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‘This is Not a Quote’. Quotation Emplotment, Quotational Hoaxes and Other Unusual Cases of Textual Reuse in Sanskrit Poetics-cum-Dramaturgy

Daniele Cuneo

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Edited by

Elisa Freschi and Philipp A. Maas

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**“This is Not a Quote”:
Quotation Emplotment, Quotational Hoaxes and
Other Unusual Cases of Textual Reuse in
Sanskrit Poetics-cum-Dramaturgy***

Daniele Cuneo

This chapter will highlight some instances of textual reuse in selected works of *alaṃkāraśāstra* (poetics) and *nāṭyaśāstra* (dramaturgy). The material will be investigated in order to find a provisional rationale regarding the what, how and why of various kinds of quotation scenarios, specifically and primarily in connection with the issue of novelty and its relation to the self-understanding of traditional knowledge systems. After illustrating the well-known standard view of the denigration of novelty as such in Sanskrit *śāstra* (Pollock 1985, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c), I will tackle the reverse in the field of *alaṃkāraśāstra*, as has been propounded by McCrea (2011). My cursory survey will therefore begin with a contrastive example regarding the origination of *rasas* (“aesthetic emotions”) according to Abhinavagupta (10th–11th CE) and Bhoja (11th CE), each in dialogue with Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra* (2nd–4th CE), the seminal work of Sanskrit dramaturgy. The second case to be examined is the often-studied list of the views of earlier thinkers found in Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the *rasasūtra* of Bharata, a crucial aphorism in the sixth chapter of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. In his commentary, Abhinavagupta weaves, so to speak, a narrative of various authors’ opinions and refutations, at the end of which his own view is enthroned as the only correct endpoint of a history of progressively improving speculations. Borrowing from the thorough analysis in Cox (2013), the third case that will be examined is Śāradātanaya’s *Bhāvaprakāśana* (13th CE), in which, on one hand, recognized citations and re-adaptations are employed to appropriate and domesticate the well-known Kashmirian version of literary theory in a South Indian theoretical milieu, and on the other, Śāradātanaya seems to attribute textual passages by both earlier authors and himself to texts and authors that

* I am deeply grateful to Elisa Freschi, Philipp Maas, Elisa Ganser and Charles Li for their precious remarks and suggestions. All mistakes, of course, are mine alone.

probably never existed, but are smuggled in as the “actual” ones. Arguably this has been done to legitimize his own cultural endeavor and sanction its theoretical and practical validity. The last work that will be considered is Hemacandra’s *Kāvyañuśāsana* (11th–12th CE). In his own sub-commentary, called *Viveka*, Hemacandra repeats almost verbatim Abhinavagupta’s entire analysis of *rasa* found in the above-mentioned *rasasūtra* commentary. This act of sheer repetition, however, camouflages small but significant changes to the quoted portions, probably introduced to make the material better fit Hemacandra’s own theoretical agenda. It is worth noting that the case of Hemacandra represents a number of similar cases of extensive reuse of textual materials in *alaṃkāraśāstra* and *nāṭyaśāstra* in the second millennium. My tentative conclusion for assessing these very disparate and sometimes unusual manners of textual reuse hinges on a partial acceptance of McCrear’s thesis of the peculiar nature of *alaṃkāraśāstra* as a *laukika* (this-worldly) system of knowledge, for which novelty and change are the norm and not the exception. My acceptance remains partial insofar as the evidence can be better interpreted by postulating two paradigms of textual authority whose fortunes alternate over the centuries. They are tightly linked both to the search for a foundational text in the specific folds of *alaṃkāraśāstra*, and the overlapping of topics and the synthesis of theoretical notions across the two domains of *alaṃkāra-* and *nāṭyaśāstra*. Their intersection might be postulated as one of the main reasons for the fluctuation between meta-speculative stances regarding novelty and tradition.

1 Introduction: Reuse, novelty, and tradition

purāṇam ity eva na sādhu sarvaṃ
Kālidāsa’s *Malavikāgnimitra*
(*prastāvanā*, verse 2a)

Of the many approaches and perspectives on adaptive reuse outlined by Elisa Freschi and Philipp Maas in the introduction to this volume, my focus lies on the link of reuse to the question of originality and, more specifically, to speculative innovation. Among the numerous Sanskrit knowledge systems known as *śāstras*, whose overall aim is the nomothetic establishment and sanction of a correct, regulated standard of human practice in the respective fields of application, my case studies are taken from the two interconnected fields of *nāṭyaśāstra* and *alaṃkāraśāstra*. Investigating their many patterns of textual reuse and their aberrancy and mutability through time, these two

fields will be tentatively interpreted based on the emic self-perception of the two learned, traditional discourses along with their often implicit meta-theoretical assumptions, as well as the etic stance of Pollock’s studies on the category of *śāstra* (1985, 1989a, 1989b, 1989c) and their recent sequel-cum-rejoinder by McCrea (2011). In particular, the close link between the two *śāstras* in question will be one of the central pivots for challenging, in part, earlier scholarship and gaining a more nuanced understanding of the link of innovation and textual reuse.

The significance of this understanding depends on conceptualizing the idea of “tradition” as a modality of change. Similarly, the actual realities of “traditional societies” show that these are kinds of societies that understand their own transformations in terms of this modality, commonly in a non-self-reflexive manner in which being “traditional” seems to be considered a natural fact and not a cultural construction.¹ Seen from another perspective, the issue at stake is “the issue of tradition,” insofar as including cultural change within the boundaries of traditional knowledge must be seen as an inherent and constitutive aspect of any traditional discourse as such. An assessment, albeit limited, of textual reuse and its vagaries offers a privileged perspective on this issue; the skillful reuse of texts can be, and has been, wielded as a powerful weapon to bridge the tensions that arise when coping with the unavoidable cultural antagonism between the introduction and legitimization of novelty and the reiteration and re-affirmation of bequeathed knowledge.

2 *Śāstra* as an ideological apparatus

In the above-mentioned series of pioneering articles written in the 1980s, Pollock argued that the discursive technology of *śāstra*² – arguably and emblematically born in its almost classical argumentative form with the work of the grammarian Patañjali (2nd BCE), whereupon it occupied central stage in the two following millennia of the Sanskrit episteme³ – is based on the as-

1 See Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Guolo 1996 and Squarcini 2008. Moreover, for a multi-perspective study on tradition as a device and basis for both change and its validation, see Squarcini 2005.

