and sanctity. These senses are not due to designation though they depend upon it; they are not necessary for making the sentence meaningful; nor do they inevitably arise in the minds of all who know the designated and the indicated meanings of the word. Moreover these senses and their mode of signification have a strange, distinctive emotional appeal which stirs us in a peculiar way and gives us immense pleasure. These senses are known as the suggested meanings and their mode is called suggestion or Dhvani.

The literary critics borrowed the term ‘dhvani’ from the grammarians who had made use of it while explaining the rise of the meanings of words and sentences. Like the thinkers of the other systems, the grammarians were also faced with the question of accounting for the meaning arising from the word as a whole. The word is composed of letters which are momentary, successive and non-significant in themselves. If it should convey a meaning, the letters must all be comprehended together in a single instant of time. This cannot result from the union of the impressions of these letters in the mind, because these impressions are also momentary and successive. Hence the grammarians postulated for this purpose an entity called the sphota. Every word is said to have a sphota, which is eternal and indivisible. The individual sounds of the constituent letters of the word suggest this sphota and this sphota in turn suggests the meaning of the word. The grammarians used the word ‘dhvani’ for these sounds suggestive of the sphota, and the literary critics took that name to characterise a similar function of words and their meanings in literature. ‘The exponents of the theory of suggested meaning’, writes Dr Pandey, ‘following this use by grammarians, have used the word Dhvani for both the suggestive word and the suggestive meaning, for the simple reason that just as the last sound brings the Sphota to the hearer’s consciousness so does the suggestive word or the suggestive meaning the suggested meaning’. Following the precedent of the grammarians who employed the term to mean the thing that suggests, the thing that is suggested, the process of suggestion, and the suggested meaning, and from etymological senses derived independently, the literary critics used the word ‘dhvani’ to mean the word or meaning which suggests, the suggested meaning, the process of suggestion, and the literary work in

2 DA. Vṛtti. on I. 16.
work was more polemical than expository, Ananda’s method was so thorough and his success so convincing, that the later writers looked upon him as the originator of this theory and called him the Dhavanikara. The theory received invaluable support at the hands of Abhinavagupta, the great philosopher-critic, who wrote a commentary on the Dhvanyaloka called the Locana which became as great an authority in the field as the original work itself. Finally a line of very eminent critics like Mammata, Viswanatha and Jagannatha appeared in the succeeding generations upholding, defending, elucidating and establishing the theory firmly with such faith and skill that at last the theory of Dhvani came to be regarded as the unique creation and contribution of the literary critics to the problem of meaning.

The responsibilities of definition are great and when the thing to be defined is the elusive nature of the marginal meanings of words, even the attempt at definition might be given up as impossible. ‘The varieties of connotation’, says Bloomfield, ‘are countless and indefinable, and as a whole, cannot be distinguished from denotive meaning’. A similar theory that the suggestive meanings can only be felt, not expressible in definitions was held by one school of the supporters of dhvani. But Ananda was of a different view. He would have approved the view of Sir William Hamilton that ‘if words cannot be discriminated it would be absurd to discriminate anything by them’. Not only did he say that it was definable, but also claimed that he had done it properly and adequately.

The suggested meaning, defines Ananda, is that which arises when the meaning of a word subordinates itself or the word its meaning in order to indicate another sense. It is that which arises after the designative and indicative modes of meaning have ceased to function. It appears over and above the other two meanings and is recognised as quite distinct from them as the beauty of a woman is apprehended as something over and above and distinct from the individual charms of her various limbs. The stock example of interpreting the sentence ‘A village on the Ganges’ illustrates this point in a simple and clear way. In this sentence, Ganges is first recognised to be the name of a particular stretch of flowing water in a particular part of the country. This information is gathered either from books or the talk of the elders. This is the designated or primary meaning of the word. But in the sentence as it stands it makes no sense, for a village cannot exist on a sheet of moving water. Yet the sentence is not rejected as meaningless, for ‘Ganges’ is interpreted by the listener not as referring to the stream

