CHAPTER 6

THE NATYASASTRA - HISTORY, FORM AND CONTENT
We have reviewed the theory of Catharsis as laid down by Aristotle and as explained and interpreted by the later exegesis and critics. Now it is proposed to study the theory of Nāya, as propounded in the NS attributed to Bharata Bumi and as explained and interpreted by the later critics and commentators.

The NS is an encyclopaedic work, treating all the relevant subjects connected with Nāya, in modern terminology, with all the performing arts concerning the theatre. It is a unique work, which deals not only with the origin and nature of Nāya - drama but with music and dance too. As the Dance Encyclopedia says,

"It is perhaps the oldest extant work in the field of dance and drama."

This valuable work was first brought to light to the Western world by Fitz Edward Hall in 1965 A.D. This American scholar was very eager to edit the complete text of the NS, but he was successful in editing only 18, 19, 20 and 24th chapters of the NS as an appendix to his publication of the 'Dada-rūpaka'.

This led to the discovery of similar NS in different libraries. As a result, E. Regnauud, a German Scholar published in 1874, on the basis of these, a valuable article on the subjects discussed in the NS. In 1930, a French Scholar, named Paul Regnauud critically edited Chapter XVII of the NS. He continued his study of the work and edited part of Chapter XV and the Chapters XVI, VI and VII in 1934.

The excellent work of Regnauud was continued by his able pupil Jeanne Grescet and he edited a critical edition though incomplete in 1898. The complete text of the NS of Bharata first appeared in print as the Nirnayaśāgara edition, Bombay in 1894, edited by Sivadatta and Kāśināth Porab, two Indian Pandits. Another edition, varying in readings and numbering of verses, came as the Chowkamba edition from Banaras, edited by two modern Indian Scholars, Śrī Bāhuśīrāja Samā and Śrī Baldeośā Upādhyāya in the year 1929. The NS text was published, with the valuable commentary, Abhinava Bharati, of Abhinava Gupta, in the Guakhad’s Oriental Series, in four volumes in Baroda from 1926 to 1934. The G.OJ edition was prepared after consulting nearly forty manuscripts by

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3 Ibid., p.xxii.
4 I have generally referred to this edition in this study.
the editor S3.E. Kavi. Dr. Monomohan Ghosh made further researches and constituted the text, selecting readings from both the shorter and the longer recensions and with an arrangement of chapters and verses, slightly different from that of G.O.U. edition. This text was published with an English translation from Calcutta in two parts in 1961 and 1967.

The MS is divided into thirty-six Adhyāya. All these chapters have the varying number of adhyāyas. In the ancient times, the MS may have existed in two versions—long and short. Abhinavagupta (circa 980-1070 A.D.) who wrote his commentary on the MS, notes in his second introductory verse that there are 36 chapters—'Satitrīṣāmā bharataśutrāṇāh ico.' He also refers to the longer and shorter versions in his commentary. At the beginning of the 15th Chap. on Notrās, he notes, that there were two recensions—'dividhaḥ paṭhe drṣyate.' Sārdatanaya quotes a tradition according to which the Ṛgveda was composed in 12,000 verses and abridged into 6,000 verses.


6 The recent Nirmayanagar edition contains 37 chapters, while the chokhamā edition (1929) contains 36 chapters, the last chapter, combining the two chapters of the GSI edition.


8 Ibid., p.252.

9 Sārdatanaya, Prayatnādhyāya (Baroda: Gost, 1968), Lines 7–10, p.237.
The Nature of the Text

Now let us find the nature of the text as it stands in the different editions. The whole text of the NS is in the form of a dialogue between the sage Bharata and his disciples, and other sages led by Ātreya. On a certain holiday, the Sage Bharata, surrounded by his disciples, answered the questions, put by Ātreya and other sages, pertaining to Nātyaveda. The questions were as follows - How was the Nātyaveda created? For whose sake? How many parts has it? What is its magnitude? and what is its production like? This dialogue is given in 36 adhyāyās. Adhyāya literally means lessons or lectures. so the NS is a sort of collection of lessons or lectures of Bharata Ānúi.

