WHAT DID BHARATA MEAN BY RASA?

In one of his works, Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinava Gupta, R. Gnoli writes, "In this way Bhatta nayaka and Abhinavagupta rescued the idea of Rasa from the primitive and too concrete form which it had been given by Bhatta Lollata and Sankuka. Rasa is not a thing in itself, formed previous to the act of consciousness by which it is perceived, but the consciousness itself (and therefore, the perception) which, freed from external interference and from all practical desires, becomes Rasa or aesthetic consciousness. The subject, when immersed in this state, finds, in it, the fulfilment of all his desires : in this sense, therefore, Rasa is pleasure, beatitude, rest, lysis!" The remark is based on the present Indian tradition and perhaps correctly describes a particular aspect of aesthetic consciousness. But did Bharata mean Rasa by this particular experience, or was the theory fathered on him by Bhattanavaka. Abhinavagupta, Mammata and their followers? It is not my object in this paper to criticise Abhinavagupta's theory of Aesthetic consciousness, for it may correctly depict the aesthetic It is my object, however, to show that there are reasons for believing that by 'Rasa', Bharata meant an entirely different thing which is, in fact, an essential element in his whole theory of dramatic art or Natya.2 The following study is an attempt to disentangle this extremely important theory of artistic creation which Bharata seems actually to have held, from the theories of later ages.

I shall begin by asking the meaning of the word 'Nātya'. The word 'Nātya' should be distinguished from the word Nāṭaka, though it is not often done. Both these words are derived from the word 'Naṭa', but on account of the different terminations added to 'Naṭa', the word stands for two entirely different concepts. The word Nāṭya is formed by adding Śañ to Naṭa and means the action or performance of the actor. Nāṭya is thus concerned with the staging of a drama (or Nāṭāka). Bharata himself defines Nāṭya as the *imitation* of that which takes place in the real world: Nānā-Bhāvopsampannam Nāṇāvasthāntārāntikam, Lokavṛittānukaraṇam Nāṭyametat Mayā Kṛtam (I. 112 N. S.). The word Nāṭaka,

on the other hand, is formed by adding 'Aka' (Nvul) to the word 'Naṭa' and is to be classed under the genus 'poetry', e. g. in "Kāvyeṣu Nāṭakam ramyam". It can very well be seen that though of course 'Nāṭya' ³ and 'Nāṭaka' ⁴ are closely related to each other, 'Nāṭaka' is connected more with the content or story aspect, (e. g. in "Nṛpātinām yaccaritam Nāṇārasbhāvasambhṛtam bahudhā Sukhadukkhotpattikṛtam, bhavatihi tannāṭakam nāma''5) and Nāṭya with the manifestation of the story on the stage. It should be borne in mind that when a Nāṭāka is not staged it still remains a 'nāṭaka' even if it has been reduced to spoken or written symbols. But it cannot be a nāṭya unless it is staged.

This stage medium then, is an important aspect of Natva. It is a medium in which the poets' or rather the artists' mental states become, so to speak, objectified. In Nātaka, they become objectified in a different way, in written letters or spoken sounds In sanskrit this medium is called Sabda, "Sound". Let us call the written or spoken symbols the language of poetry or Nāṭaka, and the stage-medium the language of Natya. All the constituents of stage performances will thus form the language of Nātya. It may be objected, and perhaps rightly, that at the time of Bharata this was not the conception of Nataka. But at any rate this was the conception of poetry or Kavya, and the language or medium of Kāvya was Śabda. What is relevant for my purpose is to show that just as Sabda is a medium for poetry, it is not a medium for Nātya. Bharata was interested in giving us a system of rules about Natya. He wanted to show us how to transform the content that was in a poet's mind into the stage language. It was this language or at least a part of it — that, I hold, was called Rasa by Bharata. I shall try to explain in the following paragraphs my reasons for thinking so.

In almost all the systems of Indian Philosophy, the words Sabda, Sparśa, Rūpa, Rasa and Gandha occur, in the Vedas and Upaniṣads too. But, I think, the earlier technical use of these words can be found in the Sāmkhya system. Unfortunately almost all the literature on Sāmkhya is lost and the only commentaries on the kārikā of Iśvarakṛśna that exist are written from the vedāntic point of view. In spite of these difficulties, it is possible to discuss the place of the concepts of śabda6 etc., in Sāmkhya. I have, of course, to base my view on the scanty material that is available to

me in the kārikās of Iśvarakrśna, with the commentries there on by Gaudapāda and Vācaspati Miśra and Yuktidipika, an anonymous commentary on it by Vijnāna Bhikśu, and exposition of Sāmkhya in other systems such as Buddhism and Vedanta. From the information that is available, it can be safely asserted that for Samkhya, Śabda, Sparśa, Rūpa, Rasa and Gandha are 'Tanmātrās', and that 'Tanmātrā' is a word that is indigenous to Sāmkhya system. 'Tanmātrā' means 'that itself' : 'Tadeva iti tanmātrām'. The concept is something like Kant's concept of the thing-in-itself. The world as it is known to us is a product of the mind and the Tanmatras together (not the product of mind alone). This world, therefore, consists of five gross elements or Panca Mahābhūtas. Mahābhūtas are, thus, the knowable or epistemic objects, and Tanmātras are the ontological objects which reach us as Mahābhūtas. It is in this sense then that we can say that Mahābhūtas are born out of Tanmatras. But the language of Samkhya should not be literally understood. It is on account of the difficulty of expressing the thought that Sāmkhya has to use such a language. Tanmatras can not be known to us; their existence is postulated in order to distinguish real knowledge from false. Thus a knowledge process would consist of three elements, (1) the knower or the subject, (2) the thing in itself that is known and (3) the thing as it is known to the subject.8 Whenever a knower comes in contact with a tanmātra, what he knows is a Mahābhūta. Tanmātra is thus logically prior to Mahābhūta and serves in the realm of Sāmkhya ontology as an intermediary between the knower and Mahābhūta. It is necessary to remember that neither the tanmātras, nor the mahābhūtas are psychological in nature, though they are usually so thought. Mahābhūtas are sensible objects and since the sense organs are five, at least in the Sāmkhya conception of the term. Mahābhūtas are divided into five classes. Naturally the nucleus (or the physical things) on which our sense organs act are also regarded as five. The idea is that each sense organ has a separate object for acting on. Of course, one could as well think that the object of five organs is one. But the prejudice that each sense organ has a separate object does not seem to be uncommon, as can be seen from the sense-datum theory. Tanmatras, however, should not be confused with sense-data. For, for Samkhya, the physical objects and the Tanmatras are not different. The five Tanmatras are named after five senses because (1) no other convenient names are available and (2) they are connected, in a sense, with sense organs.

