The Rasa Theory: its Meaning and Relevance

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The rasa theory of Bharata Muni has evoked at least as much scholarly debate as the Aristotelian theory of tragedy. What is more, its life as a determinative force of actual artistic practice has perhaps been longer than that of the Greek theory. The more systematic classical dances of India still take pride in keeping to Bharata's injunctions in respect of the details and basic function of artistic creation. It is true that both Aristotle and Bharata seek to ground the charm of the art forms of their choice in some inborn tendencies of humanity as a whole. But whereas Aristotle, in this context, focuses only on our natural proneness to pity and fear, Bharata chooses many more original propensities as bases for his account of the way of evoking rasa — which is his word for how the impact of proper presentation of plays, dance and music (in principle) feels. Bharata's account is also distinguished by the fact that it gives meticulous attention to the details of experience *and* expression of subjective states in respect of both actors who actually create the stage presentation *and* those who follow it knowledgeably, that is, those who make up the audience. He is also careful not only to list the various factors that *prevent* us from adopting the right aesthetic attitude, but to relate variations in aesthetic response to differences in age, sex, and temperamental characteristics. Above all, our systems of philosophy, Vedanta and Samkhya in particular, have been more actively concerned with the rasa theory than Western philosophies have been with Aristotle's view of tragedy.

My purpose in this essay is essentially interpretative. But it is also exploratory in the sense that it seeks to consider if Bharata's theory is applicable also to some such art forms as non-dramatic poetry and Kathak dance, to which it has not been convincingly related so far. If other art forms have to be left out, as is indeed unavoidable, it is due to two main factors: first, my own limitations; and, second, the fact that Kathak is perhaps the only one of our major dance forms in respect of which no one has tried to *show in detail* the relevance of the rasa theory. But even generally I have to proceed very carefully for, as has been pointed out by Harold Osborne, one of our eminent aestheticians today, the theory in question is an extremely intricate one.

So I have to reflect on it piecemeal, say, by trying to answer some key questions, if not exactly in the same order in which they are listed below:

1. What exactly is rasa ?
   (The answer, to begin with, may be given as a quick listing of the main emphases of the rasa theory.)
2. How is the evocation of rasa brought about?
   (This will require us to distinguish and explain the various objective and subjective factors that make for the eventual emergence of rasa.)

3. How does rasa really feel to one who actually experiences it?
   (Here, the answer will call for attention to some of the more important ways in which rasa has been spoken of by our traditional theorists *in a way which is today the well-known idiom of phenomenology.*)
4. Finally, can the relevance of the rasa theory be fairly extended to cover arts *other than* drama and dance, say, non-dramatic poetry and *sangeet*, or music and dance?

I

Now, to turn to the first question, we may begin by noting that rasa is not exactly the same thing as aesthetic experience, taken quite generally. We often grow ecstatic at the beauty of nature. Rasa, on the other hand, is (said to be) produced by contemplation of *art* alone, especially of drama, dance and poetry; and the *what* and *how* of it may be put, quite briefly, as follows:

> Rasa is the aesthetically sublimated, yet direct and deeply satisfying experience of *a basic determinative mode of our emotional life (sthāyibhāva)*. The process of sublimation here consists in so treating this mode with a configuration of some essential factors — namely, *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, and *vyabhichāribhāvas* — that the resulting emotional experience appears in utter freedom from those factors that tend to delimit, bedim, and disturb our experience of emotions in daily life; and may therefore be said to be quite otherworldly, nay, even a close approximation to the bliss of realizing ultimate Reality.

Almost all the major emphases of Bharata's view of rasa have been noted above, if rather tightly. They may now be brought out at some length. However, before we set out to do so, some immediate comment is needed in respect of the way rasa has been commonly spoken of, that is, as an exalted emotion. The word *exalted* not only means noble, but *exaggerated*. On the other hand, the word we have chosen, *sublimated*, can only be taken to mean *purified* or refined[1]. Even generally, it does not carry any derogatory sense. Positively, rasa-experience has indeed been regarded as pure or refined because the emotion here sensed is utterly free from linkages with particular individuals, places, or occasions in real life. Yet, in spite of its being quite different from our mundane emotional experiences, it is had by us directly; and is, what is more, deeply satisfying not only because the process of its evocation involves a good deal that fascinates the ear and the eye, both aesthetic senses according to Bharata, but because it presents to us, for vivid contemplation, the primal determinants of our emotional life and behaviour. Nor is it difficult to see why we have thought it necessary to qualify *sublimated* with *aesthetically*. It is easy for a poet to invest his poems with a sublime look by just packing them with words of profound ethical import. The bulk of India's devotional poetry is a case in point. Indeed, who can deny the exalted look of Bhajans like the well-known Bhajan of Narsi Mehta which fixes the essential marks of "*Vaiṣṇava jana*"[2]? Bharata, on the other hand, looks on *śṛṅgāra* as the pre-eminent rasa[3], and entertainment as the essential function of drama. So, from his point of view, the

sublimation of a sthāyibhāva (into rasa) is to be secured aesthetically, that is, through the principal artistic device of so integrating constituent elements (*saṃyoga*) that they may all help each other in making the whole work significant. In respect of rasa theory, it only means such an interlacement of the various *bhāvas* that the resulting complex or the dramatic presentation as a whole may, so to say, liberate onlookers from all such factors as delimit experience to individual concerns or specific time-place settings; and so provide them with an exalted *or purified* emotional experience.

As for the total meaning of the way we have distinguished — in brief, the main ideas implicit in the *theory* of rasa — it will emerge by degrees as we proceed. But the word 'rasa' itself provides some clues to what the *theory* may be taken to say. Traditionally, this word has been commonly translated as *taste*, not in the sense of cultivated or poor taste — say, in respect of clothing or the arts — but in that of relish of what we eat or drink. Even in this everyday sense, however, the word 'taste' may be taken as a noun *or* as a verb: that is, as what is tasted ("*rasyate iti rasah*") — or some*thing* edible as it feels to the tongue — or as the *act* of taking the taste of the edible in question ("*rasanam rasah*"). As that which is tasted, rasa may well be the juice of a fruit. *Juice* is also, as we know, a commonly acknowledged meaning of rasa. Taken in this sense *and* as an aesthetic concept, the word rasa would mean that just as its juice is the very essence of (the value of) a fruit, so rasa is the secret of the charm of a work of art as contemplated. The analogy, however, should not be stretched too far, for whereas the pulp of a fruit is commonly thrown away after its juice has been extracted, a work of art — say, a good poem — remains a single, undivided, object of relish even after many readings[4].

We have also to remember that every act of tasting is not welcome to the palate. Very few, for example, relish the taste of bitter gourd. Rasa, on the other hand, is said to be always a felicitous experience. Partly because of this one consideration, 'relish' would probably be a better word for rasa (taken as a verb) than 'taste'. What is more, 'relish' does not only mean to enjoy something greatly, but with discrimination; and this again makes the word 'relish' more accordant with Bharata's real view than 'taste'. What justifies our saying so is his oft quoted analogy. Just as a dish, in the making of which various spices have been used, must be tasted *by a connoisseur* of food if its distinctive taste is to be rightly perceived, so, because it is no simple property of any given object — but is rather a kind of rich and elevated delight which arises from the interplay of various factors — rasa, too, is an object of relish only for those who can contemplate works of art knowledgeably.

But, even when it is so interpreted, the sensuous analogy is open to a question. If, as the theorists insist, in experiencing rasa we do not *severally* identify the various factors which have gone into its evocation, how are training and discrimination necessary (as they are emphatically said to be) for those who expect to experience rasa? An answer is however possible, and we may put it thus. What is demanded and exercised in the case of rasa-experience is *intuitive* discrimination, and no explicit analysis. Yet, such discrimination, though it here *works* instantly, is the *product* of a long course of discipline of our apprehending powers. It would not be proper to doubt if discrimination can ever be *intuitive*[5], for differences can certainly be felt as such without being blown up into clear distinctions. It is, in fact, an everyday experience for a gourmet to sense the various condiments that have gone into the

making of a dish *without* letting his overall relish suffer for a moment because of abidance of attention at a particular condiment.

At the same time, as sensitiveness to a relish, *tasting* is not mere *eating*. The latter can be done absent-mindedly; the former, never[6]. There is yet another way in which the metaphor of tasting is of help to us in the present context. Just as the experience of tasting is so immediate that the truth of what is tasted, along with that of the experience itself, is quietly admitted in the very act, so rasa, as a kind of tasting, is itself a witness to its own truth[7]. *This* tasting, however, is no mere isolated act of *momentary* relish (or चखना). It is the *course* or process of enjoying an experience. In spite of the charm that may be there in the aesthetic presentation itself, the person involved has to put in some effort, though he is also impelled to hold on to the act. This is why the dual ability to concentrate on, and to adopt an impartial attitude towards, the aesthetic object is regarded as one of the essential preconditions for the experience of rasa. But, of course, once rasa *has* come into being as the experience of a relish, the *rasika*'s effort operates as just a quiet impulse to keep himself open or available to the bliss. It is because of this (partly deliberate) attitude of effortless attention and *self-surrender* (of a sort) that when the experience is over the rasika is often able to *recall* it all as his, not with any self-conscious sense of having been its agent, but as one who was, so to say, just blessed with the experience — a fact which explains why we cannot be prompted by a play to take recourse to actions which lead to happiness if it is *not* able to evoke rasa[8].

In other words, in the 'tasting' of rasa the ego is only submerged, *not utterly undone* as it is in mystical experience. It may seem odd to speak thus, but we cannot dismiss the suggestion outright; for if the *object* can be perceived with varying degrees of distinctness, why should we find it difficult to believe that in having an experience, the *ego* can be more or less self-conscious? The truth indeed is that in the experience of rasa one's own self is neither quite eclipsed (*tiraskṛita*), nor in a state of tending to cut into (*ullikh*) the felt unruffledness. Were the self here wholly eclipsed, the cognition would be not merely aesthetic, but mystical, or utterly free from distinct apprehensions (*vikalpa*); and were it to remain a distinct, self-conscious ego, the experience in question will tend to take the form of subject-object relatedness, or be merely discursive, like the bulk of everyday experience, dissipating *tādātmya* without which rasa can neither arise nor continue. Here, as a fair analogy, we could point to the possibility of an intensely devout man *regarding himself as a mere channel of His Will*. Here his *ego-sense* is not wholly rubbed out, for he truly feels both humbled and nourished by the attitude, and so happily lets himself be imbued with it ever deeper; but, on the other hand, the sense of being the bearer of an experience does not obtrude upon the feeling of surrender, and so keeps up the beatitude.

We may not here wonder if our recourse to an instance of *non*-sensuous experience is not a mere leap, for Bharata is quite explicit on the point that though he surely uses the analogy of tasting food, *rasāsvādana*, in his view, is *mānasāsvādana*[9] in reality, and that the analogy in question is meant only to heighten the immediacy, or the self-certifying, presentational, character of rasa-experience.

All this has been repeatedly pointed out by learned writers on rasa, both in the past and in our own day. What has, however, perhaps not been quite clearly seen is *the relation* between Bharata's recourse to the metaphor of tasting and the other emphases of his theory

of drama. The point is that what is tasted is not only directly sensed but directly *presented.* It is this which explains Bharata's unremitting and extremely detailed emphasis on the presentational side, and not merely on the inner details of the art of drama; and so necessarily on *overt* physical changes that make for effective *abhinaya.* This is also what makes the rasa theory pre-eminently relevant to drama (as staged) and dance. In both these arts what directly meets the eye is of paramount importance, and the ideal content or what is expressed never looks disembodied. It is this which can easily make our experience here *sākshātkārātmaka*, or of the nature of encountering a *presence* (as Marcel uses the word)[10]. Phenomenologically, there is no gap here for rasikas between sensing and the seizure of expressiveness. Yet, we may note, it would be wrong to assume that Bharata is indifferent to the actor's need to be watchful in respect of the subjective aspect of abhinaya. What he speaks of as *sāttvika abhinaya* is impossible without the actor's intense imaginative oneness with the ideal content being expressed[11]. It would here be pertinent to note that even today our better known directors and writers of plays regard intensity as a key requirement of effective acting[12].

Nor can we say that Bharata's emphasis on the paramount need to train actors in the art of making the requisite *gestures and movements* is wholly irrelevant today. Our classical dancers educate themselves in both; and some of our directors of plays today have thought it necessary to subject their actors to a regular course in body discipline. See here the following emphasis of Kavalam Narayana Panikkar in respect of his presentation of (a part of) *Śākuntalam*:

> The body is of paramount importance to an actor. So we chose the Kalaripayattu system as the basic method of training. Kalari is the martial art of Kerala . . . In our process of training, we try to combine body movements with the *bhāva*, the inner state of being.[13]

Our main concern, however, is with Bharata's own formulation of his rasa theory and not with the measure in which it still holds good today. So we may turn to what we have listed as the second question relating to our task.