2 On the meaning of the term according to various emic understandings (“system of rules” and “revelation,” i.e., the Veda itself), see Pollock 1985: 501–502.

3 One might want to include in the genre the even earlier texts known as *vedāṅgas* (6th–3rd BCE), ancillary disciplines chiefly conceived as means for preserving the Vedic corpus and properly performing the Vedic rites, and the *dharmaśūtras* (from the 4th–3rd BCE), the first legal texts of the tradition that was later called *dharmaśāstra* (see be-

sumption that truth is revealed and given once and for all in a timeless past. It is then merely repeated and explained in any given present time in any single traditional knowledge system. Specifically, Pollock's main thesis pivots on how the authoritativeness of all *śāstras* ("cultural grammars," "cultural software" or "knowledge systems," as he cleverly dubs them) is rooted in a kind of transhistoric, trans-human and transcendent source, usually a lost or otherwise inaccessible Vedic or semi-Vedic (even divine) scripture. For instance, it is stated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* that the various branches of the theater derive from the four Vedas.⁴ Or, in the case of *āyurveda* (medicine), the *śāstra* traces its origin back to the god Brahmā.⁵ In Pollock's view, this actively negates history and novelty as concrete possibilities in the development of knowledge. This meta-theoretical stance, Pollock argues, is borrowed from the Mīmāṃsā model of the textual authority of the Veda, whose unique status as an authorless and ahistorical text, i.e., its *apauruṣeyatva*, makes its legitimacy intrinsically unquestionable.⁶ In other words, in the self-understanding of *śāstra* and its understanding of the world, theory must always precede practice. This nomological mechanism of warranty and validation determines and seals the supremacy of the proponents of a tradition (such as the Vedic or, potentially, any other) by making them in practice the only judges who can sanction any possible or actual novelty by means of an *ex post* reinterpretation of theory that strives to include that new practice (or idea) in an older framework, in the reassuring womb of traditionally validated knowledge. The naturalization and de-historicization of cultural practices actually hides the hand of elitist and dominant powers and, at least in theory, immunizes them from any critical attack or derogatory value judgment.

low: p. 225).

- 4 *Nāṭyaśāstra* 1.17: *jagrāha pāṭhyam ṛgvedāt sāmabhyo gūtam eva ca | yajurvedād abhinayān rasān ātharvaṇād api ||*
- 5 In Pollock's theory, the properly "Vedic" origin and the "divine" origin (such as the one of *āyurveda*) are thought to belong to the same general framework of understanding the *śāstra*, its genesis and role. Whether or how far this conflation might be regarded as problematic lies beyond the limited boundaries of the present chapter. See, for instance, Pollock (1989c: 609): "Veda is the general rubric under which every sort of partial knowledge – the various individual *śāstras* – are ultimately subsumed. There are several routes to establishing this contiguity: through some formal convention embodied in the text – a *śāstra* will explicitly claim status as a Veda, or establish for itself a *paraṃparā* reverting to God, or present itself as the outcome of divine revelation."
- 6 It is worth noting that early Buddhist and Jain works may well have contributed, at least indirectly, to this meta-theoretical idea of a timeless and unquestionable truth, since the founders of the non-brahmanical religions were regarded as omniscient and, to some extent, beyond the pale of criticism based on human reason. I thank the editors of this volume for their useful insights on this crucial point.

Given the major role that this ideological apparatus played in shaping the culture of the Indian subcontinent for almost two millennia, concrete examples are easy to find. A first one might be the *dharmasāstra*, the corpus of social and cultural textualized norms aimed at regulating every aspect of human behavior. At its cornerstone is the very concept of *dharma*, especially insofar as it is considered to share the transhistoric and naturalized status of the Veda, in its turn the paramount source of *dharma*.⁷ However, in the history of the Sanskrit cultural hegemony, practically all fields of human activity became the object of a *śāstra*, from the creation of art to sexual intercourse, from archery (or the science of weapons in general) to astronomy or astrology, from architecture to lexicography. Numerous traditional lists of sciences (*śāstras* or, more often *vidyāsthānas*) are well known; again Pollock (1985: 502–503) is a good guide through the dizzying lists and their variations.⁸ Anyway, our present concern is the realization that “virtually any organized activity known to a premodern society is amenable to treatment in *śāstra*” (Pollock 1985: 502).

Having acknowledged the wide scope of the technology of *śāstra*, it is useful to note how its meta-speculative stance of the primacy of traditionality over novelty – of recovery over discovery – is not, for the most part, established textually on the foundational works of the various branches of knowledge, but more aptly and commonly on the impressive number of commentaries and sub-commentaries on these works, which constitute the overwhelming majority of Sanskrit texts *tout court*.⁹ Obviously, the textual genre of commentary highlights, both implicitly and explicitly, the pre-eminence of the principle of authority over individual originality, since the task of a “commentator” is completely different from that of an “author,” at least in theory.¹⁰ The theoretical-cum-practical technology of *śāstra* and the practical

7 For the latest review of the issue of the various sources of *dharma*, with a selected bibliography and references to relevant *dharmasāstra* literature, see David 2015.

8 On the progressive opening up of these lists and the enduring restrictiveness of Mīmāṃsā with regard to conferring the transcendent legitimacy of the Veda to other fields of knowledge, see Pollock 1989b.

9 On the idea and analysis of numerous cultural traditions as “Commentary Cultures,” see Quisinsky and Walter 2007 and the workshop “Commentary Cultures. Technologies of Medieval Reading” that was held within the framework of “Zukunftphilologie” 16–17 May 2013 in Berlin. On various aspects of the commentary culture of South Asia, see von Stietencron 1995, Chenet 1998, Hulin 2000, von Hinüber 2007, Slaje 2007, Tubb and Boose 2007 and Ganeri 2010.

10 The cautionary double quotes are meant to indicate that in actual practice there is no clear-cut divide between the roles of author and commentator, and that many commentators can be regarded as more original and “authorial” than authors, both in South

technology of commentary represent, so to speak, two sides of the same ideological apparatus, an apparatus that is aimed – generally speaking and in Pollock’s parlance – at creating, preserving and naturalizing a set of norms conceived to assure the crystallization of the power structures in the social and cultural *status quo*.