In some broad sense at least, a work of art is a thing, an entity. On one side it is connected with its creator, the artist, on the other side it is connected with the appreciator. Art, thus, may be called a process, with three distinct stages involved in it. This may roughly be represented as (1) The states of artist's mind (2) the objectified expression (of the artist) and (3) the appreciation or the states of the mind of the appreciator. This process may also be subdivided into two sub-processes, as their functions are entirely different. The first sub-process may be called the process of creation of art and the second may be termed, the process of appreciation of art. In the terminology of Bharata, the first one is known as 'Rasanirmiti-Prakriyā' and the second one as 'Rasāsvāda-Prakriyā'. These processes may be represented in the following schemata:

The pole (2), that is the objectified expression (of art) in a sense is independent of the poles (1) and (3). That is though it is dependent on (1) for its creation, it is not dependent on it for its existence. Similarly it is also independent of (3) for its existence though it is related to it for being appreciated. On the other hand pole (3) cannot exist if pole (2) does not exist.

There appears to be an interesting parallel in this account and Sāmkhya account of knowledge. The pole (2) appears to be similar to the 'Tanmātras' of the Sāmkhya or the world that is absolutely independent of our knowledge, the only difference being that the 'tanmātras' belong to the real world whereas pole (2) belongs to the world of art. The pole (3) appears to be something like the Mahābhūta of Sāmkhya, which is a sort of construction of the knower. The sub-process with the poles 1 and 2 is again very similar to the sāmkhya process from Tanmātra to Mahābhūta, with, of course, a difference that the art process of creation is more or less an inverted process of the one that is represented in Sāmkhya. It is very similar to the process by which the Sāmkhya philosopher, starting from the world of Mahābhūtas arrives at an entity called Tanmātras. The artist also, draws his material from the world

Mahābhūtas, a material which has been transformed into his individual experience. This individual experience starts as a background for the artistic creation and is sometimes known in the Indian theory of Art as Sthāyibhāva but should be rather known as Kavi-antargabhāva9. The problem before an artist is to reduce his 'individual' experience to a medium which will be impersonal, independent of him, and knowable to all people who want to know This is pole (2) in our terminology and represents in the world of art a concept which is similar to that of Tanmatra of the Samkhya. The influence of the Samkhya system on Natyaśastra is well known and several passages from Natyasastra can be quoted for proving that in Natyaśastra the language of Samkhya is used. In fact the word 'Rasa' (Tanmatra) and Bhava used in Nātyaśāstra and the two processes to which I am referring above have been actually mentioned in the Sāmkhya Kārikā. I quote below the fifty-second Kārikā from Iśvarakrśna which will indicate that the words Rasa, Bhāva etc., are used in Sāmkhya.

Na vinā bhāvair lingam na vinā lingena bhāva nirvṛttih l Lingākhyo Bhāvākhyah tasmāt dividhah pravartate sargah li

The kārikā when translated means:

Without Bhāva¹⁰ there cannot be liñga i. e. Tanmātras (Fortunately commentator Gaudapāda is very clear on this point in his commentary of this kārikā. He clearly says that liñga refers to Tanmātras (liñgam na tanmātrah na), though in his commentaries on other kārikās he has confused the meanings.) and without Liñga or Tanmātra the Bhāvās cannot come into existence (the word 'Nirvṛitti' also is used in Nātya). Therefore, there are two kinds of creative processes, by name Bhāva and by name Liñga.

I, therefore, think that the Sāmkhya theory of knowledge is used in the Indian theory of Art in general and the Nātyaṣāstra in particular, in the way I suggest. It, thus, appears to me that the terms referring to Tanmātras in the Sāmkhya theory of knowledge, such as Śabda, Rūpa and Rasa, were borrowed by the theory of art to designate the pole (2) or nucleus in the media of particular arts. Śabda was applied to the medium for literary arts like Kāvya, Rūpa for Citrā and Śilpa, and 'Rasa' was used for Nāṭya. There could not, in any real sense, be any fine art connected with Sparśa and Gandha¹¹

as their fields, too, are covered by Sabda, Rupa and Rasa. I believe at the time Bharata wrote his Nātyaśāstra, this triple scheme must have been the basis for the classification of the arts. This is also, perhaps, the reason why we do find a special discussion of Rupa in connection with the visual theory of Arts-or Kala-in the Tantraloka of Abhinavagupta himself. It is evident that the words Sabda, Rūpa and Rasa should stand on the same level and if one designates a class of media, so should, the others. I think it is likely that in the course of history the originally intended meanings of these words were lost, perhaps under the influence of certain schools of philosophy. Thus Rasa, which was originally intended to refer to an object (or medium or language) of Natya, became in the post-Abhinavagupta era, a mental state, a pleasure and aesthetic consicousness, and was applied not only to Natya but also to Kavya in general. As late Paul Hacker, of the University of Bonn, pointed out to me, later Sanskrit dramas were most unsuitable for staging and were most likely meant simply to be read. This factor also must have contributed to the change in the meaning of Rasa. The fact that Abhinavagupta identified Kāvya with Nātya12 should also corroborate the fact that Natya had lost its distinction from Nātaka and Kāvya in his time, that is about 10th or 11th century A. D.

Abhinavagupta was, indeed, a very profound scholar, but it still appears to me that he has completely missed the point which Bharata wanted to convey. When Bharata talks about Nātya, it is clear from his use of the word that kāvya or poetry cannot be intended. This is very plain, even from the cursory reading of the text of Nātyaśātra. Whenever he wanted to speak of what we now call kāvya, he has specifically used the terms, Nāṭaka and Kāvya.¹³ He also defines Nāṭya and Nāṭaka in different terms. This clearly indicates that Bharata did not intend to use these terms indiscriminately. In spite of this clear distinction Abhinavagupta repeatedly says that Nāṭya is poetry. Kāvyam Nāṭyameva.⁴ This clearly shows that while writing his famous commentary on Nāṭyaśāstra, Abhinavagupta did not have the same concern with the staging of drama (Prayoga) as did Bharata.

