



## CHAPTER FOUR

# Abhinavagupta and His School, 1000–1200

### 4.1 RASA AND THE CRITIQUE OF IMITATION

#### *Literary Investigations of Bhatta Tota (c. 975)*

What we know about Bhatta Tota (sometimes, Tauta) comes principally from the pen of Abhinavagupta. He refers to him at various places in his writings on literature as teacher, and at the beginning of his commentary on the *Treatise on Drama* explains that he will transmit “the true doctrine of the theory of drama that has issued from the mouth of the goodly Brahman Tota.”<sup>1</sup> That Bhatta Tota wrote a work on dramaturgy, if not a commentary on Bharata’s *Treatise*, is indicated by Abhinava’s later citations in his *New Dramatic Art*. Also ascribed to Bhatta Tota is a treatise, now lost, the *Literary Investigations*, upon which Abhinava himself wrote the *Exegesis* (*Investigations* might have been the name of the dramaturgical treatise).

Bhatta Tota is rarely mentioned in Sanskrit literature after the twelfth century; Hemachandra (d. 1172) may have been the last scholar to have had direct access to his works, though even he was probably only citing citations. Given Abhinava’s own coordinates, Bhatta Tota must have lived in Kashmir in the latter half of the tenth century. If the exposition of interpretations of rasa that Abhinava provides in his *New Dramatic Art* is to be understood as a strictly chronological rather than conceptual ordering, then Bhatta Tota would have to be placed earlier than Bhatta Nayaka, though if our interpretation of the reference in the *River of Kings* is correct, Bhatta Nayaka must have lived at the beginning of the tenth century. Thin though the evidence is, the former appears to have known and critiqued the latter. We may contrast the two on the definition of “poet” (Bhatta Tota fragment #1 and Bhatta Nayaka #4), and on poetry and pedagogy (fragments #3 and #7 respectively); also, the term “commonization,” closely associated with, if not coined by

Bhatta Nayaka, is used by Bhatta Tota. One problem with this sequence, however, is Bhatta Tota's argument that the character, the poet, and the spectator all have the same experience of *rasa* (fragment #4). Such a theory would be unthinkable in the wake of Bhatta Nayaka's transformative ideas—unless, of course, it had been offered as stubborn critique.

The fragmentary state of Bhatta Tota's corpus can give us only the merest sense of his views, but they were sometimes as insightful as they were influential. His definition of poetic imagination (*pratibhā*, fragment #1) was to be echoed down the generations. He was the first to draw a radical distinction between the secular poet (*kavi*) and the Vedic "poet" (*kavi*), and to restrict the idea of *kāvya*, literature, to the work of the former (fragment #2). The importance he attributes to "description" in the constitution of literature, rather than, say, narrative action, captures something essential about the specific nature of classical Sanskrit poetry. And the primacy he awards to drama in the conceptualization of *rasa* (fragment #5) brilliantly recapitulates as theory what was historical fact.

Aside from these tantalizing bits, Bhatta Tota is most celebrated, thanks to Abhinava's extended paraphrase (or quotation?), for his devastating critique of Shri Shankuka's concept of *rasa* in drama as an imitation of emotion.<sup>3</sup> This critique reveals both a mind skilled in dialectic, sometimes dizzyingly, even facetiously so, as well as the difficulty he and his student Abhinavagupta faced in trying to interpret away the many statements in the *Treatise on Drama* that support the idea of dramatic imitation. The critique itself does not help us determine what his own position on *rasa* may have been. But his bravura reasoning is a treat in itself, and it was to be taken over almost in its entirety by Abhinava.<sup>4</sup>

## FROM LITERARY INVESTIGATIONS OF BHATTA TOTA

### Direct (and Possibly Direct) Citations

(#1)<sup>5</sup> Wisdom that has ever new insights is called imagination. Imagination is the very life breath of description, and a "poet" is someone who has mastered description. A poet's work is called "poetry."

(#2)<sup>6</sup> There is no true poet who is not a seer. "Seer" comes from seeing, and "seeing" is true insight into the properties of the vast variety of existent things.

Reference made to the word "poet" in the Vedas is based on his true insight, but the meaning of the word that has become conventional in everyday life is based on both his insight and his gift for description. Thus, although his sight was ever clear, Valmiki, the primal sage, did not become a poet until he mastered description.

(#3)<sup>7</sup> Pleasure is constitutive of *rasa*, and *rasa* is simply drama, and drama simply knowledge.<sup>8</sup>

(#4)<sup>9</sup> The protagonist, the poet, and the audience, accordingly, all have the same experience.

(#5)<sup>10</sup> [Abhinavagupta: "Rasas are found in drama alone, and in poetry only to the degree that it mimics drama. For as my teacher has argued, with respect to the subject matter of the literary text, *rasa* comes into being only when a state of awareness simulating perception comes into being. To quote his *Literary Investigations*:]

To the degree that poetry does not approximate the character of a performance, the possibility of savoring *rasa* decreases. But when the aesthetic elements—foundational factors such as a beloved woman or stimulant factors like a garden or the moon—are properly made available by the full range of imaginative expression blossoming in the course of description, they can become as clear as actual perceptions.

(#6)<sup>11</sup> The poet, they say, has a vast burden to bear: definitions, figures of speech, language qualities, knowledge of flaws, dramatic modes, and plot elements.<sup>12</sup> Only when all these come together as pleasing virtues in a mutually suitable manner will *rasa* be manifested, and immediately. A composition that is uncomplicated and engaging, whether with lilting meters or unversified words,<sup>13</sup> in an easily comprehended language—this sort of pure poetry (defined as "verbal acting" within the context of the "general style of acting") facilitates the experience of its *rasas* and emotions.

From this kind of poetry, whatever may be its narrative content, *rasa* will emerge from the transfiguration of the full complement of aesthetic elements, when these are neither deficient nor used to excess. The world of the drama is born from everyday life for the enhancement of *rasa*. *Rasa* is the be-all and end-all of the creator poet, deriving from his vivid imagination.

#### Restatements of Bhatta Tota's Doctrine

(#1a, Abhinavagupta)<sup>14</sup>

The position of Shri Shankuka<sup>15</sup> lacks any inherent truth and cannot withstand criticism. To explain: Is the argument that "*rasa* has the form of an imitation" asserted [1] from the perspective of the apprehending audience member; or [2] from that of the actor; or [3] in reliance on the notions of scholars, who analyze the nature of reality (to quote: "It is scholars, after all, who analyze in this way, and not those who simply engage in the practice")?<sup>16</sup>

[1] Now, as for the first perspective, we cannot reconcile it with Bharata's actual statements if we follow them closely.<sup>17</sup> We can only call something an "imitation" if it has been perceived by some valid means of knowledge. For example, one can only

interpret the drinking of water as the drinking of rum (giving us the idea, "That fellow is drinking rum") if we are actually seeing the water-drinking with our own eyes. And thus in the case under discussion, you need to explain what the spectator is perceiving in the actor that appears as an imitation of desire. For one thing, his body, the headdress, the costume and so on it is dressed in, his horripilation, stammering, the shaking or flailing of arms, the movement of eyebrows, the glances, and so on:<sup>18</sup> none of this appears to anyone as an *imitation* of a mental state such as desire, because all of it differs radically from desire. For one thing, it is material; for another, it is perceived by different sense organs; and last, it is located elsewhere than desire.<sup>19</sup> For another, this cannot be the imitation of a character since such imitation can manifest itself only if we have already seen the actual person. But none of us has ever seen Rama and the desire he feels. The idea, therefore, that the actor is "imitating Rama" can be dismissed as so much empty talk.

Now, suppose you argue that the erotic *rasa* is an imitation of desire comprehended as simply the mental state of the actor. You still need to explain what the mental state we are apprehending consists of. It consists, you will say, of the everyday mental state—one characterized by causes, effects, and auxiliaries—that we are able to apprehend by signs that prompt an inference: a cause such as a lovely woman, an effect such as sidelong glances, and auxiliaries such as satisfaction and other transitory emotions. But then, unfortunately for you, the mental state we are apprehending is *desire itself*; forget about the argument of its being an *imitation* of desire.

You will reply that there is a fundamental distinction here: the aesthetic elements, the foundational factor and so on, are real only in the case of the character being imitated; in the case of the actor doing the imitating, they are not. So be it, but if these elements are factitious and not really the causes, effects, and auxiliaries of that desire, but are instead something invented thanks to the actor's study of the poetry, his training, and so on, are they or are they not grasped as factitious by the audience? If they are, then how could the audience possibly have any real awareness of desire?<sup>20</sup> That, you will retort, is precisely the reason for claiming that what is being apprehended is an imitation. But, my simple fellow,<sup>21</sup> it is only reasonable to draw an inference about some *second* thing (that is, an *imitation* of desire as opposed to actual desire) when it has arisen as an effect from some *second* cause (factitious elements) *understood to be second* by an observer who knows the difference. But the observer who does not know will only have an inference of the cause itself that is familiar to him (that is, the real desire in the main character).<sup>22</sup> From a particular scorpion, only a knowledgeable observer could make the correct inference that dung is the cause of its propagation; an ignorant observer would make an inference that another scorpion is its cause, and that could be false knowledge.<sup>23</sup> You would not in-

fer an imitation of fire from mist that is actually being perceived as smoke.<sup>24</sup> It is not even correct to say we can infer an imitation of fire from a sign manifesting itself as an imitation of smoke. We do not find that we apprehend the presence of a bouquet of red roses imitating fire from mist actually perceived as an imitation of smoke.<sup>25</sup>

[269] But wait, you will say, the actor who is angry is not really angry but only appears to be so. That is true, he is similar to an angry man, the similarity coming from his frowning and so on, the way a cow's similarity to a wild ox comes from its features<sup>26</sup>—but this in no way suffices to make it an imitation.<sup>27</sup> Given that the audience has no sense of any similarity anyway, and that it believes the actor is certainly feeling some emotion, it is a completely hollow argument to say an imitation must be manifesting itself here.

You make the further argument that the audience has the awareness "This is Rama." Now, if this awareness is certain at the time it arises and not negated<sup>28</sup> at some later point, why does it not count as true knowledge? Or if it is negated later, why does it not count as false knowledge? According to the real nature of things, of course, it is false knowledge even if it is not later negated. It is therefore untrue to say, "We encounter no antithetical ideas. . . ."<sup>29</sup> In addition, we have the same awareness, "This is Rama," when it comes to a second actor too, so there would turn out to be a general class category, a "Ramaness," in which both participate.<sup>30</sup>

You also argue that "A distinct comprehension of the foundational and stimulant factors is gained on the strength of the literary narrative itself."<sup>31</sup> I am not sure what this means. First, the actor does not get the idea "This remarkable woman Sita is mine" as something actually pertaining to himself. And if what you mean by "distinct comprehension" is simply that it is the audience that is supposed to be capable of apprehending the factors, then it should be all the easier for them to "distinctly comprehend" the stable emotion.<sup>32</sup> What the audience chiefly understands, after all, is "This stable emotion is present in this person (the actor)." If we are to be in accord with what the audience is actually apprehending, then, it is false to claim that *rasa* is an imitation of a stable emotion.<sup>33</sup> (The distinction in the nature of "verbal acting" introduced in the sentence "For *referential* language as such is not at the same time *expressive*" will be considered later at the appropriate place.)<sup>34</sup>

[2] Now, as for the actor, he certainly does not have the idea, "I am imitating Rama or his mental state." For in the first place, if "imitation" (*anu-karaṇa*) is taken in the sense of "making similar" (*sadrśa-karaṇa*), it is not even something that the actor can accomplish, since he has never seen the original. But if the term means merely "making (*karaṇa*) afterward (*anu*)" (with *anu* understood in a temporal sense), then the definition would be too wide, for this species of "imitation" occurs in everyday life.<sup>35</sup> Then again, if it is not some particular person but rather the emotion (grief, for

example) of a high-status character<sup>36</sup> that the actor believes he is imitating, then you still need to explain what he is using to produce the imitation. It cannot be grief, first of all, for there is no reason for the actor to be grieving.<sup>37</sup> Nor can an imitation of grief be made by shedding tears and the like, because of the radical difference between material teardrops and immaterial emotions that we have already noted. And if you are only prepared to go so far as to say that the actor believes he is imitating the reactions to grief that a high-status character is feeling, we still have to ask: what high-status character are you talking about? If you answer: Just some unspecified character, then how can such an entity lacking all particularity be brought to our awareness? And if you answer: Whoever it is that would be expected to weep the way the actor is weeping, well then, we have the actor's own self barging into the midst of the proceedings,<sup>38</sup> and the whole relationship of subject and object of imitation collapses.

