

## FROM RASA SEEN TO RASA HEARD

Sheldon POLLOCK

*Columbia University, New York*

To a degree that may prove to be more far-reaching than I can demonstrate within the limits of the essay that follows, the theoretical understanding of *rasa* was shaped by its historical extension from the domain where it was first formulated, that of *drśyakāvya* – “literature meant to be seen”, that is, drama – to the domain of *śravyakāvya* – “literature meant to be heard”, that is, poetry recited and undoubtedly read privately. There is nothing very original about positing such an extension (though the stages in the process have never been identified as well as they might be), yet I believe its true consequences remain to be fully assessed. I hope to show here that one of these pertains to the number and kinds of emotion that can count as *rasas*. Other crucial aspects of the intellectual history of *rasa* theory may be implicated as well, including notions of its very ontology and epistemology: where it exists and how it comes to be known. My thoughts here are tentative, unlike the admiration and affection with which I offer them in honor of one of the great *rasikas* among Sanskrit scholars of our time.

### I. *Literature Seen and Heard*

Before we can reconstruct the history of the extension of aesthetical analysis from the dramatic to the non-dramatic, we need to show that the Sanskrit tradition differentiated between the two types of literature, or better yet, that it drew an opposition indicating that analysis applicable in the one domain might not be automatically applicable in the other. While the specific binary “seen”/“heard” is found as early as the *Kāvyaśāstra* (1.39), it is not without some conceptual difficulties. For one thing, the “representation” (*abhinaya*) that defines *drśyakāvya* itself comprises in some measure the verbalization constitutive of *śravyakāvya*,<sup>1</sup> softening any hard distinction between them. For another, when *kāvya* is distinguished from *śāstra*, as it very frequently is (thus Bhoja, for instance, declares that “Sanskrit discourse

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1. “In some measure”, that is, one-quarter, since there are three other types of representation beside *vācika*, verbal (namely, *āṅgika*, physical; *sāttvika*, psychophysical; *āhārika*, costuming). But note that *Nāṭyaśāstra* 1.11 speaks of drama itself as both *drśya* and *śravya*.

can be scriptural, traditional, or mundane... Mundane discourse is *śāstra* and *kāvya*"),<sup>2</sup> drama and literature are no doubt both subsumed under the same term, and any distinction between them is bracketed.

That said, not only were the two genres categorically differentiated; they were often radically opposed, as we can see in the contest between them for primacy in the minds of literary critics that became a running dispute in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Bhoja merits quoting in full:

It is difficult to specify what precisely *rasa* is, since it is knowable only experientially, and is not universally accessible. When displayed by skilled actors in correctly performed dramatic presentations, it can be determined by the audience; when properly<sup>3</sup> declaimed by great poets in their compositions, it can become accessible to the minds of the learned. However, [there is a difference between these two modes of experience:] things are not so sweetly savored when they are actually perceived as when they are cognized through the language of masters of language. To quote:

A subject does not expand the heart  
so powerfully when we see it portrayed  
as when it flashes forth from the words  
of great poets declaimed with art.

Therefore we prize poets far more than actors, and poetry more than dramatic representations<sup>4</sup>.

As an anonymous verse puts it, "The language of poetry and the representations of drama are the two ways [of expressing *rasa*]. The former is superior in this by reason of the range of its narrative power (*vastuśaktimahimnā*)"<sup>5</sup>. Abhinavagupta, by contrast, elevated drama to the paradigmatic form of literature, enlisting older scholars in his cause:

Other thinkers argue that the relishing of *rasa* can occur in poetry no less than in drama, produced by the exceptional beauty of its language qualities and rhetorical figures. Our view, however, is as follows: First of all, "literature" is comprised chiefly of the ten dramatic forms. For it is there that, thanks to the appropriate languages, cultural modes, intonations, costumes, and so on, the presence of *rasa* achieves plenitude. In a literary work like a courtly epic, by contrast, we even have female protagonists speaking in Sanskrit, one of many improprieties that find place in the narrative simply because it is not possible to do otherwise<sup>6</sup> – however much it may not seem inappropriate, in view of

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2. *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, vol. I (R. DWIVEDI – S. DWIVEDI (eds.), *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa of Bhojarāja*, 2 vol., New Delhi, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 2007), p. 163-164.

3. I conjecture *yathāvat* for *yāvad*.

4. *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, p. 2-3.

5. Cited by Śrīdhara (c. 1400) while restating Bhoja's view. See *Kāvya prakāśa* (J. MOHAN (ed.), *Kāvya prakāśa [of Mammāta]*, *solah ṭīkāṃ sahīṭ*, 6 vol., Delhi, Nag Prakashan, 1995-), vol. 1, p. 77.

6. Presumably because of the genre constraints of the courtly epic (rather than the incapacity of the poet to become a playwright, so R. P. KANGLE, *Rasa-Bhāva-Vicāra*, Bombay, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya-Samskṛti Mandal, 1973, p. 196).

the maxim that you like whatever you are given<sup>7</sup>. This is precisely the reason it has been argued, as noted earlier, that “Among all the varieties of literary composition the best is drama in any of its ten mimetic forms”. Other literary works, from the courtly epic to the isolate verse, come into being by borrowing structures such as acts and scenes from the ten forms<sup>8</sup>.

Whatever other questions may be at issue here, it should be clear that by the beginning of the eleventh century and no doubt far earlier, drama, or literature seen, and poetry, or literature heard, constituted two fundamentally different and differentiated forms of literature, and indeed, that there already was a dispute about the extension of rasa analysis from the one sphere to the other. Thus when Bhaṭṭa Tota, Abhinavagupta’s teacher, asserts that there is in fact no such thing as “non-dramatic literature”, he would seem to be responding to a new argument (one already contested by Abhinava himself) on the extensibility of rasa theory:

Rasa exists only in drama, and in poetry only to the degree that it mimics drama. For as my teacher has argued, with respect to the elements of the literary text, rasa comes into being only when a state of awareness simulating visual perception (*pratyakṣakalpasamvedana-*) comes into being. To quote his *Kāvyaakautuka* (Literary Investigations), “So long as poetry does not approximate the character of a performance, there can be no possibility of savoring rasa”<sup>9</sup>.