This reminds us of the nature of the text of Aristotle's 'Poetics', which consists of the Lecture-notes of Aristotle.

The NS mostly consists of verses but there are short sūtras and prose passages of the nature of essays. The present text of the NS, contains the following elements.

1. Sūtra like statements and explanatory passages in prose, such as those connected with the theory of rasa and its constituents (Chap. 6, 7), music (Chap. 23) and with the meanings of Abhinaya-punctuation (Chap. 13, 15, 19) and Pravṛtti (Chap. 13)
2. There are about 15 slokas, and 16 Aryas referred to as ānuvadāya (belonging to a certain family or school or tradition)

3. There are several verses, introduced with the words 'Sūtraṃhādīhe Arye bhavatāt'.

4. About 100 verses are cited to confirm or elaborate a point with the words: 'atra ālokāh', 'atra yaye bhavatāh', and 'bhavatī cātra ālokāh'.

5. There are over 5000 verses, most of which are in the ālokā metre, a few being in other metres such as āryā or upajīti.10

The Sūtra itself explains the different forms of systematic writing in which it treats the subject-matter. In fact this is the traditional way of scriptic treatment. The text mentions the terms, Saṅgāraha, Sūtra, Kārika, Nirukta, and explains them.11 Saṅgāraha is explained as a compact composition (like a table of contents) of topics, discussed at length in Sūtra and bhāṣya. The Sūtra is explained as a brief statement. The Kārika is explained as one explaining the meaning of the sūtras. Nirukta is an exegesis, explaining the words grammatically. Then the author says,

"I will now speak at length about Saṅgāraha mentioned briefly by me with Nirukta and Kārika."12


11 NS, GOJ, I, 6.5.2-3, 11,13.

12 NS, GOJ, I, 6,14.
This suggests that we should expect sūtras, Bhāṣya, Kārikā and Kīrtikā, etc. in the Nā.

After mentioning relevant topics under Sūgraha, which is called Kātyā Sūgraha, Bhurata, further on says that now he will speak about. "Sūtragranthavikalpanāḥ," 13

AC explains the word sūtra as definition and Bhāṣya as investigation or examination that will make the sūtra clear, and under this, Kārikā is included. Grantha is explained as bhāṣya and vikalpanaḥ as parikṣā - arguments and counter-arguments. Kārikā which is included also under the term Kīrtikā, is regarded as of the nature of exegesis of sūtra. Kārikā throws light on the sūtra and in that way makes clear the meaning of the sūtra to a student, confused by many arguments and counter-arguments. So Kārikā is given after bhāṣya.

We may further note the explanation of other technical terms given in the Adbhā. First we shall consider the significance of the words 'Umanājya' in citing certain Āryā and anustubh verses. On 'strāṇuṇāṣṭyau ālokau bhuvah,' AC says,

"strāṇi bhāṣya. Umanāṣṭyaḥ,
sīyaśāntyopapāṭaṁ vartate saṁāsāṁ ālokākṣayaṁ vṛttiveṣaṃ avamāśāntāṃ praparicchedikākramaṇaṁ Kārikāśāravāchau bhuvah." 14

13 NŚ, 605, I, 6,31.
14 Adbhā., p.390.
From this it follows that the verses cited as 'Ānuvahāya' had already been composed and had been traditionally handed down from teacher to pupil in relation to dramaturgy and were included in the NS, and were not the compositions of him, who composed the NS, B.V. Kane supports this view, by citing such another Ānuvahāya sūgka from the 'Mahābhūrata' and cites the explanation of such a sūgka by the commentator Nīlakantha as 'Paraiparāgatānūshīnaśloka'.

Thus they appear to be verse handed down in tradition. It is important to note that verses headed by these words occur mostly in the 6th and 7th chapters of the NS, where Ṛgasas and Bhūvas are described and explained.