3 The worldly *śāstra*, its fuzzy boundaries, and the derivation of *rasas*

The general validity of this basic paradigm can be challenged using evidence drawn from the field of *alaṃkāraśāstra*. When compared to the others, this field is a quite extraordinary knowledge system.¹¹ I’ll just briefly state three reasons for its distinctiveness.¹² First, it is a latecomer, its first extant work dating only to the 7th century CE.¹³ Other *śāstras* have a significantly older pedigree. Second, its subject matter is thoroughly *laukika*, that is, this-

Asia and elsewhere.

- 11 This section of the present chapter contains material I presented at the 14th World Sanskrit Conference in Kyoto in a paper entitled “Smuggling Novelty or Dismantling Tradition. Abhinavagupta and Bhoja on the derivation of *rasas*.”
- 12 The present remarks are developed along similar lines as in Tubb (2008: 173–176), where the “murkiness of the status of poetics as a *śāstra*,” concerning its subject matter, its sources as well as its audience, is briefly dealt with. The peculiarity of *alaṃkāraśāstra* as a knowledge system and the issue of novelty in its historical development are also dealt with in Tubb and Bronner 2008, but with a specific focus on the authors of the 16th and 17th centuries, the self-consciously *navya* (“new”) school (in this regard, see also Bronner 2002 and 2004).
- 13 Although they quote earlier authors by name, the first two extant works of *alaṃkāraśāstra*, Bhāmaha’s *Kāvyaṭalaṃkāra* and Daṇḍin’s *Kāvyaḷakṣaṇa* (or *Kāvyaḷadarśa*), both date to the 7th century (with Bhāmaha prior to Daṇḍin, as has been convincingly argued in Bronner 2012). The *Nāṭyaśāstra*, on the contrary, is considered to date back to the first centuries of the Common Era, or maybe even earlier. The intersection of the two fields of knowledge (*nāṭya*- and *ālaṃkāraśāstra*) is a cultural event whose beginning can be dated with reasonable certainty: The Kashmirian author Udbhaṭa (8th–9th CE) wrote, as probably the first, on both *alaṃkāraśāstra* (his *Kāvyaṭalaṃkārasaṃgraha* and his mostly lost commentary on Bhāmaha; see Gnoli 1962) and *nāṭyaśāstra* (a lost commentary on Bharata’s work). A partial fusion of the two knowledge systems occurred with Ānandavardhana’s *Dhvanyāloka* (see McCrea 2008). And Abhinavagupta (10th–11th) masterfully attempted the complete convergence of the two cultural grammars in his twofold effort of commenting on and harmonizing the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and the *Dhvanyāloka*. As I will argue throughout this chapter, it is this convergence of knowledge fields, along with their different styles and attitudes towards novelty and tradition, that might be regarded as one of the causes for the peculiar alternation between the two different methods of validating and norming authority (see below, section 7).

worldly. The genre of *kāvya* (“*belles-lettres*”) even has a specific, albeit semi-mythical, beginning in “history,” so to speak, namely Vālmiki’s *Rāmāyana*, the first *kāvya* by the first poet (*ādikavi*). Third, *alaṃkāraśāstra* lacks a root text that could have been the object of a chain of commentaries and sub-commentaries, as have other *śāstras* such as *nyāya*, *mīmāṃsā* and so on. I was very happy to discover that Lawrence McCrea, in a contribution to the 2011 volume in honor of Sheldon Pollock, *South Asian Texts in History*, explored the usefulness of Pollock’s understanding of the transcendent *śāstraic* model, limiting the scope of its application by showcasing the discourse on literary theory. Here, he argues, elements of historical consciousness and pride, as well as practice-driven, historically self-aware theoretical innovations are actually quite frequent and possibly the norm.

In addition to focusing on *alaṃkāraśāstra* and *nāṭyaśāstra*, I would like to propose that there were two opposing methods for how bequeathed knowledge was dealt with in the crafty hands of South Asian commentators.¹⁴ The two commentarial meta-techniques I am suggesting could also be regarded as two extremes in the spectrum of commentarial approaches. On one side, which I somewhat fancily dub the “novelty-smuggling” strategy, theoretical and practical changes were introduced to the framework of traditional lore by disguising transformations in the reassuring garb of the old system, thereby rejecting novelty *per se* as a legitimate cultural category. On the other side, which I call the “tradition-dismantling” strategy, bequeathed knowledge was de-legitimized and the novelty of change was invested as sovereign for building cultural discourse, thus setting new parameters for future development.

I am presenting two case studies, intended as paradigmatic examples of this. The first, as an instance of the “novelty-smuggling” strategy, is a passage from Abhinavagupta’s commentary (10th–11th century) on some verses of Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra*; the second, as an instance of the “tradition-dismantling” strategy, a heated discussion in the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* of Bhoja (11th century) on the same portion of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The textual details in themselves do not concern us directly, but given the brevity of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* passage and the marked difference between the two takes on it, it is a good example in this investigation of textual reuse in texts on dramaturgy and poetics.

14 One of the aims of the present chapter is also to show how these two commentarial approaches can be considered two general “authorial” attitudes towards novelty and tradition, independent of their use in commentaries proper or in any other work within the Sanskrit episteme.

Verses 39–41 of the sixth chapter of Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the first and most important treatise on Indian dramaturgy available to us, deal with what I have tentatively called the “derivation of *rasas*.” To describe this briefly, without entering the centuries-long debate on their epistemological status and their definite locus,¹⁵ the *rasas* are the various possibilities of the audience’s emotional response to a theatrical performance elicited by an array of components and representing the performance’s ultimate aim. The standard text of Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra* lists eight such emotional experiences.¹⁶

The three verses we are concerned with here construct a derivational pattern among these eight *rasas*, whereby four of them are seen as originating from the other four. Consequently, the former are considered the “causes of origination” (*utpattihetu*) of the latter. One might say, in other words, that the former are primary – at least in this respect – and the latter are secondary.