## II. Assimilating the Analytic

If the distinction between visual-dramatic and aural-poetic literature was thus clearly established from a relatively early date, the Sanskrit tradition nowhere explains how an aesthetic theory developed for the former could be applied to the latter and indeed, why it should be. For the most part we are left to reconstruct this development by inference. The first – and, so far as I can see, the sole – explicit declaration on the subject comes from Rudrabhaṭṭa’s *Śṛṅgāratilaka* (datable to somewhere in the period 950-1100): “Generally speaking, the nature of rasa has been discussed by Bharata and others in reference to drama. I shall examine it here, according to my own lights, in reference to poetry”<sup>10</sup>. We are justified I think in pushing this attempt at integration back to the time of Rudraṭa’s *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra*, the source of so much of the *Śṛṅgāratilaka*: When Rudraṭa remarks that “the greatest effort

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7. *tāvātīva hṛdyam*. My translation is uncertain.

8. *Abhinavabhāratī* (K. KRISHNAMOORTHY (ed.), *Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata, with the Abhinavabhāratī of Abhinavagupta*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Baroda, Oriental Institute, 1992), p. 285. The citation is from Vāmana, *Kāvyaḷaṅkārasūtra* 1.3.3 (R. G. BHATTA (ed.), *Kāvyaḷaṅkārasūtra and Vṛtti of Vāmana*, Varanasi, Braj B. Das, 1908).

9. *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 284.

10. *Śṛṅgāratilaka* 1.5: *prāyo nāṭyaṃ prati proktā bharatādyaḥ rasasthitiḥ / yathāmati mayāpy eṣā kāvyaṃ prati nigadyate* // (R. PISCHEL (ed.), *Rudraṭa’s [sic] Śṛṅgāratilaka and Ruyyaka’s Sahṛdayalīlā*, Kiel, C. F. Haeseler, 1886).

must be made to invest *kāvya* with *rasa*”<sup>11</sup> he was surely referring to aural-poetic literature, since his work has nothing to say about drama. This would bring the date for the assimilation of *śravyakāvya* into the analytic of *rasa* to sometime in the middle or latter half of the ninth century.

This dating fits with what earlier works that touch on *rasa* have to tell us, a story that is well known but bears restating. The *Nāṭyaśāstra*, a composite text the core of which is probably not later than the fourth century, introduces the theory (in a confused and much edited form in the manuscripts now available) entirely within the domain of dramaturgy. By contrast, the earliest extant texts of literary theory more narrowly conceived, Bhāmaha’s *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* (c. 650) and Daṇḍin’s *Kāvyaḷadarśa* (*Kāvyaḷalakṣaṇa*, c. 700), are concerned exclusively with aural-poetic literature, and while both are aware of the dramaturgical theory they conceive of *rasa* exclusively as one or another type of rhetorical figure<sup>12</sup>. Their precise arguments concerning the tropes *rasavat*, *preyaḥ*, and *ūrjasvi* are not easy to explain in brief compass<sup>13</sup>. In the simplest terms, these all represent expressions of heightened feeling: where a given emotion clearly manifests itself (*rasavat*); where a warmly felt compliment is conveyed (*preyaḥ*); where a character’s arrogance or vehemence is expressed (*ūrjasvi*). And while not embodying the indirection (*vakratā*) that defines other *alaṅkāras*, these emotion-“tropes” nonetheless remain specialized uses of language and hence are capable of being understood as figures of speech. The “expression of heightened emotion” – in the character, of course – may indeed coincide with Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa’s understanding of *rasa*, which constitutes the oldest, or “classical”, view: that is, the view clearly implicit in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, ascribed to Daṇḍin himself and the other “ancients” by Abhinavagupta,<sup>14</sup> and preserved as late as Bhoja. Yet for both Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin the representation of emotion in aural-poetic literature is subordinate to and therefore subsumed under the dominant discourse on *alaṅkāras*. Nowhere in this early work is *rasa* considered anything more than a trope; it certainly does not yet, as it was soon to do, constitute the heart of literariness.

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11. *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* 12.2: *tat kāvyam* [conj. for the unmetrical *tasmāt tat*] *kartavyam yatna mahīyasā rasair yukta* (Rudrabhaṭṭa had this v. in mind when he writes *tasmād yatna kartavyam kāvyam rasanirantaram*, *Śṅgāratilaka* 1.8) (DURGAPRASAD – W. L. S. PANSIKAR (eds.), *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra of Rudraṭa, with the Commentary of Namisādhū*, Bombay, Nirṇaya Saḡar Press, 1928). Note Rudraṭa is still writing *alaṅkāraśāstra* for makers of literature rather than readers.

12. For the dates here see Y. BRONNER, “A Question of Priority: Revisiting the Bhāmaha-Daṇḍin Debate”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, in press. For the analysis of *rasa* as a trope in early *alaṅkāraśāstra*, L. MCCREA, *The Teleology of Poetics in Medieval Kashmir*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2008. While Daṇḍin regards dramaturgy as the object of a separate science (1.31) he is fully aware of the doctrine of eight *rasas*: *aṣṭarasāyattā rasavattā smṛtā girām*, *Kāvyaḷadarśa* 2.290 (A. THAKUR – U. JHA (eds.), *Kāvyaḷalakṣaṇa [= Kāvyaḷadarśa] of Daṇḍin, with the Commentary of Ratnaśṛījñāna*, Darbhanga, Mithila Institute of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1957).

13. Bhāmaha adds several more such figures of affect (*Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* 3.5-11) but Daṇḍin’s three become canonical.

14. *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 266.

Udbhaṭa (fl. 800) marks the final – and, by his date, contradictory – stage of this rhetorical analysis of aesthetic emotion. On the one hand, as we might expect from the first known commentator on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Udbhaṭa redefines the expressions of affect to approximate the full rasa typology: *rasavat*, which for previous writers was simply heightened emotion, now and for the first time becomes the *full realization* of rasa with the complete panoply of aesthetic elements (*vibhāvādi*);<sup>15</sup> *preyaḥ* (in the now oddly overdetermined form *preyasvat*),<sup>16</sup> earlier an emotional compliment, becomes the *intimation* of an emotion (or *bhāvakāvya*, as his commentator Pratihārendurāja notes); *ūrjasvi*, formerly prideful expression, becomes *rasābhāsa*, or *semblance* of rasa, marked by social impropriety. On the other hand, however, and despite this approximation to the dramaturgical model, Udbhaṭa continues to categorize all these as figures of speech, on the same order as, say, the “elevated” (*udātta*) figure, where “some richly appointed object or the deed of a great being is intended as an indicative characteristic and not as an event in itself” (4.8);<sup>17</sup> that is, he ranks them just as Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin had done, on the same level as the “expression of irony” (*pariyāyoktam*) or the “description of providential help” (*samāhita*). By the end of the ninth century Pratihārendurāja was confessing how markedly the conceptual terrain had shifted from the time of Udbhaṭa: “Whether the rasas and the emotions, given that they are the source of the highest literary beauty, are “ornaments” of literature or its very “life force” will not be a subject for consideration here lest it unduly lengthen the book”<sup>18</sup>.