II

How is the experience of rasa, which is said to be otherworldly, actually evoked? To be sure, it does not arise on its own; and, quite as definitely, it is very different from our everyday emotions. The joys and sorrows of our daily life occur quite easily; they do not need that happy, yet controlled, interplay of subjective and objective factors without which rasa cannot arise. Now, the factors that make for the emergence of rasa are put thus in the famous rasa sutra[14]:

Vibhāvānubhāvavyabhichārisaṃyogādrasaniṣpattih[15].

According to this sūtra, rasa results from the *saṃyoga* of three factors, namely, *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyabhichāribhāvas*. Sthāyibhāva does not here figure in this list, though it is

undoubtedly regarded as the basis of the whole aesthetic configuration. But then how are we to account for its omission in the sūtra itself? Some answer to this question may perhaps be had by considering the very order in which Bharata proceeds in the sixth chapter of his *Nāṭya Śāstra*, and by reflecting on it expressly in relation to some key questions, say, as follows:

1. What is the ultimate objective of the artist's (or dramatist's) creative effort?
   It is evocation of some rasa. So, in the 16th sūtra Bharata lists all the eight rasas[16].
2. As against the ultimate *aim*, what is the basic, fundamental *ground* on which art creation is to proceed?
   It is (in Bharata's view) some sthāyibhāva. So, in the 18th sūtra, Bharata lists the eight sthāyibhāvas[17]. *What* exactly he means by making sthāyibhāva the very anchor of the creative process, and *why* he does so, can be brought out quite simply. Is the dramatist to begin by choosing any subject straightaway? No, if he wishes to make his work acceptable to rasikas at large (as he surely does), and not to any highbrow penchant of some people who may choose to affect a cultural stance superior to the common man's attitude, he has to begin by picking up a subject which admits of a particular sthāyibhāva for artistic treatment, because these bhāvas are integral to our being, and are already familiar to us as common determinants of our emotional life. Everything else that is needed to make a good play has to follow subsidiarily — that is, in such a way that the sthāyibhāva's aesthetical potential, or its openness to be exalted into a super-personal and deeply unified (*niravachhinna*) emotion may be duly realized. This is *the essential logic* of artistic creation, as distinguished from its *devices of construction.*
3. Finally, after the ultimate goal and the regulative principle of artistic creation have both been fixed, how is one to proceed? What are the elements to be built upon or the creative devices one may use?
   These are, we are told, vibhāva, vyabhichāribhāvas (sūtras 19-22), *sāttvikabhāvas* (23), and abhinaya of four kinds (24)[18].

As components of the creative process (which integrates them), they may be called *elements*; but in so far as they have all to be *created* — that is, projected or performed by actors or provided by the stage manager — they may also be called devices of construction. None of these elements can work in a kind of philosophical vacuum. Like emotional reactions in our daily lives, they become meaningful *only* as related to some specific situation or pre-existing factors, essentially objective or subjective, or both at once (vibhāva). Yet, they alone are to be creatively visualized (in writing a play) or actively presented on the stage, *and* integrated in either case, for the sake of exalting a sthāyibhāva (which is already there is us as human beings) into rasa.This is why where (as in the rasa sūtra) Bharata speaks of elements which are to be brought together for the purpose of evoking rasa, sthāyibhāva is not included. The omission cannot be taken to suggest that he here undervalues sthāyibhāva. In fact, in two sūtras (33,34) which obviously follow the rasa sūtra (32) pretty quickly[19], we are told that just as those who have expert knowledge of the rasas found in food can relish

the delicacies made out of various ingredients, so *sahṛdaya-jana* (non-sensuously or mentally) taste the sthāyibhāvas as rasa in dramatic compositions. Here, it is obvious, the primacy of sthāyibhāva is reaffirmed.

It is in this context noteworthy that Bharata relates (the individual emotive character of) every rasa to a specific sthāyibhāva, and not to any particular vibhāva or detail of anubhāva. However various be the factors that go into the rise of, say, *śṛṅgāra rasa*, it must have the feel of *rati* (sheer delight or amorous enjoyment); and, similarly, the rasa known as *karuṇa*, though of course it is not our immediate response to any actual tragic news or event, must induce in us a serious and sympathetic mood, as can happen when we actually find someone in a sorry state. For abstract understanding, it may suffice to think of rasa in terms of its *general* attributes, such as tranquillity or repose and freedom from desire, or from thoughts of reality and utility; but when we experience rasa, it is always a *specific* rasa, and its distinctness arises from, and retains and evokes, the unique feel of the particular sthāyibhāva which it builds upon. This is a vital part of Bharata's meaning when he fixes specific sthāyibhāvas (s.b.) as the bases of different rasas, as follows:

> s.b. *rati* (desire for happiness, amorous or general) — rasa, *śṛṅgāra*; *hāsa* (innate love of mirth or laughter) — rasa, *hāsya*; *śoka* (tendency to grieve) — rasa, *karuṇa*; *krodha* (tendency to get angry) — rasa, *raudra*; *utsāha* (impulse to feel enthused) — rasa, *vīra; bhaya* (propensity to feel afraid) — rasa, *bhayānaka*; *jugupsā* (tendency to dislike, abhor) — rasa, *bībhatsa*; and *vismaya* (proneness to wonder) — rasa, *adbhuta*.

But what exactly is a sthāyibhāva? It is obvious that whatever be the way we put it in English, it should go well with the literal meaning of the Sanskrit word. Now, the word *'sthāyi'* means permanent or abiding; and as for *'bhāva'*, we have to go by the way Bharata interprets the word at the very start of the seventh chapter of his treatise[20]. Derived from the causative of *'bhū'*, to be, it is also intended to mean *to cause to be, create, or bring about*. So, taking the two meanings together, 'bhāva' may be taken to signify something which (already) is and which also brings about something, say, the projection of dramatic meaning through speech, bodily limbs, and sāttvikabhāvas. The complete word 'sthāyibhāva' therefore comes to mean an original or already present tendency or disposition in the mind which makes for the *experience and expression* of some ideal content[21]. So to understand the *concept* of sthāyibhāva is however not the same thing as an *actual* sthāyibhāva. The latter always bears a specific character. This is why Bharata takes pains to distinguish the different sthāyibhāvas. The sthāyibhāva of rati inclines us to rejoice and seek happiness generally; that of śoka, to commiserate with others; and so on. Words *we* have chosen for 'bhāva' — that is, *tendency, disposition* — are both open-ended in the sense that they alike mean the supplement *to do* or *bring about*. So they may both be taken to facilitate Bharata's passage from a sthāyibhāva to its corresponding rasa. Even apart from this semantic consideration, actual experience bears out the way Bharata here speaks. Relating the sthāyibhāvas of śoka and utsāha, for example, to karuṇa and vīra rasas (respectively) is obviously proper. The sight of someone sorrowing may easily make us feel moved; and how can anyone be a hero

without being enthused in the pursuit of some definite objective? Further, in so far as the sthāyibhāvas, regarded as dispositions, are here taken to *operate* as tendencies that (can) *produce* emotional experiences of different kinds, instead of merely *being* this or that, their full meaning may be put thus: dispositional *modes* of emotional experience[22].

At this point, however, a question may be put. Emotion is also an acknowledged meaning of bhāva. So why can't sthāyibhāva be translated as 'permanent or fixed *emotion*'[23] rather than as 'permanent *disposition*'? To this our answer would readily be that the word *emotion*, as commonly understood, stands for something that is merely occurrent, something which comes and goes; and that therefore it cannot go with the word sthāyī. Precisely for the same reason, it is difficult to accept the suggestion, put forth by both Ananda Coomaraswamy[24] and S.K. De[25] that sthāyibhāva may be taken to mean 'permanent mood'. A mood is always *felt*, however dimly[26]. A sthāyibhāva, on the other hand, is said to abide in us as a *latent* disposition[27]. Further, whereas any stray object can quicken a mood (say, a gloomy one) to re-awaken its parent emotion (say, grief) *quite easily* — as when a bereaved parent, still close to the loss, starts crying at once on seeing a dress which the toddler used to wear — a sthāyibhāva is *made to* bloom as the corresponding rasa through a close and skilful mixing of diverse elements. Finally, a mood is often the gradual way in which an emotion is seen to taper off. So it does not abide — or is *asthāyī*. Surely, the irritable mood which comes in the wake of violent anger, and the blues which may follow intense grieving, both pass off quickly. Nor can a sthāyibhāva be identified with *sentiment*. *Sentiment* is of course an admitted meaning of bhāva. What is more, sentiments like friendship and patriotism work as fairly *stable* determinants of our attitudes and behaviour. However, they cannot be said to be a part of the *original* equipment of our minds. We *develop* sentiments. Two men become friends by experiencing, say, joy, sorrow, or anxiety with regard to each other in different situations. Nor can anyone be said to be born with the patriotic sentiment. A sthāyibhāva, on the other hand, is (for Bharata, and quite rightly) a part of our mental make-up from the very beginning of our lives. This is borne out by the way in which he posits the reality of sthāyibhāvas. All human beings, he argues, desire the company of those whom they love, enjoy making fun of others, and are saddened when their loved ones depart. So it would only be proper to believe in the universal (if uneven)[28] presence of sthāyibhāvas like rati, hāsa and śoka, and also of the others, following the same line of argument. It would here be relevant to add that the deeply satisfying character of actual rasa-experience — distinguished by the feeling that though it is (in the main) objectively evoked, the experience strikes a chord in our hearts, instead of appearing as a mere outer occurrence — is better explained on the assumption that sthāyibhāvas are inborn. So, because of their being original, they cannot be regarded as being identical with sentiments. In case it is protested that *sentiment* can also be taken in senses other than the one we have focused on — say, as refined feelings expressed in art or literature — our answer would be the same as we have already given in respect of taking bhāva as emotion.

Nor can we equate sthāyibhāva with instinct. The difference is, in fact, easy to see. As a native capacity to *deal with* a situation in terms of some overt and relatively determinate action, an instinct is essentially conative in character[29]. A sthāyibhāva, on the other hand, is essentially an original tendency to *feel*. To speak of a sthāyibhāva as being original to

human nature is simply to mean that we have an inborn tendency to become sad, angry or happy in appropriate situations. On the other hand, where we act out of (what have been regarded as) the instincts of sex, pugnacity, or self-preservation, the resulting feeling is one of having been able *to do* what we wanted to do. The aesthetic evocation of a sthāyibhāva in terms of rasa just gives one the *feeling* of emotional exaltation[30], or rather *sublimation* (as we have interpreted the word); and so long as it is not evoked, it may be said to remain in a state of latent abidance, or as *vāsanā*.

At this point, too, a sceptical question is possible. Can we not produce a good play without relating it to any specific sthāyibhāva or rasa? A negative answer cannot be given here at once, especially if we take care to go by contemporary evidence. On 31 December 1959, under the banner of Little Theatre Group, Utpal Dutt produced *Angār*, the "immediate provocation" of which was simply the occurrence of some coal-mine disasters, and which was yet a definite commercial success[31]. Again, *Ādhe Adhure*, a well-known play of Mohan Rakesh, has been successfully produced more than once: in 1970, as directed by Shyamanand Jalan[32]; in 1976, by Amal Allama from the National School of Drama[33]; and yet again on 8 September 1989 by Jalan, in connection with the Nehru Shatābdi Nātya Samāroha. But the underrunning theme of this play, as of all the other plays of Mohan Rakesh from *Ashādh kā ek Din* on, does not conduce to evocation of any definite rasa, but is simply the contemporary "breakdown of communication in human relations and the consequent tragedy . . . observed and experienced at its direct and most delicate in man-woman relations."[34]

Are we then to say that the rasa theory has today quite lost the value that has been so widely attributed to it?

A fair answer here would simply be that though a play can surely be good in itself and also as a stage presentation without owing allegiance to the rasa theory, it is doubtful if such works can have as *wide and abiding an appeal*, as distinguished from merely contemporary acclaim, as (say) *Śākuntalam* of Kalidasa or Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*[35].

On the other hand, it would be wrong to believe than an element of merely contemporary interest is necessarily a barrier to the evocation of rasa by a work of art. Consider, in this context, the widely (and rightly) acclaimed film *Lagaan*. The rasa theory seems to be quite applicable to it. Even generally, it would be odd to maintain that a theory which holds good for drama and dance is irrelevant to films. It is true that drama and film differ in some quite clear ways. In the former we look at a stage; in the latter, at a screen; and the diverse visual effects produced by the entry and exit of actors, or by their movements across the stage, are obviously missing to those who watch a film. Further, it is only in the presentation of a play that an actor may seem to be addressing the audience directly. But, on the other hand, the two arts of drama and film also share a great deal. There is plenty of abhinaya, even of the sāttvika kind, in both. Music and dance, included by Bharata in *āhārya abhinaya*, are perhaps even more pronounced in the majority of our films today than in contemporary theatre. Again, in respect of films like *Anand*, one could even speak of a continual undercurrent or sthāyibhāva of śoka, say, because of a manifest all-round apprehensiveness at the thought of what is imminent for the sick and overly cheerful hero; and so also of an effective evocation, finally, of karuṇa rasa. In respect of *Lagaan*, perhaps even more convincingly, one could speak of the sthāyibhāva of utsāha and of the corresponding rasa, vīra. Violence,

we may note, is *not* one of the essential vibhāvas that make for the evocation of this rasa. According to Bharata, these vibhāvas are rather the following:

> highly exalted and enthusiastic nature; freedom from confusion, insensibility, ignorance (*a-sammoha*); mental effort (*adhyavasāya*); *bala* (strength, power); *parākrama* (enterprise, courage); *śakti* (capability); *pratāp* (reputation); *sthairya* (steadfastness, perseverance, tranquillity); *dhairya* (patience); *śaurya* (heroism, valour); *tyāga* (giving up, resigning, sacrificing one's life, liberality); and *vaisāradya* (expertness, wisdom).[36]

None of these means physical violence. It is true that at least one commentator has translated 'bala' as an army which comprises horses, elephants, and soldiers[37]. But this is not one of the acknowledged meanings of the word[38]; and to insist on this meaning is just being driven by our chronic, but mistaken, tendency to take the word in question in a merely physical sense. Do we not speak of strength of will quite as freely as that of a strong body? Indeed, anyone who pursues or struggles for a noble objective persistently and patiently, without being discouraged by opposition, criticism, or difficulties like lack of resources, deserves to be regarded as vīra.