The introductory prose to verse 6.39 and the verse itself read as follows:

*teṣām utpattihetavaś catvāro rasāḥ | tad yathā – śṛṅgāro raudro vīro
bībhatsa iti | atra śṛṅgārād dhi bhaved dhāsyo raudrāc ca karuṇa
rasaḥ | vīrāc caivādbhutoṭpattir bībhatsāc ca bhayānakaḥ ||*

Among those [eight *rasas*], four *rasas* are the causes of origination [of the other four]. Namely, *śṛṅgāra*, *raudra*, *vīra* and *bībhatsa*. In this respect: *hāsyā* arises from *śṛṅgāra*, and from *raudra* [arises] the *rasa karuṇa*, then, *adbhuta* originates from *vīra*, and *bhayānaka* from *bībhatsa*.

The following schematic table employs the rough but usually accepted translation of the names of the various *rasas*:

15 I have examined the two main interpretations of *rasa* in an earlier article (Cuneo 2013); its arguments do not need repetition here, but its tentative conclusions might be useful for framing the general problem, at least in a note. According to the interpretation of the “ancients” (theoretically including Bharata himself, although, in my reading of his text, there are some significant doubts and grey areas regarding this), *rasas* are nothing but heightened ordinary emotions, experienced by the characters in dramatic representations and enjoyed secondarily by the audience (Bhoja shares this view, with his personal accent on the singularity of *rasa*, as discussed below.) According to the new paradigm, championed by Abhinavagupta and followed by many other authors after him, *rasa* is the emotion directly savoured by the audience. It consists of a blissful aesthetic *Erlebnis* that is qualitatively different from ordinary experience, insofar as the felt emotion is distilled of any reference to personal identity, causality or spatio-temporality. This distillation eliminates desire and, hence, allows the beatific savouring of the emotional experience itself, ultimately not different from the spectators’ own consciousness.

16 In the subsequent history of the *nāṭyaśāstra*, many authors recognized and argued for a different number of *rasas*. For an overview of this matter, see Raghavan 1967.

Table 1: The origination of rasas

| “Originating” <i>rasa</i> | → | “Originated” <i>rasa</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. the erotic (<i>śṛṅgāra</i>) | → | the comic (<i>hāsyā</i>) |
| 2. the furious (<i>raudra</i>) | → | the pathetic (<i>karuṇa</i>) |
| 3. the heroic (<i>vīra</i>) | → | the wondrous (<i>adbhuta</i>) |
| 4. the loathsome (<i>bībhatsa</i>) | → | the fearful (<i>bhayānaka</i>) |

The internal logic of this derivational pattern is very briefly outlined in the next two verses, *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.40–41:

śṛṅgārānukṛtir yā tu sa hāsyas tu prakīrtitaḥ | raudrasyaiva ca yat karma sa jñeyah karuṇo rasaḥ || vīrasyāpi ca yat karma so `dbhutaḥ parikīrtitaḥ | bībhatsadarśanaṃ yac ca jñeyah sa tu bhayānakaḥ ||
Hāsyā is well known as the imitation of *śṛṅgāra*, and the *karuṇa* *rasa* is known to be the result (*lit.* “action, activity”) of *raudra*. Moreover, the result (*lit.* “action, activity”) of *vīra* is well known to be *adbhuta*, whereas the vision of *bībhatsa* is to be known as *bhayānaka*.

On first sight, this brief explanation of the relationship between various emotional states seems sound and comprehensible; for instance, looking at something disgusting can also engender fear. However, on closer inspection, this explanation is far from obvious and self-explanatory. There are a considerable number of possibilities regarding the status and locus of *rasas* as conceived in the text of Bharata that can change how the derivational pattern between the emotions is understood.¹⁷ Nonetheless, the present aim is not to clarify the contents of this passage in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* itself, but rather how Bhoja and Abhinavagupta approached its problematic nature. While the two authors were close in time, they were probably not only unaware of each other, but also unaware of each other’s account of this aspect of Bharata’s aesthetic theory, an aspect that was either outdated, somewhat underdeveloped, or simply no longer fully understood.

17 See n. 15 and Cuneo 2013 for some speculations on the issue.

In a passage of his *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, translated in part in a seminal essay by Pollock (1998),¹⁸ Bhoja, the king of Dhāra in the reign of Malwa, is quite adamant in rejecting Bharata's proposal that some *rasas* derive from others, seeing this as completely inadequate, as well as in stating the superiority of his own theory of aesthetics. Bhoja's theory recognizes, in fact, the existence of only one *rasa*, namely *śṛṅgāra* "passion," also called *abhimāna* "sense of self," *ahaṃkāra* "ego," *preman* "love" and *rasa* (in the singular), representing the real and only origin of all other *rasas*. In Pollock's words (1998: 126), Bhoja's *śṛṅgāra* is "what enables a person to experience the world richly" and "the capacity of emotional intensity as such."¹⁹

In his argumentation, Bhoja denies that one *rasa* might arise from another, stating that such a pattern of arising can be logically understood in only two ways and both are erroneous. According to the assumed understanding of the production of psychological states in the *nāṭyaśāstra* (here with the lowercase I mean the knowledge system, not the foundational text), either the originating *rasa* is the "determinant as substratum" or the "concrete cause" of the originated *rasa* (*ālambanavibhāva*) – such as a hero and heroine being considered the *ālambanavibhāva* of the *rasa* of love (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*) – or, in a manner reminiscent of Sāṃkhya thought, the originating *rasa* is the primordial state (*prakṛti*) from which the originated *rasa* develops in a kind of self-transformation.

In the first explanation (treated in *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, pp. 684–685), Bharata's theory does not hold because there would be an invariable concomitance between the originating *rasa* and the originated *rasa*, and this is not the case. For instance, the comic (*hāsyā*) can be found arising from *rasas* other than the erotic (*śṛṅgāra*), and, moreover, it can also be found as not arising from the erotic. Furthermore, the pathetic *rasa* can arise from a *rasa* other than the furious, and not all instances of the furious govern the arising of the pathetic, since the furious can also produce the fearful or the loathsome. At this point, Bhoja offers numerous examples of possible breaks in Bharata's pattern, such as the comic *rasa* arising from a *rasa* other than the erotic, a *rasa* other than the comic from the erotic, and so forth.²⁰

18 The same passage has also been dealt with briefly in Raghavan (1978: 424–426).

19 To anticipate some of the conclusions of this digression: Bhoja's "monistic" aesthetic philosophy is a complete novelty, a novelty that is consciously aimed at revolutionizing its field of knowledge.