Furthermore, the actor does not feel that what he is doing is an imitation; he just has the sense that he is acting, simply by displaying the physical reactions—first, thanks to his training; next, by reason of his recollecting his own “foundational and stimulant factors” (his own beloved, for example); and last, from the “heart’s concurrence” deriving from a “commonization” of the character’s mental state—and by reciting the poetry with the proper intonation and all the other appurtenances. [270] For an actor’s imitating the actions of Rama is nothing like a woman’s imitating the clothing of her lover (as we have shown in chapter 1).<sup>39</sup>

[3] Last, it is also in accordance with the way things really are that we deny that an imitation of the stable emotion takes place. This is so first of all because nothing of which we have no awareness<sup>40</sup> can be said to have any reality. As for what is really the case, this is something we will discuss later. Furthermore, the sage has not directly said anything to suggest that *rasa* is an imitation of a stable emotion, nor can we find anything in his text that would lead even to an inference of such a thing. In fact, his description of all the things that provide sustenance to drama—the *dhruvā* songs, the variegated rhythms, the components of the preliminary dance—leads us to infer that just the opposite of imitation is taking place, an issue we will enlarge on at the end of the chapter on emplotment in drama.<sup>41</sup> As for the statement in the *Treatise on Drama* itself that drama is “an imitation of everything contained in the seven continents,” this is something that can be explained in an altogether different way.<sup>42</sup> And last, if we were to grant for the sake of argument that the sage is indeed speaking of an “imitation” of a stable emotion, why is that new term never applied by him to the woman’s actual imitation of her lover’s clothes or gait?<sup>43</sup>

Finally, as to your argument about a cow’s being “constructed” of yellow and other colors of paint:<sup>44</sup> if the sense meant here is “manifested,” that is patently false, be-

cause no real cow is being manifested by the paint as though by a lamp. All that is being produced thereby is a particular configuration similar to a cow. The painting is the domain of an appearance, namely, that an entity similar to a cow subsists in a particular arrangement similar to the arrangement of the parts of a cow. The configuration of aesthetic elements, however, is never grasped in a cognition of *similarity* to a stable emotion like desire. Therefore, it is false to assert that *rasa* is the imitation of a stable emotion.

(#2a, Abhinavagupta)<sup>45</sup>

The peaceful *rasa* is the most important *rasa* of them all, insofar as it is based on the highest of the ends of man, because it results in liberation from transmigration. Both my teacher, Bhatta Tauta, in his *Literary Investigations*, and I myself in my *Exegesis* thereon, have carefully and repeatedly analyzed both the pros and cons of this position.

(#3a, Abhinavagupta)<sup>46</sup>

Hence, no one should be confused into concluding that drama is an imitation of things that are *not* particulars. This is what we should understand to be the intention behind the *Literary Investigations* of my teacher, and not that drama may indeed be an imitation of nonparticulars.

(#4a, Anonymous)<sup>47</sup>

Bhatta Tota held that *rasa* is something both “manifested” and “apprehended” in the literal sense of the terms. It can be said to be something that “arises” only in a figurative sense.

## 4.2 THE THEORY OF RASA PURIFIED

### *The New Dramatic Art, of Abhinavagupta (c. 1000)*

We know considerably more about the eleventh-century Kashmirian thinker Abhinavagupta (his last work is dated 1015) than any writer discussed so far—about his family, his teachers and students, his religious and philosophical views—in part because so much of his oeuvre has been preserved, in part because he is voluble about his associates, and in part because he left a short poetic autobiography of a kind we have for no other contributor to the *Reader*.<sup>48</sup> Among his extant works are two important texts on aesthetics, both commentaries, one on Anandavardhana’s *Light on Implicature*, entitled *The Eye*; the other on Bharata’s *Treatise on Drama*, named, punningly, *The New Dramatic Art* or *Abhinava’s Dramatic Art*.<sup>49</sup> (Other works on literature that have been lost include his *Exegesis* on the *Literary Investigations* of his teacher Bhatta Tota.) In addition, he is the author of an extensive body of philosophical-theological texts in the tradition of the monist Shaivism of Kashmir. The

chronological relationship of his aesthetic to metaphysical works is reasonably clear, and there is no doubt that the former preceded the latter (he tells us he was "greedy for the rich rasa of literature" until he was "seized with devotion" to Shiva).<sup>50</sup>

Abhinavagupta is thus one of the relatively few exceptions to the rule that whereas literary theorists might also contribute to philosophy (and most had affiliations to one or another school), philosophers rarely contributed to aesthetics. These were evidently viewed as more or less separate disciplinary specializations, even discrete realms of thought—until, for a brief moment, Abhinava changed the rules of the game and combined aesthetics and metaphysics, in his own scholarly career at least, if not as fully in his aesthetic theory as some scholars have suggested. On the contrary, his aesthetics seems more autonomous from his theology than what we usually read in secondary accounts; whereas understanding his philosophical treatises may require understanding something of his aesthetics, the reverse is not unconditionally the case. By far the greatest part of Abhinava's theory of literary art fits squarely within the disciplinary formation he inherited, in everything from the central problematics to the principal categories and technical vocabulary. Moreover, while Abhinava is also often viewed as the thinker whose conception of rasa stamped all future developments in the discourse—many later writers (there are numerous exceptions) largely identify their conception of rasa as deriving from his—what is not entirely clear is how much of that conception was in fact Abhinava's.

The two extant works on aesthetics, *The Eye* and *The New Dramatic Art*, the second of which was written later,<sup>51</sup> offer rather different ways of thinking about rasa, no doubt in part as a result of the different concerns of the primary works for which these commentaries were composed. The purpose of *The Eye* is to explain and defend Anandavardhana's conception of implicature, and in the course of executing that task Abhinava does something quite remarkable. Although Ananda consecrated rasa as the very goal of literature in a way no thinker before him (save Bharata) had done, rasa itself remained for him what it was for his predecessors, a phenomenon related to the formal organization of the literary text. And like his predecessors, Ananda was concerned with the textual processes that produce the sense of a feeling. While it is of course the viewer/reader who is ultimately cognizing the feeling, the feeling is that of the characters in the text, once it is "enhanced" and made cognizable by the aesthetic elements. Ananda's only consideration was how to make sense of the linguistic mechanism by which this feeling is created: it can never be directly expressed, he decided, or even figuratively communicated; it can only be implied. In the same way that the more important narrative component or the more powerful figure of speech is the one that is implied, not expressed, so emotion in the character can only be implied by the assemblage of the aesthetic elements, and can never be simply declared. Living as much as a century and a half after Ananda, in a thoughtworld that had experienced the conceptual revolution in aesthetics initiated by Bhatta Nayaka, Abhinava



aimed—or at least this seems the unavoidable conclusion—to rescue Ananda from his own obsolescence. He sought to do this by transforming Ananda's linguistic modality (*śabdavṛtti*), whereby *rasa* was cognized, into a psychological modality (*cittavṛtti*), whereby *rasa* was experienced. *Rasa* now became something “manifested” not in the text by means of the aesthetic elements but by the activation of the “predispositions” associated with the stable emotions that preexist in the heart of the sensitive reader.<sup>52</sup> This is undoubtedly a more subtle and interesting theory, but one that Ananda would almost certainly have been perplexed to see presented as his own.

It is therefore at once surprising and unsurprising to realize how rarely Abhinava refers to “manifestation” or its synonym “implicature” in his later *New Dramatic Art*. He only mentions the idea in passing, and nowhere offers anything remotely approaching a full exposition, certainly nothing on the scale found in the synopsis of his theory that Ruyyaka, writing a century and a half later (and almost certainly in ignorance of *The New Dramatic Art*), provides in a text given below.<sup>53</sup> This silence is surprising not only because manifestation/implicature is core to his view in *The Eye* but also because that would be the terminology adopted by all later Sanskrit thinkers for the new reader-centered aesthetics. At the same time, it is unsurprising if we hypothesize, perfectly reasonably, not only that Abhinava found his earlier notions to be of diminished importance for a commentary on the *Treatise on Drama* but also that his own theory had matured, unrecognized though this possibility may be in the secondary literature—and even in the Sanskrit intellectual tradition. For although the theory found in *The Eye* (or in many cases just the précis of it in Mammata's *Light on Poetry*) had the greater effect on the history of aesthetics, this is only the result of an astonishing fact: aside from a group of thinkers all working in late twelfth-century Gujarat (Hemachandra, his students Ramachandra and Gunachandra, authors of the *Mirror of Drama*, and a commentator on another vanished work of literary criticism, *Examination of The Wishing Vine*, *Kalpalatāviveka*), no succeeding writer on aesthetics had access to *The New Dramatic Art*. The work was preserved in what seems to have been a single manuscript (and some late medieval copies of it), and not in Kashmir or even in Gujarat but in Malabar in the far southwest.

The notion of implicature became less relevant for Abhinava's later thinking about *rasa*, so we may continue to hypothesize, not only because it was less relevant for the work he was commenting on but also because in his mature theory something else, radically different, had come to take its place. What that something else is we can clearly deduce from the inaugural argument of his “critical reconstruction” of *rasa* theory.<sup>54</sup> Abhinava begins by likening literature to scripture in terms of its capacity to generate in the reader a “surplus comprehension”: when we read in the Veda how someone performed a sacrifice and received great benefits from it, we are naturally inclined to apply that story to ourselves. Literature works in precisely the same way, prompting us to apply to ourselves, or to

"commonize," the elements of the narrative. "Drama," so runs one of Abhinava's definitions, "is some subject matter that every viewer 'actualizes' as his own by the process of 'commonization,' and thereupon relishes."<sup>55</sup> What is grasped by this new aesthetic apprehension is no longer the character's stable emotion but the viewer's own, and "thus grasped, the stable emotion is *rasa*." The experience of *rasa* has now become the experience of one's own pure consciousness. Abhinava names this, somewhat obscurely, *anuvyavasāya*, a term that in normal philosophical discourse refers to a kind of secondary, or reflexive, awareness, or knowledge of a knowledge, but which he uses, he tells us, synonymously with "tasting, savoring, rapture, relishing, absorption, 'experience,' and so on"; and he offers an explicit gloss to signal its newly charged meaning: it is "on the order of direct awareness," and "consists of the light of the bliss that is one's own pure consciousness": "In our view, what is being savored is simply one's own awareness, and this is uniformly blissful."<sup>56</sup> (While aesthetic awareness is itself a special kind of pleasure called "bliss," in the course of an aesthetic experience one can also feel what seems to be displeasure, such as pain or fear; but "these are merely one's latent dispositions, of desire, grief, and so on, that serve to add variety to this awareness.")<sup>57</sup> And he is careful at the same time to dematerialize, as it were, the "taste" that is *rasa*: it is "not some already existent thing but in essence simply this very process of relishing, which exists only as long as the relishing itself exists and does not last beyond it."<sup>58</sup>

If this sounds familiar, it is because many of the same ideas, and much of the same terminology, are found in the earlier theory of Bhatta Nayaka and his disciples, Dhanamjaya and Dhanika, respectively author of and commentator on *The Ten Dramatic Forms*. Bhatta Nayaka based his entire reformulation of aesthetics on a hermeneutical model, borrowing from *Mīmāṃsā* its central notion of "actualization," or the process embedded in the imperative language of scripture that prompts us to act in the world. All the key terms that Bhatta Nayaka either made his own or perhaps even coined, such as "commonization" and "absorption," were taken over by Abhinava as building blocks of his own theory; he even appropriates his opponent's three-part hermeneutic model.<sup>59</sup> However much Abhinava may criticize Bhatta Nayaka in *The Eye* as well as in *The New Dramatic Art*; however much he may protest—in accordance with a commonplace of Sanskrit intellectual history, that all later innovations are always-already contained *in nuce* in the foundational knowledge—that he is relating "simply what the sage [Bharata] himself has said, and nothing new at all,"<sup>60</sup> his "purified" theory of aesthetics is largely that of Bhatta Nayaka (even the transformation of the idea of "manifestation" may originally have been the latter's).<sup>61</sup> The very fact that he opens his own reconstruction this way shows that he has fully accepted Bhatta Nayaka's grand analogy: that the same mechanism that enables us to understand, and to become the subject or "agent" of, a commandment of scripture and so to actualize by ourselves the action prescribed by its discourse, enables us to understand and become the sub-

ject or agent of a literary text, to actualize its affective charge. Even Abhinava's extended reflection on the nature of aesthetic consciousness may owe something to Bhatta Nayaka, who was the first to think about these matters, for we find it already in Dhananjaya a generation (it seems likely) before Abhinava ("When there is a fusion of the mind with the meaning of the literary work, there arises the bliss that is the self, which constitutes the savoring of *rasa*"), and in his commentator Dhanika ("The stable emotion . . . when brought within the sphere of savoring—a state of intensely blissful consciousness— . . . becomes *rasa*").<sup>62</sup> And of course, the very idea of "absorption" or "repose" as the core characteristic of aesthetic cathexis was already enunciated by Bhatta Nayaka, along with the corollary that aesthetic consciousness, when rendered so completely joyful and luminous, is akin to the ecstasy of spiritual self-transcendence, given that "the self-other distinction vanishes" (so Dhanika). Abhinava accepts this fully,<sup>63</sup> though it is noteworthy, in view of his later theological career, how little in fact he has to say in *The New Dramatic Art* about the precise boundaries of aesthetic and religious consciousness.