Now, to turn again to the film in question, right from its beginning to the very end, what strikes the onlooker is the determined and perfectly fair opposition to the imposition of a quite unfair tax (*lagaan*), spearheaded by the hero Bhuvan, and gradually taken up by most of the villagers. They may all be said to be acting nobly not only because of the manifest rightness of the cause they are fighting for, but because of their recourse to fervent collective prayer — rather than to any devious means or sheer abdication of the fight — in a life-and-death situation. The hero, Bhuvan — highlighted not only as the target of the British army officer's venomous challenge, but as the central rallying force that galvanizes almost the whole village into action — is here the *ālambana vibhāva*; and the ominous situation created by the challenge, and the thought of the ruinous consequences that are bound to follow the failure to meet it, are *uddīpana vibhāvas*, because it is these factors that quicken and intensify the hero's resolve. The cricket match, where the challenge comes to a head, is of course an element of contemporary interest for urban Indians, most of whom are cricket crazy; but the way it is fought out against very heavy odds and machinations of the opponents, overriding occasional moments of despair, is so heroically courageous that the finale is not the mere winning of a game, but the very climax of a fight for justice which we *all* hail happily, because of our innate propensity to get enthused by a noble cause[38a]; and so experience vīra rasa.

In thus reflecting on the film in question, however, we have used some terms, such as vibhāva (ālambana and uddīpana) and āhārya abhinaya, the precise significance of which is yet to be brought out. It is this defect which we may now try to remedy. Like our everyday experience of emotions, rasa-evocation needs appropriate pre-conditions or vibhāvas. Generally, vibhāva is taken to mean an objective situation[38b] which is more or less lifelike by virtue of having a distinct emotive character, yet without representing a real, living individual. It is lifelike also in the sense that it comprises a human focus (ālambana) and a

context which is commonly known as uddīpana because it is favourable for the self-revelation of (a particular sthāyibhāva in terms of) an emotion. Thus, where (a semblance of) the sthāyibhāva of rati is to be evoked, the togetherness of the *nāyak* and the *nāyikā* can easily be the focus (or ālambana) of the situation, and details like a moonlit night and a bower in the garden may be said to serve as uddīpana or stimulus to love-making. To make the point clearer, an example may here be taken from the well-known classic of Kalidasa, *Abhijnāna Śākuntalam*. At a particular juncture in the course of the play King Duṣyanta, as he moves about the hermitage of Káṇva ṛishi, gets his first glimpse of the lovely Śakuntalā watering the plants of the garden, accompanied by her two close friends. When she casually asks one of them to slightly loosen her improvised bra of bark which, she complains, has been tied a bit too tightly by the other friend, the other one retorts: "Why do you pick on me? It is rather the blooming of your own youth which is at fault"[39]. Now, here Śakuntalā may be said to be the ālambana vibhāva because she has been brought to a focus by the pleasantry; and the beautiful natural surroundings of the hermitage and the amiable friends, the uddīpana vibhāva, because they conjoin to bestir the king's ardent love for Śakuntalā.

However, if we stop here, as has indeed been done by some scholars[40], our account of vibhāva will be incomplete and even misleading. In Bharata's total view, vibhāva is not always merely objective. As already pointed out, he includes the following *essentially subjective* qualities or attitudes in the list of vibhāvas that make for the quickening of utsāha, which is the sthāyibhāva of vīra rasa: *adhyavasāya* (mental effort, apprehension) and *asammoha* (freedom from confusion, insensibility, ignorance, folly, bewilderment)[41]. So, vibhāva has to be taken to mean all those factors — subjective or objective, or both at once — which serve as essential *pre*-conditions of the very start of the creative process whereby a sthāyibhāva is made to bloom into its corresponding rasa. Both the points here made in respect of vibhāva have to be borne in mind, that is, not only its being essential as a pre-condition but its being related to our subjective attitudes. A pre-condition is simply a condition to be satisfied in advance, like just getting properly set at the blocks for running a race. Vibhāva too does not itself evoke rasa directly, but only facilitates or prepares the ground for evocation of the experience. So, as compared to the visibly active character of abhinaya (acting and dialogue, in particular) included in anubhāva, the due value of vibhāva is likely to be missed. But a simple example should suffice to make us see that the effectiveness of abhinaya itself depends on vibhāva, if but partly. A mere classroom lecture (by a danseuse) on abhinaya relating to śṛngāra rasa may be accompanied by the most accurate 'illustrations' in terms of actual bodily postures, gestures, and movements; but because the only figure present here is that of the danseuse herself, and further because what here surrounds her — say, the barren walls of the room — is not at all suggestive of rati bhāva, the impact of the entire exercise will be much less than that of similar abhinaya, say, during the course of an actual dance involving a (male-female) couple of performers, and supported by appropriate singing and stage decoration.

On the other hand, vibhāva itself needs the supplement of anubhāva, specially as movement and speech. Even in the case of the instance we cited from Śākuntalam, what appears to put life into the visualized setting of man and nature is the sweet little bout of words between Śakuntalā and her friends, the gestures which naturally go along with such

talk, and the act of watering.

It is indeed quite easy to see the value of the second factor listed in the rasa sūtra, that is, anubhāva which comprises abhinaya of different kinds, say, the following: *āngika* (or bodily, as movement, gesture, and posturing); *vāchika* (relating to utterance, dialogue); *sāttvika* (or involuntary), comprising those bodily changes which serve as unmistakable signs of some actual emotion; and *āhārya*, or those superadded things which are not really a part of the psycho-physical being of the actors, namely, costumes, lighting arrangements and sangeet (that is, vocal and instrumental music, and dance). It is noteworthy that āhārya can add substantially to the effect of stage presentation. This is borne out by the practice of both dance and drama even today. Thus, where a Kathak danseuse begins the dancing of a *trivat* composition which, we may say, opens with the syllable '*kḍān*' after a flourish of some prefatory music, the sonant suddenness of the syllable would be greatly enhanced if exactly when it is uttered (by the vocal accompanist), the stage lights are also switched on promptly. And, to turn to contemporary ways of presenting *plays*, directors have been seen to use "the proscenium stage itself, the apron, the ramp . . . [extending] from the stage down to the middle of the auditorium, allowing for . . . [actors'] entrances and exits, from one of the side doors of the auditorium. . ."[42].

What is perhaps not quite heeded today in the presentation of plays is Bharata's emphasis on sāttvikabhāvas which have been put as follows: stupefaction, loss of consciousness, horripilation, sweating, loss of lustre or colour, tremor, tears, and changes of tone. The neglect may be due to the consideration that some of these bhāvas can be noticed only by those who are seated in the first one or two rows in today's large halls, and are therefore not relevant to the bulk of the audence.

Here, however, a question may be put. The last three of the sāttvikabhāvas we have just listed — namely, tremor, tears, and tonal changes — can also be simulated or projected without the actual presence of related emotions on the inside. How, then, is it proper to regard these three bhāvas as sāttvika or truthful expressions of actual feelings? To this our answer may be that Bharata is all along keen on genuineness, as against mere manifestness of expression, which is exactly why he justifies the practice of enlisting actresses to play such roles as involve portraying typically feminine reactions[43]; and that, therefore, though they can *also* be simulated, Bharata would like the sāttvikabhāvas in question to be genuine indices of what is actually felt, and so to invest abhinaya with an easy and convincing look. What we truly feel easily spills into identifiable gestures; and so from Bharata's point of view, we may note, it would not be right to hold (as Susanne K. Langer does) that all artistic expression is wilfully controlled. At the same time, with a view to lending some balance to what we have just said about Bharata's view, it is necessary to add that in the 24th chapter of his *Nāṭya Śāstra*, Bharata not only details how the different kinds of *nāyikās* have to act (positively), but what they may *not* be allowed to show on the stage, such as bathing and robing themselves. In other words, decorum is not to be sacrificed for the sake of representational accuracy.

Yet, by and large, Bharata's emphasis on such fidelity is unremitting; and he takes care to add that the convincing quality of abhinaya also needs vyabhichāribhāvas (thirty-three in all) which are so called because, as opposed to sthāyibhāvas that form an *abiding* part of

our mental equipment, they just flit across the run of an emotional experience, adding to its true-to-life look. These fickle bhāvas include the following: self-disparagement, apprehension of encountering what is (nonetheless) desired, depression due to poverty and pain, perplexity, shrinking from censure, agitation caused by pleasant happenings, and drowsiness.

Now, it is common to speak of these as *saṃchāribhāvas* too. However, a close look at what the word *saṃchāra* means does not allow us to quite identify the two bhāvas, *vyabhichāri* and *saṃchāri*. 'Saṃchāra' does not only mean transition or passage, but transference and transmission. The last of these (or sending out) is indeed the meaning of this word when, for instance, we speak of *dūrasaṃchāra*. This, again, is the meaning of that segment of Dhruvapad-singing which is called *saṃchāri* as distinguished from the other three segments, namely, *sthāyi*, *antarā*, and *ābhog*. Saṃchāri, here, is the more or less free unfoldment of the aesthetic range of a rāga, as against the mere indication of its basic, grammatical character. So the word saṃchāribhāva may be said to point to the disseminating or expressive, as distinguished from the merely fleeting, character of vyabhichāribhāvas.

Some thought may now be given to the two remaining terms in the rasa sūtra, namely, *saṃyoga* and *niṣpatti*, the meanings of which have perhaps not been quite clearly brought out anywhere in the *Nāṭya Śāstra*[44]. Now, as for saṃyoga, some of its acknowledged meanings are: conjunction, connection, combination, and absorption (in). The first three meanings[45] make obvious sense in light of what the rasa sūtra as a whole may be taken to say quite generally. If, as is evident, rasa is not said to arise from any *one* of the factors listed in the sūtra, it would only look proper to hold that they all *conjoin* to evoke rasa. But, we may note, to indicate *what* goes into the evocation of rasa is not the same thing as to explain *how* it is evoked in the presentation of a play. The latter, or the 'how' of evocation, has to take into account the work of the actors too; and from this viewpoint of actual stage presentation, to which Bharata is all along very clearly alive, it is (what we have listed as) the fourth meaning of saṃyoga — that is, saṃyoga as absorption (in) — which seems preferable. An actor does not merely find himself in, *or* conjoin himself with, a specific situation (or vibhāva), but is sensitized by it; and the way he reacts is importantly determined by his imaginative attunement with what the situation (or vibhāva) does not merely show but suggests. Sāttvika abhinaya would otherwise be impossible[45a]. Even apart from this specific consideration, it is easy to see that the vibhāva an actor finds himself in inspires, or at least prompts, him to act appropriately.

A simple example from the region of musical practice should make the point clear. The right setting (or vibhāva) for a classical vocalist as he gets set to begin singing is an attentive, expectant audience and a well tuned Tānpūrā. But this prefatory getting set is not merely to get conjoined with the sounding Tānpūrā; the latter inspires him, or puts him in the right mood to sing; and the vocalist, in turn, remains so continually open to the impact of the sound that its slightest deviation from the correct tone disturbs him instantly. In other words, the instrumental sound and the singer interact. Hence, from the actor's point of view, it is by no means odd to interpret saṃyoga as absorption of the different bhāvas into each other. This may be said to be the dramatic parallel of what is called *form* in the region of other arts. But, quite differently from the interplay of elements in arts like painting, architecture, sculpture, and literature — where the locus of integration of elements is canvas, stone,

wood, or language — here, in the presentation of a play, it is the sensitiveness and imaginative powers of living actors which serve as the efficient cause of integration, and so we have to speak of their getting imbued with, and activated by, what vibhāva as outer situation demands or suggests and what the language of dialogues means and is expected to convey. It is because of this close integration of utterance, meaning, accordant movement, music and spectacle (*āhārya abhinaya*); and, above all, because of the *presentational* character of the entire complex, that the rasa thereby evoked acquires a *prismatic* look which is not to be found in any one of the bhāvas taken individually or even in their mere aggregation. This is what Bharata means where he likens the aesthetic configuration which makes for rasa to a dish emitting a new flavour which is not to be found in any one of the condiments used[46]; and what *we* have said here about the integration in question should provide a clue to why Bharata speaks of *rasānubhūti* as "ujjvalaveṣātmakaḥ" and as "sākshātkārātmaka".