Pratihārendurāja’s confusion (and unfortunate reluctance to display it) was understandable, since only a few decades earlier, around the time of Rudraṭa, Ānandavardhana in his *Dhvanyāloka* (c. 875) had fully assimilated rasa theory in the analysis of aural-poetic literature. Although according to Ānandavardhana’s linguistics of literary communication not all literature is concerned with the communication of rasa, when rasa is present it becomes the central organizing component of the work, to which all other features must be subordinated (“The first domain of action, for a good poet, is rasa”)<sup>19</sup> That said, rasa itself has an astonishingly undertheorized, taken-for-granted, presence in Ānanda’s treatise. He never actually tells us what it is or why it should in fact be central to the literary work, and he never explains how the

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15. This is intimated in *Kāvyaśāstra* 2.279, but not fully developed.

16. Both *īyasu* and *matup* are used in the sense of *atiśaya*, see Ratnaśrījñāna on *Kāvyaśāstra* 2.237 (the printed text is corrupt, and is corrected in S. POLLOCK, *Reader on Rasa: An Historical Sourcebook of Classical Indian Aesthetics*, New York, Columbia University Press, forthcoming).

17. *Kāvyaśāstra* [sāra]samgraha 4.8 (M. R. TELANG (ed.), *Kāvyaśāstra* [sāra]samgraha of Udbhaṭa, with the Commentary of Pratihārendurāja, Bombay, Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1928). Bhāmaha’s understanding of the figure is nobility of character (3.11).

18. *Kāvyaśāstra* [sāra]samgraha 4.5.

19. *Dhvanyāloka* (P. SHASTRI (ed.), *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana, with the Commentaries of Abhinavagupta and Rāmaśāraka, Varanasi, Chaukhambha, 1940), p. 364. For the larger question of the rise of a literary teleology, see McCREA, *The Teleology of Poetics*.

reader becomes aware of it or experiences it. This can only be because Ānanda had unquestioningly accepted the classical view of *rasa*, as I suggested we call it, with its presuppositions and particular analytical focus. The focus and presuppositions I can only touch on at the end of this essay; the important point to stress here is that the assimilation of *rasa* theory into poetry was now an accomplished fact.

### III. Eight, Nine... Many Rasas

The first consequence of the extension of *rasa* theory, from drama you see into poetry you hear, that occurred gradually over the course of the ninth century is also one of the more speculative. This concerns the nature of the *rasas* and specifically their number.

Even the most superficial reading of the history of aesthetic theory will register how, after a certain point, a dispute arose over whether there may be additional affective states that can count as *rasa*; one of the few intelligent books on *rasa* is in fact devoted to this problem, V. Raghavan's *The Number of Rasas*. These states include, famously, *śānta*, the tranquil *rasa*, which was the earliest object of controversy, and *bhakti*, devotion, one of the latest, with many other contestants for inclusion in between<sup>20</sup>. Indeed, from the moment dramatic *rasa* first became poetic *rasa*, thinkers began to question the numerical limit that Bharata had placed upon the category. This starts with Rudrāta, whom we have identified as one of the earliest theorists of *rasa* in aural-poetic literature: "Insofar as the teachers have identified certain emotions as "rasas" because they can be tasted (*rasanād*), the way sweetness, sourness, and the like can be tasted, other emotions such as despair should be *rasas* as well, since they, too, can by all means be tasted"<sup>21</sup>. And the questioning reaches a high water mark in the work of Bhoja, whose masterpiece, the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, engages with the problem in its opening pages:

The conventional wisdom that "rasa" refers to the heroic, the fantastic, and the remaining [six categories] has come out of nowhere and is hardly more than a superstition, like the belief that a given banyan tree is haunted by a goblin. It

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20. *Śāntarasa* is mentioned first (outside passages in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* added at a much later date than the core materials) in Udbhaṭa's *Kāvyaṅkārāśāraśaṅgraha* 4.4 (almost certainly an interpolated verse), but it is known to and accepted by Ānandavardhana; *bhaktirasa* first in *Bhāgavatamuktāphala* of Vopadeva (c. 1300), (D. BHATTACHARYYA (ed.), [*Bhāgavata*] *muktāphala* of Vopadeva, with the Commentary of Hemādri, Calcutta, Calcutta Oriental Press, 1944), p. 164, where the co-author/commentator Hemādri, with refreshing candor, declares, "Abhinavagupta and Hemacandra are wrong" to deny that *bhakti* is a *rasa* (though it is not clear where in fact this supposed denial is made). Raghavan argues, with some justice, that "The advent of Śānta Rasa seems to have set the writers thinking on the sanctity or otherwise of the number eight or nine pertaining to the Rasa-s" (V. RAGHAVAN, *The Number of Rasas*, Madras, Adyar Library, 1975, p. 118).

21. *Kāvyaṅkārā* 12.4. The text is cited approvingly by Pratiharendurāja (and misinterpreted by him; contrast Namisādhu ad loc.) in *Kāvyaṅkārāśāraśaṅgraha*, p. 52-53, and by Bhoja (*Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, p. 633); and disapprovingly by Dhanika on *Daśarūpaka* (T. VENKATACHARYA (ed.), *Daśarūpaka of Dhanāñjaya, with the Commentary of Dhanika and the Subcommentary of Bhaṭṭa Nṛsiṃha*, Madras, Adyar Library, 1969), p. 203-204.

has only been accepted because of the intellectual conformity typical of the world, and our intention in this work is to put it to rest.

“If all emotions are equally rasas”, concludes Bhoja after citing Rudraṭa, “it makes no sense to apply the technical terms “the erotic rasa”, “the heroic rasa” and so on only to those eight stable emotions, desire and the rest, when they are fully developed. One may do it but that would then be only a terminological distinction”<sup>22</sup>. Bhoja himself, accordingly, adds such rasas as the vainglorious (*uddhata*, based on a new stable emotion *garva*, pride), the noble (*udātta* or *ūrjasvin*, based on *mati*, sagacity), and the rasa of tenderness or motherly love (*preyaḥ* or *vātsalya*, based on *sneha*, attachment, the last being supplemented by later thinkers with brotherly love or friendship between equals, and affection for a superior, a king for example), as well as the rasas of autonomy, heteronomy, bliss, and abatement<sup>23</sup>. Still other thinkers held that any of the thirty-three transitory feelings could become rasa, from torpor (*ālasya*) to vindictiveness (*amarṣa*) to resentment (*asūyā*), and so on down the alphabet. As one tenth-century writer puts it, “There is no mental state (*cittavṛtti*) that cannot achieve enhancement and become rasa”<sup>24</sup>.