20 Just as an example of the many poetical examples, we can cite *Kīrātārjunīya* 3.21, a verse quoted by Bhoja as an instance of a *rasa* other than the pathetic – in this case, the fearful – arising from the furious: "On seeing the son of Radhā (i.e., Karṇa), who by his fury made [his enemies] lose their composure and who had propitiated the son of

In the second explanation (treated in *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, pp. 686–687), with the originating *rasa* being the *prakṛti* of the originated *rasa*, Bharata’s theory does not hold either. According to this understanding, the comic is a transformation of the erotic, indeed, in Bharata’s definition, an imitation of the erotic. However, the comic can also arise from imitations of other *rasas*, for instance, the heroic. Moreover, the same variability in derivational patterns can be identified in all of the other cases as well, since – and this is the real point at stake – there is no compulsory developmental relationship between any two *rasas*. Namely, it is impossible to establish that *rasa* x will constantly and invariably arise from *rasa* y. In other words, it is always possible to find examples in literature in which a given *rasa* derives from some other *rasa*, a given emotional situation is seen as deriving from another one. Therefore, Bharata’s theory of a one-to-one relationship between four *rasas* that are primary and four *rasas* that are secondary does not manage to pass the strict scrutiny of reason as is orchestrated in Bhoja’s criticism.

In Kashmir, quite some distance from the homeland of Bhoja, Abhinavagupta dealt with the same problem. His solution, however, is based on a very different meta-theoretical standpoint, in this case the need to integrate the innovation into the reassuring form of traditional knowledge. For this reason he can not refute the respected and authoritative text of Bharata; it must be commented upon and tacitly reinterpreted. The development of knowledge climbs, so to speak, up the rungs of the commentarial ladder.

In four celebrated and oft-quoted verses of his *Abhinavabhāratī* (see the appendix to this chapter), found in the middle of his *rasasūtra* commentary as a kind of manifesto-like intermezzo, Abhinavagupta proclaims his view. The tentative understanding of these verses and of Abhinavagupta’s meta-theoretical attitude towards change will be the focus of the conclusions to the present chapter. At the level of his commentarial practice, the attitude of respect towards the tenets of the traditional knowledge of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* influences both his treatment of the derivation of *rasas* and his strikingly innovative interpretation, aimed at resolving the conundrum represented by the apparent inadequacy of Bharata’s view while creating a new paradigm for the *Rasa* theory (see n. 15).

In his commentary on the verses of Bharata cited above, Abhinavagupta “explains” that what seems a rather rigid and schematic model of subdividing

Jamadagni (i.e., Paraśu Rāma) [in order to acquire the knowledge of the missiles], even in the God of Death would forcibly arise an acquaintance with feelings of fear, unknown [to him before].” (*nirīkṣya saṃrambhanirastadhairyam rādheyam ārādhitajāmadagnyam | asaṃstuteṣu prasabham bhayeṣu jāyeta mṛtyor api pakṣapātaḥ* ||). Translation modified from that of Roodbergen 1984: 170.

rasas between *janaka* and *janya*, “producer” and “produced,” is nothing but a paradigmatic exemplification of four conceivable derivational patterns between *rasas*, four in a wide array of possible combinations.

Therefore, the comic (*hāsya*) comes not only from imitating the erotic (*śṛṅgāra*), it can also arise from the imitation of any other *rasa*.²¹ Note that this is exactly one of the arguments wielded by Bhoja against Bharata’s theory. Similarly, according to Abhinavagupta, who continues his thoughts on the matter, the origination of the pathetic (*karuṇa*) from the furious (*raudra*) as stated in the verse is simply an example of a possible relation between *rasas*, i.e., a relation in which an originated *rasa* is the result of the result of the originating *rasa*; in this case, the pathetic (*karuṇa*) is the result of imprisonment and murder, as Abhinavagupta explains, that are the result of the furious (*raudra*). The same reasoning is to be considered valid for the two remaining derivational patterns. The origination of the wondrous from the heroic is simply an example of a relation between *rasas* in which the originated *rasa* is the direct result of the originating *rasa*. Finally, the origination of the fearful from the loathsome is an example of a relation between *rasas* in which the originated *rasa* derives from the same *vibhāvas*, i.e., from the same “dramatic” causes, to put it briefly, of the originating *rasa*. Unfortunately, it would overextend the limits of this short chapter to discuss the several poetic examples quoted by Abhinavagupta to substantiate his interpretation of Bharata’s verses.

To present Abhinava’s view schematically, an originated *rasa* can be:

- 1 a semblance of the originating *rasa*, such as the comic (*hāsya*) for the erotic (*śṛṅgāra*),
- 2 an indirect result of the originating *rasa*, such as the pathetic (*karuṇa*) for the furious (*raudra*),
- 3 a direct result of the originating *rasa*, such as the wondrous (*adbhuta*) for the heroic (*vīra*), or
- 4 a further result of the “dramatic” causes (*vibhāva*) of the originating *rasa*, such as the fearful (*bhayānaka*) for the loathsome (*bībhatsa*).

21 In Abhinavagupta’s words, in *Abhinavabhāratī* ad *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.39, vol. 1, p. 294, “Along the same lines, the word ‘śṛṅgāra’ [in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.39] suggests a modality in which [*hāsya*] comes from the semblance of one [of the other *rasas*]. Therefore, *hāsya* must be recognized as also present in the semblances of all [the other *rasas*], such as *karuṇa* and the like. [This obtains] because being a determinant (i.e., a dramatic cause, to put it briefly) for *hāsya* is merely brought about by the activity of inappropriateness [of any kind].” (*evaṃ tadābhāsatayā prakāraḥ śṛṅgāreṇa sūcītaḥ. tena karuṇādyābhāseṣv api hāsyatvaṃ sarveṣu mantavyam. anaucityappravṛttikṛtam eva hi hāsyavibhāvativam.*)

To conclude this first bundle of evidence regarding reuse, traditionality and innovation, I have argued that in their respective aesthetic theories, both Bhoja and Abhinavagupta recognized the inadequacy of Bharata’s view – although this recognition is only implicit in the case of Abhinavagupta, whose reinterpretation of the text is concealed under the cloak of respect for an allegedly infallible tradition – and that both Bhoja’s and Abhinavagupta’s solutions to that inadequacy, as well as their overall aesthetic theories, are strikingly innovative in their treatment of Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra* text. However, to clearly state what was already hinted at, the different approaches of these two authors represent two extremes in the spectrum of strategies through which cultural change is brought about, accounted for and legitimated in an unending process of constructing, preserving and re-inventing any traditional discourse.