Saṃyoga, however, calls for three more comments. First, it is not a blending of the various constituents *in equal measure*; for, with an eye to evoking the specific rasa aimed at, any one of them may be emphasized. Consider, for instance, the following verbal stimulant of śṛṅgāra rasa:

> O lovely damsel! your body is the locus of the honey that love-making exudes; the shapely arch of your eyebrows is the bow of the love-god, Kāmadeva, with its striking bend; and the wine that oozes from your lotus-face quickens desire by its very aroma — that is, without being drunk. In all the three worlds, indeed, you remain unmatched as a specially beautiful creation of Brahma.

Here, obviously, the word-bound images and the overall meaning both alike heighten the charm of the nāyikā who is the *ālambana of the vibhāva*. Vyabhichāribhāvas may be projected as follows:

> This lady, possessed of liquid eyes, is repeatedly impelled to throw away the water cupped in her hands; for, though she is impatient to bedew her lover with it, she is disturbed by the presence of fish in the water as it mirrors the shape of her own eyes.

Here, it is clear, the emphasis is on vyabhichāribhāvas. Liquidity of eyes at the passing thought of a mischief, impatience, and agitation are obviously all transitory states. So saṃyoga admits of uneven emphasis on the factors that make for the evocation of rasa.

Second, the way we have interpreted saṃyoga — that is, as interplay, and not merely a putting together of the various bhāvas — is favoured by the basic consideration that all the details of the creative process have to aim at sublimating the sthāyibhāva. It is this common, underrunning reference which determines what these details are going to be. Thus, where the rasa aimed at is śṛṅgāra, and the sthāyibhāva is rati, a moonlit garden alone cannot serve as vibhāva, for such a garden may well be used also for a leisurely after-dinner stroll. A pair of lovers too has to be shown; and they have to *appear* to register (mainly through *mukhaj* or facial abhinaya) the charm of the setting, and to be stimulated by it. The greater their attunement with the precise suggestiveness of the vibhāva, the more effortless and convincing will their abhinaya be, aided of course by the import of dialogues and the due measure of

vyabhichāri and sāttvika bhāvas.

Thirdly, to turn now to those who are watching the play, their self-identification with what they see on the stage goes on waxing as they follow the *intense knitwork of bhāvas*, essentially because it is perceptibly true to their common experience of how the sthāyibhāva being built on (in the dramatic presentation) actually determines the inner run and expression of emotions in their own actual lives. The result is that the deepening of this attunement (or tādātmya) is at once an experience of the *ekaghanatā* (or intense unity) of the rasa ultimately evoked. This word, 'ekaghanatā', has to be taken with care. Derived from the root '*ghana*' (to strike), it simply means unity of impact. Some scholars, like Coomaraswamy and Gnoli, ignore this derivative meaning and prefer to translate '*ghana*' as "a condensation of multiple factors without extension in space"[47]; and '*ekaghana*' as "dense, compact, uniform", or as the character of "a state of consciousness which does not allow the interference of obstacles"[48] (or *vighnas*). But the prefix *'eka'* makes better sense when related to *'ghana'* in the sense of *impact* than as conjoined with 'ghana' taken as *condensation*. Moreover, whereas the negative remark that, as an experience, rasa is not discursive or analytical (niravachhinna) — or not separated by distinctions — seems perfectly warranted, the positive insistence that the experience in question is utterly dense or compact would tend to make rasa appear as a static something, and to ignore the flow that rasa as experience is, as also its quickening and illuminative effect on the audience.

It is indeed important to see how *what* the rasikas see on the stage relates to *how* they see it. Generally, of course, care has to be taken to ensure that vibhāva is so structured that it may appeal to the generality of *sāmājikas*[48a], and not to any particular person. To illustrate, whereas in a man's personal life, even the passing thought (say) of his wife's happy reaction when he teased her endearingly on her last birthday may excite the rati bhāva, on the stage the vibhāva — that is, a setting which is expected to be duly evocative — must be typical of lovers in general, for otherwise it would fail to engage the attention of the majority of onlookers. Yet, however true it be to our general experience, vibhāva in itself is by no means enough to have the requisite effect. The audience too has to be of the right age and attitude. No amount of effort to make the vibhāva in question meaningful — say, emblematic of rati bhāva — would succeed where the audience is of young children only. In other words, the perception of vibhāvas (as significant) is not merely objective. It draws upon or awakens the latent traces — *saṃskāras* or *vāsanās* — already present in the spectators. A young person will not perceive the representation of a young woman quite impersonally, or in the way of *tāṭasthya* or *mādhyasthya*, which is the exact opposite of *anupraveśa*, that is, personal or active participation. The truth, rather, is that the very description of a beautiful woman easily arouses the pre-existing sexual interest in male readers. But on the other hand, of course, the (knowledgeable) rasika does not *behave* erotically in this context, as he might in his personal life, but is only led *to comprehend and follow the growth of a specific kind of emotive situation*, so that, instead of experiencing rati in the everyday manner, he is enabled to contemplate how rati feels.

The other term, *niṣpatti*, too calls for some critical attention. Its more important meanings are: (a) going forth or out; (b) being brought about or effected; (c) completion; and (d) consummation. Now, from the viewpoint of stage presentation as such, rasa-evocation may

well be said to crown the creative effort of actors with success and not merely to bring it to a close; that is, the terminus here may be called a climax. But *for the audience* the evocation of rasa is no mere culmination of an outer process. It comes to pass not only because of proper integration of the different bhāvas on the stage, but because, as sāmājikas (spectators), they have been all along following the presentation in question attentively and knowledgeably, *and* because the sthāyibhāva which the entire play builds upon is already there in them as an inherent emotional disposition — which is exactly why, in spite of the rich and elaborate process that goes into its evocation, the actual experience of rasa or rasānubhūti is felt by them not as an imposition from outside, but as a deep and delighted expansion of their sensibilities, a creative quickening of the very springs of their emotional nature. It is partly in this sense too that rasa-experience is a niṣpatti, a going forth or a welling up. Even in our daily lives there is no dearth of situations where experience does not only seem to be produced by what is external to us, but is at once felt by us as inner enlivenment. The poet's heart leaps up when he beholds a rainbow in the sky, and we too often *pine for*, and not merely think of, *what is not.*

Yet, it is important to note that the way in which the sthāyibhāvas are made to conduce to the evocation of rasa is different from their working in real life. In the everyday world, a person feels angry or sad generally in accordance with his *uniquely* developed attitudes. To illustrate, whereas the man who has meticulously trained himself to put everything always in its proper place may at once grow a little angry or sad at the sight of even a slight displacement of books from their proper positions on his study table, his friend who believes, let us say, that some disorder serves only to lend an informal or lived-in appearance to the place of work — and so is likely to make him feel relaxed — would remain quite unaffected by the displacement in question. Further, when we experience an emotion in real life, which always happens in a specific situation, our emphasis (as a rule) is on *behaving* in a particular way, so as to deal with the situation properly, not on *contemplating* how the emotion itself feels. Thus, if a man feels afraid at the sight of a snake, he will either run away from the place or try to kill the reptile somehow. Here the urgent need for personal safety demands quick action, and just does not give him time to attend to this feeling of fear. In other words, the emotions of real life remain tied down to individual persons; and though they are certainly felt, and even quite intensely at times, our awareness of their own inner character is only incidental to, and so is bedimmed by the demands of, personal adjustment.

But, one may ask, is the complex dovetailing of various elements that we have taken pains to explain and justify really necessary? Why can't we say that rasa is our more or less direct response to a theme or subject of a specific emotional hue? Now, questions such as these may be answered as follows:

An emotive subject is not by itself enough to generate rasa, for the way it is dealt with may be just philosophical, that is, the way of serious, meaningful statement or reasoning which is only to be understood and accepted as true or rejected as false. This is the case, for instance, where a Shakespearean sonnet speaks of love as "an ever-fixed mark", and asserts that

> . . . Love is not love
> Which alters when it alteration finds. . .[49]

Here the subject is love; yet the whole sonnet only induces us to *think* of love, instead of enabling us to experience śṛṅgāra rasa. The same may be said of the (Urdu) poet Jigar's famous poem on love which opens even more philosophically than the sonnet which we have just cited. Here, in one daring sweep, the poet professes to sum up the whole story (*fasānā*) of love as follows: quintessentially, it appears in the heart of a lover; and should it decide to unfurl itself, it can cover the whole wide world — as love of humanity[50].

Nor is a poem on a *sad* subject necessarily evocative of karuṇa rasa. Tennyson's poem 'Tears, Idle Tears'[51] is also only *about* the commonest expression of acute sadness; and though, in both its first and closing stanzas, it bemoans with "idle tears . . . the days that are no more", it gives us at the most a fitful feeling of sadness at what has ceased to be, which is quite different from the *bhogikaraṇa* (or enlivening, making available for relish)[51a] of karuṇa rasa which is a single, undivided run of emotional experience. This is so also because, like the sonnet already referred to, this poem is pretty short in length. Tennyson's lament comprises only twenty lines; and Shakespeare's poem, being a sonnet, even less, just fourteen. So, though the sentiments they express are true and even noble, their reading fails to make us feel that we are being led over the build-up of an emotion, instead of being merely provided with readymade statements of truth or images of longing or reminiscence.

This does not, however, warrant the view that *all poetry other than its dramatic genre* is necessarily incapable of evoking rasa; and we must duly heed Vishvanath's account of how poetry *can* well evoke rasa, if not the sweeping way he *appears* to decree that rasa is the very soul of poetry[52]. This is how he himself explains his view in brief:

> When *sthāyibhāvas* like rati (which are already there in us as *vāsanās*) become manifest (as transformed) for the blissful, immediate relish of *sahṛdaya jana* through the poet's depiction of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, and *samchāribhāva*, they are said to be rasa.[53]

How exactly this can happen in our concern with (non-dramatic) poetry may now be brought out by considering two well-known English poems: Keats's 'The Eve of St. Agnes' (for śṛṅgāra rasa) and Shelley's 'Adonais' (for karuṇa rasa). The former tickles the sthāyibhāva of rati repeatedly and all along through images and thoughts of love, longing, and beauty, such as the following:

[a.] . . . These let us wish away
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart *had brooded, all that wintry day, On love . . .* [54]

[b.] They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve
Young virgins might have visions of delight
Upon the honey'd middle of the night
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire
And couch supine their beauties, lily white; . . . [55]

[c.] *Full of this whim* was thoughtful Madeline
The music, *yearning* like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard . . .

. . . her heart was otherwhere:
She *sigh'd* for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year[56]

[d.] . . . Meantime, across the moors.
Had come young Porphyro, *with heart on fire*
For Madeline . . .[57]

It is easy to see that, along with making a quiet appeal to the sthāyibhāva of rati (as desire for amorous bliss), the lines cited above also at once make for the needed vibhāva by inducing us to visualize situations and happenings relating to rati. As for anubhāva, we are not of course expected to see any actual acting here, as we do in witnessing a play; but, on the other hand, there is no dearth of word-bound images which prompt us to visualize movements, action, postures, and even such details (of stage management, in the main) as disposition of things and figures in space. Thus, see the following:

. . . *Beside* the portal doors,
Buttress'd from moonlight, *stands* he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment . . .
That he might *gaze* and worship all unseen;
Perchance *speak, kneel, touch, kiss* — in sooth such things have been,[58]

Or again:

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature *came*,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he *stood, hid from the torch's flame*,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far *beyond* . . .[59]

What is more, even vyabhichāribhāvas are traceable in some such lines of the poem as the following:

[a.] She danc'd along with *vague, regardless eyes*,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
. . . : she *sighs*[60]

[b.] . . . ; with aged *eyes aghast*
From fright of dim espial.[61]

[c.] She clos'd the door, . . .
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.[62]

The *regardless eyes* which 'a' speaks of is *śunyā dṛṣṭi*, and '*eyes aghast*' (in 'b') is *śaṅkita dṛṣṭi* in Bharata's account of how eyes can be made to express bhāva and rasa; and

both are meant to express saṃchāri bhāvas[63]. Further, the *pain* of having to hold searing longings of love which press for fulfilment is a deeply subjective vyabhichāribhāva in the course of being in love. It may not last long, but it feels excruciating. On the stage it may well be expressed through some subtle bodily signs of felt inner discomfort through mukhaj (or facial) abhinaya[64]. But āngika abhinaya is clearly not a part of poesy's resources; and so, in the lines just cited, the poet has to use an endearing image of anguish — that is, the *nightingale* image, with such specificity that the reader can easily visualize the vyabhichāribhāva in question, and so quietly do without the prop of actual abhinaya.