Bhoja assumed that the limitation on the emotions that could count as rasa originated in mere unfounded convention (the standard view of rasa “comes out of nowhere”, *rasaprasiddhiḥ siddhā kuto 'pi*). But we know that within the tradition, a distinction was early on drawn between what could and could not count as rasa. “Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa argued”, as Abhinavagupta reports, “that, although rasas were potentially infinite in number, it was the opinion of experts that only those listed by Bharata were capable of portrayal on the stage”<sup>25</sup>. Although Abhinava agrees on the limited number of rasas (*etāvanta eva ca rasāḥ*) his haughty dismissal here (“This little bit of arrogance on Lollaṭa’s part can be safely ignored”) implies that he himself felt Bharata’s list was restrictive, not (as Lollaṭa seems to have thought) by scholarly convention, but by the nature of things, though elsewhere he tries to explain the restriction otherwise: “These are the rasas, and there are nine and nine only. It is either because these alone subserve the four “ends of man” or provide sustained pleasure that this restricted number has become traditional”<sup>26</sup>.

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22. *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, p. 2 and 633 (see also *kārikā* 11, p. 2); *Sarasvatīkaṅṭhābharāṇa* 5.23 (K. SARMA (ed.), *Sarasvatīkaṅṭhābharāṇālaṅkāra of Bhoja, with the Commentaries of Ratneśvara and Jagaddhara*, Bombay, Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1924).

23. *Sarasvatīkaṅṭhābharāṇa*, p. 627 (*svātantrya, pāraśya, ānanda, praśama*). These additions will not seem so odd when we consider that in 1859 an English philosopher listed as emotions property, power, and knowledge (G. MANDLER, “Emotion”, in D. K. FREEDHEIM (ed.), *Handbook of Psychology*, I: *History of Psychology*, New York, Wiley, 2003, p. 157-175 (p. 158)).

24. The possibility that all the transitory emotions can be rasas was first raised by Rudraṭa, *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* 12.3-4; the quotation in the text is from his commentator Namisādhu ad loc.

25. *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 292, l. 22.

26. *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 335, l. 8 (“sustained” insofar as *sthāyibhāvas* are enduring, unlike *vyabhicāribhāvas*, or transitory emotions). See further below on the *sthāyitva* of the *sthāyi*. Abhinava reviews a range of opinion on why the transitory emotions are thirty-three in number, including the view that the set is really an open one; is meant merely for pedagogical purposes; or is actually restrictive and driven by aesthetic concerns (*Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 373).

For others, however, the limitation was made on the basis of the criteria that distinguish *śravyakāvya* from *dṛśyakāvya*. This is particularly clear from the treatment of *śāntarasa*, for which the argument of Dhanika (c. 975) is as forceful as any: “Drama consists of representation, and by no means can we accept that in drama quiescence [*śama*, the stable emotion of *śāntarasa*] can function as a stable emotion. Quiescence signifies cessation of all activity and so cannot have any connection with representation”<sup>27</sup>. To be sure, *śāntarasa* is a peculiar, even paradoxical, case – emotionless emotion – and Dhanika’s judgment was not to go uncontested. But the implication here, however faint, that the typology of *rasa* was tied up with the typology of literature and the distinguishing features of each of literature’s sub-species, points the way toward a fuller analysis.

#### IV. *The Science, and History, of Emotions*

It is not from the Indian tradition itself that we can derive this analysis – the available data cannot, I believe, take us beyond where they have taken us so far – but rather from research in cognitive science and studies in the science of the emotions. The point of adducing such perspectives is not to seek to penetrate to a scientific core of the truth of emotion that exists entirely outside of its history. As will become evident, emotions like life in general are historically contingent. But like life in general emotions have certain real and constant properties, and the point of turning to a science of emotions is to ask whether there may be anything more fundamental about the nature of emotions that can help us uncover the conceptual foundations of any given history, such as that of the traditional Indian, which presents a number of peculiar features.

The history of emotion as embedded in the theory of *rasa* presents us not only with a conflict over what is allowed to count as a dominant emotional register in literature, but also with a very specific list of what those registers must be. Recall for a moment the celebrated catalogue of eight stable emotions in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*: (sexual) desire, amusement, grief, anger, energy (or endurance), fear, revulsion, and amazement. This list is puzzling in various ways, but consider only the following two. Why should anger, which forms the basis of the violent *rasa* (*raudra*), gain entry onto the list but not hatred, surely an emotion as “stable” or primary as anger or any other in the group for Indians (as for Descartes and the moderns mentioned below)?<sup>28</sup> And why should sexual desire (*rati*), the basis of the erotic *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra*), be included,

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27. *Daśarūpaka*, p. 202. That *śāntarasa* was perfectly acceptable in non-dramatic literature was a long-established view, see V. RAGHAVAN, *The Number of Rasas*, p. 52-53 (Raghavan, engaging as he did with the tradition as if it were a living one, was less interested in understanding the grounds for *śānta*’s exclusion than in vindicating its inclusion, “To grant it in *Kāvya* and to deny it in *Nāṭya* is as clumsy a compromise...” p. 54).

28. Think only of Śiśupāla, who attained *mokṣa* not only despite hating Krishna (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 10.29.13), but because of it (*Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 10.74.46). Note that Nyāya lists hatred among the three *doṣas* (*rāga*, *dveṣa*, and *moha*), and as one of the *āmaguṇas*, or properties of the self (see n. 33 below).



while non-sexual affection (*sneha*), the basis of motherly love (*vātsalya*), is excluded? If we are to understand the criteria at work in this classification, and what might account for later disagreement, we need to have some sense of what defines an emotion as “stable” to begin with.

Unfortunately, *rasa* texts themselves rarely offer any explanation, and the thinkers who define the concept do so other than psychologically or perceptually. Dhanañjaya (c. 975) seems to think in purely literary terms:

A stable emotion is one that is uninterrupted whether by conflicting or non-conflicting emotions. On the contrary, it subsumes other emotions, as the ocean subsumes rivers.... Despair and the other transitory emotions do not have that feature, and therefore cannot be stable emotions and cannot be savored.