That said, there is a wide range of astonishingly rich and subtle ideas that are original to Abhinava. He is the first scholar to produce an intellectual history of aesthetics, from Dandin to his own time—indeed, it is his history alone that enables us to produce ours. He is the first to argue out in a philosophical mode that aesthetic rapture is "an apprehension . . . in which only pleasure appears," that all the emotions we experience in an aesthetic event "are primarily pleasant, insofar as the pure homogeneous illumination that takes the form of the relishing of one's own consciousness is in essence blissful,"<sup>64</sup> a point that will be challenged or defended over the next half-millennium (under what description, Jain scholars in particular wished to know, can we claim that the aesthetic experience of violence or horror is really "pleasurable"?). He provides a remarkable account of the "hindrances" that obstruct aesthetic experience, and how these can be removed (that is, by the creators of dramatic art, not the viewer). It is of the nature of human awareness to be constrained by the primary categories of space and time, by our identities, by the phenomena of our everyday lives. Drama is designed precisely to counteract our natural proclivities toward distraction, disbelief, and the like by such strategies as the use of plausible narratives or the neutralization of the actors' space-time constraints through the use of costumes. In fact, Abhinava's phenomenological description of the transformation of the viewer's awareness through the magic of drama as it unfolds step by step offers some of the most penetrating accounts of aesthetic psychology available anywhere (see *On Drama* and *On the Nature of Dramatic Acting*, below). He makes subtle observations on the fact that *rasa* is a "process of tasting" (*rasyamāna*) and not some substantial thing tasted, thereby attempting to address (or so it seems to a nonprofessional philosopher) what Wilfrid Sellars called "the notorious 'ing/ed' ambiguity of 'experience,'" between acts of experiencing and the contents experienced.<sup>65</sup>

Abhinava also powerfully (if complexly) reengages with the old question, first mooted by Udbhata, challenged by Shri Shankuka, grappled with by Anandavardhana, and ridiculed by Kuntaka, on the role of words for affective states in generating *rasa*. For Udbhata, the use in a literary text of the “proper term” or actual word for a *rasa* was a core factor in engendering it, a notion Shri Shankuka contested by distinguishing expressive from referential uses of language: the erotic *rasa* cannot be produced simply by way of direct reference, by use of the word “erotic”; it must find *expressive* realization (using the actual word would become an artistic flaw for Mammata). Anandavardhana made this distinction a cornerstone of his theory: *rasa* cannot be directly denoted, especially not by the actual word for it; it can only be implied by the aesthetic elements. In the important, if difficult passage given below, Abhinava appears, improbably, to be arguing against Ananda, or perhaps more credibly, against someone who offered a stronger formulation of Ananda’s position that excluded the entire range of technical emotion words, not just the words for the *rasas* themselves.<sup>66</sup> Abhinava’s position here may have been partly adopted by Mammata,<sup>67</sup> and the problem raised is central: how can you possibly create aesthetic emotion if you are prohibited from using any of the vocables in the lexicon of affective states, as a strong reading of the “flaw of using the actual words” for emotions would entail?

On one key question Abhinava does part company with Bhatta Nayaka: the degree to which drama or literature in general can be said to offer social and moral “instruction.” Bhatta Nayaka explicitly opposed the idea that the purpose of literature can be anything other than pleasure: although literature and scripture might share similar communicative-conceptual capacities in prompting the viewer/reader to “apply” the text to himself, their modalities were entirely different. Scripture commands us like a master, we are told in an analogy almost certainly originating with Bhatta Nayaka, whereas literature seduces us like a beloved. For Abhinava, by contrast, sharpening his position on the relationship of pleasure and moral instruction in *The Eye*,<sup>68</sup> the focus of aesthetic experience is on those emotions that “pertain to the ends of man,” the four life goals of love, wealth, morality, and liberation. It may be that “drama is *rasa*,” but “the end result of drama is instruction,” something he took from his teacher Bhatta Tota (fragment #3), along with a belief in the primacy of drama both for the *rasa* experience and for the theorization of *rasa* (for Abhinava, “*rasa* exists only in drama—and literature as a whole is nothing but drama,” or indeed, just a “mimicry” of drama): “The end result of the savoring is instruction in morality and the other ends of man, expertise in them, and so on.” The viewer of drama “comes to possess a certain form of consciousness of the sort conveyed by the deontic language of scripture—that those who do such and such a thing receive such and such a reward . . . so much so that, since his behavior is now interpenetrated by the desire to attain the good and to avoid the bad, he actually comes to do the good and to shun the bad,

given that he has now gained an understanding to this end.”<sup>69</sup> His brilliant, if anachronistic exposition of Bharata’s idea of the four generative rasas is founded squarely on the homology he draws between them and the ends of man (“The most essential aesthetic components are those several forms of consciousness that pertain to the ends of man,” etc.).<sup>70</sup> Literature’s capacity to refine our moral imagination was thus a central, and newly central, tenet of his aesthetic understanding.<sup>71</sup>

The selections that follow are taken entirely from *The New Dramatic Art*. These begin with the reconstructive portion of Abhinava’s account of rasa; his preceding review and critique of earlier theories—those of Bhatta Lollata, Shri Shankuka, Bhatta Nayaka, and Bhatta Tota—are presented elsewhere in the *Reader*. Excerpts from his reflections on other topics germane to the question of rasa follow. Although the space available here even to so important a thinker is limited, I might have included Abhinava’s discussion of the peaceful rasa, although it mostly just offers detail, in a highly philosophical mode, on the nature of the stable emotion underlying this emotionless state (it is, he concludes, “true knowledge,” which is what “impassivity” or “dispassion,” the emotions normally ascribed to it, are taken to really mean), but a careful translation has recently been made available.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, there was no need to translate the discussion of rasa in *The Eye*, since this now exists in an authoritative version.<sup>73</sup>

Two important cautions need to be offered to anyone confronting Abhinava’s aesthetics for the first time. His thinking is subtle, sometimes even counterintuitive, and he expresses his thoughts in a style virtually unique among Sanskrit authors for its Hegelian syntactical complexity and Heideggerian semantic idiosyncrasy. Frequently this style is refreshing; sometimes it is turbid as well as turgid; occasionally it is maddening. Added to this (and possibly a result of it), his major work on aesthetics suffered terribly in the course of transmission.<sup>74</sup> In a real sense, it is far too early in the history of Abhinavagupta studies for anyone to presume to describe his theory with any precision, let alone completeness. What follows is an attempt merely to capture in as intelligible a manner as I can some important themes, drawn from Abhinava’s principal exposition of his aesthetic doctrine and from more peripheral but still illuminating discussions. I have sometimes left material standing that I do not always fully grasp myself, in the hope of contributing to a better understanding in the fullness of time.

#### FROM *THE NEW DRAMATIC ART*, OF ABHINAVAGUPTA

(1.272)<sup>75</sup> What, then, is the truth about rasa as purified by critique? It is simply what the sage himself has said and nothing new at all. And what he said is this: “Emotions (*bhāva*) are so called because they bring into being (*bhāvayanti*) the aims of the literary work.”<sup>76</sup> Rasa, accordingly, is this “aim of the literary work.”<sup>77</sup>

Consider the following analogy: on hearing a sentence of scripture such as "They held a sacrificial session through the night," or "He offered up the oblation into the fire,"<sup>78</sup> a qualified individual—that is, someone who desires a particular reward and meets the other requirements for ritual action—has at first a bare comprehension of the meaning of the sentence, enhanced by the persuasive power of the historical eventfulness<sup>79</sup> it references. But thereupon a certain surplus comprehension arises, of the nature of a transference and the like,<sup>80</sup> whereby the verb tense and person originally used in the sentence are suppressed and the reader thinks, "*Let me hold a session*,"<sup>81</sup> or "*Let me offer up*." This sort of comprehension is identified by various terms of art depending on the philosophical school, such as "understanding," "actualization," "commandment," "undertaking,"<sup>82</sup> and the like. In precisely the same way, from literary language there arises for the qualified individual a surplus comprehension.

[273] Here the qualified individual is the person whose heart is filled with uncontaminated sensibility.<sup>83</sup> When such a person hears verses like the one beginning "The fawn, its neck bent back beautifully,"<sup>84</sup> or "Uma with flowers falling from her long black hair," or "But Shiva, his calmness just barely disturbed,"<sup>85</sup> he first comprehends the literal meaning. There then arises another comprehension in the mind,<sup>86</sup> a kind of direct visualization, in which all the distinctions employed in this or that verse—distinctions of tense, for example—are eliminated. In the case of the fawn and king who appear in the first of the verses as being involved in a state of terror, they are devoid of particularity and ultimately unreal; what appears in the second form of comprehension here is, accordingly, a kind of pure fear—the cognition "afraid"—untouched by time and place.<sup>87</sup> Directly thereafter the fear is grasped<sup>88</sup> in an apprehension free from all "hindrances," differing radically from our usual hindrance-encumbered notions (since those are delimited, giving rise to thoughts of avoidance, acquisition, or indifference caused by pain and pleasure, such thoughts as "I am afraid," or "He—friend, enemy, neutral—is afraid"). And this stable emotion of fear, when it penetrates the heart almost visibly and becomes present before one's very eyes,<sup>89</sup> just is the fearful *rasa*. In this state of fear the viewer's self is neither completely displaced nor prominently referenced, and the same holds for every other person. For this reason, the "commonization" should be seen as not restricted to a single person but as extending beyond him, like the grasping of the invariable concomitance between smoke and fire, or fear and trembling.<sup>90</sup>

The whole assemblage of theatrical components, from the actor onward, conduces to this process of visualization. In this assemblage, all sources of delimitation—time, place, perceiving subjects, both those that really exist and those made available through the literary work—are expunged by canceling each other out;<sup>91</sup> and thereby

the commonization just mentioned is enhanced all the more. For this reason, the audience members all share a homogeneous comprehension thanks to the concurrence of their predispositions—everyone's mind being studded with an infinite array of such predispositions—and this supplies even greater enhancement to the *rasa*.

This unhindered awareness is called aesthetic rapture. The transformations such as trembling, horripilation, and frissons produced from it are called rapture too, as in the following poem:<sup>92</sup>

Even today Hari is overcome with rapturous wonder that Mount Mandara caused  
not the least harm  
to Lakshmi's limbs,<sup>93</sup> softer though they are than the beams of the crescent  
moon.<sup>94</sup>

"Rapture" is said to be an experience in which one is immersed without interruption, given the absence of any feeling of dissatisfaction: "'Rapture' (*camat-kāra*) is the 'action' (*karaṇa*) of someone 'enjoying' (*camataḥ*)," that is, when one is immersed in a pulsation of a fantastical experience.<sup>95</sup> It may be of the nature of a visualization, a conviction, an imagination, or a memory—though this is memory of a sort that does not emerge as normal memory does.<sup>96</sup> To quote:

That you can be overcome with yearning, however happy you are,  
when seeing beautiful things or hearing sweet music,  
surely means some memory must be at work, something in your unconscious,  
attachments from former lives enduring in their emotion.<sup>97</sup>

[274] (The memory spoken of in this verse is not the sort described by the logicians, because the subject has never actually experienced the thing he is remembering; it has instead the character of a visualization or pure sensibility.)<sup>98</sup> At all events, this rapture<sup>99</sup> is an apprehension—or, in other words, a savoring—in which pleasure alone appears. Precisely because it is not qualified by any other internal differentiation of time, place, and so on, this apprehension, qua tasting, is not of a normal everyday sort, but at the same time it is neither illusory nor ineffable, neither similar to an everyday apprehension nor a metaphorical or other rhetorical representation of it. You may (with Bhatta Lollata) consider it a state of the enhanced stable emotion,<sup>100</sup> in the sense of its being unconstrained by the spatial or other particularities of the original; you may (with Shri Shankuka) consider it an imitation (*anu-kāra*), since it "produces" (*karaṇa*) its effects by "following after" (*anu*) the stable emotions, that is, by being in conformity with them; you may also regard it as an assemblage of imaginary

objects in the way of the Buddhist idealist school.<sup>101</sup> At all events, what is grasped by this apprehension—which is freed from all hindrances, and is essentially the *process* of tasting—is the stable emotion, and thus grasped, the stable emotion is *rasa*.