This, however, is not all that may be said to support our view that the poem makes for evocation of śṛṅgāra rasa. Two more points can be made. First, quite in accordance with one of Bharata's basic emphases, the locus of the rasa in question is here kept free from sensuality; nay, it is even to made to look ethereal, both at its core, that is, in the heart, "*love's* fevrous citadel"[65], and in respect of its overall setting. Secondly, care has been taken to ensure that our relish of the poem is almost as immediate an experience as that of witnessing a play. The former end is secured first, by providing the poem with a very chilly (or passion-free!) and devout opening:

> St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was ! . . .
> Numb were the Beadman's fingers while he told
> His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
> Like pious incense from a censer old,
> Seem'd taking flight for heaven without a death . . .[66]

and, secondly, through some express projections of purity directly in relation to those who are yet indissolubly in love:

> [a.] "I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
> Quoth Porphyro: O may I ne'er find grace
> . . .
> If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
> *Or look with ruffian passion in her face . . .*[67]
>
> [b.] Full on this casement shone the wintry moon . . .
> As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
> . . .
> And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
> She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
> Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew faint:
> She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.[68]

The past tense of the second quote ('b') balances Porphyro's solemn swearing in the present (quote 'a'). Such balancing is in fact a recurring device which the poet uses all along. Further, whichever be the temporal mode of what the poem says, past or present, pinpointing of details that make our real life experience is all along immaculate:

[a.] Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,[69]

[b.] Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallied moonshine, died:[70]

It is precisely these two poetic devices, present-past equipoise and fidelity to detail, that lend to the whole poem an air of presentational immediacy, in spite of the fact that it is meant to be "a dream, in olden times"[71]. Indeed, "the power of language to overcome distance . . . looms throughout the poem"[72]; and this is how a poet provides a parallel of our direct attention to what is shown on the stage. The two are in fact by no means disparate. We should not forget that, as we have already said earlier, what Bharata speaks of as rasāsvādana by sahṛdaya jana (or persons of responsive sensibility) is not a physical, but essentially a mental act (*mānas-āsvādana*).

In respect of Shelley's 'Adonais' too, it is not difficult to show how the interplay of different bhāvas makes for the evocation of karuṇa rasa. What makes our task here easy is the fact that, in dealing with this rasa, Bharata includes separation from a loved one and death importantly in the list of requisite vibhāvas; weeping and lamentation in anubhāvas that make for proper abhinaya of the rasa on the stage; and attachment (*moha*) and dying (*maraṇa*) among the relevant saṃchāri and sāttvikabhāvas.

Now, all this is traceable in 'Adonais', as follows:

The very title of the poem is significant. It opens with 'Adonais' — "a name that partakes of Adonis, the youth *slain* by a wild boar and hence a sacrificed seasonal god, and Adonai, the Hebrew name for Supreme Being"[73]; and quickly follows it up with a subtitle which says that the poem is an elegy on the death of John Keats, author of 'Endymion', 'Hyperion', etc. Now, the slaying of a youth, and death, taken generally, are both common causes of making us commiserate. But such moments of compassion produced by isolated thoughts are fickle and merely personal; and it is important to see how our everyday experiences not only of pity for others but of our own grieving differ from karuṇa rasa. This rasa is no mere prolongation of sorrow. One may keep wallowing in grief because of the death of a child for days on end, but it would not be nameable as an experience of karuṇa rasa; for such an actual experience is not only personal, but painful. The feeling of compassion has to be released from concern with those who matter in one's merely individual life and sustained through a pleasing organization of such factors as are common to all before it can truly claim the status of karuṇa rasa; and this is precisely what the elegy in question does. Our innate propensity to grieve (the sthāyibhāva of śoka) over the death of a loved one (vibhāva) is repeatedly quickened by verbal invitations to mourn — in ways which we are *all* familiar with, and which are therefore trans-individual or *sādhāraṇa* (general). Phenomenologically, the course of actual sorrowing is never uniform; it runs in waves, so to say, which surge up and subside; and here (in 'Adonais') the accents of poignancy are provided by two factors: thoughts of the brute finality of ceasing to be, and the glory *and ardent interior* of the one who has ceased to be. Hence the lifelike quality of the following word-pictures of (invitations to) lamentation (vibhāva) that may be taken to parallel its bodily presentation on the stage:

[a.] Oh, weep for Adonais! *though our tears*
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head![74]

[b.] Oh, weep for Adonais — he is dead! . . .
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend:— oh, *dream not that the amorous Deep*
Will yet restore him to the vital air;[75]

[c.] *He will awake no more, oh, never more*![76]

But, one may ask, what are the saṃchāri and sāttvika bhāvas, if any, in this poem? Now, one of these is *āvega* which we have already spoken of as the occasional swell of pathetic feeling in actual lamentation. What is more, the selfsame bhāva — along with some other saṃchāri and *sāttvika bhāvas*, such as moha, dainya, and maraṇa (that is, attachment, wretchedness, and death or the act of dying) — is there also in such ardent, pathetic lines as the following:

[1.] Lament anew, Urania! . . .[77]
[2.] . . . now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished
[3.] . . . , who grew
[4.] Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
[5.] And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;
[6.] Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
[7.] Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
[8.] The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew
[9.] Died on the promise of the fruit . . .
[10.] The broken lily lies — the storm is overpast[78]

In these lines evocation of the bhāvas we have set out to trace is all too clearly there in the only way that poetry admits of, that is, in terms of verbal meaning and word-bound images. The last three lines (8–10) bespeak dainya. It surely feels wretched to contemplate the premature passing away of a peaking genius; and the fourth and fifth lines clearly add to this feeling by providing a virtual picture of sadness. Words like *youngest*, (so) *dearest*, and *loveliest* suggest attachment (moha); and *has perished* and *died* are the poet's obvious words for what is called maraṇa. So, building on our innate disposition to grieve (sthāyibhāva of śoka), the poet adroitly interfuses the vibhāva of the premature death of a loved one with the four transient emotions of āvega, dainya, moha and maraṇa to make us experience karuṇa rasa.

This rasa, we may note, is not the same thing as *our* feeling sad in real life, say, because of loss of prestige, riches, or a dear relative. Such unfortunate situations are only the vibhāva or apt occasions for sorrowing, though the easy rise of the experience here is due to our innate and abiding disposition to grieve (sthāyibhāva of śoka). Nor can the rasa in question be identified with our feeling moved spontaneously when we see someone suffering — say, due to sickness or sheer poverty — because, though the reaction here may well be wholly selfless, it can also cause some actual discomfort if, maybe because of the absence

of needed resources, we are unable to give practical vent to our impulse to help. Further, in so far as the way *the object* appears to us, as distinguished from how *we* react to it, is not actively controlled here, our kindly attitude may vaporize the moment we are told that the misery of the person before us is a sequel to his own chronic and ruinous vices. What is more, though the actual impulsion to help is surely felt as a sweet expansion of our being, a sort of going out in love, this blissful core of the experience does not become *a steady object of contemplation for us*, because though it can surely recur freely if one is committed to a life of helping the needy, its individual occurrences are all at the mercy of many contingencies. Preoccupation with our own pressing problems may come in the way; or, as already indicated, some new information about the suffering one may dampen our very will to help.

Now, all this is quite transformed in the creative process of rasa-evocation as Bharata envisages it. One enters the theatre with the explicit intention of watching the presentation of a play; and what one sees on the stage — and hears on it, that is, the music and the dialogues — is all (in principle) such a compact blend (or saṃyoga) of abhinaya of different kinds that one is readily freed from the confines of one's own joys and sorrows (*nijasukhadukhādivivaśibhāva*); and is enabled, in the case of a karuṇa rasa presentation, to relish the bliss of being perfectly in tune with what is presented (movingly) on the stage, and so to experience the particular rasa. Nothing that is presented on the stage is uniquely related to any one member of the audience. The various bhāvas are a part of everybody's being and behaviour in life, which is exactly what makes them easily and commonly intelligible. Yet the impact of the objective and integrated presentation of the various bhāvas on the stage (or in the text of a play) is quite unlike our everyday experience which is largely humdrum, often merely individual — at times even aggressively so; and rarely quite regulated. This is partly why *rasānubhūti* is said to be a beyond-the-world (or lokottara) experience.

But is not the poem avowedly about someone who *actually* lived? Surely it is, about the poet John Keats; but the way he is visualized in the present poem is such a palpitating blend of the real, the celestial, and the patently mythological, and the images that illumine the poem all along collocate quite disparate elements of our everyday experience in such novel and winsome ways, that references to matters of fact nowhere seem to jar with what the poem seeks to do, that is, sanctifying the spirit of Keats[79] and making it appear virtually stellar in glory; and the reader just acquiesces in this movement away from real life[80].

At the same time, in spite of its powerful, elegiac impact — and its recurring 'invitations' to mourn, and abounding references to death and tears — the poem is by no means a vehicle of maudlin sentimentality. Karuṇa rasa is an exaltation *and no mere intensification* of the sthāyibhāva of śoka. The poem achieves this end partly by seeking to locate good poets in the heavens as stars and partly by dotting the poem with such gems of philosophic solemnity as the following:

> The One remains, the many change and pass;
> Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,

Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments . . .[81]

Here, we seem *to see, and not merely to follow*, what the poet says, if not in the way of watching a play. Indeed, as in reading Keats's 'The Eve of St. Agnes', the experience generated here is by and large immediate, or, as the rasa theorists would say, 'sākshātkārātmaka', though not of course an actual *sākshātkāra*.

What is said in the lines just cited from Shelley's poem is clearly of general significance. Further, of all the human beings visualized in the two poems we have dealt with, only one — that is, Keats — has actually lived; and (in Adonais) he too has been so beautifully idealized and framed in a setting of myth that instead of being disturbed by a lack of historical detail, we just happily acquiesce in this rarefaction of the real — a typically Romantic device which is also at work where even some real-life objects of Keats's poetic artistry are pictured as phantoms, so to say, and are thus half denuded of reality:

. . . Desires and Adorations
Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream
All he had loved, and moulded into thought
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound[82]

On the whole, however, the poem is no real strain on our credence. It only exalts the idiom of reality without quite deserting it. The vein of lament which is all along visible, and thus holds the poem pretty tightly as one, is so freely relieved by expressions of praise, love, and longing that the whole picture appears quite close to the common features of the way we all in fact tend to mourn the loss of our dear ones because of something admirable in them. There are some, it is true, who live through their heartaches in silence and solitude, whereas quite a few others choose to mourn quite openly and even so expressly for a definite period that they seem to be making a luxury of their grief[82a]. These are, however, but individual differences; the common core of mourning is provided by the features we have listed. It is these that the poet builds upon; and it is precisely this seizure of essentials of both experience and expression that makes the picture of (say) grieving acceptable to all. What the rasa theorists mean by *sādhāranikaraṇa* is no laboured simplification of what is originally obscure or profound. It is rather the device of so regulating an artistic presentation that, as a whole, it may neither appear related to any real person, nor to anybody's merely individual concerns; and may positively be relished by the *generality* of knowledgeable people. The whole process of rasa-evocation makes for both these ends, because rasa arises from an integration of situations and modes of expression which relate to human life *generally*, and because what appears (in an exalted form) as the substance of the resulting (rasa-) experience is something that is already there *in one and all*, in the form of sthāyibhāvas.

Yet, as Abhinavagupta points out, the quality of being generally acceptable *and appealing* (or *sādhāraṇya*) is quite different from, and independent of, the *logical* concept of generality (*sāmānya*)[83]. The logically general is that which is *understood or thought of* as being applicable to all or most members of a class or category. The aesthetically *sādhāraṇa*, on the other hand, is that which is not the private experience of any one individual but is accessible, as a *presentation*, to all those who are suitably equipped to attend to it; which is why the senses which enable a whole gathering of people to attend to the same art object at once — namely, the ear and the eye — are (for Bharata) pre-eminently aesthetic. A simple analogy should make the distinction clear. The *concept* of a public park *subsumes* all parks which are open to the public; an *actual* public park, on the other hand, *serves* as such simply because it is not any one individual's personal property. A stage presentation too, if it is to be experienced aesthetically, must be presented (according to Bharata) in such a manner that it may not appear as relating to any one real person alone, though its details may well be identified on the basis of our *general* experience of life and reality. It is precisely because of this absence of explicit reference to our individual concerns that while watching a play we are able to attend to situations presented on the stage wholeheartedly, that is, without being disturbed by any such *purely individual* reactions on our part as could easily arise were we faced with similar situations in real life.

Here, again, we may take a simple example to make the point clear. If one of two young and friendly neighbours is known to be rather shy by temperament, and if he yet succeeds in carrying on with a lady in their locality, the other one may feel *happy* because, after all, his friend has been able to overcome his shyness; *envious* because he has lost to one whom he had always regarded as inferior in love-making; or *angry* because the affair is likely to disturb the peace of their locality. But if the same shy young man impersonates an ardent lover in a dramatic performance, his friend will care only for the truth and subtlety of abhinaya; and, as a sāmājika, his attention to the play will not at all be disturbed by the real life reactions we have just visualized.