Bhoja implements the method I call the “tradition-dismantling” strategy. He consciously and overtly takes apart and de-legitimizes the traditional discourse on dramaturgy by refuting its tenets through both logical argumentation and phenomenological exemplification. On these ruins of traditional knowledge, he then constructs the new building of his own theory, trying thereby to set new parameters for future development.

In contrast, Abhinavagupta implements the method I call the “novelty-smuggling” strategy. Accordingly, he does not directly challenge the normative authority of the tradition represented by Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Rather, by commenting in his *Abhinavabhāratī* on the text of Bharata instead of composing an independent treatise as Bhoja did with his *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, he both implicitly and explicitly pays respect to the great semi-mythical master of dramaturgy, thereby also acknowledging the master’s authoritative and prescriptive status. Nevertheless, while interpreting Bharata’s text by means of the various hermeneutical devices common to the Sanskrit commentarial praxis, Abhinavagupta introduces crucial innovations. A noteworthy innovation is for instance Abhinavagupta’s famous conception of *śāntarasa* as the main *rasa* from which all other *rasas* develop and of which all other *rasas* ultimately consist.²² Reducing the different *rasas* in this way to a unique and supreme *rasa* is not far from Bhoja’s conception of *śṛṅgāra* as the true and only *rasa*. Nevertheless, Abhinavagupta’s meta-theoretical strategy entails an inclusion of theoretical and practical change within the seemingly unda-

22 Much has been written on the concept of *śāntarasa*. Without presuming exhaustiveness, I will mention Pandey 1944, De 1960, Raghavan 1967, Masson and Patwardhan 1969 and 1970, Bhattacharya K. 1972, Gerow and Aklujkar 1972, Bhattacharya S. P. 1976 and Gerow 1994. I will also briefly express my take on the issue in Cuneo 2016: 59–60.

minged, unaltered and inalterable framework of traditional lore. This means that in this case, the inherently disruptive nature of novelty remains disguised in the apparently harmless verses of the long-established and revered text of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*.²³

4 Quotation emplotment and the teleology of commentarial thought

As is certainly clear, the first scenario presented above is not really about actual quotations.²⁴ However, within the disputably central issue of commentary it allowed me to propose a theoretical background – two modalities for change and innovation – that can be used for exploring other quotation scenarios within the fields of *nāṭya-* and *alaṃkāraśāstra*.

A different and more general observation on quotations and their relationship to tradition is the following: Quoting a text or extensively reusing its material as “an authority” – as a case of *ipse dixit*, so to speak – can only be considered a hint at the self-perceived traditionality of a knowledge system. However, if an earlier text of the same tradition is quoted or mentioned as a rival to be refuted, this actually indicates a tolerance for novelty.

Indeed, in the first few documented centuries of the development of *alaṃkāraśāstra*, it seems that the second case is the norm, either explicitly or implicitly.²⁵ During this period a handful of authors follow one another, refuting each other's theories and attempting to build a coherent system that accounts for the poeticalness of poetry or properly describes the specific

23 As a postscript to this section, one might add that although Bhoja overtly employs what I have called “tradition-dismantling” and Abhinavagupta what I have called “novelty-smuggling,” of the two it is Abhinavagupta who arguably develops the more innovative theory regarding the epistemology of *rasa*. I am referring to what I have elsewhere called in Kuhnian terms the “second paradigm shift” (with respect to the first one propounded by Ānandavardhana and identified as such by McCrea 2008). This second revolution “marks the change from a conception of aesthetic experience (*rasa*) that does not account for the ontological difference between the universe experienced in ordinary reality and the universe created by, and experienced in, art to a conception of aesthetic experience (*rasa*, again) [...] that does account for such a difference and makes it the crucial speculative argument justifying and legitimizing the intrinsically pleasurable, or even beatific, nature of the emotions aroused by art” (Cuneo 2013: 62).

24 One might argue, however, that in every commentary the entire text being commented upon is either explicitly or at least implicitly quoted, and that therefore the intellectual practice of commenting is inherently quotational.

25 See, for instance, Bronner 2012, in which various passages of Daṇḍin are convincingly identified and interpreted as rejoinders to tenets propounded by Bhāmaha.

features of poetry.²⁶ As the history of the discipline continues, the issue becomes more and more complicated. A crucial complication in the picture – the factor that from the beginning shakes the assumption that the discipline is *laukika* (as maintained in the above-mentioned publication McCrea 2011) – is the ambiguous nature of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. As already mentioned, it is supposedly the root text of the scholarly discipline of dramaturgy. However, Abhinavagupta’s *Abhinavabhāratī* is practically²⁷ its only extant commentary, unlike the case of other *mūlasūtras*, which were commented upon many times and whose commentaries received sub-commentaries and so on. Furthermore, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is attributed to a semi-mythical figure, Bharata, literally meaning the “actor,” and begins with a story of the descent of the creation of theater by Brahmā and its transmission to Bharata. It therefore possesses at least some of the crucial features that Pollock tried to identify as common to those *śāstras* that share the transhistoric character of the Vedic texts.²⁸ However, as the above-mentioned passages of Bhoja testify, its status as an infallible source of epistemic authority was challenged just as often as it was resorted to, especially from the 9th century onwards, when the fields of dramaturgy and poetics gradually began to be integrated.

Much more research is needed to settle the issue of tradition vs. innovation in these two interconnected fields. But despite the cursory nature of this survey of some specific textual material, a working hypothesis for outlining and explaining the major quotational trends in the discipline will be attempted. In particular, three quotation scenarios will be presented, cases that are quite unusual with regard to the interpretive grids of traditionality or tolerance-for-novelty as outlined above.

26 For the history of poetics and dramaturgy, one can consult the classical De (1960), Kane (1961), and Gerow (1977). A very useful and more up-to-date discussion of the first couple of centuries, with a focus on the issue of *rasa*, is McCrea (2008: 30–54).