What removes the hindrances mentioned here are the aesthetic elements, that is, the foundational factor and so on. The consciousness thus freed from all hindrances is designated by a range of terms found in everyday life—rapture, engagement, tasting, savoring, experience, engrossment, ecstasy, absorption. As for the hindrances to this consciousness, there are seven: [1] “unfitness for comprehension,” i.e., lack of plausibility; [2] preoccupation with time-space particularities that comes about by limitations related either to oneself or to another; [3] fixation on one’s own states of mind, whether pleasurable or other; [4] deficiency in the means of apprehension; [5] absence of perspicuity; [6] nonessentiality; [7] doubtfulness. To explain in detail:

[1] A person who finds what is being narrated to be implausible cannot fix his consciousness upon it, let alone become absorbed in it. This is the first hindrance, and in the case of narratives familiar from everyday life, it is removed by the heart’s natural concurrence with the action. But in the case of exploits entirely unfamiliar in everyday life, the means of removing the hindrance is the use of characters with well-known names (such as Rama), which amplifies a will to believe on our part that is already deeply entrenched, coming as it does from unbroken tradition.<sup>102</sup> For the same reason, in the genre called epic drama, whose purpose is a didactic one—the teaching of the highest moral principles—the use of subject matter consisting of such well-known narratives is a necessity, as we will explain.<sup>103</sup> This is something that should never occur, however, in other genres such as farces. We will address this topic at its appropriate place, so let this suffice for now.

[2] The greatest hindrance is the intrusion of some other state of awareness that might arise when we are savoring the consciousness of pleasurable or painful aesthetic experiences as something pertaining exclusively to ourselves. These other states include a fear that the experience will end, a preoccupation with preserving it, a desire to have (or to avoid) a similar experience, an urge to reveal or conceal it, or some other impulse, as the case may be. By the same token, if one were to have an awareness of the pleasure and pain as being experienced exclusively by some other person, one would at the same time necessarily have an awareness of some corresponding emotion in oneself—pleasure, pain, confusion, mere indifference—which inevitably produces a hindrance.

The means of eliminating this hindrance is the mode of concealment effected by the actor’s costume, his headdress and so on, after the viewer had previously been made aware of the actor’s actual presence by seeing him during the prologue (per the dramaturgical convention, “The actress, the actor who plays the fool . . . chat



with the director"),<sup>104</sup> and the occultation effected by the theatrical preliminaries ("The preliminaries should be carried out according to prescription, but not drawn out too long"),<sup>105</sup> in combination with the theatrical conventions, zones or scenic arrangements within the theater [275], the stage, the preliminary dance, the varieties of unfamiliar languages, and all the rest. When this elimination is effected, there is no particularizing awareness of the pleasure or pain, no thought that the pleasure or pain pertains specifically to this particular person, in this particular place, for this particular reason. This is both because the actor's own person has been concealed and because our awareness does not come to rest on the character's, since in the case of an appearance of an assumed form our awareness can do so only imperfectly. And this is so because the upshot of assuming the character is merely to conceal the real form of the actor.

All such preparations, accordingly, have been required by the sage for their usefulness in promoting the relishing of *rasa*, by way of achieving the commonization of the aesthetic elements.<sup>106</sup> They will be clarified on the appropriate occasions, and no further attention need be given them here. But this explains the method for removing the hindrance coming from limitations related to oneself or to another.

[3] By the same token, how can the awareness of a person preoccupied with his own states of mind, whether pleasurable or otherwise, ever become absorbed in some other matter? To remove this obstacle, use is made of various modes of "coloration."<sup>107</sup> These reside in all the different components of the drama<sup>108</sup> and are capable of ensuring the "experience" of the whole, thanks to the power of "commonality."<sup>109</sup> These entities consist of words and other properties, and include instrumental music, singing, the enchanting theater itself, and the skilled actresses.<sup>110</sup> To quote: "Drama is something to be both seen and heard."<sup>111</sup> Thereby, the sensibilities of even an insensitive man, by virtue of his acquiring mental clarity, can be rendered completely receptive, so that he becomes a sensitive viewer.

[4-5] Moreover, how can there be any apprehension if the means for apprehension are absent? And when words and inferential signs<sup>112</sup> produce only something unclear, whatever the apprehension, it cannot attain the state of absorption; for that, what is required are ideas as close to perception as possible in the form of clear and distinct apprehensions. To quote: "All valid knowledge ultimately resolves to perception."<sup>113</sup> This is so because, for one thing, it is self-evident that neither inference nor testimony<sup>114</sup> by the cartload can alter something we have seen with our own eyes; and because, for another, a second, stronger perception can displace a first, false one<sup>115</sup> (an everyday example would be the displacement of the notion of a fiery circle upon seeing that it is produced by the swinging of a flaming torch). Thus, the

consecrated way of eliminating both kinds of hindrance, that is, deficiency in the means of apprehension and absence of perspicuity, are the various types of dramatic acting, supplemented by social conventions, the theatrical modes, and the costumes. For the process of acting is something completely different from the operations of words and inferential signs,<sup>116</sup> as we shall make clear, it is nearly equal to the operation of perception.

[6] No one's awareness can come to rest upon something that is nonessential, since the moment that the inessential thing is cognized it hastens after something more essential, and cannot come to rest in itself. The inessential pertains to insensate things—the whole class of factors<sup>117</sup> and the physical reactions—but also to the category of the transitory emotions. This is so because these emotions, though conscious processes in themselves, are of necessity always directed toward something else. Accordingly, what stand apart from all that, namely, the stable emotions, is the only object worthy of an aesthetic relishing where awareness can come to rest. To examine this in greater detail:<sup>118</sup>

[276] The most essential aesthetic components are those several forms of consciousness<sup>119</sup> that pertain to the ends of man: love, wealth,<sup>120</sup> morality, and liberation. Thus, the stable emotion of desire pertains to love<sup>121</sup> as well as to forms of wealth and morality that are necessarily related to love; the stable emotion of anger pertains to wealth in those dramatic forms where anger is predominant,<sup>122</sup> and can even eventuate in love or morality; the stable emotion of determination can eventuate in any of the ends of man, morality and the rest; and last, impassivity, when it is the stable emotion and consisting largely in dispassion brought about by true knowledge, is the means of liberation. Hence, these four stable emotions are the most essential.<sup>123</sup> And while they have a certain hierarchy among themselves,<sup>124</sup> any one of these stable emotions can have primacy in the dramatic genre that prioritizes them, and hence, in the succession of dramatic forms all of them can come to have primacy. For one who examines the matter closely, in one and the same dramatic form at different points, a different emotion can have primacy.

Now, all these emotions are predominantly pleasurable, insofar as the pure homogeneous illumination that takes the form of the relishing of one's own consciousness is in essence blissful. To explain: in everyday life, when women relish the consciousness even of pure homogeneous grief, their heart finds repose because such grief itself embodies a repose free from any discontinuities. The absence of repose is the very definition of pain, which is why the followers of Kapila,<sup>125</sup> when describing volatility's mode of existence, state that instability is the life force of pain. All rasas, accordingly, are essentially blissful, though some, depending on the factors coloring them, can have a certain harshness<sup>126</sup> about them. Such is the case with contact

with the heroic *rasa*, whose life force, after all, is, among other things, the capacity to tolerate suffering.

Thus, the most essential components are the four stable emotions: desire, anger, determination, and impassivity. The remaining five, amusement and the others, are essential insofar as they add coloration, with their aesthetic elements being so easily accessible to everyone everywhere—which is the reason the comic and the other four *rasas* typically pertain to characters other than those of high status. Every unsophisticated person will laugh, grieve, fear, recoil at another's censure, and everywhere be amazed at the slightest well-turned phrase. But these five *rasas* can also supplement the other four and thereby subserve the ends of man. As we shall argue later, it is precisely this hierarchical relationship among the stable emotions that accounts for the differentiation into the ten dramatic and other literary forms.

These nine emotions, moreover, are the only stable ones.<sup>127</sup> They are the forms of consciousness that encompass a creature from the moment of his birth. In accordance with the maxim that people are "averse to contact with pain and eager to savor pleasure,"<sup>128</sup> every being is pervaded with desire for sex; laughs at others out of a misplaced sense of his own superiority; burns at separation from a loved one; becomes speechless with anger at those responsible, and then, because of his own powerlessness, becomes fearful; is keen for some acquisition but then is overcome with repugnance if the object is unsuitable,<sup>129</sup> thinking it undesirable;<sup>130</sup> feels amazement well up in him at beholding the various things he is about to do;<sup>131</sup> and, last, is prepared to give up something or other. There is no living being devoid of the predispositions latent in such mental states. It is merely the case that in a given person at a given moment this or that mental state predominates, whereas [277] another is diminished; a given person will be constrained by a thing's propriety and another will do just the opposite. Accordingly, only four of the stable emotions—desire, anger, determination, and impassivity—can be taught as subserving the ends of man; and it is this basic division among the stable emotions that leads us to speak in terms of a character's status, whether high, middling, or low.<sup>132</sup>

As for the more particularized mental states, such as those transitory emotions known as fatigue, disquiet, and the like, it is possible for them not to come into existence at all in the course of one's life, when their pertinent foundational or stimulant factor is absent.<sup>133</sup> A sage who uses an elixir, for example, may never be affected by fatigue, torpor, exhaustion, and so on. And even when the power of a foundational or stimulant factor is present and a person is overcome by such emotions, he will find that they diminish in direct relation to the diminution of their cause, and do not for all that necessarily comprise any residue of an innate disposition. By contrast, the stable emotions such as determination, even when they are virtually dissipated

after having accomplished their tasks, do not fail to leave the residue of an innate disposition, for the simple reason that they can still have other tasks to accomplish and so cannot be depleted.<sup>134</sup> As Patanjali says, "Just because Chaitra's passion is directed toward one woman does not mean it cannot be directed toward others."<sup>135</sup>

Therefore, the transitory emotions, their existence marked by a myriad of varied stages of coming into being and going out of being, are strung on the thread of those mental states that are the stable emotions. They are like precious stones threaded on a red or blue string<sup>136</sup>—stones of crystal, glass, mica, ruby, emerald, sapphire, and the like, with their thousands of different properties—which can be individually perceived thanks to their interstices. Although these transitory emotions leave no latent impression of their own on the string of the stable emotion, they derive embellishment from the string itself; moreover, themselves dappled,<sup>137</sup> they dapple the string of the stable emotion; and they bring the string, pure though it remains on the very inside of the stones, to the point of manifestation and even while doing so, show themselves to be producing a certain variegation from the luster of the stones—the transitory emotions—that precede and follow. And that is why they are called transitory emotions.

Indeed, their very instability is suggested by the simple fact that, whereas we may ask the reason a particular person feels fatigue (a transitory emotion), we do not ask the reason when someone says, "Rama is prompted by the stable emotion determination." Accordingly, the foundational and stimulant factors that awaken<sup>138</sup> a stable emotion are merely communicating the propriety or impropriety of the emotion, desire or determination or whatever it may be, coloring the emotion with their own particular character.<sup>139</sup> By no means is it the case that in the absence of such factors those stable emotions are nonexistent, since, as we have stated, they are constitutive of living creatures, being in essence their fundamental predispositions. By contrast, a transitory emotion, when the foundational and stimulant factors for it are absent, ceases to exist even in name—something we shall elaborate on where appropriate in the course of our commentary.

Thus, the elimination of the hindrance called "nonessentiality"<sup>140</sup> is achieved by a twofold account<sup>141</sup> of the stable emotion: first, the one that supplements the general definition of *rasa*, when the sage says, "We shall show how a stable emotion becomes *rasa*,"<sup>142</sup> and second, the one that pertains to the particular definitions of the individual *rasas*.<sup>143</sup>

[278] [7] Last, there is no necessary correlation between a given physical reaction, foundational factor, or transitory emotion and a given stable emotion. Weeping, as we see for ourselves, can result from bliss as well as from eye disease; a tiger can cause

anger, fear, and so on, whereas exhaustion, anxiety, and the other transitory emotions are observed to accompany any number of stable emotions: determination, fear, and so on. The *totality* of aesthetic elements, however, does indeed establish an invariable concomitance. In other words, where the foundational factor is the death of some loved one; the reactions lamentation, shedding tears, and the like; and the transitory emotions anxiety, despondency, and so on, the stable emotion in question must of necessity be grief and that alone. And hence, wherever there may be uncertainty, the means to resolve the doubt and hence to remove the hindrance is use of the proper conjunction of aesthetic elements.