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1 \text{ L. Bloomfield, Language (Henry Holt and Co., N.Y. 1933). p. 155.} \\
2 \text{ DA. p. 10.} \\
3 \text{ Q by James Mackaye: The Logic of Language (Hanover. 1939). p. 43.} \\
4 \text{ DA. p. 233 cf. also Vidyadharas Ekavali I. 13.} \\
5 \text{ Ibid., I. 13.} \\
6 \text{ KP. II. 14; SD II. 2, and V. 1.} \\
7 \text{ DA. I. 4.}
\end{align*}\]
which this mode of meaning is predominant. But it is necessary to bear in mind that the literary critics are indebted to the grammarians for the term and the analogy, and not for anything fundamental to their theory. 'Of course, in the technique of nomenclature, the two views agree almost to a letter. But there is not a shadow of resemblance in what the term stands for. This is clear enough proof that the literary critics were indebted to the grammarians only to a small extent, as regards terminology and for the most part they had to evolve the principles of their theory anew'. In spite of Anandavardhana's great respect for the grammarians and references to their support for his theory, it was only Nagesa Bhatta, a grammarian of the seventeenth century, who gave dhvani an official recognition as an independent mode of meaning on a par with abhidha and lakshana.

The literary critics did not stop at merely defining the principle of dhvani, but also undertook a logical and elaborate analysis and description of the types of dhvani with suitable illustrations. Anandavardhana himself outlined the broad divisions and the later writers vied with one another in discovering subtler distinctions and establishing more subdivisions. All works of literature were divided into two broad types based on the importance of the dhvani in them. If suggestion was the predominant mode employed to bring about the rasa, the work belonged to the category of the dhvanikavyas and was considered to be the best type of literature. If on the other hand, suggestion was employed only secondarily to heighten the effect of the rasa arrived at through the designative or the indicative mode, the work belonged to the gunabhutavangya type and was looked upon as belonging to the second order. As a result of this, the suggested meanings will be predominant in the first type, and subsidiary to the designated and the indicated meanings in the second.

The dhvani type is further subdivided into three classes depending upon the modes of meaning from which it arises. Suggestion might arise from designation, indication or even suggestion. Suggestion based on designation is called the vivakshitāyaparacāya and is of two kinds, the asamlakshyakrama and the samlakshyakrama. In the former kind no interval of time is felt between the rise of the designated meaning and of the suggested one. In the latter, it is clearly felt, and the suggested element might be either the sound or the sense. Even the suggested element might be of four kinds. An object or event might suggest another object or event; an object or event might

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3 DA. p. 199.
4 K. Krishna Murthy op. cit. p. 211.
5 SD. IV. r.
6 DA. I. 13; SD. IV. r.
7 Ibid., III 34; SD. IV. 13.
9 SD. II. 17 and Vṛtti on it.
10 DA. II. 2; SD. IV. 4.
suggest a figure of speech; a figure might suggest an object or event; or one figure might suggest another figure.

Suggestion arising from indication is called avivakshitavācya and is of two types, the arthāntarasamkrāmita and the atyantatirākṛta. In the former type, the designated meaning is partially rejected in the resulting indicated meaning which gives rise, further, to the suggested meaning. In the latter, the designated meaning is completely rejected.

These are the main subdivisions of the mode of dhvani in literature, defined and illustrated copiously by all the writers on poetics.

Nevertheless the theory of dhvani did not meet with universal approval. The very first work in the field is partly polemical. Ananda himself refers to certain opponents of the theory and devotes the major part of his work to its defence. The opposition did not cease after him. Pratiharenduraja refused to consider it as a new mode. Bhatta Nayaka is said to have written against it. Both Dhananjaya and Dhanika thought of it as only a variety of Intention. The great logician-critic, Mahima Bhatta, wrote an elaborate treatise only to refute the theory of dhvani. Two karikas mentioning twelve anti-dhvani theories are quoted by Jayaratha in his commentary on the Alamkarasarvasva. Some of the objections are met by Ananda himself, and Abhinavagupta, Mammata, Viswanatha, and others have tried to deal with the others.