He implies that stable emotions are stable because they *cannot* be interrupted, or expunged in a psychological sense, but only says (as his commentator Dhānika only says) that they *are* not interrupted, or displaced in a literary sense<sup>29</sup>. Abhinavagupta, for his part, conceives of the stability of the stable emotions in what we might call ethical terms, as we find in his discussion of inessentiality (*apradhānatā*), the sixth of the seven impediments (*vighnas*) to aesthetic experience:

No one’s awareness can come to rest upon something that is nonessential (*apradhāna*), since the moment that inessential thing is cognized it hastens after something more essential, and cannot come to rest in itself... The most essential aesthetic components are those several forms of consciousness that pertain to the ends of man, that is, love, power, law, and liberation. Thus, the stable emotion of desire pertains to love<sup>30</sup> as well as to forms of power and law that are necessarily related to love; the stable emotion anger pertains to power among those given to anger, and can even eventuate in love or law; the stable emotion energy can eventuate in any of the ends of man, law and the rest; and last, quiescence, when it is the stable emotion and consisting largely in dispassion brought about by true knowledge, is the means of liberation. Hence, these stable emotions are the most essential<sup>31</sup>.

However elegant Abhinava’s correlation of stable emotions with the ends of man, there is no evidence that it corresponds to anything in the conceptual structure of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* or informed its catalogue of stable emotions<sup>32</sup>. Stable emotions are of course structurally contrasted with transitory emotions

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29. *Daśarūpa* 4.34, 36 (Dhānika’s comment here is fascinating, but does nothing to clarify the stability of the *sthāyin*).

30. I read *kāma-* (for *kāmaḥ* or [KA] *kāme*). The editors of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and the corresponding passage in the *Kāvyañūśāsana* mispunctuate the passage as a whole.

31. *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 275-276.

32. The correlation was however already known to Pratihārendurāja (on *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra[sāra] saṃgraha* 4.3-4). There is additionally both a *gender* and a *social* inflection to the stable emotions, from the time of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* itself, that I can only register here: for example, only women and *adhamaprakṛti*, or persons of the lowest social order, feel fear; *uttamaprakṛti*, persons of the highest social order, only feign being afraid, for example in the face of a

(*vyabhicāri-* or *saṃcāri-bhāvas*) but the definition of the latter brings us no closer to understanding the “stability” of the former. (In fact, they complicate what precisely a *bhāva* is, including as they do such physical states as illness, dying, torpor, numbness, sleeping, waking, and exhaustion.)

The idea of an emotion list of the sort we find in Bharata is rare in systematic thought outside the discourse of *rasa* itself. To be sure, Nyāya and Sāṃkhya catalogue emotions, as does Buddhism, of which Abhinava offers a brief, characteristically irreverent review when noting the scholarly discomfort with the list of thirty-three transitory emotions:

Some scholars wonder how anyone could possibly catalogue all the various states of mind (*cittavṛtti*). And they ask with respect to their enumeration how any given number could capture this totality, whether the nine qualities of the self logicized by logicians, the eight properties of the intellect numbered by the numerologists of Sāṃkhya, or the four types of apprehension (error and the like), or the duality “mind” and “mental activities” broadcast by Buddhists<sup>33</sup>.

But in fact, the philosophical systems show little real concern with the emotions, making no attempt to justify their lists or indeed to more narrowly distinguish among the various items<sup>34</sup>. This relative unconcern seems especially odd in light of the interest in precisely this question shown by Western thinkers. We have been offered lists – constructed on the basis of what are no doubt radically differing physiologies, epistemologies, and moralities, and for radically different purposes – by everyone from Aristotle (a very long one in the *Rhetoric*, including anger, mildness, love, enmity, fear, confidence, shame/shamelessness, benevolence, pity, indignation, envy, emulation, contempt) to Descartes (who in his last work, *Passions de l'âme*, 1649, catalogues the *passions primitives* as wonder, love, hate, desire, joy,

transgression they may have made against a guru (*Nāṭyaśāstra*, p. 347; *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 325).

33. *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 373. Normally Nyāya speaks of eight *guṇas* (among the twenty-four) that pertain to the *ātma*: *buddhi*, *sukha*, *duḥkha*, *icchā*, *dveṣa*, *prayatna*, *dharma*, *adharmā*; presumably Abhinava here adds *saṃskāra*. The Sāṃkhyas' eight are *dharma*, *adharmā*, *jñāna*, *ajñāna*, *vairāgya*, *avairāgya*, *aīśvarya*, *anaiśvarya*, and the four types of apprehension, *viparyaya*, *aśakti*, *tuṣṭi*, and *siddhi* (see also R. P. KANGLE, *Rasa-Bhāva-Vicāra*, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya-Samskṛti Mandal, Bombay, 1973, p. 438).

34. Buddhist *Abhidharma*, which provides lists in profusion, may be an exception but it is concerned more with ethical dispositions than with what contemporary psychology would identify as emotion (see G. DREYFUS, “Asian Perspective: Indian Theories of Mind”, in P. ZELAZO *et al.* (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 89-114 (p. 100)). Nonetheless, the lists of *kleśas*, *āsravas*, *kaṣāyas*, *anuśāyas*, and other mental states merit attention for an intellectual history of *rasa* of the sort they have not received. Indeed, there is no comprehensive account of emotion in Indological literature, or even an adequate historical psychology differentiating the functions of *manas*, *buddhi*, *antaḥkaraṇa*, *citta*, *hṛdaya* (where *rasa* is often said to exist), and so on.

sadness) and Spinoza (who in his *Ethics* reduces *affectus* to pleasure, pain, and desire, identifying the last as the very core)<sup>35</sup>.

One of the striking if conspicuous things about these Western lists is their variability. Not only does the scientific capacity for precision in describing the human meet something of its limit in demarking the subtle gradations of the emotions, but emotions change over time. We have more and more evidence of the fact that new emotions emerge, and old emotions disappear, slowly no doubt but assuredly. In Western Europe, melancholy is a phenomenon of the post-Reformation era, boredom of the eighteenth century, and (perhaps not unrelatedly), romantic love of the nineteenth. We know that emotions may fade to the point of vanishing (for example, the sense of honor in contemporary life; consider also the historical fluctuations in the nature of male grief), and may be variably distributed across cultures or across historical epochs (for example, shame and guilt)<sup>36</sup>. Then again, there do seem to be striking continuities. In classical Chinese thought, for example, the catalogue of emotions seems very familiar. The *Book of Rituals* list the *qing* as joy and anger, sorrow and fear, love, aversion and desire; while traditional Chinese medical theory and therapy list the seven *qiqing liuyu* or emotional states/affects as joy, anger, anxiety, thought, grief, fear, and fright<sup>37</sup>.

