

THE DEFINITION OF ŚĀNTARASA: A CRITICAL STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF ABHINAVABHĀRATĪ AND RASAGAṄGĀDHARA

Ven.K.Seelananda^{1*}

¹ PGIHS, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*seelanandakumburuwela@yahoo.com

The concept of *Rasa* (sentiment) has a very wide scope in the field of Sanskrit literary criticism. Abhinava who was the author of *Abhinavabhāratī* mentions *Śānta* as the seventh out of eight sentiments of literary criticism. According to him *Sthāyin* is *Śānta*. Furthermore, he gives various arguments to show why Bharatamuni did not speak about *Śānta*. Abhinava comments on why *Śānta* should be considered a *Rasa* in the *Abhinavabhāratī* although there are several studies touching upon *Śāntarasa* and Abhinava's insights in the *Abhinavagupta*, none of them appear to have attempted to approach this topic using the text *Rasagaṅgādhara*, which analyzes it in depth, critically and comprehensively. The reason for this disregard may be due to Jagannata, the author of *Rasagaṅgādhara*, being a later critic, and his different approach to Sanskrit poetics than others although later sources such as *Śāntarasa*, *Daśarupaka*, *Sāhityasarpaṇa*, *Kāvyaṅkāśa* and *Rasagaṅgādhara* discuss *Śāntarasa*. *Rasagaṅgādhara* is one of the major sources that records Jagannata's remarks on *Śāntarasa* since no other critic has expounded Jagannata's remarks on *Śāntarasa* including Abhinava. Therefore, this study is crucial, and contributes immensely to the field of literary criticism. It examines Abhinava's insight into *Śāntarasa* and how it could be connected with the definition of *Śāntarasa* in *Rasagaṅgādhara*. In order to understand the critical aspects of this research, comparative and analytical methods are used. Moreover, to strengthen the prospective answers to the research problem, primary sources are read in the original Sanskrit. When Abhinavagupta explains the origins of *Śāntarasa*, he could not help but use his philosophical views from the school of *śaivadvaita*. He studied Jainism, Buddhism, *Tarka śāstra*, *Mīmāṃsā*, and *Nyāya*. With the helping of that observation, he pointed out *sthāyin* of *Śānta* as *Tattvagñāna* according to his perception. "*Itha tattvagñānameva tāvan miṅśasādhanamiti tasyaiva mokṣe sthāyitā yuktā*" (Knowledge of the truth alone is the *sthāyibhāva* of *mokṣa*). Similarly, he used *śaiva siddhānta* and *tāntric* religious teachings to describe *Śāntarasa*. Considering everything, it is clear that there is influence of Abhinava's philosophical views on his descriptions of *Śāntarasa*. In the same way, Jagannātha who was the author of *Rasagaṅgādhara* has mentioned *Śāntarasa* as the ninth one in the aesthetic experience. He also accepted that the *Śānta* is *sthāyibhāva* of *Śānta* and it can be used in drama, though Dhanañjaya, Dhanika etc. assert that *Śānta* is impossible in drama. He says that if it is not, an actor would not be capable of acting in a manner congenial to fear, anger, etc. also. Therefore he mentions that *Śānta* is a peculiar state of mind which is also called *viśayavirāga*. The study concludes that Jagannātha accepts the definition of *Śāntarasa* according to Abhinava's insights.

Keywords: Śāntarasa, Śānta, Abhinavabhāratī, Rasagaṅgādhara,