The very fact of an independent mode of meaning called dhvani is denied by a section of critics. According to these critics there is no necessity for assuming any mode other than the primary mode of meaning for words. Even in literature, this mode is quite enough for the expression of rasa. As an arrow sent powerfully by a strong archer can pierce through many layers of defence and strike the object, so also the abhidha does not stop with designation but passes through a chain of meanings to reach its goal. This view is refuted by Abhinava and other critics also. It is pointed out that the chief characteristic of abhidha, the convention which determines the relationship between the word and its meaning, is absent in the case of dhvani. Moreover the meanings conveyed by an expression do not reveal any similarity among themselves and hence would require an additional significative

capacity for that task. Viswanatha succinctly points out the differences between the abhidha and dhvani thus:

(1) Difference of nature: When the primary meaning is in the form of an order, the suggestive meaning indicates prohibition and vice versa.

(2) Difference of number: The primary meaning is only one but the suggestive meaning is multiple. The sentence, ‘The sun has set’, refers to the plainly observed fact by the abhidhāsakti, but might suggest to the listener other ideas like ‘Tie the cattle’, or ‘It is time for the meeting of the lovers’ etc., depending upon the speaker and other circumstantial factors. These ideas arise only with the help of the dhvani.

(3) Difference of capacity: The primary meaning is grasped merely on hearing the word or with the help of a dictionary, but only by the power of imagination can we apprehend the suggestive meaning.

(4) Difference of effect: The primary mode conveys cognitive perception only, whereas the suggestive mode arouses a feeling of delight.


3 DA. Vṛtti. on I. 4. cf. the VI type of Ambiguity in Empson’s Seven Types of Ambiguity. (Chatto and Windus. Lond.). Also I. A. Richards: ‘... if we abstract a plain sense from it (the poem), what we get is something very unlike, if separately considered, anything we are distinctively aware of in reading the words as poetry’. Coleridge on Imagination. P. 203.


5 DA. I. 7 and Vṛtti thereon. ‘As a rule a part of the meaning is put into the word and the rest is left to be our response to this meaning... The projection of its meaning into a word is an instance of Imagination’. I. A. Richards: Coleridge on Imagination. Pp. 108-10. ‘The complete content of a sentence,... is not exhausted when the words composing it are known and its grammatical elements are analysed. It still has an affective value which must be taken into account’.—M. Schlauch: The Gift of Tongues (Allen and Unwin. Lond. 1949.) P. 122. Beauty is ‘a character of some things, and in them present, but present only in the thing for those endowed with the capacity and the training through which alone it can be perceived.’—Eliseo Vivas: The Æsthetic Judgment (Journal of Philosophy. Vol. XXXIII). P. 57.

6 DA. I. 18. ‘The only mystery in poetry resides in the nature of the reality which poetry attempts to express. There is no mystery in the poetry itself, any more than there...
(5) Difference of time: The suggestive meaning arises only after the primary meaning has ceased to function.

(6) Difference of linguistic means: The primary meaning arises from complete words. The suggestive meaning may exist in a part of a word, of the meaning, or the style.

(7) Difference in persons addressed: The primary meaning might be addressed to the friend, while the suggestive meaning might be meant for the lover.

This does not mean that the suggestive meaning is wholly indefinite and the result of ignorance of grammar, etymology, or usage. It is definite, yet in a way indefinable. Lastly, if the primary mode is quite sufficient to explain all the ways of the words, there is no place for the indicative mode itself. But this is not conceded by the anti-dhvanī critics. So Viswananatha argues that if the same analysis is continued further it will be found that dhvanī will have to be admitted as an independent mode of meaning.

The dhvanī school is attacked from a different quarter by the Bhāktavādins. These critics admit the fact of dhvanī, but deny it an independent status. They try to include it under indication, especially is mystery in an algebraic form equated with infinity. But there is at times another quality to which we might perhaps concede the term magic. It is the capacity which words, and the sounds of which words are composed, have accidentally evoking more than they literally express.—H. Read: Phases of English Poetry (Hogarth Press. Lond. 1948). P. 124-25.