27 Another versified commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* called *Sarasvatīhṛdayālaṅkāra* (although it is often referred to as *Bharatabhāṣya*, see Primary Sources) by Nānyadeva (11th–12th CE) also exists, but it only covers the sections on music, which do not concern us here. As an aside, as far as I know the only edition of this work, by Chaitanya P. Desai, seems to be based only on the manuscript found in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute of Pune (MS no. 111 of 1869–70) and does not use the manuscript held in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library of Madras (MS no. R. 5598 – Vol. 1, S.R. 2981). Moreover, more manuscript material related to this work might well be unearthed by further research.

28 For the divine origin of both theater and the knowledge of theater, see the first chapter of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (in particular, the many verses where the expression *nāṭyaveda* appears). For an analysis of the myth of origin, see Bansat-Boudon 2004.

The first case I would like to examine is what I tentatively call “quotation emplotment.” I am referring to the famous commentary by Abhinavagupta on the much-quoted *rasasūtra* of Bharata: *vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicārisamyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ*. As mentioned above, the *Abhinavabhārati* is practically the only extant commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. However, Abhinavagupta quotes a plethora of other authors who commented on the work or, at least, dealt specifically with the issue of *rasa*. Just to name the most important, we encounter Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, Śrī Śaṅkuka, Bhaṭṭa Tauta and Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka. The range and content of their various opinions will not be dealt with in the present context, since they have already been the object of quite a lot of scholarship.²⁹ Here I am interested in how Abhinavagupta quotes them and uses their theories in relation to one another.

But first a caveat is necessary. Since Abhinavagupta is practically our only source, no precise details are presently known about the respective theories of the aforementioned authorities on *rasa*. Indeed, we might reasonably doubt the accuracy of Abhinavagupta’s re-use of their words and their positions.³⁰

Even after quick reading the first passage of the commentary on the *rasasūtra*, it is possible to appreciate the power of rhetorical technique implemented by Abhinavagupta, both in using direct quotations and rephrasing his predecessors’ textual materials. He weaves a narrative, so to speak, of the

29 The commentary on the *rasasūtra* is the object of the pioneering translation and study by Gnoli (1968). The most recent treatment, albeit somewhat lacking in fresh ideas, of this seminal section is found in Gopalakrishnan 2006. I have attempted an improved translation of the text (within the context of the whole sixth chapter) in my unpublished PhD thesis (Cuneo 2008–2009). Several portions of the *rasasūtra* commentary have been newly translated and analyzed in a number of articles, as for example Pollock (2010b) and David (2016). Generally it is also worth reading Ingalls (1990), since the same discussion on the nature of *rasa* is contained in an abbreviated form in Abhinavagupta’s *Locana* on Ānandavardhana’s *Dhvanyāloka* (especially 2.4). Many arguments on *rasa* found in the poorly studied *Kalpalātāviveka* can be traced back to those of Abhinavagupta (although most are probably from his *Locana*). In the history of *alaṃkāraśāstra*, the *rasasūtra* commentary has been often taken as a model and also quoted *en bloc*, sometimes in an abridged form but sometimes expanded upon (see section 6 of this chapter for a brief examination of such re-use).

30 An extreme stance, if we want to give in to scepticism, would consist in doubting even the very existence of these authors and postulating that they are fictional characters in a dialectic drama enacted by Abhinavagupta himself, who is both director and the only actor impersonating different roles. I personally do not hold this view, since I am convinced, at least in general terms, by the arguments provided by Pollock (2010b) that identify many of the ideas of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka in the fourth chapter of Dhanañjaya’s *Daśarūpaka* and, especially, Dhanika’s *Avaloka* commentary on it.

opinions, arguments and refutations of the various authors who preceded him, thus building something between a sort of historical report, a fictional narrative and a doxographical account, in which every theoretician’s viewpoint is refuted by the arguments of the next. In this way, Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa is refuted by Śrī Śaṅkuka, Śrī Śaṅkuka refuted by Bhaṭṭa Tauta and so on, in a crescendo of speculative acumen as well as the sheer number of lines devoted to each thinker. At the end of this “history” or “story” of progressively improving theories, it is Abhinavagupta’s own view that is established as the only correct one, a final view of the ontology and epistemology of the *rasa* experience.

If we take Abhinavagupta’s account at face value, that is, as a kind of doxographical or, one might even say, historical report, then the model of textual authority being implicitly called upon is clearly the one that McCrea postulates for *alaṃkāraśāstra* as a whole. In this model, theoretical and even historical novelty is both praised as such and expected as the norm for a knowledge system dealing with a *laukika* topic. However, as mentioned above, it is legitimate to doubt, at least in principle, the accuracy of Abhinavagupta’s quotes, or quotation emplotment as I have called it, exactly because it is a bit too neat in its gradual, progressive and almost teleological development of the argumentation, an argumentation that ends in a kind of speculative apotheosis of Abhinavagupta’s own conclusions (*siddhānta*). It is therefore fair, although this judgment amounts to nothing more than mere educated guesswork, to assume that Abhinavagupta undertook a certain amount of tweaking and tampering with the material he had at his disposal.³¹ What is more important, however, the four elegant verses at the end of this quotational narrative seem to represent Abhinavagupta’s own judgment of the rationale of his argumentation, from both a historical and theoretical viewpoint. And they seem to reflect questions of originality, innovativeness and sources of knowledge.

However, in order to complicate the discussion further and for the sake of the larger picture drawn at the onset of this chapter, before tackling these verses and trying to gauge their significance I would like to describe two other unusual quotation scenarios that a reader of *alaṃkāra* texts might stumble upon.

31 I am not accusing Abhinava of malignity or having a bad conscience, but I simply accept that theories and arguments are inevitably transformed when reconstructed in any narrative account, especially if the account is aimed at becoming some kind of teleological narrative. In the words of Tubb and Bronner (2008: 626), “Abhinavagupta’s real purpose in retelling the history of the *rasa* discussion is to impose upon it a linear narrative in which his own view is the triumphant culmination.”

