

# ***Rasa Dhvani* :An Applicational Model to R.Parthasarathy's Rough Passage**

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## **Abstract**

Poetics is one of the fields of knowledge in which Indian scholarship has made significant contribution. But a feeling of regret arises when we find that Indian Poetics has not been properly appreciated by scholars. My goal in other words, is to show that art of reading poetry can be as fascinating and as creative as the art of writing, if we have our own critical tools . Rajagopal Parthasarathy, an Indo- Anglian poet says:

***Language is a tree, loses colour under another sky.*** (Rough Passage, 17-18)



Thus the present paper is a modest attempt to apply the *Dhvani* theory of Indian Poetics on the selected canvas of English and *Sanskrit* Literature. The focus of the paper is to counter and correct the de-intellectualized mind by arguing for and developing applicational model from Indian *Sanskrit* literary theory of *Dhvani* to a wide variety of English texts.

**Keywords:** *Dhvani*, Aesthetic pleasure, Exile , Trial, Home Coming ,*Abhidha* ,*Laksana*, *Vyanjana* ,*Dhvanarthā*

The *Dhvani Siddhanta* occupies a status of special importance in the realm of Indian poetics. We get the first mention of the term ‘*Dhvani*’ in the *Mahabhashya* of Maharshi Patanjali in a grammatical and philosophical sense . The credit of propounding the doctrine in a systematic manner goes to *Acharya* Anandvardhana who composed the scholarly treatise, named *Dhvanyaloka*, in which he enunciated the *Dhvani Siddhanta* (the principle of suggestion). In the *Dhvanyaloka* for the first time we hear the word *dhvani* used in a technical sense of “a particular type of poetry.”

Anandvardhana added *vyanjanashakti* or *Vyanjakatva* ( suggestive power). Infact, *vyanjana* or *Dhvani* is a contextual meaning , not solely dependent on words . Its nature is unique which can be understood by the relation between the *vacyartha* and the *vyangyārtha*. There is an analogy of human body and its charm in order to understand this relation. Human body has three aspects-*rupa* ( complexion), *saundarya* (form) and *Lavanya* (charm). *Rupa* is complexion seen by eyes and it does not depend on ornaments. *Saundarya* stands for physique of a person or part of the body. And *Lavanya* is the consequence of *rupa* and *Saundarya* depends on them but it is without them. The relation between them is also that of the lamp and its light. In order to get light, one takes the lamp the wick, the fuel and the match-box. Although the light is the consequence of the lamp, the wick, the fuel and the match-box and so depends on them, yet it is away from them. Thus *Dhvani* is the power of revelation of a lamp which reveals the object upon which it casts its light. Similarly, in order to arrive at the *Vyangyārtha*, the *Sahridaya* approaches the *vacyartha* . ( *Dhvanyaloka* I.9)

According to Anandvardhana , the words can convey also a suggested meaning in addition to their conventional primary meaning in three forms, viz, ‘*vastumatra*’ ( mere matter of fact), ‘*alamkar*’ (figures of speech) and ‘*rasadi*’ (‘*rasa*’ and other such mental states).

In other words, a composition where a suggested sense predominates is called ‘*dhvani*’. Ānandavardhana calls “this power *dhvani* when in its purest form, that is, when it predominates over the other semantic powers in the sentence” (*The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with the Locana of Abhinavagupta* 15). He further says that “*dhvani* is that type of *kāvya* where the *vācyārtha* (primary or conventional meaning) loses its independent entity and suggests meaning i.e. *vyangyārtha*. Here the *vācyārtha* being secondary enhances the *vyangyārtha*. This type of *kāvya* is *uttama* (the

first grade). This's why, Ānandavardhana, considers *dhvani* to be the soul of literature, "*kāvyaśyātmā dhvanirīti*" (D.A. I, 1. ). He traces its history how it has travelled right from the commencement of the first piece of literature (*laukik kāvya*) i.e. *Ramayana*:

*kāvyaśyātmā sa evārtamstathā cādikave purā  
krauñcadvandva viyogotthaḥ śokaḥ slokatvamāgataḥ*

That meaning alone is the soul of *kāvya*, and so it was that, of yore, the sorrow of the first poet (Valmiki) at the separation of the curlew couple took the form of a distich)

(D.A. I, 5.)