With respect to this process: in everyday life we develop through repeated practice the skill of inferring the mental states of others—that is, their stable emotions—by seeing signs betokening causes, effects, and auxiliaries. Now, in the theater, these very elements—a garden, a sidelong glance, the feeling of satisfaction,<sup>144</sup> and the like—transcend the worldly plane where “cause,” “effect,” and “auxiliary” have their proper significations, and consist solely in the processes of “factoring,” “reactionizing,” and “colorizing.” For that very reason they receive these new, supermundane designations “factor” (whether foundational or stimulant), “reaction,” and “transitory emotion,” respectively, whose different natures we shall examine in the chapter on emotions.<sup>145</sup> (They are designated by such names in order to call attention to the fact that they derive their existence from the primordial dispositions of cause, effect, and auxiliary to which they are related.) As these aesthetic elements take on their dominant or subordinate status in turn, they attain a “conjunction” (in the *Sutra on Rasa*)—etymologically<sup>146</sup> a correct (“con-”) relationship or concentration (“junction”)—in the minds of the audience. They thereby bring the aesthetic entity<sup>147</sup> into the domain of relishing, a state of awareness that is supermundane and freed from the seven hindrances. And that entity—which is not some already existent thing but in essence simply this very process of relishing, which exists only as long as the relishing itself exists and does not last beyond it, and which must be something other than the stable emotion itself—is *rasa*.

Shankuka and others, however, are mistaken to argue that it is the stable emotion itself, apprehended by means of the factors and the rest, that is *rasa*, and is so called because it is tasted.<sup>148</sup> For not only would *rasa* then exist in the real world, but also there would be no emotion that would not be *rasa*: if something nonexistent<sup>149</sup> can be tasted, then why should something that really exists not be tasted? Hence it is only the apprehension of the stable emotion in the form of an inference that is being postulated, not *rasa* itself. It was for precisely this reason that the sage did not use the term “stable emotion” in the *Sutra on Rasa* itself—indeed, that would have been a red herring.<sup>150</sup> And when the sage states that the “stable emotion turns into *rasa*,”

it is merely because of a formal congruity lying in the fact that those things familiar to us as causes when pertaining to a real-world stable emotion take on the designation of "factors" and so on when enabling the act of aesthetic relishing.<sup>151</sup>

That is to say, what kind of *rasa* can be held to exist in an *inference* of a real-world mental state? On the contrary, the savoring of *rasa* is in essence a supermundane rapture, completely different from the real-world awareness deriving from inference and memory. To explain:<sup>152</sup> a person predisposed toward an aesthetic event by the practice of drawing real-world inferences does not apprehend a female character on the stage in some neutral manner. On the contrary, without in the least ascending the ladder of inference, memory, and the like but rather on the strength of his aesthetic receptivity (in essence, his heart's concurrence), he apprehends her as the life breath of aesthetic relishing—something congruent with an act of identification—indeed, as the shoot of aesthetic savoring that is about to blossom into fullness. Such relishing does not arise from any other prior act of cognition, [279] whereby some memory might come into play during the aesthetic event; nor is any real-world act of cognition, such as perception, in operation here. On the contrary, the relishing is presented solely by virtue of the conjunction of the supermundane aesthetic elements. Accordingly, it is radically different from [1] awareness of a stable emotion produced by a real-world act of cognition, whether perception, inference, testimony, analogy, or other source of valid cognition; [2] knowledge of another's mental state produced by yogic perception, which remains entirely indifferent; [3] the completely homogeneous experience of his own bliss on the part of a supreme spiritual adept, which is pure because it is free from all coloration of objective reality. The difference lies in the fact that those three forms of consciousness are all *devoid of beauty*: the first because of the presence of this or that hindrance (such as the desire to actually possess the woman one sees);<sup>153</sup> the second because of the indistinctness that accompanies the indifference; the third because one is possessed by the blissful object and thereby overpowered.<sup>154</sup> In the theater, however, because the aesthetic event cannot possibly be restricted to oneself alone, such overpowering cannot take place; because the event cannot be restricted to someone else alone, given one's own participation, that imprecision cannot arise; and because one's congruent predispositions of desire (or other stable emotion) take possession of one when activated by force of the "commonization" of the aesthetic elements, none of the hindrances can come into play—this is something we have stated repeatedly.

In view of this radical difference, the aesthetic elements cannot be viewed as normal phenomena. They cannot be causes for an actual "arising" of *rasa*,<sup>155</sup> for that would lead to the absurdity that *rasa* could exist even after cognition of the aesthetic elements has ceased. But neither can they be causes of "knowing" *rasa*—which would

entail their being numbered among the valid means of cognition—since *rasa* is not a cognizable object given that it is not a concrete entity.<sup>156</sup> What, then, do we mean by “aesthetic elements”? It is a term we use to refer to something supermundane that enables aesthetic relishing to take place. The fact that we find these elements nowhere else than in the theater actually enhances our argument for proving<sup>157</sup> their supermundane character. It is exactly like saying that the savor of a mixed drink cannot be located in any one of its ingredients, brown sugar, black pepper, etc.<sup>158</sup>

But then, one might object, does *rasa* not thereby cease to be a cognizable object? This is in fact logically the case. The very essence of *rasa*, or “taste,” is a *state of being tasted*; its nature is not that of a cognizable *object*. Then what does “arising” in the *Sutra on Rasa* refer to? Not to *rasa* itself, but to the aesthetic tasting directed toward *rasa*. There is no harm if, in referring to the arising of such tasting, we also speak of the arising of the *rasa* whose existence depends entirely on it. As for this tasting, it is a process neither of production nor of cognition, and for all that it is not itself without cognitive basis, because it is proven to exist by our reflexive consciousness. Aesthetic tasting is, to be sure, a form of awareness, but utterly different from any kind of real-world awareness, since its means, the aesthetic elements, differ utterly from real-world means. Hence, since it is from the conjunction of the aesthetic elements that aesthetic tasting arises, *rasa* itself, which comes under the domain of this unique kind of tasting, must be a supernormal entity. Such is the gist of the aphorism.

Here is a synopsis of the whole matter: first of all, the idea that it is an actor we are seeing on stage is obscured by his costume—the crown, the headdress, and so on. But the notion that he is Rama, however much stimulated by the power of the literary text, does not come to rest on the actor because of dispositions of our consciousness that are old and deeply implanted.<sup>159</sup> For this very reason<sup>160</sup> the dimensions of time and space pertaining to both actor and character are eliminated. The sight of the physical reactions in the actor, the horripilation and so on, that serve to produce the convincing apprehension of desire when we observe them in the real world, gives us to understand the presence of desire in a way that is, as a result of the foregoing, unrestricted by time and space, and in which the viewer himself comes to participate thanks to his own predispositions toward desire. The understanding we have of such desire cannot, therefore, be one of indifference. Moreover, since we do not understand the desire as being brought about by a cause specific to oneself<sup>161</sup>—a particular woman, say—there is no possibility of our wanting to possess her, embrace her, or the like; and since we do not understand it as exclusively concerning someone else, there is no possibility of hatred arising toward that person, or sorrow, or any other emotion.<sup>162</sup> [280] The desire is thus “commonized” and, when brought within our consciousness (whether consciousness is conceived of as a

sequence of moments or as a unity),<sup>163</sup> is the erotic *rasa*. This "commonizing actualization," for its part, comes about through the aesthetic elements.<sup>164</sup>

....

[281] The ultimate savoring of *rasa*, however, occurs only when there is equal prominence of the aesthetic elements, something that takes place only in an extended narrative,<sup>165</sup> though in actual fact only in one of the ten forms of drama. As Vamana states, "Among all the varieties of literary composition the best is drama in any of its ten forms. For the drama, like a painted canvas, is multifaceted, by virtue of the full complement of its particular components."<sup>166</sup> In the case of an extended narrative, one or another such dramatic form is being transferred, thanks to the reader's capacity for imagining the proper speech, costume, regional customs, and the like. In the case of an isolate verse, it comes to be understood only by being ultimately enlivened by such narrative—that is to say, by receptive readers' ability to imagine what is appropriate in view of the sequence of events, and to establish a contextual foundation by conjecturing for the verse the appropriate speaker on the given occasion.<sup>167</sup> Thus, for those who are receptive readers thanks to, among other things, their study of literature and their good karma from past lives, the "aim of a literary text"<sup>168</sup> manifests itself with absolute clarity, as if before their very eyes, even when only a limited number of aesthetic elements is disclosed. And hence for them, literature alone, without any reference to dramatic spectacle, can bring at once pleasure and instruction. Drama can be an additional source of mental clarity for such people too, of course, on the analogy of radiant moonbeams falling.<sup>169</sup> But for those lacking in receptivity, drama alone can produce such clarity, because it is only there that the apprehension of singing, music, and the courtesan actresses does not lead to vicious behavior, since they are simply features of drama.<sup>170</sup>

In this connection we may note that the actor is an object of meditation analogous to that used by meditators. In the latter case we do not of course have the apprehension that it is the very Vasudeva Krishna before us, painted with vermillion, whom we are to call to mind; the apprehension is rather that the particular deity, when come within the ambit of a conceptualization made especially vivid thanks to the physical medium, will reward those who meditate on him. In the same way, the content of a drama can become the object of an identification made especially vivid thanks to the actor's procedures, while remaining completely untouched by any particularization of time or space pertaining to actor or character. The content is thus comparable to a Vedic commandment in providing moral instruction to the effect that such and such a reward comes from such and such an act; and comparable as well in view of the fact that in neither case does a subsequent perception ever arise to negate it, whether with respect to the law that something must be either what we



are seeing or something else, or in the spectator's subsequent mental state.<sup>171</sup> Quite the contrary, the apprehension is veridical and complete. Accordingly, we have the bare apprehension "Rama," and never later the idea, "This person before my eyes was not Rama but someone else." We will clarify this in due course.

### On the Homology of Physical Tasting and Rasa

(1.283) The author of the *Treatise on Drama* shows that there is a homology between tasting and rasa with respect to the object and agent of the experience and the end result. Just as there is something being savored in the food prepared with condiments; an agent of savoring in the agent of the gustatory experience when he is single-minded (since a person who has the experience when his mind is elsewhere will have no sense of savoring anything); an end result of the savoring, namely, pleasure, weight gain, vitality, nourishment, strength, health, and the like, so it is in the case of rasa: there is something being savored when rasa in the form we refer to as the stable emotion is manifested by the various forms of acting; there is an agent of savoring in the audience when they are single-minded, that is, when they identify with the drama; and there is an end result of the savoring, namely, instruction in morality and the other ends of man, expertise in them, and so on, in a way that is predominantly pleasurable. Thus, because of the similarity of act, agent, and outcome, we can refer to the specific kind of apprehension produced by the aesthetic elements as an act of tasting. Such is the gist of the matter. . . .

When Bharata speaks of "joy and the like,"<sup>172</sup> some scholars believe that "and the like" includes grief and other such emotions. That is unreasonable. The outcome of drama for spectators is joy and that alone, not grief or other such feeling. This is so, first, because there is nothing to cause such grief, and second, because if there were, people would simply avoid the theater. With this in mind, some scholars actually believe the text should read, instead of "joy and the like," the plural "joys."

. . . .

[284.15]<sup>173</sup> With the words "they savor," the author shows that "savoring" is a mental process far superior to eating, the process of physical tasting. The basic idea here is that "savoring" is not the physical process of tasting but a mental process. And in this case it is a complete, or whole, process. The usage here is figurative, since it is well known that in everyday life the mental follows immediately upon the physical process of tasting. . . . The stable emotions, which are beyond the reach of thought as such, are "conjoined" with the aesthetic factors. Here "con-joined" means properly joined, that is, becoming identically grounded in the viewers who all enter gradually into a state of identification<sup>174</sup> through the heart's concurrence. When this

occurs, the "learned" "fully savor" them. Here "fully" indicates that this happens by virtue of an apprehension free from all "hindrances" thanks to total commonization. "In their heart" means free from the possibility of being hindered through any of the senses; "savor," that is, enjoying by "relishing," in other words, a state of consciousness of ultimate joy afforded by the wide variety of dispositions that punctuate it: pleasure, pain, and so on.<sup>175</sup> Given this state of rapture-savoring to which one feels virtually subjugated owing to the absence of the self-other distinction, this consciousness is of a sort entirely different from everyday apprehension, since that is crowded with hindrances, such as acquisitiveness and the like,<sup>176</sup> but also from yogic apprehension, since that is so to speak harsh, owing to its repudiation of any savoring of objects.