It is necessary at this stage to dilate further on the meaning of Nātya. Abhinavagupta himself defines Nātya as follows: Yattu daśarūpakam tasya yo arthah tadeva nātyam. That is the

Artha¹⁵ of Daśarūpaka is nāṭya. This definition, though in a sense correct, is very ambiguous and is likely to be misused, unless the primary meaning of 'nāṭya' is borne in mind. The object or viṣaya¹⁶ of Daśarūpaka may change in as much as the artistic medium changes. If the medium is word or ordinary language, this object could be easliy identified with poetry; Nāṭya would thus be equated with poetry. This is what Abhinavagupta is trying to do. It appears to me that he wrongly quotes from Nāṭyaśāstra in supporting his point. He says, "Yat Vakśyate. 'Nāṭyasya eṣā tanuḥ". The chapter from which this passage is taken, really deals with the importance of speech in acting. Separated from its context, the quotation¹⁷ is likely to be misleading. The passage runs thus:

Yo Vāgabhinayah prokto mayā pūrvam dvijottamāh lakṣanam tasya vakṣyāmi svaravyañjana sambhavam vāci yatnstu kartavyo Nātyasyeyam tanusmṛtā¹⁸

To use this passage for proving that Nāṭya is the same as Kāvya is, therefore, not quite fair. It is much better to define Nāṭya as Anukaraṇa, following Bharata as I have done. It appears to me that Abhinavagupta and Mr. R. S. Ramaswamy Shastri, the learned editor of Abhinavabharati¹¹ are both wrong in insisting that Nāṭya should not be regarded as Anukaraṇa. Once, however, the distinctiveness of the medium that is employed in Nāṭya is recoginsed it can easily be seen that Nāṭya can substantially be the object or viṣaya of Daśarūpaka. In a sense even Nāṭaka, (including the representation of it in verbal symbols) may be thought to form a part of Nāṭya; for it is the Nāṭaka or the story of Nāṭaka that is exhibited through the far more extensive resources of Nāṭya.

Abhinavagupta seems to have over-looked a very crucial point in Bharata's theory. It appears to me—and this has been pointed earlier—that for Bharata, Nāṭya, Nāṭaka, or for that matter any art was essentially communicative and consisted of three stages: the first stage is that when the art is still potentially in the poet's or artist's mind. The second stage is when the first stage becomes objectified and becomes independent of the artist. It is at this stage that the arts become distinct from one another because their media are different. The third stage is that when the art is experienced by the appreciator. The art so to speak becomes a part of the spectator's mind. This stage is the interpretation of the second and is more or less analogous to the first.

For Bhattanāyaka and Abhinavagupta, the first two stages—the creative element in art—are relatively less important or perhaps in a metaphysical sense non-existent. That is why they restrict their discussion of art to the third stage, which in one sense is not an effect of any earlier stage. This explains why Bhattanāyaka and Abhinavagupta think that Rasa, which they place in this third stage, is not created, nor is it experienced: "Raso na pratiyate; na utpadyte na abhivyajyate." On account of this peculiar point of view, the problem of how to transform the first stage into the second, or the mental content into the object—which in a sense is a real problem of all arts, and much more so in the case of nāṭya does not arise for Abhinavagupta. This, however, was the problem with which Bharata was definitely faced and which he tried to solve in the Nāṭyaśāstra.

Bharata points out: "Ekonapañcaśata ime yathavat bhavah tryavasthāh gaditā mayā vah." And again, "Evam Rasāśca bhāvāsca tryavasthāh nātake smṛtāh21." The significance of the word 'tryavastha' does not seem to have been noticed by any commentator. Even Abhinavagupta²² does not comment on it and in several editions of Natyaśastra the word is replaced by another word 'vvavastha'. But the word tryavastha is a key word for the understanding of Bharata's theory. Bharata is pointing out that Bhavas or Rasas have three stages or three transformations. But for these transformations, Rasa and Bhava—a term that will be discussed later-would be identical. What are these three stages? What is it, that Bharata wants to convey by the expression Tryavastha? As has been pointed out above, Bharata is here, referring to three different stages in the theory of Natya. The theory, however, will hold good for any art or for that matter for language.23/24 Let me try to explain it further.

It must be admitted that art, like language, is in a very important sense, communicative. This communication, is between the artist and the appreciator and is carried on through a certain medium, an art. The state (or content) of mind (feelings) which the artist is impelled to express, as well as the effect on the mind of the appreciator are both mental and perhaps in some way, similar or equivalent. But in the realm of art there cannot be any direct transmission of the contents of the artist's mind to the mind of the appreciator. There cannot be any direct transition from the artist

to the appreciator. The content of the artist's mind must take some form which acts as a medium between the artist and the appreciator and may vary from art to art. In fact it is on account of the variations of medium that one art differs from another. Nāṭya differs from Kāvya in respect of this medium; the medium of Kāvya or literature is "ordinary language or word or Śabda", the medium of drama that is staged (Nāṭya) is something different not abhinaya or acting alone; it is not entirely Nāṭya. It is in a sense the stage with all its constituents. A suitable word is to be found for it. To express this idea, I believe Bharata employed the word 'Rasa' on the analogy of the word Śabda, borrowing it from the metaphysics of Sāṁkhya.

Before proceeding further, let the relations that exist between the three stages be noted. Let me call them S1, S2 and S3. S1 refers to the content of the artist's mind, all that he wants to convey or express. S2 represents the objectified mental facts or S1 as transformed into symbols. S3 again depicts them as they are in the mind of the appreciator. S3 constitutes the meaning that the symbols S2 have for the appreciator. Let this 'meaning'26 be symbolised by the letter'M'. I can, then express myself in the following way:

(1)
$$\frac{S1}{M} = S2$$
 (2) M(S2) = S3

If the above equations are roughly correct, then it will be the object of any artist to put forward his ideas, or the content of his mind in S2. It must, however, be remembered that S2 may differ according to the difference in Medium. Let this difference in media be represented by letters "D.D'.D'.D''.D''". I may, then, say that the forms of all arts may be expressed by the following notations:

$$D_{S2}..\ D'_{S2}..\ D''_{S2}\ ..\ D'''_{S2}\ ..\ D^{\mathfrak{u}'}_{S2}$$

It can be very easily seen that the creative function of the artist ceases with the creation of a member of the series $D_{S2}...D^{n'}_{S2}$. Any art must be located only within this series. It is this series which the appreciator knows and when he knows it, knows it with the meaning attached to one or other of the series, that is, knows it as S3. The relation between the D_{S2} series and the S3 could easily be interpreted as analogous to the knowledge process as visualised by $S\bar{a}\dot{m}khya$. S3 is something like the world as we know it

to use Kant's terminology, a phenomenal world. In order to know this world we assume that in the physical reality there must be some datum. This datum can be compared to ' D_{S2} ' series. The Sāṁkhya concepts of Tanmātra and Mahābhūta can, in exactly the same way, be regarded as parallel with the D_{S2} series and S3. The real world of physics consists only of Tanmātras, though it is perceptible to us as consisting of Mahābhūtas. Similarly the world created by the artists consists only of the ' D_{S2} ' series, though when it is known by the appreciator it is invested with its meaning, and is called S3. M will be constant whether in the 1st stage or in the third and will be present potentially in the 2nd stage also. This is Sthāyi.

How are you going to interpret and describe the D_{S2} series in the context of Nāṭya and what name are you going to give to this mediatory series? What will be the Nāṭya language for expressing the ideas of the artist? What will be the material of such a language?

The language of Nātya will differ from that of poetry; the material of this language will consist of visible and audible symbols; it will consist of actions and the cast of actors themselves with the environment. All these together will form a Nātya language and it is into this language that the thoughts or the ideas of the artists, that is 'S1' will have to be translated.

Let me illustrate the point. Suppose an artist has to express a love episode between a hero and a heroine, say Samkara and Parvati. It cannot simply be in written or spoken symbols: one party making an offer and the other accepting it. With this mental event, love, certain bodily events are necessarily concomitant. The mental content is expressed through bodily expressions and behaviour, very peculiar to the situation. In the actual world, too, if a lover expresses his love to his beloved and the beloved accepts the love, the whole situation cannot be simply verbal and devoid of proper signs of emotion. The beloved's acceptance of love-at least in Indian tradition-will be accompained by certain bodily postures, or throbbing of the lips, or tremor of the body. The beloved will usually blush. She may not look straight into the lover's eyes, but may look downward, and in many cases, may not utter a word but remain silent. Usually such a scene may occur at some beautiful place near a lake where there are lotuses. The

dramatist, the creator of the art, has to conceive the whole of this complex situation with all its (mental) implications before expressing it in words or symbols. And in the act of staging of this drama, if the stage director is different from the dramatist, he has to construct on the stage, with the help of the set of actors and situations. all that the dramatist has to convey. The stage director thus makes use of this material in order to give concrete form to the ideas of the artist i. e. the dramatist. The set of actors and environment, and the acting and the bodily expression, the direction and the director-all these form the material of the Natya language, just as the meaningful words and their syntax form part of poetry. I think it was this Natva language or rather language medium that was called Rasa by Bharata, in the same way as the language medium of literature or poetry was called Sabda. Just as ordinary language or a sentence consists of words, similarly this language consists of Vibhava (i. e. set of actors and environment) Anubhāva (the expressions connected with acting which again is of three varieties, Vācika, Āngika and Sātvika) and Vyabhicāribhāva, (mental, bodily and organic states, poses and movements). Bharata thought that such natya-language-patterns would be of eight types and classified them under different Rasas like Śrngāra, Vira etc.

I have stated that any art can be conceived as having three stages, S1, S2 (or D_{S2}) and S3. I have also stated that S1 is mental and is concerned with the states of the artist's or poet's mind. I have further said that the states of the poet's mind are given a concrete form in S2 (or D_{S2}). I have also suggested that S1 is what Bharata thought to be the internal state of artist and M the Sthāyibhāva. Now it may be objected here that this analysis, though adequate for arts like 'Readable poetry' or painting or sculpture, is not adequate for Natya. The art of Natya, unlike other arts, is concerned with a set of four different kinds of persons (1) the dramatist, (2) the stage director, (3) the actor and (4) the character played by the actor. Each one of the first three in his turn tries to express what he conceives in his mind and so a problem arises: whose mental state it is that is manifested in 'Ds2'? In other words, what is S1? Is it concerned with the mental states of the dramatist, as I have earlier suggested, or with the stage director, the actor; or the character that is being played? In Abhinavabhārati, a lot of discussion has been centered round

the problem, the problem of 'location' of Sthayibhava as it is called and the theories of Bhattalollata and Śańkuka, at least, as they are represented by Abhinavagupta, have contributed considerably to carry the discussion on wrong path.

It is true that in Natya, each of these four agents in a sense contribute to the manifestation of 'Ds2'. 'Ds2' is, in some sense, mentally conceived by the dramatist, the stage director and also in most cases the actor. But to 'locate' S1, in either the stage director, or the actor or the real hero is based on certain misconception. The mistake lies in the fact that the complexity of the human mind was not properly conceived by any of the commentators of Nātyaśāstra. A man can, not only experience some experience, but can also experience that someone else experiences some experience. He can imagine such or more complex situations and try to objectify them. A man who does this is a dramatist. alone conceives the drama. It is he who conceives that his hero should behave in a particular way in a particular situation. It is not really material whether the real hero has ever existed or if he has existed whether he behaved in a similar way in that situation. It is this creativeness of the dramatist which is accepted and carried out by the stage director and the actor. Their work is not original, but is rather that of expressing the ideas of the dramatist. In this sense, then, both the stage director and the actor are only factors in 'Ds2'. Even if they improve on the original ideas of the dramatist, it would mean that they have shown better understanding of the situation and that their mental states were just the improved editions of the original. Both the 'S1' and M must, therefore, be referred to the mind of the dramatist alone.