At this juncture Ānandavardhana could perceive that what gives shape and meaning to words is *dhvani* which was 'the soul of poetry'. He was trying to say that meaning in a poem is revealed through *dhvani*. This *dhvani* is a hint or an echo of something which it would reveal to *sahṛdaya* at a particular moment of his consciousness during his interaction with a literary composition. From there Ānandavardhana goes on to explain that the meaning which is revealed to the *sahṛdaya* is according to his capacity yet a meaning to be revealed is in the poem and this meaning in the poem is different from its literal meaning as it contains the *dhvani* or echo of poet's experience of higher reality. No doubt, each word or figure or image comes into being with a poet's perception of higher reality underlying them yet they are not part but fruits of the central experience of the poet. The relationship between the *vācyārtha* and the *vaṅgyārtha* in fact becomes what Ānandavardhana would call *sādhyaśādhana* (content revealing itself through the form). Thus Ānandavardhana introduces a new function of words, called '*vyanjana*' in addition to '*abhidha*' and '*laksana*' of the earlier Ācāryas.

Of the three types of the suggested sense the '*rasadi*' type is considered to be the best. Now, *Dhvani Siddhanta* is founded upon a threefold division of meaning, emanating from a threesome of word-powers. The first power of word is called '*abhidha*' and the meaning flowing therefrom is called, '*abhidheyārtha*' or '*vacyārtha*'. The second power is called '*laksana*' and the meaning derived therefrom, is called '*lakṣyārtha*'. The third word power is known as '*vyanjana*' and the meaning, obtained therefrom, is known as '*vaṅgyārtha*', '*pratiṣamanārtha*' or '*dhvanyārtha*'. Let us illustrate how *Dhvani* works in *Kavya*:

- *Abhideyārtha*



“What a lovely flower it is !”

- *Lakṣyārtha*



What a lovely flower!

- “ if somebody exclaims in a spirit of material detachment”:
- *Vyangyārtha*



“These lovely flowers will be gathered by Cruel Providence one day”

It is obvious that the *dhvanyārtha* depends upon speaker, the person addressed, the context, the time, place etc. It also requires a little amount of intelligence on the part of the ‘*sahrdaya*,’ the cultivated reader.

Thus, Ananadvardhana has enunciated the ‘*dhvani*’ for the delight of the minds of the *sahrdayas*. He holds:

तेनैवविधासुविमति”। स्थितासहृदय—मनःप्रीतयेतत्स्वरूपं ब्रूमः **A** (Dhvanyaloka, Vrtti Part-9)

‘*Dhvani*’ has been defined in *karika* I, 13, which runs as

यत्रार्थः ‘।ब्दो व तमर्थमुपसर्जनीकृतस्वार्थो ।

व्यंक्तः काव्यविशे’। स ध्वनिरितिसूरभिः कथितः ।। (Dhvanyaloka, Karika I.13)

That kind of poetry, wherein either the conventional meaning or the word renders itself or its conventional meaning secondary (respectively) and suggests the implied meaning, is designated by the learned as ‘*dhvani*’ or suggestive poetry’.

On the basis of such illustrations as given above, Ānanadvardhana’s typology of *dhvani* given in his *Dhvanyāloka* can be understood. Broadly, *dhvani* falls into two kinds:



*avivakṣitavācya* (unintended expressed sense) and *vivakṣitānyaparavācya* (intended expressed sense but extending to something further ).

*Avivakṣitavācya* is *lakṣṇāmūladhvani* because it depends on *lakṣaṇā* or on the conditions that bring *lakṣaṇā* into play. These conditions are :

- 1) *sāmīpiyasambandhlakṣaṇā* (mutual closeness): As in expressions of transferred epithet ‘a sleepless night’, ‘The plowman treads his weary way’.
- 2) *sādrśyalakṣaṇā* (similarity): As in George Herbert’s poem “The Church Floore”
- 3) *saṁvāyalakṣaṇā* (association): as in expressions, ‘The sun steals’, skirts go to garden, etc.
- 4) *vaiparityalakṣaṇā* (contrast): As in the expression, “Brutus is an honorable man.”
- 5) *kriyāyogalakṣaṇā* (attribution) (*kriyāyoga*): when one’s qualities or actions are attributed to others, e.g. He was Socrates in thinking, Achilles in fighting.