'To name an object is to do away with the three-quarters of the enjoyment of the poem which is derived from the satisfaction of guessing little by little: to suggest it, to evoke it—that is what charms the imagination'. Mallarmé. Q by. E. Wilson in Axel's Castle (New York, 1954). P. 20. 'The weakness of the direct method is shown in the fact that it is liable to challenge the intellect rather than the emotions, and either prove too interesting to be enjoyed as art, or too difficult to be enjoyed at all.'—E. M. Butler: The Direct Method in German Poetry (Lond. 1946). P. 14.

1 DA. I. 19; SP. II. 14, and V. I. 'In the reading of poetry the thought due simply to the words, their sense it may be called, comes firstly but other thoughts are not of less importance. These may be due to the auditory verbal imagery. . . . More important are the further thoughts caused by the sense, the network of interpretation and conjecture which arises therefrom. . . .'—I. A. Richards: Principles of Literary Criticism (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Lond. 1947). Pp. 128-29.

2 D.A. III 2, and 16 and Vṛtti thereon. 'For literary purposes, the phonetic level of a language cannot . . . be isolated from its meaning . . . . We can write the grammar of a literary work of art . . . beginning with phonology and accidence, going on to vocabulary (.), and rising to syntax (.), — A. Warren and R. Wellek: Theory of Literature (Jonathan Cape.)

3 S.C.W. p. 20.

4 DA. II. 32; also Vṛtti on III. 33, 'śabdātmani tasyāniyatatvam na tu sve vishaye vyangyalakshane'. P. 197. 'All sounds, all colours, all forms, either because of their pre-ordained energies or because of long association, evoke indefinable and yet precise emotions—Yeats, W. B. Essays. (MacMillan. Lond.) p. 191.'—SD. Pp. 254-55.

5 DA. I. 1.
of the lakṣaṭā-lakṣaṇa type. But this is refuted by the defenders of dhvani. For the chief element in indication is the incompatibility of the designated meanings. But this is not found in dhvani. The primary meaning is not only not rejected wholly or partially, it coexists with the suggested meaning, and maintains a distinct being, though not the prime importance, in the resultant interpretation. Hence it is held that dhvani is a separate mode of meaning and not a variety of indication.

The logicians, and especially Mahimabhatta, look upon dhvani as a type of inference. Just as the unseen object, fire, is inferred from the sight of an object which is connected with it, like smoke, similarly the rasa or alamkāra which is not directly perceived through the primary meanings of the words, are indirectly apprehended with their help, because of their relationship with the rasa or the alamkāra. Hence the mode of suggestion is only an instance of inference. But Ananda discusses the inadequacy of this thesis in the third Uddyota and Abhinava, Mammata and Visvanatha refute it in their works. The distinguishing characteristic of inference is the existence, and the knowledge of the existence of an invariable concomitance between the probans (linga) and the probandum (sadhya), which is established by the past occurrence of the two. And there is a temporal interval between the apprehension of the probans and the inference of the probandum. When the instances of dhvani are examined with reference to these two conditions, we find their absence in dhvani. There is neither the necessary logical

1 DA. I. 17-22; SD. V. Chapter.
2 DA. I. 20; Kp. II. 15; SD. V. 3. ‘The remotest figurative significance that we can derive does not invalidate the extensions of the literal statement. Or we may begin with the literal statement and by stages develop the complications of metaphor: at every stage we may pause to state the meaning so far apprehended, and at every stage the meaning will be coherent (integrative).’—Allen Tate Q by Kaplan and Kris: op. cit. p. 429.
3 DA. p. 195, ‘ata eva vivakṣhitānayaparāvēye dhvanau vācyavācakayordvayorapi svarūparatirirāarthāvagamanam ca dṛṣyata iti…’ Also cf. p. 190. Also Empson’s Type I Ambiguity.
4 Ibid., p. 194, ‘Tadvam śābde vyavahāre trayaḥ prakārāḥ—vācakatvam guṇavṛttirvī-
najakatvam ca’.
6 VV. Pp. 39-40. 7 Ibid., p. 57; and 63.
9 KP. Pp. 185-87. ‘The term Implication is not meant to suggest that this meaning follows logically from the sense of the word now in use.’—S.C.W. p. 15. ‘The same sound and signs may easily be vehicles of poetry at this place and not in that, at this time and not in that, to this person and not to the other.’—O. Barfield: Poetic Diction (Lond. 1928). P. 14. ‘It seems impossible... to prove that specific figures and devices must, under all circumstances, have specific effects or ‘expressive values’—Warren and Wellek; op. cit. p. 182.
concomitance between the primary and suggested meanings, nor is there any sense of mediacy in the case of dhvani of the asamlakshyakrama type. Thus it is clear that dhvani cannot be considered to be a type of inference at all.