There exists to date no historiography of Indian emotion, let alone one that might have some bearing on Bharata's list or the notion of "stability", though I think one could be written. It can certainly be argued that, for example, *bhakti*, or devotion to a personal god, is a new affective state first discernible in late-epic India (though it attains culture-wide, and explosive, influence only a millennium or more later)<sup>38</sup>. No less interesting if more speculative is the history of *karuṇā* (which becomes the rasa *karuṇa*)<sup>39</sup>. The term is sometimes

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35. *Ethica* III. *cupiditas est ipsa hominis essentia* (J. VAN VLOTEN – J. P. N. LAND (eds.), *Benedicti de Spinoza opera quotquot reperta sunt*, 2 vol., The Haag, Martinus Nijhoff, 1882), p. 172. Compare Bhoja's definition of *śṛṅgāra*, or passion: *sarvātmasampadudayātiśayaikahetuḥ* ("the sole cause of the appearance and added potency of the entire range [of emotions] of the self"), *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, p. 2 (for Bhoja's exegesis of the *kārikā*, see p. 375).

36. The bibliography on the history of emotions in the West and the history of attempts to catalogue them is vast, and I am a very inexpert guide. For general trends see P. STEARNS, "History of Emotions: Issues of Change and Impact", in M. LEWIS *et al.* (eds.), *Handbook of Emotions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., New York, Guilford Press, 2008, p. 17-31; G. MANDLER, "Emotion"; G. BRUN – D. KUENZLE, "Introduction: A New Role for Emotions in Epistemology", in G. BRUN *et al.* (eds.), *Epistemology and Emotions*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008, p. 1-31. P. ARIÈS, *The Hour of our Death*, New York, Vintage Books, 1982, presents evidence of male grief in the Middle Ages that would have been familiar to medieval Indians (judging from a work like the *Uttarāmacarita*) but alien to our contemporaries. Ennui, or French boredom, may be somewhat later than the English variety.

37. H. EIFRING (ed.), *Love and Emotions in Traditional Chinese Literature*, Leiden, Brill, 2004, p. 1, 13, 23; Benjamin Elman (personal communication).

38. I am unaware, however, that anyone has actually made this argument. Note that devotion was an emotion for Darwin (discussed below), with its own distinct historicality. See also D. GROSS, "Defending the Humanities with Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872)", *Critical Inquiry* 37 (2010), p. 34-59 (p. 49).

39. The two forms were first distinguished by Śrī Śaṅkuka (*Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 311).

translated in European languages as pity or compassion, but what emotion is it really pointing toward? Two quite dissimilar ones, I believe, for two different “emotional communities”<sup>40</sup>. In the *Uttararāmacarita*, for example, the paradigmatic text of *karuṇarasa* (*eko rasaḥ karuṇa eva*, says Bhavabhūti, 3.48, meaning of course the single *rasa* in his drama), Rāma does not feel pity for Sītā because he believes she has been wronged or wants to relieve her suffering; the emotion is not primarily outward-directed sadness at all. On the contrary, the pity would seem rather to be Rāma’s sadness for himself, for the collapse of everything he suffered for, above all his kingship, and for the loss of the sons required to help him repay the debt to his ancestors (6.28 [8]).

Even if such a formulation may be thought too reductive, the classical theory can hardly be said to concern itself with “compassion” according to the dictionary definition: “pity for the sufferings or misfortunes of others”, *tout court*. For the feeling of *karuṇā* to become the *rasa karuṇa* the person lost must be, as Bharata says explicitly and repeatedly, an *iṣṭajana*, someone beloved to the *subject*; it is an emotion in which one’s self remains central. “The *karuṇa* *rasa* that arises when someone grieves for a person *not* related (*bandhu*) to him”, as Abhinava states, “is [a *semblance* of *karuṇa* and hence is] itself comic”<sup>41</sup>. We think of *karuṇa* more broadly as we do only because the early Buddhists appropriated and transvalued the concept as they appropriated and transvalued so much of the dominant episteme. One might even say the Buddhists redefined the very concept “*bandhu*” so as to comprise the whole world, thereby turning *karuṇā* into the active, blind, almost irrational compassion so exuberantly illustrated in the *jātaka* tales. As Dr. Johnson put it, “Pity is not natural to man... Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reason. We may have uneasy sensations from seeing a creature in distress, without pity: for we have not pity unless we wish to relieve them”<sup>42</sup>. To see a creature in distress and to strive to do everything, even at the cost of one own life, to relieve that suffering was, once upon a time, something new in India. It was the Buddhists who invented compassion – and this is decidedly not the *karuṇa* of aesthetic discourse<sup>43</sup>. Indeed, it is also by no

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40. See J. PLAMPER, “The History of Emotions”, *History and Theory* 49 (2010), p. 237-265 (p. 252) for a brief definition, and B. H. ROSENWEIN, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2006, for a full exposition.

41. See *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.62 and *Abhinavabhāratī*, p. 290 (note that the *vibhāvas* for *karuṇa* are: a violation of *dharma*; loss of one’s wealth, and death of one’s kin, 6.78 with Abhinava). Abhinava dismisses Śrī Śaṅkuka’s idea that *karuṇa* has anything to do with *dayā*, compassion (p. 311).

42. J. BOSWELL, *Johnson’s Table Talk: a Selection of His Main Topics and Opinions Taken from Boswell’s “Life” and Arranged by W.A. L. Bettany*, London, Blackie & Son, 1904 (p. 20). Hume (in *The Treatise of Human Nature*) offers a strikingly different, and uncharacteristically Christianized, view of pity.

43. A fuller argument would need to make sense of the history and nature of the idea of the *dayāvīra*, the hero of compassion, first discussed in *Dhvanyāloka* (p. 394) in relation to *śāntarasa* (in fact, Abhinava and others claim *dayāvīra* is only another name for *śānta*; see V. RAGHAVAN, *The Number of Rasas*, p. 85), but first exhibited in *Nāgānanda*, Harṣa’s Buddhist drama. Note that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* speaks only of the *dharmavīra* (6.79).

means clear that what the viewer was supposed to feel is compassion, rather than something closer to misery<sup>44</sup>.

Pity therefore has a history in India, as no doubt many other emotions do in many other places, and this history surely has a bearing on the affective aesthetics of Bharata. But there is something else more directly pertinent to this aesthetics that the science of emotions has to tell us.

### *V. Seeing is Believing*

However vastly documented, or at least documentable, the historicity of emotions may be, the diversity revealed by this history has not stopped contemporary psychology from trying to develop a set of the basic universal emotions; on the contrary, the overlaps have encouraged the effort. There have been lists galore and more recently lists of lists, including one that reports lists of three emotions (fear, love, and rage, Watson in 1930), four (expectancy, fear, rage, and panic, Panksepp in 1982; or fear, anger, depression, and satisfaction, Kemper in 1987), five (happiness, sadness, anxiety, anger, and disgust, Oatley in 1987), six (anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, and surprise, Ekman in 1982), nine (fear, anger, distress, disgust, interest, shame, joy, surprise, and contempt, Tompkins in 1962-1963), ten (anger, contempt, disgust, distress, fear, guilt, interest, joy, shame, and surprise, Izard in 1971)<sup>45</sup>. This state of affairs has naturally led some to doubt the very attempt to reduce so complex a mass of phenomena to a set of elementary particles (there are over 300 words in the English language that refer to emotions),<sup>46</sup> confronting us as it does again with the tension between a quest for scientific order and the messiness of life in history.