Such another technical term explained by AG is 'sūtrānudāde ārīya bhavatah'. On this AG says,

"evaḥ sūtrānudāde parikṣāya sthūpite tadarthaḥ sūtrānudāde varaharāparitsūtrarūspantopatatvāṃhā Ṛgasas ādīni kārikāti evaḥ sarvatraṃvantavyaḥ."  

From this it follows that "the verses are closely connected with the sūtra that precedes (anuśadhha) or that they contain in easy language the meaning of the sūtra. It may be said that they are the composition of the author himself." AG says that they are like Kārikā and they are meant to explain

15 Kane, op.cit., pp.16-17.
16 A.bhā., pp.311-12.
17 Kane, p.17.
The other verses in Āryā were composed by earlier teachers according to AG and are included in the Āryā text to elaborate, explain or confirm a point or precept for the easy understanding of students. On the words 'ātrāryāḥ', AG says, 18

"The former teachers had composed and collected together, āryāḥ relating to rasas and matters connected with them, from which Bharata took verses and inserted them at the proper places under rasas." 19

The above references from Ābhā show that the Āryā contains āryāḥ not composed by Bharata, but handed down in the teacher-student tradition. In fact, this leads to the hypothesis that the theory of rasas and śāyanas was older than Bharata. S.K. De puts this very aptly when he says,

"An examination of these passages will reveal that these different styles do not possibly belong to the same period, but they probably indicate several stages in the growth of particular forms of composition of dramaturgic works in general, each stage betraying its own particularity towards a particular form." 20

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18 Ābhā. p. 327.
"tā etā bhūryā omā-praghattākātāya pūrvācāryair laṃkāśeyum
Pathitah (muninā tu sukha-saṅgahaye yathāsthūnāh
nīveditāḥ)

19 Kane’s translation of the sentence.
Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics, p.17.

He further adds,

"Our text contains enough to betray the existence of previous speculations in prose and in verse, as well as indicate the fact that it might have itself been once written in the sutra-bhashya form, which was recent, with considerable additions from other sources, into a convenient metrical compendium." 21

From these features of the text, we can see that the M3 is a sort of compendium, which has achieved a sort of unity because of its systematic treatment of the different topics, relevant to dramaturgy. In the course of the traditional exegesis, the connected topics may have been added to the text as the gradual growth of drama and the experience of its composition and production made more material available.

The M3 is a comprehensive work, connected with the unitary theme of dramaturgy, and dealing with all aspects of play-writing, play-production and also theatre-buildings. This is clear from the list of subjects, mentioned in the tenth verse of the 6th adhyaya of the M3.

"Rasa bhava kriyavayasya dhanaivrttipravrttayah, siddhih varadatadatodyah granaabhisangasaurya." 22

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21 Ibid., p.23.

22 It is interesting to note in this connection what M3 says, although Marga is usually said to consist of five angas - parts, the enumeration of eleven angas here, is in accordance with the view of Kharal and others. ref. A.bhaa., p.264.
The topics treated in the work are rasas (Chap. 6), bhūva (7), abhinayas (3 to 26), dharmi (14), vṛtti (22), pravṛtti (14), śuddhi (27), avatāra, atodhya, gana (23 to 33) and ranga (2 and 33). The above list shows that it covers not only the performing arts but under vīṇa Abhinaya, it also deals with literary aspects such as metres, figures of speech, and the writing of ten types of plays (15 to 21). It also deals with music, vocal and instrumental in chaps. 23 to 33. As if to complete the requirements of a theatre-man, it also gives the rules for the constructions of nine types of theatre-building. In the fourth chapter, it finds an occasion for describing varieties of pura-dance (Nṛtta). Thus the Nāṭyāngī is a unique work, which deals not only with the origin and the nature of drama, but with many other aspects of dramaturgy.

The Historicity of Bharata

This nature of the text makes us believe that perhaps this work is not the work of a single author, though the tradition accepts it as the composition of the sage Bharata.

Now, we may as well see, who this Bharata was. There are different views about the historicity of Bharata. As far as the problem of the historicity of Bharata is concerned, different views are possible, because when we come to speak about him, we are in the domain of myths and legends, and we have to glean, some historical facts. The problem is whether
Bharata was a historical person, a sage who taught and composed Natya - the ammaya, the sacred learning and practice of Natya or whether it is an eponymous name for Bharatas - for actors in general.