Ānandavardhana divides *avivakṣitavācya* into two types: *arthāntarasāṅkramita* (partially expressed) and *atyantatiraskṛta* (completely set aside ).

In *arthāntarasāṅkramita*, *vācārtha* is not intended to be spoken partially. It remains in the background or subordinate position. It is transformed in the other meaning or shifted to something else. In it *pada* and *vākya* (sentence) play important role. Abinavagupta holds that *sāṅkramitavācya* is like the thread of a necklace, which is unnoticed property-possessor. He identifies *sahakārīvarga* (group of conditions) as the agents which cause the shifting of the sense. These conditions are *mukhyārthabādhā* (suppression of meaning), *nimitta* (i.e., *sambandha* or closeness) and *prayojana* (purpose). Shelley’s poem *Adonais* is an example of *arthāntarasāṅkramitavācya*.

In *atyantatiraskṛta*, *vācārtha* is transformed in the other meaning or shifted to something else. In it the *vācārtha* is completely lost or entirely set aside. In it also *pada* and *vākya* (sentence) play important role.

As far as *vivakṣitānyaparavācya* is concerned, it is called so because here *vācārtha* is *vivakṣita* (intended to be spoken). It is also called *abhidhāmūladhvani*. It imparts meaning in two ways: *asamlakṣyakrama-vyaṅgya* (non-sequential suggestion) and *saṁlakṣyakrama-vyaṅgya* (sequential suggestion).

*Asaṁlakṣyakrama-vyaṅgya* is called *rasadhvani*. Ānandavardhana was the first Indian critic to state that a *rasa* cannot be directly expressed.

Present paper is focusing upon aesthetic pleasure or *Rasa dhvani* known as *asamlaksya-krama-vyangya* class i.e. *abidha-born dhvani*.

It is some emotional content, a '*rasa or a 'bhava'*', that is purposed to be suggested, and creates the charm.

One important contribution by Anandvardhana has been the identification of an '*angin rasa*', the principal relish, which should characterise a poem, narrative or otherwise. Even in the Tragedies where the emotions of pity and terror are supposed to be jostling together, one central emotion can be located. For example, of the four major tragedies of Shakespeare's, the '*Bhayanaka Rasa*', evocation of fear may be discovered in 'Macbeth' while the '*karuna rasa*', a product of the development of the '*sthayi*' of '*soka*', can be identified in the other three Tragedies of 'Hamlet', 'Othello' and 'King Lear'.

Anandavardhana has quoted the following verse from Amaru as an instance of '*Rasa-dhvani*' of the '*Srngara*', precisely, '*sambhoga Srngara*':-

‘नून्यं वासगृहं विलोच्य ‘यनादुत्थाय किञ्चिच्छनै  
निद्रा व्याजमुपागतस्य सुचिरं निर्वर्ण्यपत्युर्मुखम्।  
विस्रब्धं परिचुम्बय जातपुलकाम् आलेक्य गण्डस्थलीं  
लज्जानम्रमुखीप्रियेणहसताबालाचिरंचुम्बिता।।(Dhvanyaloka, III 44)

‘The newly wedded wife, finding the bedroom vacant, arose from the bed a little, looked at the face of her husband in feigned sleep; kissed his cheeks and eyelids in a mood of confidence; but immediately bent down her head, blushing to behold signs of horripilation on his cheeks. Then she was kissed by her laughing sweet heart (who evidently awoke from his feigned sleep) for a long time’.

- 1- This is an exquisitely sweet image of union oriented erotic in as much as the *rati sthayi* has attained full *prakarsa* or climax. An erotic is said to be “*nayikarabdha*” (initiated by the heroine) when the practical gesture of love is first made by the woman and it is said to be “*Nayakarabdha*” (initiated by the hero) when the amatory gesture is first made by the man.