But the greatest opponents of dhvani are the Tātparyavādins. These critics admit that there is a type of meaning which is distinct from designation, but not so distinct as to be called by a separate name and given an independent status. As this meaning is the one which is intended by the author of the particular statement, it should be considered as the one that is directly expressed. This mode is already characterised as designation and hence neither a new name nor a new function need be posited. The intended meaning of the sentence is the designated one. As the meanings of the constituent words of a sentence are only a means to the understanding of the meaning of the sentence, similarly the meanings which arise incidentally in the course of the apprehension of the intended meaning are only instrumental to the realisation of that intention. Hence suggestion is unnecessary and the mode of intention includes it. This is the view of the older Mīmāṃsakas and the literary critics like Dhanika and Dhananjaya.

Ananda discusses this problem in the third section of his work. In the case of a word or sentence suggesting a different meaning after expressing the designative meaning, the two meanings, Ananda points out, cannot be said to be identical or even similar, for they differ in their natures and objects. The object of designation is the conventional meaning whereas the object of suggestion is something different and occasional. Designation arises directly from the word whereas suggestion begins to arise after the designated meaning is conveyed. While the primary meaning is confined to words and complete words, suggestion arises from the word as well as its meaning, from parts of words, and even from non-denotative sounds of music and soundless symbolism of gesture. Moreover if the two meanings expressed by the word or

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1 'Some of the erroneous views current before the method of dhvani was formulated or after are due to mistaking the method of art to be logical. Thus Mahima Bhatta tried to make out that the process involved in the so-called dhvani was nothing but inferential; and others like Mukula Bhatta represented the secondary senses of words as derived through the pramana known as arthabatti. Both forgot that the dhvani lacks the element of necessity, which is essential to what is strictly a logical process'. M. Hiriyan: Art Experience (Mysore, 1954.) p. 50.

2 'Mediacy is the characteristic feature of inference and here in suggestion one feels that degree of mediacy that is necessarily characteristic of inference is wanting and we feel that there is a certain degree of immediacy which does not entitle us to bring it under inference.'—S. Kuppuswamy Sastry: 'Highways and Byways of Sanskrit Literary Criticism.' p. 39. cf. also DAL. p. 185.


4 DA. Pp. 187 Ff., cf. also SP. 152-159.

5 DA. Pp. 188-89.
sentence are apprehended as identical, there would have been no talk of two meanings at all. But this is not so in actual experience. Suggestion is, no doubt, a verbal function, but it is an independent function, distinct from designation as it differs from it in its nature, object and the mode of conveying its meaning. Moreover, the suggestive mode differs from the intentional mode in some important respects. In the sentence the meanings of the constituent words vanish when the total meaning of the sentence is realised, and the relationship between the two meanings is that of the designator-designated, and is determinate in nature. This is not so in the case of suggestion. The meanings of the constituent words are only superseded but never destroyed. The relationship between the meanings is that of the revealer-revealed type. It is compared to the light of a candle which reveals other objects, but also continues to shine in its own right. Secondly, all sentences have some type of intention, but all do not have suggestion. Lastly, Ananda argues, that even this intention is only revealed by suggestion and not by the designation of the words at all.