First we shall see the references to Bharata, as an individual teacher of Natya, a sage, from the text itself. In NS, in the first Adhyaya, there is a story, about the origin of the NS. The introductory verses of the first Adhyaya of the NS, describe the occasion of the propounding of the NS by Bharata. The account in the NS, about the origin of Natya says that, at the request of Indra and other gods, Brahman composed the Natyaveda as the Fifth Veda, taking elements from the Four Vedas - Pathya from Rigveda, Gita from Sama, Abhinsya from Yajurveda and Rasa from Arthaveda. Brahman.

23 There are various references to the proper noun Bharata in ancient texts. For vedic references, see Arthur A. Macdonell and A.E. Keith, Vedic Index of Names and Subjects (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1953), pp. 94-95.

The Sanskrit Lexicographers give several meanings of the word Bharata. With the four proper nouns, they generally accept the meaning of Natya-actor. The four proper nouns are:

1. Bharata, the son of Dvayasena (Maheswar, III A.D., Vidvaprakasa)
2. Bharata, the younger brother of Rama (Ibid).
3. Bharata, a son of Suhadeva, the first Jain Tirthankar (Nanchanda 12th Cent. A.D.)
4. Bharata, the sage of the Natyastra "BharaNatyastra manau nato" (Modinikara, 14th Cent. A.D., Nahrthadakosa)

24 NS, GOS, I, 1,17.
asked the gods to receive his teaching of the Šruti and impart it to gods who are skilful, learned, free from stage fright and inured to hard-work. Indra replied that the gods are unfit to do anything with the drama and the munis (or sages) who know the mystery of Vedas and have fulfilled their vows are capable of maintaining this Šruti and putting it into the practice. So Brahma called me (Bharata) and taught me the Šruti and asked me to teach it to my hundred sons or disciples. Thus this account presents Bharata, as a sage of great antiquity, who presented his first dramatic performance to an assembly of Devas and Asuras at the behest of Brahma, on the occasion of Indra's victory over the Asuras. The first verse of the first Adhyāya of the Mahābhārata, says,

"Bowing down the head to two gods, Pitāmaha (Brahma) and Mahādeva (Shiva), I will propound the Nyāya-strā which has been revealed to me by Brahma."

The verses two and three inform us that on a holiday Bharata's disciple requested him to propound the Nyāya to them, and from the second line of the 6th verse, "Namāya Bhārat Mahā" starts answering the questions.

Here, there is a difficulty. Who is this individual speaking in the first person that would propound the Nyāya? If he were Bharata, why he refers to himself as a third person?

by his name? But AG explains that this mode of referring to oneself in the third person is not unusual in ancient Sanskrit Sāstraic works.26

In other adhyāyās also we find such references as 'Bharata Vyāsā' (N3,4,269) 'Maninīśa Bharata Muni śrutiavāna' (N3,5,5), 'Bharata Vyāsya' (N3,6,1), etc. This shows that for the N3 itself, Bharata Muni is a historical person, a sage who taught and composed Nitya - the Ānāśya of Natas.

AG supports the tradition that this work is composed by a single author - Bharata Muni. He supports this tradition from the very nature of the text. He says that this is the style of any classical systematic writing. It is usual to give one's own opinion and then to narrate other contradictory views to establish a point in the old classics like śruti, carti, vyākaraṇa, etc. So from the different features of the text we must not think that it is written by different persons. AG answers the argument of one teacher, a 'śāttikadhiyopādhyāya' - the head of the skeptics, who said that this work is not created by Bharata, thus explaining the customary classic method of writing.27

AG emphasizes the fact that the N3 is written by Bharata Muni by referring to an opinion of some other

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26 A. Bhāṣa, pp.3-9.
27 A. Bhāṣa, p.3.
commentators, according to which, all the five questions, put earlier are solved in the first \textit{Adhyāya}, and the other \textit{Adhyāyas} are meant for uddeśa mention or statement, \textit{Vibhāga} – classification, \textit{Lakṣaṇa} – definition, and \textit{Pariksā} – examination.