I believe, Bhaṭṭanāyaka and Abhinavagupta (as also Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa and Śaṅkuka) missed this point that all Bharata wanted to describe was the language and technique of expressing the ideas in the mind of the artist—in this context, the dramatist. They, therefore, centered their attack against Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa and Śaṅkuka, who discussed theories about Śthāyībhāva as to whether it was in the mind of the actor or of the real hero. Since 'Rasa' is supposed to succeed Śthāyībhāva, the real notion of Rasa was misconceived as soon as Sthāyībhāva was located at a wrong place. They, therefore, missed the point that Bharata was interested mainly in the production or Niṣpatti of Rasa, in the production of D_{S2}. Since they identified Rasa with the aesthetic

consciousness of the appreciator they thought that there could not be any process like the production of Rasa (Rasa-nispatii). They, thus, further missed the point that Bharata distinguished between the process of the production of Rasa (Rasa-nispatti) and the the experiencing or tasting of Rasa (Rasasvada). They, therefore, thought that 'Rasa' intrinsic to the appreciator (Rasikagata). and manifested only in him, was, therefore, mental in nature (Āsvādarūpa). They, thus, completely neglected the keyword in Bharata's theory, that Rasa and Bhava are 'tryavastha', that is, are manifested in three stages. Bharata, as a matter of fact, clearly distinguished 'Rasa' from another stage—a fourth one—happiness, which he called 'Harsa'. He talks of 'harsa'27 while dealing with the process of the experience of Rasa. It seems clear that these great scholars imposed their own theories on Bharata oblivious of his profound concern with the actual staging of a drama. Their theories may be important in the history of poetics and aesthetics: but they should not be allowed to replace Bharata's older theory which has its own great virtues. It is only by misinterpreting Bharata's intentions and misreading Bharata's texts that a theory like that of Abhinavagupta could be super-imposed on Nātyaśātra. The problem before Bharata was relatively simple, it was how to exhibit a drama. All that he tries to do is to explain the different aspects of this technique which concerns the body of Natya. problem for Abhinavagupta was purely philosophic and I believe that Bharata's concern with the technique of production has been sacrificed entirely for the sake of philosophic speculation. Indeed a genuine theory of aesthetic consciousness did emerge from it, but a theory of art was also lost.

For Bharata state 1 and state 3 or as I called them, S1 and S3, were definitely mental. For him the State S1 was 'Internal' as can be seen from his words: "Kaveh antargatam bhāvam"28, State S3, was the meaning of and reaction to Rasa and could also in one sense be termed as Sthāyībhāva, as the state is similar to it, though Bharata never says so and also on account of the presence of M. The state of Rasa came in between the two, S1 and S3, i. e. it succeeded the meaning in the (dramatist's) artist's mind. But if the meaning in artist's mind or rather the artist's intention is confused with a 'bhāva' in the mind of the appreciator i. e. S3, then Rasa which, Bhārata says, succeeds Sthāyībhāva, i. e. S1 could easily be misunderstood as something succeeding S3. Now this S4 could

be a state of pleasure or happiness and all that Abhinavagupta says may be perhaps true of S4. Since for Abhinavagupta and Bhattanāyaka there could not be any 'production' of Rasa, S1 and S2 (or Ds2) could not exist. S3 is, then, taken as a Sthāyibhāva and the state of Rasa which succeeds Sthavibhava is, therefore, pleasure But this kind of logic is based or aesthetic consciousness. on a fundamental error that Sthavibhava was state S3. This, in turn, is based on the failure to distinguish between the process of production of Rasa (Rasa-nispatti) and the process of tasting or experiencing of Rasa (Rasāsvāda). It is on account of this confusion that Rasa, which for Bharata was not mental at all, became dogmatically mental for Abhinavagupta and his followers and was identified with Artha (meaning) or Asvada, which Bharata, as I see it, used to convey the S3. This paved the way for the condensation of Rasa-dhavani theory. The Dhavni theory is, in fact, a theory about 'Artha'29 i. e. S3. As soon as Rasa was identified with S3, the condensation could easily take place. It is, however, interesting to note that though the meaning of Rasa was, thus, transformed, the meaning of Sabda and Rupa, which belonged originally to the same universe as Rasa, did not undergo any such transformations.

Whether all that I say is right or wrong can be verified from the text of Bharata itself. I therefore propose to offer in translation an important passage from Bharata. After giving the list (sangraha) of all the constituents of Nāṭya he says:

"We shall, therefore, first describe the Rasas (for) without Rasa there could not be any Artha.²⁹ This Rasa is produced there (i. e. on the stage) on account of the combination of Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhicārībhāva [this combination should not be understood as a mechanical combination, but should be understood as a combination of parts and a whole or rather of sentence (vākya) and words (padas).³⁰ (The Vibhāvas are the set of actors and the environment, Anubhāvas are different kinds of supplementary states like 'smiling' etc., which are useful in acting, and the Vyabhicāribhāvas are different bodily and mental states etc.)] (How do you explain this process of the production of Rasa?) What is your illustration? It will be explained by us. Just as on account of the combination (chemical) of many spices, medical herbs and things (ores), Rasa (i. e. either mercury or juice) is produced or from

things like jaggery, spices and medicinal herbs Rasas (essences). śādava etc. are extracted, similarly the Sthāvibhāvas. (evidently in the mind of the dramatist) even when they approach the different Bhavas (i. e. when they are transformed into different Bhāvas like Vibhāvas, Vyabhicarībhāva and Anubhāva) become Rasa.31 Here it is said. What kind of object is Rasa? [What is the object of the word Rasa? i. e. How do you know what it stands for?] We shall say. Because it is that objectified, which can be tasted (experienced). (2nd process) How is it tasted? Just as good men eating the food prepared with different spices taste the Rasas (essences of juices that exist in the food) and attain happiness, so good minded Preksaka³² (i. e. observers) taste or experience the Sthāyībhāvas33. which have been special with (i. e. which have been transformed to) different kinds of Bhavas (i. e. vyabhicāribhāvas etc.) and Abhinavas and have thus come nearer to (i. e. have taken the shape of) Vak, Anga, and Sattva,34 (the spectator perceives or experiences the Sthayibhavas, not in the form that is mental (for this is impossible) but perceives them in an objectified form or Rasa) and attain happiness35 etc. In this way the Rasas in Natva are defined36.

The passage of Nātyaśāstra that follows the one rendered above, again of crucial importance, is also the subject to erratic comment in the Abhinavabhārati. I, therefore, propose to translate it.

"Here it is said, whether the Bhāvās are born of Rasa or Rasas are born of Bhāva. According to some they are born out of one another. But that is not so. Why? It is seen that Rasas are born out of Bhāvas and Bhāvas are not born out of Rasa." Here the point to note is that Bharata is referring to the process of *creation* or production of Rasa. It is evident that the "Bhāvas" here cannot mean the Sthāyibhāva of the spectator, or the Sthāyibhāvas in the mind of the poet, the Vyabhicāribhāva, Anubhāva, and Vibhāvas which are stipulated elsewhere as necessary for the production of Rasa. This is clear from an earlier Kārikā.