### On the List and Order of Rasas

(1.261.15) Insofar as love is readily accessible to all creatures and thus entirely familiar, and thereby pleasing to all, the erotic is named first. The comic follows in the wake of the erotic. The opposite of the erotic, insofar as it is a state of hopelessness,<sup>177</sup> is the tragic. Next comes the violent, which is the cause of the tragic, and concerned primarily with wealth.<sup>178</sup> Then the heroic, insofar as love and wealth have their ground in morality and the heroic is concerned primarily with morality, consisting as it does essentially in providing security to those who are afraid. The fearful is next, followed by the macabre, because it can be argued that they share the same foundational and stimulant factors; both are implied by the heroic. The fantastic is mentioned next since it appears at the conclusion of the heroic. (Bharata will state that the fantastic is the *rasa* that must always be used at the end of a play.)<sup>179</sup> Thereafter comes the peaceful, whose ethos is in essence the cessation of all acts in contrast to the ethos of engagement in the group of three ends of man, love, wealth, and morality; its end result is spiritual liberation.

....

[335.7] There are accordingly only nine *rasas*, for only so many have been taught either as serving the purpose of instruction or as adequately pleasurable. Thus, the argument that others have made, that although other *rasas* are possible, the number is restricted by scholarly convention, is refuted. . . .<sup>180</sup> It is false to claim that affection, with tenderness as its stable emotion, can be a *rasa*.<sup>181</sup> Affection is simply attachment, and attachment always resolves into desire, determination, or one or another of the standard stable emotions. To explain: the affection a child feels for his mother or father amounts to fear; that of a young man for his friends, desire; Lakshmana's affection for his brother Rama is in fact the "heroic in morality," and the

same logic applies to an elder's affection for his son. This line of reasoning can be followed in rejecting a *rasa* of avarice with a stable emotion of greed—it resolves into amusement or desire. The same can be said of devotion too.

### [The Number of Transitory Emotions]

(1.373) When Bharata states, "There are thirty-three transitory emotions," all others are meant to be included in this set: deceit in dissimulation, for example, distress in despair, hunger, thirst, and the like in fatigue. Other examples are easily supplied. Some scholars, however, wonder how anyone could possibly number<sup>182</sup> all the various states of mind. And they ask with respect to their enumeration how any given number could capture this totality, whether the nine attributes of the self logi-cized by logicians; the eight properties of the intellect numbered by Samkhya numer-ologists, or their four types of apprehension (error and the like); or the duality "mind" and "mental activities" broadcast by Buddhists.<sup>183</sup> If one argues that, if it was for the purpose of teaching poets and actors that these few have been described, then others could certainly have been enunciated—well, others will in fact be enunciated by the sage in his discussion of the "general style of acting"<sup>184</sup> when describing the emotions, behavior, and ornamentation of men and women. And in the present chapter too, they have at least been intimated in the enumeration of foundational and stimulant factors and reactions, such as when hunger and thirst are mentioned as factors in fatigue. They have not been literally defined only because their defini-tion, perfectly well known to begin with, would not be all that useful to playwrights and actors.

Others argue that it is in the performance of these few emotions that beauty arises. For when the auxiliary emotional states are displayed in performance in this finite number and no more, the stable emotion becomes fit for relishing. Some believe that these are to be known first and that such knowledge allows one to extrapolate to the definition of others.

### On Drama

(1.260.12) By "drama" is meant a particular species of literature that comprises the whole range of genres beginning with the epic-derived play. It constitutes a homo-geneous conviction in the mind that produces a visualization on the strength of the registers of acting on the part of the actors. Although a drama consists of innumer-able aesthetic elements, given the fact that all these insensate things can be reduced to the consciousness of them, and consciousness to the class of people experiencing

them, and that class to the principal person experiencing them, drama can be said to consist essentially of the stable mental state of that principal person, whom we call the protagonist. Now, this single mental state is differentiated from the countless other mental states that are understood as belonging to oneself or another; thanks to . . . the employment of the power of poetry, perfected and beautified by the singing and instrumental music, the figures of speech, language qualities, adherence to the thirty-six "characteristics" of dramatic poetry, and appropriating the enlivening force of the ten components of the preliminary dance (the recitative and the rest), it is utterly disconnected from any particular locus;<sup>185</sup> and insofar as it is "commonized," it can invest the audience members with its own presence. And precisely by reason of this identification,<sup>186</sup> it appears as different from any mundane mental state that is felt to belong to some separate person, which is based on inference or testimony or yogic perception and where the agent and object of cognition are entirely neutral; [261] and because it is free of any appearance of being located in one's delimited self, it is incapable of producing the kind of mental state—attraction,<sup>187</sup> for example, or repulsion—that comes into being in the case of feelings of desire or grief arising from a mundane source of knowledge. It can therefore be grasped by a "process," otherwise known as "tasting," that can be defined as repose in one's own unhindered consciousness, and thus comes to be expressed by the term "*rasa*," or taste. Hence, drama is *rasa*, whereas the end result of drama is instruction.

....

[NS 6.31+ (p. 266): "We will explain the *rasas* first, for no *artha* of drama will be achieved without attention to *rasa*"]<sup>188</sup>

(1.265.14) By *artha* is meant: [1] "aesthetic element," such as the foundational factor, which except for *rasa* would never be "achieved," or enter the mind, as an analytical category; [2] "purpose," that is, instruction through literary pleasure, which without *rasa* would never be "achieved," or take place; [3] "entity" and the like, for when the audience is absorbed in the *rasa* experience—a homogeneous apprehension that consists of tasting—no entity is "achieved," or is individually present<sup>189</sup> to their minds, because the whole class of aesthetic elements, all insensate themselves, appears as subsumed under the principal mental state, namely the stable emotion, which all other mental states subserve. Hence, *rasa* is listed first in the contents of the *Treatise on Drama* and defined first, since it has primacy for all three readerships: the scholar, the actor, and the audience.

....

(1.284.25) When Bharata speaks of "drama *rasas*,"<sup>190</sup> he may mean the "*rasas that arise from*" the composite artistic enterprise that is "drama." Or he may mean "*rasas are drama*," for drama is a composite of *rasas*. Or finally, he may mean that

"rasas are found in drama alone," and in poetry only to the degree that it mimics drama. For as my teacher has argued, with respect to the subject matter of the literary text, *rasa* comes into being only when a state of awareness simulating visual perception comes into being. . . .<sup>191</sup> [285] Whereas some scholars assert 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 is as follows: first of all, "literature" is comprised chiefly of the ten dramatic forms. For it is there, thanks to the appropriate languages, cultural modes, intonations, costumes, and so on, that the presence of *rasa* achieves plenitude. In a poetic 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>192</sup>—however much it may not seem inappropriate, in view of the maxim that you like whatever you are given.<sup>193</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 forms." Other poetic genres, from the courtly epic to the isolate verse, come into being by borrowing structures such as acts and scenes from the ten forms. As for the meaning of the phrase "ten forms," it simply refers to drama, as the author will later say (when speaking of language), "It constitutes the body of drama."<sup>194</sup>

Now, given the varying degree of their heart's concurrence, those who hear a reading or watch<sup>195</sup> a play can have a highly differentiated appreciation, depending on its clarity or obscurity to them. Someone whose heart is by nature like a spotless mirror<sup>196</sup> has, for that very reason, a mind no longer subjected to the anger, confusion, craving, and so on typical of this phenomenal world; for such a person, on the occasion of hearing a play with its various appropriate components, the cluster of *rasas*—the defining feature of drama—will be entirely clear and cognized by a relishing that is essentially a tasting of their commonality.<sup>197</sup> Someone else, by contrast, who lacks these traits will require the procedures of actors and the rest of stagecraft in order to attain that sort of perception-like relishing; for such a person the sage—on the maxim that a work of systematic thought must seek to fulfill everyone's needs—has made further provision in the procedures of singing and so on, to loosen the knot of the viewer's heart, hardened as it is by the anger, grief, and so on he bears inside.

Thus, *rasa* exists only in drama—and not in the world—and poetry as a whole is nothing but drama. For the same reason, *rasa* is not in the actor.<sup>198</sup> And if you were still to demand, Where then is it? I would say in reply: What<sup>199</sup> a forgetful reader in need of constant reminding! I have already explained that *rasa* is something completely unconstrained by time, space, and perceiver in any way, shape, or form—why then this question? If you were then to ask, What then is there in the actor? I would

answer: a means of savoring. That is why the word used to refer to an actor etymologically signifies “vessel”: there is no savoring of liquor that remains in the vessel; the vessel is the means of savoring. When we therefore use the term “actor” it is in the sense of “chief vessel”<sup>200</sup> for our savoring *rasa*. But enough digression. I would only add that from the drama, again—that is, from its meaning portion—are painting, sculpture and the like distilled, just as courtly epics and so on are distilled from its wording portion. We will address this at length in our commentary on NŚ 7.10.<sup>201</sup>

Others have explained the term “dramatic *rasas*” as “*rasas* that come from drama,” where the word “drama” (*nāṭya*) is taken to mean “a property of an actor” (*naṭa*), namely his action,<sup>202</sup> drama being an externally visible aggregation of the various registers of acting. . . .

[285.26] Those who hold *rasa* to be an imitation of desire or other stable emotion respond to the critique of the view that something like grief can be a source of pleasure by arguing that the emotions of the theater are unique. But the critique itself is unfounded. Since when did it become a hard and fast rule that the perception of grief always produces pain in the perceiver’s heart? When the pain you are perceiving is that of your enemy, the perception produces joy, and in the case of someone who is neither friend nor foe, mere indifference. And their answer is a sheer postulate on the nature of the theatrical emotions. None of this has an ounce of truth. [286] In our view, what is being savored is simply one’s own awareness, which is uniformly blissful, so why would we have any worries about its comprising pain? The fact that one and the same awareness can appear emotionally multiform is simply a result of the operation of latent predispositions of desire, grief, and so on—which are themselves awakened by the operation of the various registers of acting.

### The Causal Relationship of *Rasa* and Emotion

(1.286.8) The *rasas* in the actors would seem to be the source of the emotions in the audience, such as their feeling grief from seeing the tragic *rasa*. Yet the tragic *rasa* comes to exist in the audience only when it is enhanced by the emotions and other aesthetic elements.<sup>203</sup> Hence the doubt arises whether emotion comes from *rasa* or *rasa* from emotion. A third position is accordingly also on offer, namely that *rasas* and emotions are mutually generative at different moments in the process. Then again, one could analyze the three positions as follows: first, the emotion is in the actor alone, or in the character alone, Rama for example; second, when this is enhanced, it becomes *rasa*; third, when it is diminished, it becomes emotion. But actually, that analysis would be false, since we have already refuted the suggestion that such can be the proper assessment of *rasa*’s nature.

There is yet another view of the matter, that of Shri Shankuka.<sup>204</sup> It, however, is falsified by the simple fact that the viewer actually perceives no distinction whatever between character and actor. And in any case, the doctrine of imitation itself has already been refuted.<sup>205</sup>

Therefore, the correct analysis is that there are three questions: Do the emotions derive from the rasas, or rasas from the emotions, or are they mutually generative? . . . Now, first of all, the author has stated<sup>206</sup> that rasa arises from the emotions and other aesthetic elements, and hence the second view has already been vindicated. But how is this possible? In the real world there exist no aesthetic elements—no “foundational causes” or “stimulant causes,” no “reactions,” no “transitory emotions”; there, such things have the status simply of real causes and effects. But these are the very things that become aesthetic elements so as to make aesthetic tasting possible. It can therefore be said that the “emotions”—that is, the aesthetic elements—arise by virtue of rasa.<sup>207</sup> But then it might well be objected that if the author has already stated that rasa arises by virtue of the aesthetic elements, whereas it is now being claimed that it is by virtue of rasa that the aesthetic elements become such, we have a circularity, and as the *Great Commentary on Grammar* declares, “Operations based on a circularity do not work.”<sup>208</sup>

Bharata's conclusion is as follows. Upon being apprehended, an aesthetic element—a foundational cause, as for example the female object of desire—affords a savoring of rasa, as previously stated. Hence the emotions here cannot be said to derive from the rasas. And from an examination of the etymological meaning of the word “emotion” itself this makes perfectly good sense [287], as the sage states: they are called emotions (*bhāva*) because they “bring into being (*bhāvaya*-),” or produce, the rasas “when they are fully,” i.e., properly, “configured with the various registers of acting,” in other words, when the emotions<sup>209</sup> come to be lodged in the heart.<sup>210</sup> [ . . . ] Hence, the author summarizes the position he adopts by saying, “There is no rasa devoid of an antecedent emotion.” Given that the opponent would argue that the reverse is also true, that there is no “emotion devoid of an antecedent rasa”—in view of the fact that the aesthetic elements are not part of everyday life<sup>211</sup>—the author responds by saying, “Their production is mutually effected in the course of acting.” In other words, it is only with the presence of acting, or full aesthetic visualization, that aesthetic elements can be referred to as such, insofar as they only then function in support of acting. When they are conceived of in this way, their mutual causality becomes reasonable, and there is nothing vicious about this sort of circularity. Here the author provides the analogy of the “conjunction of condiments and spices.” Just as condiments and food make each other savory, so emotions and rasas bring each other into being—emotions “bring the rasas into being,” that is, produce them,

and rasas “bring the emotions into being,” that is, make them “emotions” in the first place—in other words, make them identifiable as aesthetic elements.