This is the \textit{Naiyāyika} methodology, wherein, the subject is first mentioned clearly, then classified, defined, and finally critically examined.

\textit{AD} also mentions another opinion according to which the first five \textit{Adhyāyas} up to the performance of purvaranga, solve the first two questions, while the rest of the \textit{Adhyāyas} up to sāmānyābhinaya and citrābhinaya, solve the remaining three questions. \textit{AG} rejects this view and says, "There is no order in solving the five questions. The whole work consisting of 6000 verses is one unitary big sentence—

Māhāvāka, and it solves the five questions as and when required. So the \textit{MS} as a whole resolves all the five questions. This he says, he will make clear while explaining the work."\textsuperscript{23}

Now let us take the references of \textit{Bharatās} in plural, meaning \textit{Nāṭak-actors} in general, in the \textit{MS}. In \textit{Adhyāya} 13, \textit{Śloka} 16, \textit{Bharata} in singular and \textit{Bharatās} (\textit{Adh.} 36, \textit{śloka}-20) are referred to as common nouns, meaning \textit{Nāṭkas} (actors) in general. In \textit{Adhyāya} 35, \textit{Śloka} 21, \textit{Vidūṣaka} and other actors

\textsuperscript{23} A\textsuperscript{dh}ātā, p.9.
are known as Bharatās, in explained thus - ‘Sharatāryāsca Bharatās’. i.e. Vidusakam and other actors are called Bharatās, because they are dependent upon Bharata. This means Bharata is a main personality and Bharatās are his dependents, and the Nātas dependent on him are called Bharatās. Thus as far as the N3 text is concerned Bharata is the proper noun of an individual sage, who was the teacher of Nātya - the Ānāśya of Nātas.

However, here there is an alternative theory. Bharatās equal to Nātas are the primary persona and Bharata is merely an eponymous creation. To support this, the Bharatās or Nātas in general, mentioned in the N3 are connected with the tribe29 of Bharatās or Drvijas mentioned in the vedic Nighantas; whose main work might have been music, dance and dramatic performance in the sacrificial rituals.

The vedic Nighantas (3.18) mention Bharatās as one of the eight synonyms of Drvijas, another being rimvah. We

29 Prof. Adya Raṇgācārya is of the opinion that Bharata of the N3 is the family name of the Vedic tribe. This family must have been highly cultured, intelligent and respectable but cursed by the other vedic sages on account of their later lapse in morals.

know that among the five tribes mentioned in the Rigveda, Bharatas and Kuru are two prominent names. It might suggest that the Bharatas and the Kuru performed also duties as Atvijas or rather among the Atvijas, there were Bharatas and Kuru.

But this is a purely guess-work. There is no documentary evidence to connect these Bharatas (actors) with the Vedic Atvijas — the performers of sacrificial rituals. However, this is not to deny that some acts of sacrificial rituals were dramatic in nature or character.

As we shall see in the next chapter of this study, Pāṇini’s references to Nātya as Śrutiya of Natas and as originally belonging to the sacred tradition of sacrificial rituals, appear to support the association of Bharata—Atvijas with Bharatas as Natas.

Later on, when some of these Bharata—Atvijas performed those acts outside the sacrificial rituals, they still continued to bear the name of Bharatas. So one may even say that the ŚŚ is a work of these Bharatas or originated from this śrutiya—tradition of learning and practice of these Bharatas.30 And later on, Bharata Mani, an eponym of Bharata—Atvijas

30 V. J. Agrawal says, “The present treatise on dramaturgy, known as the Nātyastra of Bharata, describes the Natas as Sailākaka. The corresponding Vedic term used
was traditionally believed or invented as the author of this work.