Yet a little more care is needed to see how exactly the self is related to objects in aesthetic experience. It is surely not a state of indifference (or tāṭasthya); in fact it is rather "an active participation (*anupraveśa*) of the cognizing subject in the event represented"[84]. How otherwise can we explain the fact that after we have witnessed a good play or dance recital quite a few moving scenes or expressive postures continue to haunt the mind? Yet, on the other hand, our attention to what we see on the stage does not impel us into the broad overt reactions of daily life. The whole point has indeed to be taken in a duly balanced way, partly by holding on to Bharata's own views on both aesthetic attitude and variety of aesthetic responses, along with due attention to the otherworldly character of rasa emphasized by commentators on his views. Bhatta Nayak insists that the essence of rasa is "a pleasure which has no relationship with any real individual"; and that the

> images contemplated on the stage or read in poetry are seen by the man of aesthetic sensibility independently of any relationship with his [own] ordinary life or with the [normal] life of the actor or of the hero of the play or poem and appear, therefore, in a generalized [*sādhāraṇikṛta*] way, that is to say, universally and released from individuality.[85]

Abhinavagupta goes even further when he says that during the course of aesthetic experience the individual raises himself above time, space and causality, and so also above the very basic character of practical life (or *saṃsāra*). Such an experience, he believes, "just like a flower born of magic, has, as its essence, solely the present, it is correlated neither with what came before nor with what comes after. This experience is therefore different both from the ordinary experience and from the religious one"[86].

Now, what is meant here simply is that we do not situate our aesthetic experiences in the space in which we actually move about or in the time by which we measure delays or premature ageing. Where a danseuse traverses the stage in a series of quick and tight-knit steps the space covered appears greater than it really is. Oppositely, if the recital is absorbing, the seventy-five minutes or so it usually takes may not appear as a *passage* at all. In neither case, it is true, the difference disturbs us. But, on the other hand, our reactions on such occasions can be *basically* quite true to life. It is true that "the proverbial unsophisticated yokel whose chivalrous interference in the play on behalf of the hapless heroine [because he could not abstain from behaving as one is expected to, in response to a similar situation *in real life*] is not the ideal type of theatrical audience"[87]. But, at the same time, the audience would be less than human if it reacted to emotive situations in a play *quite dissimilarly* to how we react to them in real life. Bharata does not visualize any such audience of bizarre onlookers; and where he speaks of the reactions of *prekshakas* (the audience) to presentations of different rasas, he very rightly says that if the rasa evoked on the stage (effectively) is adbhuta, śṛṅgāra or vīra, the audience reacts with an audible "*aho*" (or *vāh*, expressing wonder); and where the rasa is karuṇa, with tearful eyes or a mournful utterance of "*hāī*"[88]. What is more, with his uncanny eye for detail, Bharata even distinguishes the objects of aesthetic response from the viewpoint of age, sex and personality types. Children and ladies, we are told, generally react positively to a hāsya rasa presentation; and the elderly, to a religious or *paurāṇika* theme. By and large, however, Bharata's emphasis is on prekshakas of 'parallel' sensitiveness:

> Only those should be provided as audience to a play who feel happy when they find a blessed person in the play and feel sad on seeing a grieving character in the play . . .[89]

Such writing is clearly more enlightening than quite a few contemporary definitions of the aesthetic attitude (and response) such as the following:

> [The aesthetic attitude] is disinterested and sympathetic attention to and contemplation of any object of awareness whatever for its own sake alone.[90]

How the aesthetic attitude is disinterested in the sense of being free from determination by the very basic character of reality — that is, by distinctions of time and space, you and I, or subject and object; and how it is 'sympathetic' as vibrating with parallel sensitiveness to what is shown on the stage — all this is clear in Bharata's account *concretely*, and not merely in terms of distinct concepts.

Drama, and poetry in general, however, are not the only arts to which the theory of rasa

seems relevant. As has been suggested by Hiriyanna, it may even be possible to construct a theory of fine arts in general on the basis of data provided by quite a few Sanskrit works on poetics though "their set purpose is only to elucidate the principles exemplified in poetry and the drama"[91]. Now, though the task here visualized has not been accomplished so far, it is undeniable that the theory in question is quite evidently at work in the majority of our classical dance forms. Quite a few of them, in fact, regard *Navarasamālikā* as an important number. Kathak, of course, is an exception to this. Indeed, of all the major classical dances of India, it is probably the only one which has charmed its numerous fans without claiming that it derives its character or content from Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra.* A careful look, however, at the great variety of its representational and expressional numbers (that is, *nritya*) makes one wonder if it has not borrowed, if perhaps unconsciously, quite a good deal from the time-honoured classic of dramaturgy. A brief account of some such numbers — or *intra-forms*, as I prefer to call them[92] — as have been actually presented on the Kathak stage in contemporary India should make the point clear.

Consider, to begin with, that well-known nritya number which opens with the words, '*Vṛndāvan kunjan racho rāsa āli*'. Here, the sthāyibhāva of rati is manifest pretty quickly not only because of the general awareness among Indians that a rāsa is essentially an artistic essay in playfulness, figural charm as manifest in dancing, and variform expression of love, but because of what the pattern in question itself actually shows. Thus, its very opening words that we have cited enable the rasika to visualize the relevant vibhāva, that is, a celebration of rāsa in Vṛndāvan featuring the Radha-Krishna duo as ālambana and the verdant charm of a *kunj* as uddīpana vibhāva. Further, along with quite a few *bols* of pure dance — such as *dig, dig, trām* — the figural representation of such meaningful words as "*laya gati dikhāwat*' or '*chapalā sī chamakat chandramukhī Radha*' may be said to provide what Bharata speaks of as anubhāva; and, above all, the accordant dancing of poetic details like '*kasak-masak*', '*chanchal nain bān*', and '*bhanva-katāksh*' exemplify what he says about vyabhichāribhāvas (as incidental to the evocation of *saṃyoga śṛṅgāra*) in chapter VI of his treatise[93].

What is more, on a number of occasions even a close and balanced presentation of both *saṃyoga* and *vipralambha* (or *viyoga) śṛṅgāra* in terms of two separate compositions — and in fair accordance with Bharata's view of rasa-evocation — has been effectively presented in the Kathak idiom. Here is a brief account of the way it has been done[94]:

The danseuse first chooses a sad and moving composition for presentation. The text for singing (as accompaniment) is provided by a Meera Bhajan which opens with the words, '*Hori piyā bin lāgey khāri*'. 'Khāri' may here be taken to express *glāni*, which is one of the vyabhichāribhāvas of viyoga śṛṅgāra[95]. The song is set in rāga Puriyā which is admirably suited to express how one pines in love unrequited, and lives through endless stretches of waiting for the dear one, here Murari or Krishna. The rhythm chosen is Tritāla at a reposeful pace. The sthāyibhāva of rati is manifest straightaway, because of the very opening line, a refrain in the course of dancing, which says that even a gay and *frolicsome* festival like Hori feels distasteful *in the absence of the loved one*. The next line speaks of the loneliness that pervades the village — nay, the whole neighbouring region — and makes even the *saij* and *aṭāri* look forlorn, that is, sad and deserted[96]. Words such as these, we may note, lend extra

explicitness to both sthāyibhāva and vibhāva, at once indicating how the two interrelate or colour each other in an actual situation. Anubhāva has, of course, to be there all along as abhinaya; and glimpses of vyabhichāribhāvas are provided by such fleeting, but genuine, indicators of an agonizing and seemingly unending wait as *andesā*[97] (or anxiety) duly reflected in the dancer's face, and the eventual disappearance of the very lines that segment the fingers because of incessant counting of days spent in forlornness[98]. The closing words duly signify a helpless admission of what must be endured, that is, lingering forlornness[99].

The next composition which follows very quickly is an essay in evoking saṃyoga śṛṅgāra. The rāga chosen is Hindol; the rhythm, Dhamār, at *madhya laya*; the vocal form, also Dhamār; and the text of the song visualizes Holi-playing at its sportive best, as indicated by the very first line '*Khelat holi Shyām chapal madmāti*'. Quite a few other words like '*Abeer gulāl ki dhoom machi hai, nāchat dey dey tālī*' not only project the occasion or vibhāva (Holi) and the sthāyibhāva of rati (as sheer rejoicing), but the vyabhichāribhāva of (an aspect of) dancing regarded as regulated movement of beauteous limbs[100].

In respect of all such numbers, however, the following objection is possible:

It takes but a few minutes to complete their dancing; the staging of a play, on the other hand, lasts much longer; how then can we expect such dances to evoke the *sustained* emotive experience that rasa is said to be? Now, our answer may be that though the proper staging of a play is of course characterized by saṃyoga or due integration of the different bhāvas, good dancing is *more tightly* and more noticeably organized on the inside, and so is quicker in producing an impact than a play. The point may be argued as follows:

Rhythm in Hindustani (North Indian) music is necessarily cyclic in character; and so, because it here envelops and regulates both music and the dancing, the entire presentation appears visibly gathered. This appearance is also determined, in part, by the fact that the rhythm here is not a mere cycle, but a cycle with a distinct centre, namely, the *sama*, from where the *laya*-flow begins and to which it returns, *directing the rasika's attention accordingly*. Above all, the two senses which are eminently aesthetic according to Bharata — namely, the ear and the eye — are much more conjointly and continually tickled by the dances we have referred to than by a play. No mere dialogues here detract from the fascination of senses; and the ideal content — that is, the meaning of the text of the songs — is generally too familiar to rasikas to make any heavy demands on their understanding. The rasa here evoked may not last long, but so long as it does, its impact is definite; and its character, quite easy to identify.

To turn, now, to classical music, in our talk about this art we freely — and confidently — speak of the rasas of (at least) some rāgas. It is quite widely accepted that a recital of rāga Adānā has to evoke a semblance of vīra rasa, or at least of aggressiveness; and that the proper singing of Jogiya and Sohini has to wear a look of karuṇa rasa. But, on the other hand, there is a good deal in the forms, structural features, and practice of our (Hindustani or North Indian) music today which distances the art from the rasa theory. What we call sthāyi in our Dhruvapada and Khyāl singing is not at all the same thing as sthāyibhāva. Whereas such a bhāva, we have seen, is an innate disposition to have emotional experiences of a particular kind, a sthāyi in vocal music is, for theory, just the first line of a composition and in practice the structural anchor of a whole recital. The text of a Khyāl sthāyi may have

nothing to do with emotion; and even where it has some emotive import, like the well-known Sadārang composition (in raga *Miyan ki Malhar*), '*Kareem nām tero*', its opening devotional air may be, in fact it usually is, quickly dissipated by the *tāns* in which a Khyāl recital usually abounds. Further, *tarānās* which only use mnemonic syllables, and no words at all, do not aim at evoking any emotion; and the whole genre of Tappā singing is distinguished only by the vocalist's ability to execute quite sudden and difficult vocal turns, and not at all by evocation of emotions.

Yet it is undeniable that where our classical singing — specially as *ālāpa* of the Dhruvapada manner and Vilambit Khyāl-singing — is really excellent, it *is* able to provide us with an experience which is delightful and unruffled by distinctions that characterize our everyday experience; which lifts us, temporarily, above the concerns of our real life; and, above all, which leaves us finally, if momentarily, with the feeling that we, who were just a random gathering of listeners at the start of the recital, have somehow become not merely akin, but one in the fellowship of art contemplation. How the evocation of this experience results from an integration of the various bhāvas which the rasa sūtra speaks of is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to trace in respect of our music today; but as to the quality of the experience it can evoke, what we have just said is indubitable. This should become clear as we turn to consider how the experience of rasa actually feels — a task which calls for a fair amount of phenomenological analysis. Happily, our task is made easy by such succinct accounts of what rasa distinctively is as the following one by Vishvanatha:

> *Sattvodrekād akhaṇḍasvakāśānandachinmayaḥ |*
> *vedyāntarasparśaśūnyo brahmāsvādasahodaraḥ ||*
> *lokottarachamatkāraprāṇaḥ kaiśchit pramaṭrbhiḥ |*
> *svākārvad abhinnatvenāyam āsvādyate rasaḥ ||*[101]

Gnoli translates the above as follows:

> Rasa is tasted by the qualified persons . . . It is tasted by virtue of the emergence of *sattva*. It is made up of a full Intelligence, Beatitude and Self-luminosity. It is void of contact with any other knowable thing, [and is] twin brother to the tasting of *brahman*. It is tasted as if it were our very being, in indivisibility.[102]

Now, this translation may well be true to the essential features of rasa, but it is unable to account for their being interrelated in the unity of rasa-experience. Perhaps we could make it a little more enlightening too by reflecting as under:

There are three basic considerations which have to be borne in mind. First, however different it be from our everyday emotional experiences, rasa is not *alaukika* in the sense of being *utterly* independent of *every* kind of context though, of course, as Abhinavagupta insists, aesthetic experience does disconnect us, if temporarily, from the spatio-temporal and utilitarian character of our everyday life. It is emphatically said to arise *as the result of* a proper integration of the different bhāvas in the presentation of a play, in good poetry or in a dance recital — all as contemplated by a rasika. Second, in so far as rasa is said to be dominated by *sattva*, as against *rajas* and *tamas*, we cannot hope to see how the different

attributes interrelate, and are not merely distinguishable to thought, in the blissful experience which rasa is and which is insistently said to be thoroughly unified or niravachhinna. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the locus of rasa is always the state of tādātmya, that is, the rasikas' imaginative self-identification with what they see on the stage or read in a play; and that though the rasa-experience may well be taken to release them (temporarily) from preoccupation with their own individual lives and problems, it does not — and surely cannot — efface their temperamental characteristics and ingrained likes and dislikes, and sense of values, which is precisely why Bharata thinks it necessary to point out that sāmājikas do not all react identically to plays projecting different rasas, and that differences of sex, age, and individual tastes necessarily determine their aesthetic responses. We have to resist being swept off the ground by references to light, beatitude, and composure (*viśrānti*)[103]; and to refrain from the temptation to think that rasa is a kind of luminous cloud floating all by itself in mid-air.