The point is that circularity becomes vicious when two things are simultaneously produced in one and the same action, not when there are two actions. For example, food is only made tasty when conjoined with condiments and spices, whereas condiments and spices only become pleasant to eat when they are incorporated into food. Similarly, it is thanks to the emotions that the experience of *rasa* arises, whereas it is the rasas that enable the causes [288] to be identified as aesthetic elements. To draw an analogy: threads can only be referred to as a cause in reference to a piece of cloth; the cloth, however, can be considered an effect only in reference to the threads. There is no more circularity than this in the case at hand.

One might object that, if *rasa* arises from emotion, why did Bharata state, “We will explain the rasas first, for no aim will be achieved without attention to *rasa*”?<sup>212</sup> Surely it is emotion that should have been addressed first. In response to such an objection, the author uses the analogy of the seed.<sup>213</sup> *Rasa* is just like a seed functioning as the source of a tree. [1] From its source in *rasa*, instruction arises mediated by pleasure, and it is for this reason that the rasas principally merit comment first.<sup>214</sup> [2] The actions of the actor, for his part, because they depend upon the literary text, have their ultimate source in the consciousness of the author that has been commonized—a consciousness that in the final analysis is *rasa*. [3] The audience members too are captivated first by the apprehension of *rasa*, and only afterward, by an act of analytical understanding, come to apprehend the various aesthetic elements. Thus the same source, namely *rasa*, pertains to the work itself,<sup>215</sup> to the performance of a drama, and to the audience's awareness.<sup>216</sup> It can also be the *rasa* in the author that corresponds to the seed in the simile, the author being in this identical with the audience; this is why Anandavardhana has said, “If a poet is filled with passion, the whole world of his poem will consist of *rasa*”;<sup>217</sup> the literary work would then correspond to the tree, with the various actions of the actor, his registers of acting, corresponding to the flowers and the like, and the savoring of *rasa* on the part of the audience to the fruit. Thereby the whole world consists of *rasa*.<sup>218</sup> ...<sup>219</sup> Hence, the gist of this discourse is that all three positions can somehow be accommodated, depending on the particular perspective one adopts.

[289] [The *Treatise on Drama* states: “Among the rasas four are generative causes. . . .”]<sup>220</sup>

(1.289.13) There are four “causes”—that is to say, indicators—of the engendering of a *rasa*. In other words, the full range of causal relationships among the rasas can be indicated by reference to just four of them. To explain the four relationships: [1] When we are told that the imitation of the erotic *rasa* is the comic, the erotic in



the form of an imitation is meant to indicate that any *rasa* presented as a “semblance” is a cause of the comic.<sup>222</sup> When we have a semblance of all the aesthetic elements—the foundational and stimulant factors, the reactions, and the transitory emotions—we apprehend a semblance of desire; when this happens, we have a semblance of the erotic *rasa* that leads in turn to what is essentially a semblance of relishing. Here desire functions not as a stable emotion but only as a transitory one in the form of mere lascivious craving, even though it will seem in the man’s own eyes (i.e., the eyes of the antagonist) as if it were indeed stable;<sup>222</sup> as a consequence, all the aesthetic elements here become semblances. As a result, desire becomes a semblance of a stable emotion.<sup>223</sup> After all, the idea never enters Ravana’s mind<sup>224</sup> that Sita must either hate him or be completely indifferent to him, and were it in fact to do so, Ravana’s illusion<sup>225</sup> would vanish utterly. Instead, he never has done with<sup>226</sup> the certainty that she loves him, since his feelings are in essence a delusion produced by sexual passion—exactly like the semblance of silver that can appear where only mother-of-pearl is actually present.

Now, it is true that in all of Ravana’s utterances,<sup>227</sup> as for example,

Hearing her name is like a magnet or a bewitching spell.

My heart cannot bear her absence a fraction of a second.

These limbs of mine are tortured by love, my desire itself is tormented . . .

and I see no clear way to ever have the joy of having her.

[290] we find only the semblance of desire; the comic *rasa* does not manifest itself. Nonetheless, a foundational factor in the shape of Sita;<sup>228</sup> a host of transitory emotions (anxiety, despondency, confusion, and the like) that are at odds with Ravana’s character and his maturity; the array of reactions, weeping, lamenting, and the like—all this, since it is entirely out of character in him, becomes a *semblance* of the erotic and thus a foundational factor for the comic (Bharata will define this later, in the passage beginning “Wearing incongruous clothing and jewelry that belong to someone else”).<sup>229</sup> The erotic *rasa* is referred to above only to indicate this type of semblancing; we should understand that the semblances of all other *rasas*, the semblance of the tragic and so forth, also lead to the comic. For to be a foundational factor of the comic amounts to nothing more than such “improper” or out-of-character usage (and this can be extended to the foundational and stimulant factors and the reactions of all the *rasas*; the same holds true for the transitory emotions). This is why the ancients, who were well versed in the true nature of human consciousness, spoke here and there of “the *rasas*, the emotions, and the *semblances* of both.”<sup>230</sup> We similarly have a semblance of the peaceful *rasa* leading to the comic when something is

not actually a source of liberation but a mere semblance of one. The dramatic form of the farce in particular provides the instruction that impropriety with respect to all the ends of man must be avoided—something that will be enunciated in the definitions of the individual rasas.

Among these eight semblances of rasas, the following is an illustration of the semblance of the comic, a poem of Vamanagupta, my father's brother:

His deeds are otherworldly, and if this world  
does not honor them, well then, what to say?  
But the fact that the world is raucous with laughter at him . . .  
who wouldn't burst into sidesplitting laughter at that?<sup>231</sup>

Similarly, the tragic rasa that arises when someone grieves for a person with whom they do not have a kinship bond is itself comic.<sup>232</sup> The same reasoning applies to the other rasas. The above can suffice as an example, and others can be inferred from it (I have simply followed here the sage's formulation).<sup>233</sup>

[2] A second rasa inevitably follows upon the end result of a first. Bharata offers as an example the violent rasa with the tragic as its result. The end result of violence is killing someone, taking him captive, and so on, and with this foundational factor the tragic rasa will inevitably come about. Here is an example from the *Tying Up the Braid*.<sup>234</sup>

This very day the two of us went to the battlefield after seeing our father and  
mother.  
They kissed me on the head as I bowed, and did the same to Duhshasana.  
Now that his enemy has reduced their child to this state,  
how I can approach our parents, cruel man that I am? What am I to say?

Similarly, the fearful will necessarily follow upon the violent, and the tragic upon the erotic.<sup>235</sup> Of course, no effect of the erotic leads necessarily to the tragic, but the erotic can contribute as a subordinate factor to engendering the tragic. This is so in the case of Udayana, king of Vatsa, as a result of the supposed immolation of his queen, Vasavadatta, in the play *The Ascetic King of Vatsa*. It would be wrong to argue that what we have here has nothing to do with the erotic but is simply grief occasioned by a loved one's death after desire has been interrupted. For we find instances where anger is interrupted even at the moment that the tragic is arising,<sup>236</sup> as the author of the other play says: "Let Pandu's sons rejoice, the fires of enmity be quenched by their quelling their foes."<sup>237</sup> Nor in fact is the cause of the tragic rasa simply Uday-

ana's being married to Vasavadatta, with desire for her no longer present. Were that the case, in the following verse [291],<sup>238</sup>

You were trembling, with your garment slipping off in terror,  
casting those two eyes of yours distressed in every direction,  
as the cruel fire burned you without pity—was it so  
engulfed by smoke that it could not see who you were?

the word “those,” which bears the life force of the verse, would serve no purpose whatever. In the “Mourning of Rati” a similar sort of memory of the erotic gives life to the tragic:<sup>239</sup>

I now see those intimacies—“You dwell in my heart”—were tricks, mere figures  
of speech.  
How otherwise could your body be gone,<sup>240</sup> and your Rati survive?

In the same sense, the fearful can be said to arise from the heroic, as in the verse, “The whole world stood in fear of Arjuna as he killed Karna's son before his very eyes.”<sup>241</sup> Shri Shankuka, by the way, is wrong to assert that determination, the stable emotion of the heroic, is not at work in the above verse.<sup>242</sup> Determination has no scope anywhere if it is not present here, since its prerequisite requires no deep searching: in “the heroic in war,” which is at issue in the verse, this prerequisite is what is known as martial ardor, which produces<sup>243</sup> the enemy's defeat and brings burning pain to their hearts. And what this ardor gives life to is the fearful *rasa*, among their wives and so on, as in the following verse:

May he protect you who slaughtered the demons,  
the few survivors being overcome with terror  
just to look into their wives' eyes, lovely eyes though they were,  
that were darkened by kohl as dark as him.<sup>244</sup>

That there is a *necessary* relationship between the one and the other *rasa* is expressed in Bharata's text by the word “and” used directly after the ablative case (“of violence”), intimating *immediate consequentiality*.

[3] Every *rasa* can aim toward another as its end result. Bharata offers as an example the heroic *rasa*, with the fantastic as its result. For a great man's determination is exercised with the aim of amazing<sup>245</sup> the world as its end result, as for example in the verse, “He was set on breaking the bow of Shiva as he spanned it in

his iron-rodlike arms. . . ."<sup>246</sup> The case is different from [2]: the violent *rasa* does not aim toward the tragic as its end result, but only aims toward destroying the enemy. As for the laughter of the jester in a drama, it has no other aim than provoking the laughter of the leading lady.<sup>247</sup>

[4] One *rasa* will as a rule strongly imply another because the aesthetic elements<sup>248</sup> are common to both. Bharata offers as an example the macabre *rasa* implying the fearful, for its foundational factors—streams of blood and the like—are necessarily causes of fear;<sup>249</sup> so too its transitory emotions, dying, confusion, possession; and its physical reactions, the leering mouth and so on. An example from the *Tying Up the Braid*:<sup>250</sup> "Call back the armies breaking in retreat from the battlefield, dropping their weapons in terror at the macabre sight of Bhimasena spattered with the blood left from what he had drunk from the chest of the dead Duhshasana."<sup>251</sup> . . .

[292.20] These four *rasas* (the erotic, violent, heroic, and macabre) as generative causes are furthermore intimately related, through their specific properties,<sup>252</sup> to the four ends of man: love, wealth, morality, and liberation, respectively.<sup>253</sup> The reason is their capacity to produce extraordinary beauty. The other *rasas*, the comic and so on, insofar as they provide coloration for these, should be presented in dramatic genres as complements to the four.

As we stated earlier, this is the total number of *rasas*. To claim, as Bhatta Lollata does, that *rasas* are in fact numberless but that only this many should be used, in conformity with the norms of scholarly assemblies, is simply unthinking arrogance.<sup>254</sup>

[294.5] [The *Treatise on Drama* states: "Now . . . we shall show how a stable emotion becomes *rasa*."] In everyday life the stable emotions are the states of mind that are the sources of all manner of cares, and bespeak the unbroken series of obligations to which we are subject. And it is these, to be sure, that "we shall show becoming *rasa*" by becoming the sole basis for the state of absorption, as the teachings declare.<sup>255</sup> And they become *rasas* when poets or actors introduce the aesthetic elements as appropriate. (To quote: "The poet's new vision, preoccupied with enabling the *rasas* to be tasted"<sup>256</sup>—here the word "new" is used of poets alone because actors are dependent on poets and have no "new vision" themselves that sees and makes the tasting possible.) Thus, when the author states that, by teaching the proprieties of the aesthetic elements and how they make tasting possible, he will show how the stable emotions become *rasa*, he is making clear the goal of the account of definitions he is about to offer.