The Indian materials do not help us resolve that tension, and it is not my intention anyway in adducing them to try to do so – the usual, and usually useless, maneuver of attempting to upstage Western “science” by a wiser Eastern “pre-science”. What I do aim to achieve by placing the Indian data in the context of a cognitive approach to emotion – I repeat myself here lest I be misunderstood – is to determine whether the contemporary method for identifying basic emotions might suggest anything pertinent about the Indian intellectual history of *rasa* as it moved from the seen to the heard.

Perhaps the most well-known of the lists of emotions is the set of six noted above that was developed by Paul Ekman (since revised by the rather

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44. See Gadamer’s discussion of Greek *éleos* in Aristotle, for which he believes the correct German translation is not *Mitleid* but *Jammer* (in *Truth and Method*, New York, Continuum, 1996, p. 130), though others demur (see M. POHLENZ, “Furcht und Mitleid? Ein Nachwort”, *Hermes* 84 (1956), p. 49-74). (I thank Andrew Ollett for reminding me of the Gadamer passage.)

45. The list of lists is adapted from Ortony and Turner, cited in R. C. SOLOMON, “Back to Basics: On the Very Idea of “Basic Emotions”, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 32 (2002), p. 115-144 (p. 123), plus R. LEYS, “How Did Fear Become a Scientific Object and What Kind of Object Is It?”, *Representations* 110 (2010), p. 66-104 (p. 68).

46. G. BRUN – D. KUENZLE, “Introduction”, p. 7.

alarming addition of seven)<sup>47</sup>. What has been most influential in Ekman's work is his insistence that "distinctive signals", more particularly, "facial configurations", are fundamental to the definition of basic emotion. It does not matter to my argument whether or not such data are presented in the attempt to prove the existence of transculturally constant, indeed neurologically based, universal emotions. What does matter is that these signals and configurations, for much contemporary research, are considered key to determining what is "basic" about basic emotions, however many there may be, since other "emotional traits" and moods do not manifest themselves in this way. In a word, while there may very well be debate about the meaning and heuristic value of physical expression in the science of the emotions, there is no debate that some emotions are indeed physically expressed and some are not.

As Ekman's acknowledges, his theory and in fact the heart of his method were deeply influenced by Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). The aim of this classic work was to corroborate the theory of evolution by demonstrating how the expression of emotions was constant across species<sup>48</sup>. It is less any particular list of basic emotions that interests me here – Darwin actually offers no fixed set, though he does speak of "chief emotions" and discusses amusement, fear, suffering, rage, indignation (moderate anger), astonishment, disgust, and contempt or disdain<sup>49</sup> – than the method by which emotions are to be investigated. Central for Darwin in making his case was *visible* expression, in particular facial expression, which he presented "with photographic and other illustrations". There are some emotions that are basic; they are identified "with those that display more or less fixed, more or less automatic... manifestations"<sup>50</sup>. The emotions that are basic are the emotions that you can *see*.

There are other emotions that you cannot see. They certainly exist, and powerfully so, but they cannot be considered basic because they elicit no action on the subject's part. Darwin considers these in a section of *Emotions* called "Contrast between the emotions which cause and do not cause expressive movements". The first he addresses is motherly love: "No emotion is stronger than maternal love", Darwin explains, "but a mother may feel deepest love for her helpless infant, and yet not show it by any outward sign". And with this he contrasts sexual love: "The love between the opposite sexes is widely different from maternal love... for this love is not inactive like that of a mother for her infant". Similarly, hatred (like suspicion, envy, or jealousy) does not "lead to action" and is not "shown by any outward sign". Hatred is enacted by rage, which however is "plainly exhibited". Neither painters nor

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47. P. EKMAN, "Basic Emotions", in T. DALGLEISH – M. POWER (eds.), *Handbook of Cognition and Emotion*, Chichester, Wiley, 1999, p. 45-60 (p. 55).

48. See D. GROSS, "Defending the Humanities".

49. C. DARWIN, *The Expression of the Emotions*, p. 361-364.

50. R. C. SOLOMON, "Back to Basics", p. 116.

poets are able to portray such emotions as hatred and maternal love except by association with their accessories<sup>51</sup>.

It should be noted that while Darwin may have emphasized in his account of the visible what the then-revolutionary technology of photography permitted him to capture and reproduce, namely facial expression (a narrow assessment in which, rather curiously, he has been followed by contemporary scholars such as Ekman),<sup>52</sup> he was actually interested in the total physicality of the emotions. He thus speaks generally of the physical “movement” of an emotion, or “movement of expression”: “Terror causes the body to tremble. The skin becomes pale, sweat breaks out, and the hair bristles... The breathing is hurried. The heart beats quickly, wildly, and violently”; “When lovers meet, we know that their hearts beat quickly, their breathing is hurried, and their faces flush; for this love is not inactive like that of a mother for her infant”<sup>53</sup>.

In this history of the science of emotion we can find, I suggest, some clues to help us understand the intellectual history of aesthetics in India. The Indian data show that it was originally in the context of drama, *dr̥śyakāvya* or literature-that-is-seen, that the distinctive list of “stable emotions” and their associated rasas was conceptualized. The foundational logic of dramatic (and dramaturgical) emotion comprises only emotion that can be physically represented, not of course just in facial expression but in the whole host of vocal and physical reactions and cues (*anubhāvas*), in physically observable “movement”, that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is at pains to teach the actors who were its principal readership<sup>54</sup>. (This context of identification will prompt us to rethink the physicality of *utsāha*, the basic emotion of the heroic rasa: it is less fortitude as a moral virtue than something like embodied determination.)<sup>55</sup>

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51. C. DARWIN, *The Expression of the Emotions*, p. 78-79, see also 215 (and D. GROSS, “Defending the Humanities”, p. 50-51). Note that Ekman regards hatred and parental love as “emotional plots” (“Basic Emotions”, p. 55), “more enduring” than emotions, which (in contrast to the Indian *sthāyibhāvas*) he thinks of as short-lived (p. 50).

52. See P. EKMAN – W. V. FRIESEN, *Unmasking the Face. A Guide to Recognizing Emotions from Facial Clues*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall, 1975. Developed from this work is a “Facial Action Coding System” used by cognitive scientists, see D. GROSS, “Defending the Humanities”, p. 41.