To use the technical terminology, here both the damsel and her consort are the *asrayalambana* and *visayalambana* alternately although it will be a case of the “*nayikarabdha sringara*” (initiated by the heroine).

The vacant bed-room and the sleeping posture of the husband are the ‘*uddipana vibhavas*’. The acts of kissing on both sides are the ‘*anubhavs*’, ‘*harsa*’, ‘*vrida*’, ‘*avega*’ etc. are the ‘*vyabhicaris*’ and horripilation etc. are the ‘*satvikas*’. Thus the ‘*sthayi*’ of ‘*rati*’ is effortlessly visualised and enjoyed. Hence, this is ‘*sambhoga- sringara – dhvani*’.

‘*Rasa-dhvani*’ has been divided into eight classes, designated as *rasa*, *rasabhasa*, *bhava*, *bhavabhasa*, *bhavodaya*, *bhava-sandhi*, *bhava-prasama* and *bhava sabalata*.

Anandavardhana said, ‘Whatever material is produced in poetry is all oriented to the evoking of the desired meaning or *rasa* even as a lamp is lighted solely for the obtainment of light.’ (R.S.Tiwari)

R.Parthasarathy is conscious of the colonial hangover. Discarding this hangover he says “*that Language is a tree, loses colour under another sky.*” Hence the painful necessity of a sincere and continual search is for self expression. Parthasarathy outlines in his seminal essay “Whoring after English Gods”, the true problems of the Indian Poet in English as the quality of experience and the choice of Idiom. This is rooted in the very situation and that is what constitutes Parthasarathy’s poetry. His longing for not having the borrowed feathers when he says :*One cannot fly with borrowed feathers*, expresses his anguish for not having Indian critical tools like *aucitya*, *Dhvani*, *vakrokti* etc. His lines: “*That language is a tree, loses colour under another sky*,” gives his confirmation to the fact that *Dhvani* is like the colourful tree of language endowed with *rasa*, *almkar*, *bhava* etc.

By the title ‘Exile’ Parthasarathy means self-imposed exile from his tradition and the suggested meaning or *dhvanyartha* in it. Here the ‘self-imposed ‘exile has been transformed partially into the Exile of Adam Imposed by God as a punishment for plucking the apple from knowledge tree. This suggestion of the partial transformation of meaning or *Vacyartha* can be understood as *arthantarsankramit* in the *DhvaniSiddhanta*. It is *Laksna* Word Power born.

As far as the second title ‘Trial’ is concerned it exhibits suggestion of complete transformation of *vacyartha*. Here Parthasarathy attempts to overcome feeling of exile and alienation by the means of love and new dimension ushered in because of marriage. So he eulogises personal love which make life meaningful and minimizes the feelings of isolation. Here the applied meaning seems to be his personal love in the identification of

human soul or eternal love. After seeing all the ups and downs, pains and pangs of life a man starts feeling the eternal oneness. Here Suggestion of complete transformation of *vacyartha* of personal love i.e. married love has been completely disregarded by the new meaning i.e. love of soul and oneness of universe. It is also *Laksana* Word Power born.

In the third title 'Homecoming' we have suggestion of subject or *vastu dhvani*. The title refers to the poet's return to his Tamil culture which suggests death that means the return of human soul to its permanent abode being identified with the mortality of materialistic world. Here the transition from the *vacyartha* to the *vyangartha* is discernible. It is *Abidha* Word Power born. It is born of poet's inventive fancy or imagination and sometimes it is grounded in material possibilities or Realism.

So far much work has not been done on Parthasarathy. It seems that the meaning in his poetry has not been appreciated adequately even in the works done on him. Keeping in view the present critical study made on R.Parthasarathy, it is strongly felt that there is a need for exploration on R.Parthasarathy's poetry. Present study may prove a modest applicational model to *Dhvani* and show how the poet does seem to reach a destination in his continuous search for stable values. It is hoped that the study shall unearth new grounds for further research.