Bhāvābhinaya sambaddhān sthāyībhavānsthathā budhāḥ Āsvādayanti manasā, tasmāt nāṭyarasāḥ smṛtaḥ.37

Of this kārikā too, usually a wrong rendering is given. It is said that because the Rasas (i.e. the Sthavibhavas which are connected with the other Bhavas such as vibhava etc., and acting) are experienced by mind, therefore the Rasas are also mental. In the first place everything that is experienced by mind need not be mental. But in this particular case, the experience of the Sthāyībhāvas is not a direct experience and so it is quite correct to say that they are experienced by mind. I have drawn a distinction between the state of the poet's mind and that which is a state of the appreciator's mind. I have called them S1 and S3 respectively. I have also said that S3 is similar to S1 and that S3 is the meaning of S2 (or D₅₂). The stage of S3 should not be confused with sthāyibhāva although the M factor both in S1 and S3 suggests sthāyibhāba. It appears to me that Bharata is quite conscious of this fact. Whenever he talks of sthayi (the stage S3) he uses the word 'Artha' for it. E. g. in the kārikā: yortho hrdayasamvādī tasya bhāvo rasodbhavah. (VII 7 N. S.) i. e. that meaning which appeals to the heart: it is produced by Rasa. It must be noted that the word 'Bhava' is used here not in its technical sense. It simply means existence as it commonly does in Sanskrit.

What Bharata meant by Rasa cannot be fully realised unless the meaning he gives to the term Bhāva is properly understood. Perhaps Bharata himself has used the word in a very loose way or his commentators have interfered with the original text and abused it to the maximum. This has led to the following confused interpretations and all sorts of views have been associated with the doctrine. Some of these views are:

(1) that all bhāvās are mental. (2) that Rasās and Bhāvās are synonymous. (3) that both of them are mental but Rasās are the effects of Bhāvās and are synonymous with pleasure or Ānanda. (4) that the sthāyībhāvas are the emotions and the Rasas are the sentiments as these terms are understood in modern psychology. (5) that the sthāyībhāvas are the instincts and the Rasas are the emotions. (6) that sthāyībhāva, samcāribhāva and anubhāva are psychological terms and stand for sentiment, derived emotion and expression of emotion. These views have been held by great scholars, ancient and modern, oriental and occidental. At the present time the names of some very eminent scholars like Dr. S. K. Dey, Dr. Pandey and Dr. K. N. Watve and several others are

associated with one or the other of the views mentioned above. The suggested interpretations are so ingenions that the scope of the present paper does not allow each of them to be examined in detail. All cannot be correct simultaneously, nor in fact need any one of them be correct. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the presenting of what I believe to be Bharata's own theory of Bhāva as it is found in Nāṭyasāśtra, and shall refer to the writings of Abhinavagupta alone, wherever necessary, for it is upon them that all the differently held theories concerning Bhāva ultimately repose.

Bharata discusses Bhāvas in the seventh chapter of Nātyāśastra. It is necessary to bear in mind that by the word 'Bhava' Bharata does not necessarily mean something mental as Abhinavagupta stipulates. In Sanskrit of Bharata's days and still in modern usage Bhava means anything that exists. Any existence can be called Bhava. Thus both mental and non-mental existents may be included under Bhavas. Moreover it was in this sense, and primarily in a non-mental sense that the word Bhava was used in Ayurveda. D. K. Bedekar has very ably brought out his point in his articles on Rasa38 and I think this point does not require further elaboration. Bharata starts his whole enquiry with the definition of Bhavas. He asks : kim bhavanti iti bhavah kim va bhavayanti iti bhavah, ucyate, vāganga satvopetān kāvyārthān bhāvayanti iti bhāvāh iti.39 He asks whether those that exist are bhavas or those that create are bhavas, and answers that those that create objects of poetry -objects which are reduced to (acting of the type of) vak, anga, and satva, are bhavas. There is no doubt that by the phrase 'vāgangasatvopetān kāvyārthan' Bharata means Rasas. Abhinavagupta also accepts that these words refer to Rasas, but from his quotation of this passage, he very cleverly omits the words 'vaganga satvopetan'. Only by resorting to this subterfuge and ignoring the implications of these words can he make his phrase 'objects of poetry' designate Rasa of his concept. Not simply any object of poetry, but that object (of poetry) which has taken the form of acting etc. Bharata holds to be Rasa. Without the qualifications 'vagangasatvopetan' the 'kavyarth' would not stand for 'Rasa' but would merely be another name for Sthayibhava. himself uses the words as synonymous in chapter VI (p. 93 N. Sagar Ed,). Of course, Abhinavagupta would have no objection to such an interpretation as he identifies 'sthavibhavas' with 'Rasas' relying on the misinterpretation of Bharata's text which follows.

This simple omission makes a world of difference to the whole theory of Rasa. For it immediately reduces Rasa to merely mental status, as the meaning of poetry. Thus instead of designating a member of the $D_{\rm S2}$ series it comes to designate S3. It is a pity that Bharata's use of language is somewhat loose. Abhinavagupta exploits this to the full, but even then it is only by omitting a crucial part of Bharata's sentence, that he can make the text mean what he wishes.

There is another defect in Bharata's definition of Bhava. It no doubt points out that Bhavas are the causes of Rasas. But even though they create (Bhavayanti). Bharata does not bother to point out that they may still exist (Bhavanti). There is no contradiction whatsoever in these two positions. But in emphasising the creative aspect. Bharata has either forgotten the existence aspect or his original text has been interfered40 with. In fact, there are a few places where Bharata himself has used the word 'bhava' in the sense of 'that which exists' : bhavanti iti bhavah. e. g. in the kārikā, "kaveh antargatam bhāvam bhāvavan bhava ucyate".41 Also in the kārikā: "yo artho hrdayasamyādi tasvabhāvo rasodbhavah.42 Here the word 'bhāva' is used in the sense of existence. In fact all bhavas which Bharata defines as ".... creating" (Bhavayanti) can equally be described as 'existing' (Bhavanti). In fact Bhavas exhibit both the qualities, of existing and creating or manifesting, and the point should not be neglected.