Bearing these three precautionary attitudes in mind, let us now turn to the first keyword in Vishvanath's definition, that is, '*sattvodrekād*'. '*Udreka*' is here to be interpreted as predominance, not mere abundance; for to say that a quality is abundant is only to mean that it is there in plenty, not necessarily that it also rules over other qualities. 'Sattva' must here be taken to dominate rajas and tamas; otherwise it will not be possible to relate '*sattvodreka*' with other attributes that are made to qualify rasa. But how is sattva to be taken as distinct from rajas and tamas? According to the *Gita*[104], sattva makes for purity, light as heightened awareness, and keener powers of apprehension, right knowledge, overall purity, and so for happiness. Rajas is at the root of self-serving actions, (hence) attachment to consequences, greed, fickleness of mind, desire for sense-indulgence; and so it causes *duḥkha*. The third *guṇa*, tamas, is regarded as the principle of *pramād* (or useless, wasteful activity), ignorance, and moha. Therefore, 'sattvodreka', or ascendance of sattva over rajas and tamas here means that, as experience, rasa is characterized by purity (as freedom from cravings, sensuous desires, and mental fickleness), and so by composure and beatitude, because (as according to Sāmkhya) it is *aviśrānti* (or lack of composure) which is the *immediate* cause of *duḥkha*. But, we may note, the ascendance in question does not mean that rajas and tamas are thereby made inoperative for good, or even for the duration of rasa-experience itself. It is an obvious fact that after the most gripping aesthetic experience, the normal tenor of our selfish pursuits, cravings and dissatisfactions — with spells of sheer lethargy and boredom — reappears pretty soon. What is more, even during the course of rasa-experience, rajas and tamas do not become entirely ineffective. The luminous character of rasa-experience is not to be confused with the inert, changeless glow of a torch. *Wondrous* though it is surely said to be, rasa is not to be regarded as a *benumbing* experience. Nor is it accompanied by the incredulous feeling — '*how could it happen*'— which is partly why rasa is said to be a miracle *of a quite uncommon kind*. In spite of being very different from our everyday experiences, it elicits credence because what it builds on, basically, is a sthāyibhāva, a disposition which we readily identify as our own. What is more, it is a *course* of blissful experience, and it cannot but be so because it is largely confluent with our attention to the stage presentation, or with our reading of a play, both alike sequential necessarily. Now, this pervasive fluidity (*druti*) is provided by a contact of sattva with rajas[105]. Where

sattva operates by itself — that is, where its sway is absolute — the resulting state of consciousness is *vikās* or expansion (ibid.); but where its working is tempered with a touch of tamas, we get moments of mere dilatation or *vistāra*[106]. This distinction may be clarified thus:

First, out of this world though it may well be, rasa is after all an emotional experience; and, in point of fact, every emotion can be felt in two ways: as a flow, so long as it is allowed to express itself; and as a trifle uneasy block-cum-swell if it is denied due vent. Now, where the stage presentation appears to be heading for a denouement, and the prekshaka holds his breath in *mounting* suspense or apprehension, the passing arrest in the varying flow of experience is due to the impact of tamas on sattva (vistāra); and the moment uncertainties are explained and previously unresolved problems and mysteries are explained, sattva may be said to reassert its supremacy over tamas, undoing the hold on the flow of experience, providing fuller understanding (*vikās*) and deepening visrānti.

The ascendancy of sattva over rajas — the guna which is the cause not only of oriented activity, but of haste, impatience, and unrest — accounts for the presence of tranquillity, as also for the absence of willed overt activity in the experience of rasa. As we have already hinted, some reflex bodily changes, such as bated breath and accelerated heartbeat, may well occur in *rasānubhūti*, but here we do not *seek to do* anything; and, generally, serene contemplation of what is presented to us is our only intentional activity.

Some features of rasa, however, relate directly to sattva itself. This guna is commonly regarded as the principle of *purity*; but here this quality cannot be said to characterize our motives and conduct. It has rather to be taken in a sense which is partly, but importantly, negative. Just as ālāpa of the Dhruvapada way of singing is said to be pure music because it is free from mixture with language and beat-measured rhythm, so the purity which sattva lends to rasa means that the experience here is not at all ruffled by preoccupation with one's *own* joys and sorrows (*nijasukhaduḥkhādiviveśibhāva*), cravings and desires, because of the sādhāranīkaraṇa brought about by the aesthetic configuration of different bhāvas; and is therefore *chinmaya* or consisting of pure thought (or awareness).

But, one may ask, what exactly is the point in relating this awareness to *prakāśa* and *ānanda*? Here, we may answer thus:

It is quite proper and surely not uncommon to speak of feeling lit up with understanding, say, after we have given close and fruitful attention to an intricate train of argument. Now, though quite differently evoked, this feeling is importantly there in rasa-experience as well, because of the tightly focused and so exclusive quality of our attention. We feel gripped by the integrated and expressive form of what is presented on the stage, as also by its appeal as much to the ear and the eye as to understanding, not a little because of āhārya abhinaya. Further, in virtue of being authentic rasikas, we are not merely willing but *able* to follow the presentation. This ability is due to two main factors: first, our own past training and experience in watching plays, and, second, the passing release from preoccupation with out *own* joys and sorrows presently brought about in the way already indicated, so that our attention is here 'exclusive' in the sense of not being ruffled at all by concern with any other object of knowledge (*vedyāntarasparśaśūnyo*). Be that as it may, it is a matter of actual experience that one who tastes rasa rests in a state of pure contemplation bereft of all practical

interest (*saṁvit*), which is at once a feeling of composure (viśrānti). Such tranquil and undivided attention naturally makes for very clear perception which illuminates understanding. What is, in this context, spoken of as "prākāśa" is obviously no physical light, but "the inner radiation of being which accompanies delighted understanding, a joyous state of heightened awareness"[107].

Correspondingly, Bharata's characterization of rasa as "ujjvalaveṣātmakaḥ" may be translated as 'whose essence is a look of splendour and clarity' (rather than of *burning*!). The italicized word within brackets has been taken from S.K. De's translation (of the Sanskrit word), which runs thus: "whose essence is an appearance of burning". By way of explaining what this 'burning' is he cites the case of "inflamed" passions. Now, this interpretation creates a problem if we take *it*, obviously a way of characterizing rasa, along with his other view that rati, the sthāyibhāva of śṛṅgāra rasa, is "physical passion"[108]. Are we to believe that śṛṅgāra rasa, as 'ujjvalaveṣātmakaḥ', is simply an inflamed or violently excited (because "burning") evocation of an animal appetite?

Anyway, to turn now to prakāśa and viśrānti, important though they surely are, these terms do not exhaust the meaning of ānanda in Vishvanatha's definition of rasa. Taken along with *sattvodreka*, ānanda cannot be taken in the sense of everyday happiness, and surely not as sensual pleasure, though these are surely both acknowledged meanings of the word. The "emergence of . . . sattva, limpid and mirror-like" always makes for a clearer reflection of "the light and beatitude proper to the self"[109]. So, taken in the light of this truth, ānanda can here be taken to mean pure happiness alone, that is, happiness which is utterly free from impulses to do or to get, and from all domination by the pull of the senses. It is this beatitude — that is, happiness with absolute peace — which brings rasa very close to the bliss of realizing *brahman* (*Brahmānanda sahodaraḥ*), for ānanda (as we have interpreted it) is also regarded as one of the three attributes of brahman. Another clue to this closeness is provided by the fact that just as *brahmānubhava* is a very deeply satisfying experience because it answers a basic need of the ātman, so is rasa because of its grounding in sthāyībhāvas which are a part of our native equipment of tendencies to have emotional experiences of specific kinds. In neither case does the blissful experience appear as the attainment of a merely objective end.

This is, we may note, not only an important emphasis of the theory in question but a point of some theoretical value, insofar as it enables us to meet an obvious and quite sensible objection. Can we not experience, one may ask, utter and blissful tranquillity even in looking at a beautiful detail of natural beauty, be it even a little foam on a moonlit bank? We surely can. What is more, intense and reverent communion with nature has even enabled some sensitive poets, such as Wordsworth and Sūrdas, to receive (or elicit) some quiet, but ennobling impulses from nature[110]. Yet such experiences cannot be summarily likened to rasa because of two clear differences. First, our attention to a beautiful object of nature can hardly ever be *so sustained and so manifestly engaging to the mind* as our knowledgeable contemplation of a dramatic presentation which does not merely please our eyes and ears, but has a full-blown plot packed with almost every element of real life, namely, thought, emotion, and a variform interplay of character with situations. Secondly, to receive elevating influences from outside is not the same thing as seeing something essential from our own

being reflected in an outer object with charm and convincingness, as really happens when we witness plays which present our own sthāyībhāvas for objective contemplation. It is this projection of what is intrinsically within us as human beings which enables us to taste rasa with a degree of intimacy which is hardly ever there in man's communion with nature, except perhaps in the case of some religious mystics. There *are* moments when we feel perfectly *at peace with* the beauty that nature presents, but the beauteous objects of nature are surely not felt *as reflecting us*; and it is no mere rhetoric to say, as Vishvanatha does, that "rasa [alone] is tasted as if in indivisibility". Our experience of listening (knowledgeably) to good music can perhaps be said to be closer to Vishvanatha's characterization of rasa than our contemplation of nature.

There are reasons why I refer to such experiences again. They have a definite, if but partial illustrative value for the purpose of this essay. So far as I know, in independent India, just one explicit attempt has been made to *relate drama* to the rasa theory. This happened in 1980 when Shyamanand Jalan tried to explore the theory with a multi-disciplinary production of *Abhijñāna Śākuntalam* with the assistance of Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra as choreographer and Girija Devi as music composer — a venture which subsequently enabled Jalan to organize comprehensive workshops such as 'Indian Dance Traditions and Modern Theatre' (1983), with scholars, classical dancers and theatre actors participating. I have no idea of the result of this venture; but my point is that insofar as the dramatic art of Bharata's day is no longer accessible to us, and because it is surely not the general practice of our playwrights and directors of today to consciously adhere to all the injunctions of Bharata, we may turn to consummate cases of listening to music recitals to get some idea as to how the various qualities distinguished by Abhinavagupta in his succinct characterization of rasa could in fact interrelate in one single experience.

The point can be brought out quite simply, say, as follows:

The clear *and discriminating* perception (by a knowledgeable listener) of sweet-sounding (and correctly placed) svaras as making the distinct wholeness of a single rāga provides joy *and thought* simultaneously. What is clearly and appealingly perceived at once makes the listener feel enlivened or lit up on the inside (prakaśa). All this is aided by an intenseness of attention which is, in turn, helped not only by the ability and willingness of the (qualified) listener to care for nothing but the music (*vedyāntarasparśaśūnyo*), but (in principle) by the pull of the music itself. This perfect accord of *what* he listens to and *how* he does so makes for the undivided (*akhaṇḍa*) quality of the experience which is wondrous (or of the nature of a miracle, *chamatkāra*, because it is quite unlike our everyday experiences insofar as it is not disturbed (*vitavighna*) by considerations of utility, or of location in real space or time. It may well be, in fact, it often is, quite without the semblance of a distinct emotion (barring perhaps joy and wonder); and this is indeed what prevents it from becoming an exact parallel of rasānubhūti. But it is incontrovertible that, as I have already said earlier, at least for a while after the listening is over, or even during the course of listening, such an experience lifts one out of the sense of being a limited 'I' as opposed to others.

Yet, in spite of all that is said for it, rasa-experience is only a close similar or twin brother (*sahodaraḥ*) to, but not exactly identical with, the bliss of realizing brahman; and the differences are easy to see. Even our most fascinated watching of a play is quickly

followed by a return to the humdrum tenor of life; the recurring eclipse of sattva by the other two guṇas begins all over again; and, as we resume it, our normal living generally does not show any marked improvement in its moral tone. The bliss of realizing brahman, on the other hand, ennobles our lives markedly and loosens our bondage (more or less) to purely worldly concerns. What is more, besides of course a modicum of moral decency, no such psycho-ethical disciplines are needed for experiencing rasa as are generally essential for securing the relish of *brahmānanda*. However, the

> limitations of the experience of art, to which we have just alluded, do not affect the conclusion that it is of the same [sattva-dominated] order as . . . the ideal [spiritual] state; . . . [what is more, it even makes *that state* appear feasible] . . . art experience [as visualized by the rasa theory] is well adapted to arouse our interest in the ideal state by giving us a foretaste of it, and thus to serve as a powerful incentive to the pursuit of that state . . . It is not given to the ordinary man to transcend [merely individual concerns] . . . ; art by its impersonalized forms appears the best means for a temporary [yet educative] escape from the ills of life arising from such [self-serving interests][11] .