On face of our alternative possibilities we have to rely only on the documentary evidences of the \textcolor{red}{N}3. But here also we have a problem. The verses of the first \textcolor{red}{adhyāya} make Bharata a semi-divine person, who is in communion with \textcolor{red}{Brahman} and other Gods. The account of the origin of \textcolor{red}{Nātya} is also mythical and legendary. So we have to find out, how much historical nucleus, it has. Can we neglect all the references in \textcolor{red}{N}3 about \textcolor{red}{Bharata} as worthless because of their mythical crust? This mythical crust can be explained as due to the tendency, to divinise persons of superior intellectual and spiritual endowments. If we remove this crust, that is, put aside \textcolor{red}{Brahman} and \textcolor{red}{Indra} and \textcolor{red}{Bharata}'s intercourse with them, we would see that whatever is described is historically and socially possible.

The value of myths for the historical assessment, is

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by \textcolor{red}{Panini} is \textcolor{red}{Baliśālaḥ} \textcolor{red}{Nataḥ}. It seems that \textcolor{red}{Bharata}'s \textcolor{red}{Nātyaśāstra} was the product of the dramatic school of \textcolor{red}{Baliśāla}, which originated in the \textcolor{red}{Ariadne} era: founded by that teacher, who was also the author of a \textcolor{red}{Brahman} cited in the \textcolor{red}{Agrahṣ} \textcolor{red}{Brata} \textcolor{red}{Ātra} V.4,7. \textcolor{red}{G}

\textcolor{red}{V. J. Agarwal, India is Known to \textcolor{red}{Panini},} 2nd rev. ed. (Varanasi: \textcolor{red}{Prithvi}prakāsha, 1963), p.540.

\textcolor{red}{It seems that Dr. Agarwal} has based his theory on the strength of a reference, in the \textcolor{red}{N}, describing \textcolor{red}{Bharata} as \textcolor{red}{Baliśālaḥ}. \textcolor{red}{I have not been able to trace this reference in the \textcolor{red}{N}.}
now generally accepted. Prof. Garraghan gives an apt definition of myths, "In general a myth is any recital which lifts merely mundane happenings to a supra-mundane or divine sphere." He further says,

"The Greek philosopher Suhemerus (3rd cen. B.C.) regards myths as tales of the deeds and achievements of earthly heroes and heroines raised to the dignity of divinity."  

Thus this aspect of the myth does not destroy the real human character of Bharata but strengthens his position as that of a human author of the NS. Let us examine some references in the account of the origin of drama to support our views.

From the text, we know that this Satyaveda is called 'Garvavamikar'. Why is it called so? The traditional four Vedas were not accessible to the Sudras - the lower communities. While this Satyaveda is to be accessible to all the varnas of societies, including Sudras. This has a social implication that persons of Sudra communities had much to do with the arts of music, dance and drama, and the NS deals with all these topics. This is a clear reference to a socio-historical fact.

32 Ibid., Article 262, p.269.
33 N3, 603 1, 1,12.
Next, let us take the reference to Anuras, being angry with their portrayal. This is nothing but a reflection of human nature, and a phenomenon, we find in the history of dramatic performances, throughout the ages, where a particular class of audience, being lampooned, gets annoyed.

To assuage the wrath of Anuras, Bharata explains to them what Nāṭya is. It is not an imitation of any individual or a class, but it is the representation of the whole world. It depicts the good fruits of good deeds and evil of evil deeds. This ennobling concept of Bharata is the representative of the concept of drama in ancient India.

This Nāṭyaveda borrowed four elements from four vedas: (1) Pathya (recitation in prose and verse) from the Yajurveda, (2) Sita (Music) from the Śatapatha Veda, (3) Abhinaya (gesticulation) from Yajurveda, and (4) Rasa (relish essence) from Ar. veda. These four are the essential elements of a drama, a social institution, created by men.

The nine-types of theatre-buildings, described in the second adhyāya also suggest a historical fact.

Thus all these and many other facts, described in the Nā, and attributed to Bharata have nothing supernatural about

34 NS, GOS I, 1.9v–64.
35 NS, GOS I, 1, 106–7.
then. So on the analysis of this myth, we find that there is every possibility of Bharata being a real, historical person, around whom, these mythical elements are woven by the later tradition.