Viswanatha meets the objections of the later critics, like Dhanika and Dhananjaya, in the fifth chapter of his work. He opines that the intentional mode accepted by the Abhihitavayavadins can bring about only the syntactical relation among the constituent words and cannot indicate the suggested sense. Even if it is contended that the intentional mode does not come to a rest until the intended goal is reached, some problems will still remain unsolved. If it is admitted that certain uses of language give rise to a hierarchy of multiple meanings, it remains to be explained whether all these arise from the designative mode. But the

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1 'An attempt is sometimes made to abolish the distinction between meaning and suggestive power; to treat the idea primarily conveyed by a word as simply one among the ideas which the use of it suggests. It is true that in practice we cannot convey the one without in some measure arousing the others; but this is no reason for denying the difference in kind between an idea attached by custom to a particular word and a varying collection of ideas aroused by its use. Thus to treat meaning as a kind of suggestion may be tempting when we think of poetry, because in poetry suggestion overshadows meaning; it is less possible when we consider a mathematical proposition or a legal enactment.'—J. Sparrow: Sense and Poetry. (Constable and Co. Lond. 1934). P. 17.

2 Ibid., p. 190 ff.

3 Ibid., I. 11, p. 190.

4 Ibid., I, 10; p. 189 ff. cf. also: 'The suggestiveness of true poetry ... is the aura around a bright clear centre ... you cannot have the aura alone.'—T. S. Eliot: Selected Essays (Faber and Faber, Lond.) p. 259.

5 Ibid., I. 9; p. 190.

6 Ibid., 'Prâyeçaiva vakṣyānām vacavyatiriktatattātparyāvabhāṣitvam'—p. 192; 'na tu vivakshitavatena vyangyasya vyavasthitih'.—p. 199.

7 Ibid., 'Paurusheyāpi ca vakṣyāni prādhānyena pūrushāhiprāyameva prakāśayanti sa ca vyangya eva na tvabhidheyah.

8 SD. Pp. 252-56.
tātparyavādins hold that after a word has given a particular meaning through designation, it cannot once again give rise to a new meaning through the same mode. If designation can express all the various meanings of a statement, then there will be no need for the indicative mode. This also is not acceptable to the tātparyavādins. Lastly the emotions of joy and sorrow caused by statements expressing good and bad news will have to be considered the denoted or designated meanings of those statements. This is also not admitted by the tātparyavādins. The word, tātparya, might mean either reference to the intended object or referring to it by the intentional mode. The school of suggestion has no quarrel with the first view, for the aim of suggestion is also the same. If by the intentional mode is meant the theory of the Abhihiyantavādins, the answer is already given above. If, on the other hand, a different mode is meant, then the quarrel is only over the nomenclature, for, then, the opponents of suggestion will have accepted a fourth mode in addition to the three already held by them¹. Thus Viswanatha sums up the whole issue and successfully establishes dhvani as an independent mode of meaning.

Apart from the purely theoretical discussion of the philosophy of suggestion, the literary critics have devoted large sections of their works to the analysis, classification, and illustration of designative, indicative and suggestive uses of language. They reveal in these sections a remarkable feat of practical semantics². They borrow materials freely from other branches of learning, and bring them to bear on the study of poetry. Their rigorous yet sensitive application of grammatical and logical techniques as instruments of analysis, clarification and interpretation of great literature which is defined by a leading critic of today as ‘simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree’, their sharpness to detect the slightest shifts of sense, their love of minute distinctions, and their precision and clarity in encoding their findings in pithy, unambiguous definitions might certainly appeal to the hearts of many a modern critic like I. A. Richards and William Empson, Edmund Wilson and John Crowe Ransome, if their language is understood. A great orientalist justly writes about them thus: “The theory of dhvani has for us among all the theses of poetics the particular interest of being the one of which the incidenecs of language are most remarkable. When we reflect upon the remarks on the order of the words, on the use of the pronouns, of the “pre-verbs”, of particles, on the choice of terms as contained in so many commentaries on poetics, we clearly see that there lie the elements of a stylistic system on a linguistic basis, very conscious of