By describing 'Bhāvas' as the prior conditions of 'Rasa' he means by Bhāvas both the mental states as well as the expressions of these in bodily and organic forms. 'Bhāva' is a genus to which mental and non-mental belong as species. Unfortunately the form of the Sanskrit language makes misinterpretation possible. Only some 'bhāvas' are mental. Abhinavagupta has taken it that all bhāvas are mental and has woven his own psychological theory round the 'Bhāvas' and 'Rasas' calling them 'particular mental attitudes' or Citta vṛttiviśeṣāḥ.

Bharata defines the 'bhāvas' as 'kāvya-rasa-abhivyakti-hetus'⁴³
i. e. the conditions for the expression of Rasa in poetry. He enumerates them as fortynine and classifies them under three categories. (1) Sthāyībhāvas, (2) Vyabhicāribhāvas and (3) Sātvika bhāvas. The two points to be noted here are (a) that the list need

not be regarded as very exhaustive and scientific and (b) the division need not be regarded as exclusive and trichotomous, though it should be useful.

Of these 'bhavas' Sthavibhavas are definitely the most important and they definitely refer to the artist's (i. e. dramatist's) intentions. I do not wish to conjecture whether they stand for instinct, emotions, sentiments, ideas or imagery or the like. It is most unlikely that this wide range of distinctions which are drawn today would have been known in Bharata's days. At any rate, they would not have been necessary for his purpose. It might well do violence to Bharata's work to identify his concept of 'Sthavibhava' with anyone of these concepts of psychology. Perhaps this mental gestalt may be much richer and comprehensive than any of the proposed states taken in isolation. 'Sthayi' literally means standing. I am, therefore, inclined to think that, by Sthāyibhāvas Bharata meant those 'bhavas' which stand as the ground or primary motives of artistic creation. Bharata has nowhere defined the 'Sthavibhāvas'. It appears to me that he must have defined them in his work as it originally stood. But in the text that has come down to us this passage is lost. This is clear from the structure of the text itself. Bharata in the seventh chapter begins by defining the concepts. First he defines the Bhavas. Then he defines Vibhavas. Anubhāvas etc. Then he comes to Sthāvibhāvas; but instead of a definition, there follows a discussion of how the Sthayibhavas are transformed into Rasas. After this comes a passage44 when it is said that the 'Laksanas' of the Sthavibhavas are already told, i. e. they are already defined and that now the particular Sthayibhāvas will be discussed. In some books, the first sentence of this passage (that is Laksanamkhalu etc.) is dropped and instead of the second, another sentence 'that we shall now define Sthavibhāvās' is substitutded. Unfortunately, however, this definition is never given. This suggests that some omission and substitution has been made in the original manuscript. In default of the proper definition we can, however, infer from Bharata's treatment o Sthavibhavas in other passages that he meant by them the materials of art as they are conceived by the artist in his mind before expressing them in some form. Sentences like 'Kaveh antargatam bhavam" suggest this. (I have a feeling to take it as equivalant to 'M' factor described above).

The second point to note in this connection is that Bharata

expressly states that 'Sthāyibhāvas' become Rasas; not that they are Rasas. This suggests the artistic creation to be a process and that, in some sense, Sthayībhāvas precede the Rasas. The words, 'āpnuvanti'45, and 'labhate' suggest this.

The 'Vyabhicāri bhāvas' and the 'Sātvika bhāvas' are those states in which the Sthāyībhāvas are expressed. Some of these states, therefore can be mental and some of them can be otherwise. For this reason, perhaps, in Bharata's list of Vyabhicāribhāvas both the mental and nonmental states are included. By Sātvika bhāvas, I believe, Bharata meant what we now term organic sensations. That both the vyabhicāribhāvas as well as the Sātvika bhāvas are very useful in Nātya can easily be seen.

From what has been said above the following characteristics of Rasa will be clear (1) that it designates a medium just as Rūpa or Sabda designates a medium (2) that it is composite in nature. that it combines characteristics of both Sabda and Rupa, in that both audible and visible symbols form part of this medium. (3) That essentially it represents movement and is extended in time. The Rasa has as one of its basic meanings 'flow" and the more familiar meanings juice and flavour imply this. On account of its peculiar nature, it is, in fact, not possible to translate Rasa into another medium that is static in nature, or something which only exhibits partial characteristics as do audible or written poetry or pictures. Perhaps the nearest approach to 'Rasa' would be a cinematographic film where several poses and conversations form a new whole. Any momentary glimpse of Rasa would be Rupa, that which you find in Painting and Sculpture, any non-visual section of it would be śabda, which is found in poetry. If you could imagine that all the different pictures, printed here produce only one dynamic image before you, and if you could further imagine that all the images in the picture are living images and that you are able to listen to them, then it would be the nearest approach This will clearly suggest that it is futile to locate Rasa either in poetry or in pictures — one cannot translate a sentence from one language into another and retain at the same time the name of the old language. Rasa is the language of staging and it is there alone that it can be manifested at all.

I then conclude that by Rasa, Bharata did not mean what Abhinavagupta took him to mean. A term conveying the sense

which Bharata gave to Rasa is necessary for any understanding of true dramatic art. It is, therefore, wrong to hold as Gnoli does, that before Bhaṭṭanāyaka and Abhinavagupta Rasa was a crude and primitive notion, and that it was Abhinavagupta who made it profound and understandable. I conclude that Rasa as used by Abhinavagupta is an entirely different concept from that designated as Rasa by Bharata, and though what Abhinavagupta conveys by his concept of Rasa may be useful and valuable for the theory of poetics, Abhinavagupta was completely wrong in foisting his notion of Rasa onto Bharata's; though Abhinavagupta's theory may be useful, his commentary as a commentary is wrong. For Bharata, Rasa is only 'previous to the act of consciousness' a thing in itself, not 'the act of consciousness' as Abhinavagupta, according to Gnoli, defines it.

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NOTES

- Introduction XXII: Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinava Gupta: Raniero Gnoli, published by Instituto Italiano Per It Medio Ed Estrenio, Oriente, 1956.
- 2. Mr. Kavi the Editor of Natyashastra has translated it by the word 'Theatronics'. I think this would help to bring about the distinction between Nataka and Natya.
- 3.4. The words, however, are not always used in this precise sense. They could be used in their wider and narrower sense. Thus, in one sense, Nāṭaka will be a wider concept, and Nāṭya only a staging part of it. On the other hand, if Nāṭaka is taken as one consisting of spoken or written symbols, Nāṭaka, in a sense, will be a part of Nāṭya. Such loose use of words is even unwittingly made by Bharata and has left the door open for misinterpretation.
 - 5. N. S. XVIII 12. Nirnaya Sager Edn. pp. 287-88.
 - 6. The word Sabda should not be confused with 'word' in ordinary language.
 - 7. (1) a reference to Tanmatra is traceable to Iśvarkṛśna's karika
 - (2) this concept is peculiar to Samkhya system alone.
 - 8. This should be distinguished from knowledge.
 - 9. Note the word 'Sthayi' which means standing.