Since desire is the goal of aesthetic experience and is something with which everyone's heart concurs, and the erotic is predominantly desire, the author defines the erotic first. . . .<sup>257</sup> [296.4] He now clarifies the portion of the aphorism "The erotic . . . has its origin in the stable emotion of desire" by the following exegesis: "Its cause is

a woman and a man. . . ." With the words "a woman and a man" he means to suggest that the desire that takes the form of a stable emotion and becomes the cause of the erotic *rasa* is entirely different both from such everyday notions as "This man possesses this woman," which is marked by the experience of mutual craving, and also, accordingly, from the transitory emotion that persists only during the stage of passion and is essentially nothing more than craving.<sup>258</sup> For this stable emotion perdures from the beginning of their relationship to the attainment of the final goal, i.e., the plenitude of pleasure. Predispositions of real-world desire pervade the poet, but when he deploys the aesthetic elements—and the actor the physical reactions—he does so in such a way that the savoring of desire turns into the erotic *rasa*. And for the person who experiences the savoring too, some experience of real desire in the stage prior to the aesthetic experience is of service to it, as we have already stated.

Here is the main point: desire is a game that is fundamentally possible only for two lovers, for it is only with lovers that the stream of pleasure comes to its resting point.<sup>259</sup> Everything else, the beauty of physical objects, flower garlands and so on, is manufactured by the poet and merely imaginary. The supreme experience of desire is a fusion that consists in a mutual interpenetration and is accompanied by awareness, for consciousness is the all-important element; everything else<sup>260</sup> is only an insensate thing that forms the object of an experience. To quote:

It is merely the vexatious effort of respiration  
that goes on in my body. My true life breath is Janaki.<sup>261</sup>

This is why the objection raised by some—that, since there are different kinds of desire depending on the object of desire, the erotic *rasa* cannot be a single, self-same thing—is based on ignorance. No matter how many forms it takes, desire remains one and the same wherever there is no possibility of separation, thanks precisely<sup>262</sup> to this mutual consciousness. And that is why the author specifies that in the erotic *rasa* "the characters are a young couple of high status."<sup>263</sup> . . . "High" refers to consciousness, not bodily properties, for it is to sentience that the attributes "high" and "young" actually apply. . . .<sup>264</sup> And it is this awareness that, as a result of its being fit for savoring, turns into the erotic *rasa*. In the case of characters who are not of high status or who are not young,<sup>265</sup> we do not find the element of persistent stability, and so we do not have this awareness of desire, precisely because there is an expectation of separation, whereas the very life breath of the erotic *rasa* is awareness of inseparability.<sup>266</sup> . . .

[297.7] When the author speaks of the two "states" of the erotic *rasa*, he means two conditions . . . not two different species of the erotic, as the dappled and the black

form two species of cow. Rather, in both situations desire is continuously present as a bond of mutual care, and the erotic consists of savoring this<sup>267</sup> form of desire. To quote:

They say absence makes the heart grow less fond—but in fact the *rasa*  
for the beloved grows from enjoyment's lack, and it turns into a mass of love.<sup>268</sup>

This is why even in the state of the erotic enjoyed we can imagine the state of the erotic thwarted and become fearful, whereas the latter can be permeated with dreams of enjoyment—out of such things is the body of the erotic *rasa* formed.<sup>269</sup> Craving, jealousy, absence from home, and other situations are subsumed under these two, so long as desire in the form of that bond of mutual care is present. Thus the term “the erotic enjoyed” can be figuratively applied even in the absence of enjoyment, whereas we have the highest form of beauty when the two situations are combined, as in the following verse:

They lay upon the bed, each turned aside and suffering in silence;  
though love still dwelt within their hearts each feared a loss of pride.  
But then from out the corner of their eyes the sidelong glances met  
and the quarrel broke in laughter as they turned and clasped each other's neck.<sup>270</sup>

Here the *rasa* experience consists precisely of a combination of the erotic enjoyed and the erotic thwarted (of the subtype “jealousy”); it breathes one and the same spirit. It is brought about by the foundational factors, reactions, and transient emotions being mutually shared—all of which make this the highest aesthetic experience possible.

### On the Nature of Dramatic Acting

(1.35.12) The idea we come to have about the characters in a dramatic performance is not of some real thing; nor of a similarity, as one twin is similar to another; nor of a cognitive error, like the silver for which we mistake mother-of-pearl as a result of a memory of silver when we see the shell; nor of a superimposition, like the silver brought about by a cognition eventually known to be false once it has been negated by a correct cognition;<sup>271</sup> nor of an identification of two things, as in the case of a metaphorical statement like “The man from Balkh is an ox”; nor of a “poetic fantasy” about two things, as in the trope of a woman's face being the moon; nor of their being a copy, as is the case in a painting or clay sculpture; nor of their being an

imitation, like the natural desire of a student to imitate the exposition<sup>272</sup> of the teacher; nor of a momentary fabrication, as in the case of a magic act; nor of an illusion produced by a stratagem, as in the case of sleights of hand. In all those instances, viewers would remain indifferent because they have no *commonality* with such objects, and hence they would never be able to savor *rasa*; or<sup>273</sup> they would wind up being subject to mundane feelings of lust, anger, and the like, just as if in the presence of a couple making love in real life, and because of this, whether they thought they were beholding the main character or the performer (since those feelings could be grounded in either), they could never experience the “repose of consciousness” necessary for *rasa*. Moreover, with respect to the poet, if he were set on describing that sort of particularized being, he could never successfully produce poetry, because he would be rendered incapable of avoiding the kind of impropriety just mentioned.<sup>274</sup>

What then is drama?<sup>275</sup> The answer is as follows: Rama and other such characters are never brought into any such cognitive sphere as those produced by the processes mentioned above.<sup>276</sup> Although a sense of their particularity may well issue from a received text—an extended work<sup>277</sup> along the lines of the *Rāmāyaṇa*—such particularities amount to real individuality, in the sense of the capacity for causal efficacy for the purported deeds, only where they are actually present, and from such texts we do not have a [36] notion of particularity based on actual presence.<sup>278</sup> In literary works generally speaking, first of all, the aesthetic elements do come to be generalized in the heart; but among these, with respect to the bare story, although indeed it makes such generalization possible, one’s mental state, because of the absence of any deep pleasure, never experiences true conviction, any more than from the bald statement, “Whoever commits such and such an act suffers such and such a consequence.”<sup>279</sup>

With poetic works, whose body consists of stylistic features, figures of speech, and beautiful words and meanings, and whose life breath is supermundane *rasa*, it is true that one can have this kind of mental absorption by virtue of the heart’s concurrence. But in poetry not everyone can experience the awareness that everything is, as it were, happening before one’s very eyes.

With respect to drama, however, that is the true state of things.<sup>280</sup> The viewer is never predisposed to believe that some quotidian task awaits him; he is only predisposed to believe that he is about to hear and see something supermundane and precious because of its boundless *rasa*, a pure pleasure he shares in common with all the other audience members. This state renders everyone’s heart as spotless as a mirror, and as he relishes the apposite vocal and instrumental music he forgets all phenomenal reality. He begins to identify with the joy or grief that emerges from watching the various registers of acting, from the simple gesticulation<sup>281</sup> onward. As other actors

enter or their recitations reach his hearing, he gains a kind of "ascertainment" regarding Rama, say, or Ravana, one not penetrated by any particularities of time and space and free from any assessment of the normal cognitive categories of truth, falsehood, doubt, or conjecture. He thereby becomes<sup>282</sup> predisposed toward the aforementioned ascertainment about Rama, one accompanied by predispositions activated by the experience of the many beautiful accompanying things—the vocal and instrumental music, the beautiful actresses—which are the causes of the continuity of those earlier predispositions.<sup>283</sup> So that for five or six moments<sup>284</sup> each spectator is filled with rapture<sup>285</sup> and has the idea that he himself has entered into the life story of Rama, and thereby beholds the universe as such while still in his own form; and he comes to possess a form of consciousness of the sort conveyed by the deontic language of scripture—namely, that those who do such and such a thing receive such and such a reward—but without any assessment of the specifics of time and space; a consciousness that is of a general sort but that delights as if particular to him alone,<sup>286</sup> which is like the love of one's life,<sup>287</sup> and where one's predispositions are activated by the beautiful vocal and instrumental music accompanied by the savoring of *rasa*; a consciousness implanted into one's very heart in such a way that a hundred cleansings<sup>288</sup> could not cause it to fade away; so much so that, since the viewer is now suffused with the desire to attain the good and avoid the bad, he actually comes to do the one and shun the other, given that he has now gained an understanding to this end.

Another name for drama is thus, as the text puts it, "re-narration,"<sup>289</sup> in other words, a particular kind of reflexive consciousness. There should be no confusion about this being an imitation, since we do not have any sense that the prince or whoever has been "imitated" by a process of mimicry.<sup>290</sup> For in fact, imitation is parody and for that reason a source of mere amusement for onlookers. As the sage later says: "The comic arises from *imitating* someone else's actions."<sup>291</sup> . . .

[37] One might wonder why, although drama may not, for all that, be an imitation of a particular individual, it cannot still be imitation as such. No reason—aside from the fact that it is impossible. "Imitation" means "making similar," but in our case similar to what? Not Rama, first of all, since technically he cannot be imitated.<sup>292</sup> And the same reasoning disqualifies the imitation of all the other foundational factors, the heroine and so on. Nor can it be an imitation of mental states, grief, anger, and so on; the actor does not make his own grief similar to Rama's for the simple reason that he has no grief at all to begin with—and if he did, he would not be producing an imitation. Nor is there anything else he could produce that would be similar to grief. It is true that he produces physical reactions; these are not *similar* to the others, however, but, precisely, *homogeneous* with them. And what sense would it make to say one thing is "similar" to another when the two things have the same



properties? As for a universal property, it cannot simultaneously be "similar" to a particular instance; only a discrete thing can be imitated, and then, only in stages. What, in short, would be the meaning of imitation with respect to a thing that exists as a generality? Hence, no one should be confused into concluding that drama is an imitation of things that are *not* particulars. This is what we should understand as the intention behind my teacher's *Literary Investigations*, not that drama may indeed be an imitation of nonparticulars.<sup>293</sup>

Hence, drama is a rendering of something as an object of a particular kind of reflexive consciousness. To explain:<sup>294</sup> the costumes and other theatrical props neutralize belief that one is actually perceiving particular actors, Chaitra, say, or Maitra, who exist in a given time and place. But since it would be impossible for perception to function without any trace whatsoever of particularity, a name like "Rama" has its special functionality in this context, communicating as it does a reputed tale as connected with this celebrated name, and thanks to its capacity for thereby eliminating our basic sense of implausibility,<sup>295</sup> the viewer's reflexive consciousness takes on the character of a direct perception.<sup>296</sup> The play, because it is a site of aesthetic rapture, becomes an appropriate locus for emotional absorption insofar as it is permeated by pleasing vocal music and the rest. The actors' identities are concealed by means of the four registers of acting; the prologue and the other theatrical preliminaries assist the viewer's predispositions produced by knowledge about the actors. Thereby, as he comes before our eyes, the performer enters into the center of the complex of enchanting aesthetic elements, his own identity being concealed; armed with predispositions produced by earlier mundane perceptions and inferences, he is assisted by other predispositions derived from his knowledge of actors and receptive viewers, and he can thereby function as an auxiliary to the process of aesthetic identification through the heart's concurrence. Through him there comes into being this special kind of reflexive consciousness that consists of the light of the bliss that is one's own pure consciousness; it is "laden"<sup>297</sup> with this or that mental state, pleasurable or painful, as the case may be and hence multifarious; something that is given many different names—tasting, savoring, rapture, relishing, enjoyment, experience. The thing that reveals itself in this reflexive consciousness is what we call "drama." It hardly matters whether this "thing," as I call it, is a mere mental construct, a superimposition,<sup>298</sup> a generality, a temporary artifact, or whatever.<sup>299</sup> We have no desire to impose upon the sensitive reader by impeding the analysis of the matter at hand with irrelevant disquisitions that only serve to put on display the author's intimacy with discourses from other philosophical traditions.

Hence, drama is a "narration"<sup>300</sup> that consists of a reflexive consciousness "laden" with conceptual sense experience of the sort earlier described; for drama is made

known by this kind of awareness. What drama is not is an imitation. There is no harm, of course, in saying that it is “imitation” (*anu-karaṇa*) in the sense that it “accords with” (*anu-sāri-*) the “doings” (*karaṇa*) of the real-world characters, since the use of such terminology is not a source of controversy so long as the actual distinction is kept securely in mind.