¹ DA. p. 201; DAL. p. 18; SD. p. 256.
² cf. DA. chapters I, II and III.; KP. II, III, IV etc., SD. II. IV, V, VII, VIII, IX, and X.
³ Ezra Pound: Polite Essays (Faber and Faber, Lond. 1937). P. 165
itself, and in some way rather near in intention to which the moderns are striving to establish in the west.\(^1\)

In spite of all their reasoning and illustration, the literary critics have not been able to convert the theorists of the other schools to their view. Dhvani was not recognised as an independent mode of meaning in the other systems. A section of the literary critics themselves did not favour it.\(^2\) A few, like Bhoja, tried to strike a compromise by accepting dhvani as a mode in literature but contented themselves with tattparya in other fields.\(^3\) But the main stream of Sanskrit critics embraced it wholeheartedly and defended it with great skill and fervour. Otherwise the greatest source of power and pleasure in poetry would have gone unrecognised.\(^4\) Rasa, the soul of poetry, being a psychological state, cannot be revealed by designation at all.\(^5\) Even if the rasas like love and anger and others can be designated directly by words, the effect will not be poetical.\(^6\) It is not enough if a rasa is mentioned in poetry; it must be induced in us. What is required of us in poetry is not a passive gathering of the information of a particular rasa but an active participation and merger in its activity. This is beyond the powers of designation, but possible only indirectly. This was a matter of common experience among the critics whether they belonged to the dhvani school or not. The differences were only about the way this was realised.\(^7\) But the credit for the logical and linguistic analysis and

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1. L. Renou: The Dhvani in Sanskrit Criticism (Brahmavidya, New Series I. 1. 1954), p. 25. ‘The distinction between ‘direct’ and ‘oblique’ poetry is not new, and must be familiar enough in some form or another, but as an important initial criterion I doubt if it has been clearly formulated or consciously applied to critical practice. This book suggests a scale ranging from the greatest possible directness to the greatest possible obliquity in poetry.’—E. M. W. Tillyard: Poetry: Direct and Oblique. (Chatto and Windus, Lond. 1948). Pp. 9-10.

2. Dhanika and Dhananjaya.


4. Compare ‘As a basis on which to erect sublime poetry, the poetry of statement is not valid for an indefinite time.’—E. M. W. Tillyard: Poetry: Direct and Oblique. P. 103. ‘Strongly creative poets like Homer favour the indirect method.’—E. M. Butler op. cit. p. 9.

5. DA. Vṛtti on 1.4, Pp. 23-26; SD p. 252. Cf. ‘All poetry is more or less oblique; there is no direct poetry’ E. M. W. Tillyard: Poetry: Direct and Oblique. (Chatto and Windus, Lond. 1948). P. 10.

6. DA. Ibid., KP. p. 163; SD. V. 3.

7. VV: ‘Kavyāsatmāni samjuñī rasādīrūpe na kasyacīdvimatih samjñāyam sā . . .’ p. 105. Cf. also. ‘Poetry is “emotive” only in intent, not necessarily in the workings of individual words or sentences. While the intent of poems is emotive, their Method consists of various kinds and levels of statement, and also of various arrangements of sounds and words of a given language, arrangements following more or less closely the syntax of that language.’ P. O. M. Meidner: Poetry, Language and Communication. (Philosophy. Vol. XXX). p. 255.
definition of this unique means of aesthetic experience must go to the school of dhvani. Thanks to their faith and fervour, the theory became very popular among the lovers of literature. It secured such a firm support so early in its career that Jayanta Bhatta, an anti-dhvani logician who wrote not long after Anandavardhana, declared in despair that there was no use in arguing with the poets about their obstinate faith in dhvani. Perhaps that has remained the silent comment of the later philosophers of the other schools, while the literary critics have preferred to rest content with their unique achievement and possession.

1 'Athavā nedṛṣṭi carcā Kavibhih saha śobhate' Nyayamanjari. p.45.
2 'The work (i.e. DA). belongs to the ninth century A.D.; and its importance is well indicated by the fact that the view of poetry which it formulated has come to dominate sanskrit literary criticism completely, superseding all the earlier views.' M. Hiriyanna: Art Experience, p.78.