

Report of Special Lecture by Ayan Bhattacharya, on 19/10/2022

Topic: Sahitya Nana Artha

In the realm of word-power, the rhetoricians classify expressions as *Abhidha*, *Lakshana* and *Vyanjana*:

Abhidha implies direct/ literal/primary meaning. For example 'Ball is in your court' will mean 'the ball is lying in the opponent's court in the game of tennis.'

In *Lakshana* the literal/primary meaning is rejected and removed while indicative/ implicative meaning is projected. For example the 'Ball is in your court' through the power of *Lakshana* will mean 'It is up to you to make the next decision or step.' Further through the power of *Vyanjana* both, literal and indicative meanings are taken off and suggestive/intentional meaning comes forth. For example 'Ball is in your court' through the power of *vyanjana* will mean that the 'onus is on you.'

Vyanjana or suggested meaning is the soul of the writings. Thus the meaning of the words denoted by *abhidha* (verbal meaning), or hinted by *lakshana* (indicative meaning) or suggested by *vyanjana* (suggestive meaning) finally terminates into *rasa* (essence).

The same theory applies in the premise of visual art where 'lines, forms and colours' replace 'words' in expressing a particular sentiment. Thus visual art is a kind of 'nonverbal communication' (communication through sending and receiving wordless clues). Nonverbal communication involves the conscious and unconscious processes of encoding and decoding. Only a small percentage of the brain processes verbal communication. Nonverbal communication represents two-thirds of all communication. That is why visual arts become the more powerful tool of expression than writings. Hence, there is an English idiom "A picture is worth a thousand words".

In the words of Oscar Wilde "No great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did, he would cease to be an artist." Through this, it is meant that artists are required to go beyond the obvious and direct (*abhidha*) and through indications (*lakshana*) should bring out the suggestive and allusive (*vyanjana*) to give the essence (*rasa*) to the viewers.