Parthasarathy's *Rough Passage* comprises of *Exile, Trial&Homecoming*. Let us analyse the lines from *Exile* first. Obviously enough there is no explicit consummation of basic human emotions, because all activities in the foreign land inhabited by him seem to be converging in a meaningless babble. The poem "*Exile-IP*" speaks for itself thus:

*Through holes in a wall, as it were,  
He had spent his youth whoring  
after English gods.  
That language is a tree, loses colour  
under another sky.  
The bark disappears with the snow,  
and branches become hoarse.  
'coloureds, is what they call us  
over ther—the city is no jewel, either:  
at Trafalgar Square: 'It's no use trying*

*to change people. They'll be what they are.* (R Parthasarathy, , Rough Passage 31)



This poem exhibits *bhava sabalata dhvani* through sentence and hence this is an example of *vakya-gata dhvani*, (where, vyabhicharis are mingled together as though compelling with one another to attain prominence). The poet here seems totally mature for his own wrong decision. At the starting Parthasarathy's prime of attraction for foreign land come face to face with the harsh realities of foreign land i.e England.

The present poem is charged with an emotional fervour which can be characterised as *bhavadhvani*. 'Sram' (exhaustion) is suggested by "it is no use trying to change people. They will be what they are". 'Dainya' (depression) is suggested by "That language is a tree, loses colour under another sky". 'Avega' (excitement) "Coloureds is what they call us over there". 'Visada' (despondency) is suggested by "The bark disappears with the snow and branches become hoarse". This union of *vyabhicharis* or transitories make the reader experience *bhava sabalata*.

Further, in "*Trial-I*", the reader experiences *bhava santi dhvani*, when he says:

*Mortal as I am, I face the end  
with unspeakable relief,  
knowing how I should feel  
if I were stopped and cut off.  
Love, I haven't the key  
to unlock His gate.*

*Night curves.*

*I grasp your hand*

*in a rainbow of touch. Of the dead*

*I speak nothing but good.* (R Parthasarathy, , Rough Passage 42)

Here Parthasarathy seems to delineate his double identification with the sensual as well as the intellectual aspect of his personality. In this poem we get *bhava-shanti dhvani*. In the poem, the sentiment of love has also been dealt and defined variously. First of all, love is celebrated as a reality through involvement in physical love, then in sculptural poses of touch. The poet holds that love is a means of recognition when touch brings the body into focus. Love is a search for a new identity in terms of body experiences. It operates in silence, putting together the disintegrated self. It is invigorating and refreshing but at the

same time it is mysterious visual frames of many of these poems show. The fact, that the woman is located in a native environment, shows that the poet has come far away from the city of exile. However, love cannot be everlasting, with the loss of love, pain enters the poem and the pathetic is introduced with a new sense of personal crisis. the language of the body is incapable of giving consolation beyond a certain point. Love fails; the word eclipses the body; touch can no more sustain the identity forged through love. The poet poeticises this in “ *Trial-XII*”. “ *And my fingers,/an open grave/with only the bones of your touch.*<sup>9</sup>

Finally, Most of the Parhasarathy’s poems are pregnant with *karuna rasa* as he has expressed his own disillusionment in them. He gives expression to his disgust and diffidence in the following lines of “*Home coming-XIII*”:

*Peddling his bicycle glasses, he asks,*

*‘what’s it like to be a poet?’*

*I say to myself, ‘The son of a bitch*

*fattens him self on the flesh of dead poets!’* (R Parthasarathy., Rough Passage Trial XII)

Thus living without meaning, growing without hope, making ordinariness as the essence of life, clutching to non-events as one would clutch one’s past for support, constitute Parthasarathy’s home coming. Moreover, Parthasarathy has demonstrated a very perspicuous and appropriate experiment of all these devices unconsciously and confirms that without ‘*dhvani*’ or suggestion, *alankar* or poetic figure and sentiment or aesthetic experience are lifeless.

To conclude, it can be said that the *Sanskrit* Poetics has a power and richness in bringing out the aesthetic potential of literary texts ancient or modern, eastern or western. And Parthasarathy’s poetry proves to its marks when put to the test of Acarya Anandvardhana’s *Rasa Dhvani*.

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