- 10. The similarlity between the words Bhūta and Bhāva is very striking. Both mean the same thing. Bhūta is formed by adding 'kta' (Napūmsake Bhāve kta) to the root 'Bhū' and Bhāva is formed by adding 'Ghañ to the same root in the same sense.
- 11. Mr. P. S. Rawson, formerly of Museum of Eastern Art, Indian Institute Oxford, however, tells me that in Japan there is an art connected with Gandha which is practised in the confection and enjoyment of incenses.
- 12. Kavyam ca Natyameva p. 291. N. S. (G. O. S.) publication.
- 13. (a) Vagangasatvopetan kāvyārthan (N. S. P.) (b) Tryavasthah Natake smṛtah (N. S. P.)
- 14. N. S. p. 291. G. O. S. 2nd edn.
- 15. The word 'Artha' is again ambiguous. It may mean the 'content' of Daśarūpaka, may mean the story or it may mean the symbolic manifestation which may also be either (1) verbal or (2) theatrical.
- 16. Artha means , Vișaya,
- 17. G. O. S. 2nd Edition.
- 18. N. S. XIV 1-2 p. 221. (Nirnaya Sagara Edition).
- Mr. Shastri seems to be further wrong in supposing that Kalidasa also indicated that Natya did not mean Anukarana but meant Rasa, when he writes in Malavikagnimitram

Traigunyodbhavamatra lokacaritam nanarasam dréyate Natyam bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhapyekam samaradhanam.

Nanarasam qualifies Lokacaritam and the last line is merely a generalisation or Arthantaranyasa. But even if you take Nanarasam as qualifying 'Natyam', even then the compound would be what is known as Bahūvrihī and Rasa which is only a part of the compound could not be identified with Natyam. But what is more interesting is to know how from this verse Mr. Shastri draws the conclusion that for Kālidāsa, Natya did not mean Anukarana. I quote below the actual passage from Mr. Shastri.

"Abhinava, therefore, concludes in his statement often repeated in this work, that the word Natya stands as a synonym of Rasa, and continuously warns us not to take Natya either as imitation, or as histrionics, or as gestures, or as vibhvas as generally understood by common people or spectator.

- 20. N. S. p. 276 (G. O. S. 2nd Edn.).
- 21. VII 107 N. S. 2 VII 121 Ibid.
- 22. At least his commentary is not available.
- 23. I think language and art are similar in many respects.
- 24. It must be admitted that the transition from stage 1 to stage 2 is extremely complicated and has problems of its own.

- 25. The word 'Natya' is ambiguous. By it we may understand something less than Rasa, or even something more. We can also use the words Rasa and Natya as synonymous, as suggested by Abhinavagupta: "Sena Rasah eva natyam. (p. 267. N. S., G. O. S. and edition). But while doing so, we must be aware that we are employing them in a sense which is given to them by our definition and that we are employing them for an art which is distinct from literature or kavya.
- Refer to Professor Brough's article on "Some Indian Theories of Meaning" published in Transactions of the Philological Society 1953.
- 27. N. S. VI Nir Sagar Edn. p. 93. Harsadīnca adnigacchanti (please note the 'ca').
- 28. N. S. VII 2.
- 29. Like all words the word 'Artha' also has its technical and non-technical uses. When we say 'what is the meaning of this word' we simply mean what is the 'bearer' of this word. This was evidently in the mind of Abhinavagupta when he commented on the sentence of Bharata—'Rasah iti kah padarthah, by Rasah iti Padasya, irngaradiprvartitasya kah Arthah. (N. S. G. O. S. 2nd edition. p. 288). But for his modern followers like Dr. K. N. Watve the word 'Artha' used here stood for S3.
- 30. This may either mean kavyartha as some passages show, and I am inclined to take i. e. S3, or may mean an object—and in that case the object or, visaya of Natya. The verb 'pravartate' suggests that Rasa-Artha represents a process and justifies my use. It, however, does not matter for the contention of this essay what you mean by Artha.
- 31. Here again it must be remembered that the relation between Rasa, as it occurs here, and Anna or food is the same as exists between a Tanmatra and a Mahabhūta. Rasa does not stand for the sensation of tasting, but stands for the object of sensation. It is true that the sentence appears ambiguous. But it is because we are now accustomed to understand by the word 'Rasa' a taste sensation.
- 32. Note that the word here is Prekśaka who is necessary for Natya and not a reader (Vacaka) or audience (śrota).
- 33. The ideas in dramatist's mind or \$1...
- 34. These are three types of 'abhinayas' or acting.
- 35. Note here the 'ca' (and) which separates happiness etc. from Rasa. Also note that the word 'sthayībhava' in this passage must only refer to what is in the dramatist's mind, and not in the spectator's, for the Sthayībhavas in the spectator's mind cannot possibly be said to be vak-anga-sattvopeta).
- Abhinavagupta, however, says that, Rasas are only in the Natya and not in the actual world: Tena natye eva rasah na lokeityarthah (N. S. p. 291 G. O. S. Baroda).
- 37 . N. S. VII N. Sagar Edn. P. 104.
- 38. Navabharata Nov. 1950 Dec. 1950. Published from Poona (India).

- Uktamena Munina na tvapurvam kincit. Tathahi aha "Kavyarthan bhavayanti" iti lan kavyartho rasah. p. 278 N. S. G. O. S. 2nd edition.
- 40. There is no doubt that the text has been interfered with. For there exist different readings in different editions.
- 41. N. S. VII 2.
- 42. N. S. VII 7.
- 43. N. S. page 106 (Nir. Sagar edn.)
- 44. p. 107 N. S. (Nir Sagar edn.) Laksanam khalu pūrvam abhihitani..... etc. and Tatra Sthayībhavan Vaksyāniah.

and the art a control only or says will all their trainer, have used trainer.

45. Ibid page 107.