However, as we have already said, we cannot regard the whole text of the Nāṭaka in its extant form, as the work of a single author Bharata. Even then it is most likely that is the work of a tradition of the school of Bharata and his followers. To have a parallel to this in the mention of Nāṭasūtras in Pāṇini. As we shall see in detail in the next chapter, Pāṇini mentions two Nāṭasūtras written by two authors Silālinī and Krṣṇāvīna (pu, v. 3-110-111) whose followers are known as Silālins and Krṣṇāvins respectively. Thus there were two such different schools of Nāṭas. Similarly there was a school of Nāṭya - a tradition of Bharatās - who were known by that name because of their teacher Bharata Śuni.

This is corroborated by Kairavāmin, the earliest extant commentator on the Amarakosā.\(^{36}\) Kairavāmin gives Silālins, Silālīyas, Jayājivas, Kṛṣṇāvins and Bharatās as

\[^{36}\text{Bharatā Kairavāmin, Amara Śrama Nāṭakajñānācārya, ed. Har Dutt Shrinivas (Poona, A.D.1.1., 1941), p.227.}\]
synonym of Nātak Kṛimavāmin explains the nouns "śailānī" and "krāmavāmin" as those who studied the Nāṭyaśāstras of Śilāla and śrāva respectively and quotes the relevant sūtras of "antādhyayā" of Pāṇini. He, however, explains Śailuṣa and Bharata differently - "śilālaśaya apatyaśaśailūṣa" and "Bharatasyaśapatyaśa" (Bhrātah). Here the word "apatyaśa" is to be taken in the wider sense of a n, student, or follower. But here a grammatical difficulty arises. Why is it not Bhrātah, as it in Śailuṣa - why there is no vrddhi in the first vowel in case of Bhrātah as it is in the case of Śilūṣa?

This difficulty is removed by Kṛimavāmin, by quoting the following from Pāṇini:

'bidādhyayāni bahutveluk (Yamoścā)  
(pāṇ. 2.4.64)  

It means that when the plural is intended, 'luck' takes place that in, vrddhi is made and then dropped'.

These references justify the mention of Bhratās in plural meaning sons, students or followers of the sage Bhrātah in general in the NS, and also support our assumption that Bhrātah was an individual, a sage who taught and composed this Āmāya of Nāṭya.

Date of the NS

The NS is a compendium, a comprehensive work, dealing with all aspects of play-writing and play-production. If we can
accept the opinion of AS, that the whole of the NS, in its extent form, is a work of one author and he is Bharata Muni, the problem of the date of the NS and of its author Bharata would be less complicated. But our critical study of the text of the NS does not allow us to accept his opinion. So we have to face the problem of the date the NS. The NS does not appear to be a work of single hand, and it is not possible now, to separate the various layers of material, that must have gone into the composition of the NS, in the course of time. Hence it is very difficult, to fix the time of the NS. There is a divergence of opinion, regarding the probable date of the NS, which is so wide that it spreads over the period from the Sixth Century B.C. to the Sixth Century A.D.

Still many scholars agree that some portion of the NS, which might have been the original nucleus of the MS is written circa 300 or 200 B.C.

Mr. L.V. Kano is of the opinion that the original work, consisting of Rasa-Sutra and portions on music and acting, may have been composed by 200 B.C. and the rest of the material with the present form of the MS was ready by about 3rd and 4th century A.D. 37

The French Sanskritist Naul Regnaud, after a
critical study of the rhetoric and metrics of the text of the MS
declared that it might go back to 100 B.C. 38

Dr. Hariprasad Shastri, on the strength of the use
of the word Pahlava in the MS, thinks that the word 'Pahlava'
was derived from the Parthava and this change took place when
the MS was written. On this ground, he assigns 200 B.C., as
the probable date of the MS. 39

Dr. S.K. De is of the opinion that "The lower limit
of the date of Bharata's work, can be provisionally shifted
back to the Fourth or Fifth century A.D., while it is almost
certain that it existed in its present shape in the 3rd
Century A.D. The upper limit cannot be put too early, because
of the mention of Sakas, Yavanas, Pahlavas and other tribes,
and probably does not go beyond the commencement of the
Christian era." 40 He further asserts that, "If the tendency
towards सूत्रविभास style may be presumed to have been generally prevalent in the last few centuries B.C., then the
presumed सूत्र-text of Bharata belongs apparently to this

38 M. Ghosh, Sr, Skt. text, p. xxii.
40 S.K. De, op. cit., p. 31.
We may passingly note that the theory of Rasac is laid down in this śūtra-bhāṣya style.