53. C. DARWIN, *The Expression of the Emotions*, p. 77-79.

54. For example, “The erotic is to be represented by reactions such as the skillful play of the eyes, movements of the eyebrows and sidelong glances, and gentle and pleasing bodily motions and verbal utterances” (*Nāṭyaśāstra*, p. 293). R. A. Shweder *et al.* have also recognized the parallel between Bharata’s list of basic emotions and that of contemporary psychology, but they adduce it basically to questions any simple equation – “There is no neatly bounded set of “universal” facial expressions” (R. A. SHWEDER *et al.*, “The Cultural Psychology of the Emotions; Ancient and Renewed”, in M. LEWIS *et al.* (eds.) *Handbook of Emotions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., New York, Guilford Press, 2008, p. 409-427 (p. 412)); R. Scheckner, by contrast, sought to correlate photographs of facial expression with the *sthāyibhāvas* to posit a universal pattern (R. SCHECKNER, *Performance Theory*, New York, Routledge, 1988).

55. Bharata’s own description of the physical representation of *vīrarasa* is obscure enough (“By boldness, heroism, steadfastness, energy, audacity, and magnificence, and by statements laden with double meanings, is the heroic rasa properly represented”, *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.68) that

With the extension of *rasa* theory to *śravyakāvya*, literature-that-is-heard – a conceptual innovation that occurred nearly half a millennium after the core ideas of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* were formulated – this logic was weakened or even lost. In the eyes of the subsequent tradition, beginning with Rudraṭa (and to the despair, instinctive and not clearly reasoned, of the custodians of dramaturgical theory such as Dhanika, who rejects Rudraṭa out of hand), the list came to appear arbitrary or even senseless. Accordingly, among those thinkers like Bhoja for whom poetic representation took precedence over dramatic representation, there seemed to be no reason – because in fact there was no longer any reason – not to include additional emotions and *rasas*, such as *vātsalya*, motherly love.

### VI. Summary and Conclusions

The number of the aesthetic emotions, and the very idea of what kinds of emotions could become aesthetic, were transformed when the concept of *rasa* was extended from literature seen to literature heard. The original pragmatic ground of what could count as *rasa* – emotion that can be made perceptible through acting – was no longer understood and in any case was no longer required for literature where everything occurred in the mind's eye *vastuśaktimahimnā*, by the power of narrativity. The visibility of emotion does not of course exhaust the significance of the *sthāyibhāva* list; it can be analyzed in many other ways, such as Abhinavagupta's moral map, once these emotions came to be linked with the ends of man. But visibility, in service of a theory not of psychology but rather of performativity, was the feature that informed the list in the first place.

The number and kind of emotions that could become *rasa* was not the only conceptual transformation that accompanied this analytical integration of drama and poetry. Another key problem, though somewhat more obscurely tied up with it than the questions dealt with here, concerns *rasāśraya*, or the locus where *rasa* was believed to reside. It makes perfectly good sense that early writers thought of *rasa*, at least in their analysis of performance, as being located in the first instance in the character they could see (the only dispute among them was whether *rasa* “arose” in the character or was “inferred” or “manifested” in him), whereas later theorists of aural-poetic literature, for whom the character was no longer visible but rather “heard”, would naturally locate *rasa* in the reader. The former position was certainly that of Bharata

scholars eventually confessed complete confusion. Thus Bhānudatta (c. 1500): “The reactions (*anubhāva*), one might argue, have to be physical properties... if they are to give us some sense of *rasa*, which is itself imperceptible, but steadfastness (*dhairya*) and energy (*utsāha*) [seen as both *sthāyibhāva* and *anubhāva*] are not such properties. True enough, but by the word “steadfast” was meant the absence of physical movement, and by “energy”, things like tears and horripilation. Or we could reply that the physical reactions are of four sorts, and mental reactions have been included among them. Awareness of that mental reaction is what makes clear the particular *rasa* being reacted to. It makes no difference whether that awareness is mental or perceptible”. See *Rasataranṅinī* 3.25 (S. POLLOCK (ed.), *Rasataranṅinī* of Bhānudatta, in *The Bouquet of Rasa and the River of Rasa*, New York, New York University Press, 2009).



and all writers before c. 900, when Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka tried to make philosophical sense of this natural relocation, and redirected the focal point of the rasa analytic away from the old formalism and toward a new reception theory, or hermeneutics, of aesthetics<sup>56</sup>. The difficulty with this explanation, however, is that in the transitional period some thinkers concentrating on *dṛśyakāvya* such as Dhanika and Abhinavagupta follow Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, whereas some who prioritize *śravyakāvya* such as Bhoja return to the classical view.

However this particular difficulty may be resolved, another set of questions, this time of an epistemological sort, was tied up with the shifting ontology of rasa as it moved from the seen to the heard. The most challenging and important case concerns the notion of (*abhi*)*vyakti*. For Ānandavardhana, who put the term in the literary-critical vocabulary, this was purely a linguistic phenomenon, a *śabdavṛtti*, the verbal “manifestation” of the latent meanings of a text, of which rasa is the most important. But this explanation for how rasa in the text was communicated became unintelligible when Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka relocated rasa in the reader, as thinkers writing in his wake like Dhanika clearly show<sup>57</sup>. Accordingly, later *ālankārikas*, at least from the time of Mammaṭa if not Abhinavagupta (or perhaps Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka himself), and by a process almost completely unregistered in western scholarship and in the Indian tradition itself, transformed (*abhi*)*vyakti* into a psychological phenomenon, a *cittavṛtti*, the “revelation” to the viewer/reader of *his own* basic emotion<sup>58</sup>.

It remains unclear whether the solutions to these key questions are all part of the extension of rasa theory from drama to the wider world of literature. What I hope to have at least demonstrated, however, is that much of the intellectual history of this theory, India’s greatest contribution to world aesthetics, remains to be written<sup>59</sup>.

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56. S. POLLOCK, “What was Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka Saying? The Hermeneutical Transformation of Indian Aesthetics”, in S. POLLOCK (ed.), *Epic and Argument in Sanskrit Literary History*, Delhi, Manohar, 2010, p. 143-184.

57. *Avaloka on Daśarūpaka*, p. 217.

58. I explore this problem in detail in “*Vyakti* in the History of Rasa”, *Vimarśa: A Half-yearly Research Bulletin of the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan* 6 (2012), p. 232-253. I say “almost unregistered” since a few sentences are addressed to the question in D. H. H. INGALLS – J. M. MASSON – M. V. PATWARDHAN (trans.), *The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1990, p. 35.

59. I thank Yigal Bronner and Andrew Ollett for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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