Such a view which posits an essential relation between art experience and humanity's ethico-religious interests is obviously a far cry from those trends in present-day aesthetics which seek to *dehumanize* art completely; but though it seems most clearly relevant only to the more systematic of our classical dances today, it has surely been the traditional Indian conception of art.

NOTES

1. The psychoanalytic meaning of sublimation — that is, the chanelling of a morally or socially unacceptable impulse, especially a sexual one, towards something else, especially something creative and more appropriate — is here irrelevant, for even the sthāyībhāva of *rati* is (for Bharata) only our natural liking for delight or enjoyment (R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, 2nd edition, 1968, p. xv), and not the sexual impulse.
2. The reference here is to the Bhajan which opens thus: "वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिऐ".
3. Thus, the 16th *sūtra* of Chapter VI of Babu Lal Śukla's *Nāṭya Śāstra* (with Hindi translation and commentaries), 2nd edition, Samvat 2040 (hereafter referred to simply as N.S. 2nd), Part I, as given on p. 218, which lists the eight rasas (that relate to the art of drama), opens with a mention of śṛṅgāra and the reason why this rasa has been regarded as pre-eminent — simply because it appeals to the generality of mankind. Ibid., p. 220, f.n.
4. T. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 1st edition, Rome, 1956, p. 60f.
5. See, here, the following statement by Susanne K. Langer in *Problems of Art*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1957, (p. 166): "There are certain relational factors in experience which are either intuitively recognized or not at all, for example, distinctness, similarity, congruence, relevance. These are formal characteristics which are protological in that they must be seen to be appreciated."
6. R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 1st edition, p. 66, 4th footnote.
7. Ibid., p. 38, 2nd footnote.
8. Babu Lal Śukla, N.S. 2nd, Part I, 3rd footnote on p. 228.
9. Ibid., p. 287.

10. That is, something which is not only directly encountered, but is at once a benign influence.
11. Śukla, N.S. 2nd, Part I, p. 84 of editor's own Preface, and p. 222.
12. The reference here is specially to the following words of Utpal Dutt: "Intensity is the most important thing. Actors cannot act [effectively] if they don't find joy in the acting. The moment acting in a rehearsal or a performance feels like a torture, one has to stop it." *Contemporary Indian Theatre: Interviews with Playwrights and Directors*, Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, 1989, p. 17.
13. Ibid., p. 62.
14. The common belief that this sūtra is an utterance of Bharata has, however, been challenged. Thus, see the following statement in Dr Radhavallabh Tripathi's review of Prof. Kapil Kapoor's book, *Literary Theory — Indian Conceptual Framework*, in the *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Special Issue ('Life-Words'), March 2002, p. 160: "The fact is that the theory of rasa does not originate with Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra. The famous rasa sūtra . . . was not given by Bharata, it was handed over to him by the tradition of earlier Acāryas."
15. 32nd Sutra of Ch.VI on p. 228 of Śukla's N.S. 2nd Part I.
16. Ibid., p. 218.
17. Sutra 18, ibid., p. 221.
18. Ibid., pp. 222–3.
19. Ibid., pp. 286–7.
20. Ibid., pp. 368–9.
21. I also here follow, in part, what Gnoli says about bhāva in the first footnote on p. xv of his *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 2nd edition, op. cit.
22. Harold Osborne, *The Art of Appreciation*, O.U.P., 1970, p. 116.
23. 'Fixed emotion' is S.K. De's translation of sthāyibhāva. See his *Sanskrit Poetics as a Study of Aesthetic*, O.U.P., 1963, p. 103. (From now on this work is referred to simply as *Sanskrit Poetics*.) Yet, as we have just suggested, it does seem proper to translate sthāyibhāva as "permanent or dispositional mode of emotion". Cf. K. Krishnamoorthy's essay, 'Traditional Indian Aesthetics in Theory and Practice' in *Indian Aesthetics and Art Activity*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, 1968, p. 44.
24. Ananda Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Siva*, Asia Publishing House, 3rd Printing, 1956, p. 53.
25. Cf. S.K. De: *Sanskrit Poetics*, 1963, p. 53.
26. This is obviously implied when we say, as we freely do, "Please do not disturb me; *I am not* in a good mood".
27. Or, as a *vāsanā*.
28. Śukla, N.S. 2nd, Part I, p. 266.
29. The commonly acknowledged meanings of 'instinct', we may note, are an involuntary prompting to *action*, and the natural impulse by which animals are guided *in their behaviour* apparently without the help of reason or experience.
30. M. Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, Kavyalaya Publishers, Mysore, 1954, p. 38.
31. *Contemporary Indian Theatre*, p. 14.
32. Ibid., p. 69.
33. Ibid., p. 68.
34. Ibid., p. 67.
35. If I do not here mention the great Shakespearean tragedies like *King Lear*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, it is simply because I find it difficult to relate them to the rasa theory.
36. Sūtra 68 in Śukla's N.S. 2nd, Vol. I, pp. 336–37. Bracketed English equivalents of listed words have been taken from *A Sanskrit English Dictionary* by M. Monier Williams (hereafter referred to as M.W.), Motilal Banarsidass, Corrected Edition, 2002.

37. The reference here is to Śukla's own footnote on p. 337 of Vol. I., N.S. 2nd.

38. I say so on the basis of the way the word has been interpreted in M.W., p. 722.

38a. See here the following relevant remark of Śukla: "उत्तम वर्णों का उत्साह सर्वत्र आस्वाद्य होता है।" N.S. 2nd, Part I, p. 336, footnote.

38b. Thus, in his *Sanskrit Poetics*, De is taken to explain vibhāva as follows: "Conditions appropriate to the emotion to be evoked, as a garden or a beautiful woman" (p. 88). The word is explained similarly on p. 104 as well.

39. This example has been taken from K.C. Pandey's *Comparative Aesthetics*, Vol. I (Indian Aesthetics), Second Edition 1959, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, p. 25. The way I have put it, however, differs from the way it appears in the work referred to.

40. Śukla, for instance, interprets vibhāva as simply the situation or occasion which makes for the awareness of sthāyibhāva in the nāyak. N.S. 2nd, Part I, p. 67.

41. In translating *asammoha* into English I have followed M.W., p. 118.

42. *Contemporary Indian Theatre*, p. 14.

43. K.C. Pandey, op. cit., p. 34.

44. Śukla, N.S. 2nd, Part I, p. 229, 1st footnote.

45. Which are not quite identical. In fact, they can be distinguished easily. In 'I am no longer connected with that company', *connected* cannot be replaced with 'in conjunction with'; and words like *and, but, if* and *because* are neither combinations nor connections, but conjunctions.

45a. Śukla, N.S. 2nd, Part I, pp. 84, 222.

46. Ibid., p. 83.

47. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art*, Harvard, 1934, p. 209.

48. R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, first edition, p. 71. Second footnote.

48a. A *sāmājika* is "One of the assembly". De, *Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 99.

49. Sonnet No. 116 in *Master Poems of the English Language*, edited by Oscar Williams, Trident Press, New York, 1966, p. 55. Hereafter, this work is referred to simply as *Master Poems.*

50. The reference is to the following opening lines of the poem:
इक लफ़्ज़े मोहब्बत का अदना ये फ़साना है।
सिमटे तो दिले आशिक़, फैले तो ज़माना है।।

51. *Master Poems*, p. 568.

51a. De, *Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 103.

52. That Vishvanath actually does so is the view of S.K. De. See his *Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 90. If I have yet thought it necessary to italicize the word '*appears*', it is simply because it has been suggested (and I think quite rightly) by at least one eminent scholar that the utterance in question should be taken as an eulogy of the poetic art rather than as an assertion of its essential character. The reference here is to p. 11 of Vishvanatha Kaviraja's *Sahityadarpaṇa*, edited by Dr Satyavrata Singh, Chowkhamba Vidya Bhawan, Varanasi, New edition, 1992.

53. Ibid., p. 69.

54,55,56,57. *Master Poems*, p. 60.

58,59. Ibid., p. 602. In the second quote, here, the words italicized are obviously such as signify positioning in space.

60. Ibid., p. 601.

61. Ibid., p. 604.

62. Ibid., pp. 604–5.

63. Sūtras 40,41,42 in Ch. VIII of Śukla's N.S. 2nd, Part II, p.11 *of the text.*

64. Sūtra 11. Ibid., p. 5 *of the text.*

65. 84th line of the poem in *Master Poems*, p. 62.
66. Ibid., p. 600.
67. Ibid., p. 603.
68. Ibid., p. 605.
69. Ibid., p. 604.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid., p. 612.
72. Ibid., p. 610.
73. Ibid., p. 540.
74. Ibid., p. 527.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid., p. 528.
77. Urania is the muse of astronomy; and another name for Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty in Greek mythology, daughter of Zeus. Its Roman counterpart is Venus.
78. *Master Poems*, p. 528.
79. Ibid., p. 540.
80. See, here, references to Urania, the mythical goddess of love and beauty who is visualized as having her seat in Paradise (*Master Poems*, pp. 527–8) and also such pictures of real life as the periodic renewal or reappearance of "the airs and streams . . . ants, bees . . . swallows . . . fresh leaves and flowers" (ibid., p. 532).
81. Ibid., p. 539.
82. Ibid., pp. 530–31.

82a. Say, like Olivia in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

83. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, first edition, p. 29, 5th footnote.
84. Ibid., pp. xx–xxi. *Anupraveśa* means 'entrance into'.
85. Ibid.
86. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 2nd edition, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies, Vol. LXII, 1968, pp. xxxiii, xxxiv, xxxvi.
87. Edward Bullough's essay, 'Psychical Distance' in M. Rader's *A Modern Introduction to Esthetics* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979, 5th edition), p. 350.
88. Śukla's N.S., Part III, 1st edition, 1983, Sūtras 9–11, of chapter XVII, p. 324.
89. Ibid., Sūtra 54, p. 338.
90. Jerome Stolnitz's essay, 'The Aesthetic Attitude' in *Introductary Readings in Aesthetics*, edited by John Hospers, The Free Press and Collier MacMillan, 1969, p. 19.
91. Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, p. 2.
92. My reason for this preference may be put thus. Insofar as every Kathak number has to be internally well organized *and also* to appear self-completing (importantly because it follows a cyclic rhythm), it may be said to be a *form* itself. But because a whole Kathak recital from the opening *thāṭa* to the closing *tatkār* — and including all the other 'items' — is also (in principle) internally well organized, what it includes, that is, the individual numbers, may well be said to be *forms within the recital's overall form*, or just *intra*-forms.
93. Śukla's N.S., 2nd, Part I, p. 308.
94. Pretty freely, by Rani Karnaa, winner of Sangeet Natak Akademi's Award for excellence in classical dance for 1997.
95. Śukla's N.S., 2nd, Part I, p. 309.

96. The Hindi words here are: "सूनो गांव, देस सब सूनो, सूनी सेज अटारी".

97. Anxiety (or चिन्ता), we may note, is (according to Bharata) one of the vyabhichāribhāvas in the evocation of vipralambha (or viyoga) śṛṅgāra. Śukla's N.S., 2nd, Part I, p. 309.

98. This is my translation of the following words in the Bhajan in question: "गिणता गिणता घिस गई रेखा, आंगुरिया की सारी".

99. Signified by the words, "अबंहु न आये मुरारी".

100. Or, "ललित अंगों का परिचालन". Śukla's N.S., Part I, second edition, p. 308.

101. R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 2nd edition, p. 47, footnote 1a.

102. Ibid.

103. "*Viśrānti*, rest, denotes the fact of our being absorbed in something, immerged in it, to the exclusion of every other thing (*vigalitavedyāntaratayā*), without, that is, having any mental movement, any extraneous desire (in other words, no obstacle, *vighna*) which . . . [may come] to break into that state of consciousness. In . . . the . . . language [of aesthetics] *viśrānti* denotes, at the same time, the fact of being absorbed in the aesthetic object, and the sensation of pleasure *sui generis* which accompanies that state of consciousness". Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 2nd edition, p. xxiii, 1st footnote.

104. Chapter XIV.

105. Ibid., p. 46, footnote 1a.

106. Ibid.

107. S.K. Saxena, *Aesthetical Essays*, Chanakya Publications, Delhi, 1981, p. 159.

108. Cf. S.K. De: *Sanskrit Poetics as a Study of Aesthetic*, p. 109.

109. Gnoli: *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*, 2nd edition, p. 46.

110. Wordsworth, for instance, voices the faith that

> One impulse from a vernal wood
> May teach you more of Man;
> Of moral evil and of good
> Than all the sages can.

And, in a much more enlightening Bhajan which opens with the words, 'वृक्षन से मति ले मन दू', Sūrdās reads in the existence and function of trees messages of selfless service and transcendence of the duality of aversion and attachment; for, do not these stately objects of nature drop fruits precisely for those who throw pebbles at them; and do they ever get angry with those who cut them or attached to those who water them?

111. Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, Kavyalaya Publishers, Mysore, pp. 28, 13.