Dr. Hanomohan Ghosh in his article on "the date of Bharata Kṛtyakāstra" infers that the work surely existed in 200 B.C. from the various data pertaining to poetry metrics, mythology, Geography, Erotics, Music, Ethnology, Linguistics and inscriptions and references in Bhāsa.

While preparing the English translation of the NS, Vol. I, Dr. Ghosh changed his views on the basis of later extensive researches. In his introduction to the revised second edition of the English translation of the NS, Vol. I, he says, "The translator is not ashamed to admit that his idea of the date of the work, again underwent a change after he had revised the critical edition of the Vol. I of the text (I-XVII) and had separated in the process, the original work from what should be considered later additions, he then finally came to believe, that the antiquity of the work could still be pushed upwards, and it was most probably written in the 3rd Century B.C." 42

It would be unwise to be dogmatic about the date of the NS, in face of such divergence of opinions amongst scholars.

41 Ibid., p.31.
42 M.S. Ghosh, NS, Eng. trans., p.11.
We may, however, agree with Mr. P.V. Kane's opinion that it is not later than 3rd or 4th Century A.D. and may be as early as 200 B.C. But some of the arguments put forth by Dr. Ghosh in favour of 5th Cen. B.C. as its probable date, also deserve serious consideration. In light of our discussion in the next chap. about the references to play-performances and the example 'Rasika Hasta' in Patañjali and the mention of the Sūtra 'rājadhyakṣa' and two Nātacāntras, and of Nātya as the Jñāna of Natas in Pāṇini, it would not be wrong to say that the original nucleus of the N3, of which Rasa-sūtra is a part, might have been as old as the 5th Cen. B.C.

As we have considered the extant Nātyaśāstra as a work to which additions have been made in later times, we have to consider the time of Bharata in this light. If we regard Bharata as the last editor of the N3, he would be put in the Fifth or 6th Cen. A.D., but if we consider Bharata, as the author of the nucleus of N3, consisting of sūtra-bhāgya, we have to put him in centuries before Christ. If we accept the date of the N3, proposed by Dr. Ghosh, Bharata can be placed in the fifth cen. B.C., and we would not be wrong in attributing the Rasa-sūtra and its bhāgya to the sage Bharata himself. As we shall see in the next chapter, that the concept of Rasa is as old, or older than Pāṇini.
In this Chapter, we propose to study the history of the word rasa. The word rasa has an interesting semantic history and we find it enriched with the different shades of meaning in its different usages. We would like to find out how the physical senses of the word rasa, such as liquid, taste, extract, etc., get transmuted into a term describing an aesthetic experience or a mental perception of a mental state.

Rasa is a word, which frequently occurs in Vedic, including earlier upanishads and classical Sanskrit literature in various senses. In Amarakośa we find all these various meanings. It gives the following meanings of the word rasa:

1. रूपमं शब्दं गंधरसासपपाृशा विसयं आमि।
   Here, the word rasa is described as an Indriya guna (a noun of sense quality) with other Indriya gunas.

2. तुवरास्तु कस्योश्री मधुरो लवणाः कतुहः
   तिठ्ठो अंलास्का रासां पुस्ते तद्वत्स मदौनिः।
   Here, the word rasa is used in the sense of taste, with reference to different food tastes.

1 Amar, Amarkośa, with Comm. of Mahesvara, ed. Vamanacarya Jhalakīkar (Bombay, Sanskrit Series, 1896), I, 7, p. 31.
2 Ibid., I, 9, p. 32.