5 Quotational hoaxes and novelty under siege

In order to illustrate what I tentatively call “quotational hoaxes,” as mentioned above I will briefly examine the *Bhāvaprakāśana* of Śāradātanaya, a lengthy 13th-century South Indian versified text on both literary and dramatic theory.³² In the words of a recent article by Whitney Cox (2013: 136–137), from which I am heavily borrowing here, Śāradātanaya’s work is “rife with quotations and recastings both acknowledged and unacknowledged, beginning with the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and extending up to Mammaṭa’s *Kāvyaṭprakāśa*,” including works “from the literary salon of the Paramāra court at Dhāra (especially the *Daśarūpaka* and Bhoja’s *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*).” Of interest in the present context, within the multi-layered and inherently quotational nature of Śāradātanaya’s work, are a number of pseudo-quotations or pseudepigraphical quotations, as Cox calls them. These are passages from works of known authors such as Bhoja or Mammaṭa whose authorship is however attributed by Śāradātanaya to another source, a source that in turn probably never existed and often seems to have a mythical, semi-Vedic or some kind of authoritative authorship. For instance, one of these sources is a certain *Yoga-mālāsamhitā*, attributed to Vivasvat who was instructed by Śiva himself. Another is a certain *Kalpavallī*, the supposedly original source of Mammaṭa’s *Kāvyaṭprakāśa*. The most remarkable example of a pseudepigraphical quotation in the *Bhāvaprakāśana* among those cited by Cox is a prose passage describing the derivation of *rasas* from ordinary emotions and their savoring on the part of spectators. The passage is attributed to Bharatavṛddha, “the elder Bharata,” a mythical figure who supposedly predated the Bharata of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. As brilliantly recognized by Cox, it is in this very passage that we find Śāradātanaya’s most striking innovation in the theory of *rasas*.³³ In

32 A better known and even more complex example of quotational hoax are the considerable number of untraced scriptural quotations found in the works of the 13th-century Dvaita Vedānta philosopher Madhva, usually considered forgeries by the author. For an analysis of this extremely interesting case, see Mesquita 2000 and 2008, as well as the contribution of Okita to the present volume.

33 Although not specifically relevant to our present concern, I will repeat the innovation for its sheer interest: “the idea that the *rasa*-experience varies depending upon the mental states of the spectator at the moment of reception (i.e., that the *rasas* are experienced *tādārvikamanovṛttibhedabhinnāḥ*)” (Cox 2013: 144). The accent on the mutability of the aesthetic experience in its singular, personal instances and on account of individual variables is very far from the standard concept of *sahṛdaya* “ideal connoisseur” and its normative character in both Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta (see Masson 1979, Hardikar 1994, Kunjuni Raja 1997 and McCrea 2008: 114–117). Although any comparative attempt must be undertaken with due caution, it could be li-

Cox’s words, Śāradātanaya is “prepared to conceal or to downplay his own innovations and unprecedented combinations by displacing these onto other, invented works,” these often ascribed to supernatural figures (like Śiva) or mythical ur-authors (like Bharatavṛddha). Cox describes this confectioning of textual authorities in the light of the text-historical panorama of scholarship in South India around the 12th century, a period that witnessed a creative explosion of literary works in Tamil as well as the production of numerous anonymous Sanskrit texts, “resulting in whole new canons for different Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta religious orders” (Cox 2013: 153). From a more general perspective, however, the abundance of pseudo-quotations in the *Bhāvaprakāśana* can certainly be considered implicit approval of the model of textual authoritativeness that grants the greatest value to what is transhistoric and transcendent. One might well argue that the mere mention of human authors would not be enough to empower the quotations with validifying Śāradātanaya’s work, not to mention the case of an innovation championed by the author himself. Thus they were craftily attributed to the mythical Bharatavṛddha. Such a meta-theoretical ascription points in the opposite direction from the model postulated by McCrea for *alamkāraśāstra* (pace what Cox seems to argue for at the end of his article), a model nevertheless well supported by many cases from the first centuries of the discipline, examples offered by McCrea himself (especially the self-conscious attitude of being an innovator taken up by Ānandavardhana) and possibly by Abhinavagupta’s quotation emplotment described above. But before attempting to draw a conclusion, let’s review one last piece of quotational evidence.

6 Unabashed repetition and authorial sleight of hand

The last quotational scenario that will be discussed here might be better understood as large-scale borrowing, also dubbed as the phenomenon of “repeat” (Hugon 2015) – the acknowledged or unacknowledged appropriation of large chunks of earlier textual material in one’s own work. The object of the “repeat” under question is again the core discussion on the ontology, epistemology and psychology of *rasa* in Abhinavagupta’s commentary on the *rasasūtra*. This discussion is borrowed and heavily summarized in the fourth *ullāsa* of Mammaṭa’s *Kāvya prakāśa* (second half of the 11th century), which

kened to certain strands of contemporary hermeneutics and aesthetics of reception. (Although unaware of Śāradātanaya’s position at the time, I briefly touched on this issue in Cuneo 2006: 156–157.)

became the standard manual for poetics in the second millennium. The same passage is then generously quoted, rearranged and rephrased in numerous commentaries on the *Kāvyaṣaṅkha* itself, starting with the commentary by Māṅikyaacandra, the *Samketa* (late 12th century).³⁴ Similarly, the same passage of Abhinavagupta is appropriated in its entirety in a section of Hemacandra's sub-commentary, the *Viveka*, on the second chapter of his own *Kāvyaṅnuśāsana* (first half of the 12th century).³⁵ All of these cases of appropriation are marked by more or less minor reworking,³⁶ something worth studying in itself to gauge the theoretical differences between these authors.

But as one example, a passage from the auto-sub-commentary on the *Kāvyaṅnuśāsana* might be briefly analyzed. In order to clarify the often very terse Sanskrit of Abhinavagupta, Hemacandra expands on the text in several sections,³⁷ especially by re-stating the views of the authors at the end of the parts dedicated to them (as in the case of Lollaṭa's view on *rasa*) or making obscure or elliptic lines of reasoning more explicit (as in the case of the seven reasons why Śaṅkuka cannot accept Lollaṭa's view). In doing this, Hemacandra expands the text considerably, from a handful of lines to a full page, offering examples and textual authorities in support of the reasoning. In re-writing this long passage, Hemacandra also relies on the version of the text as it was summarized and re-elaborated by Mammaṭa less than a century earlier. However, independently from Mammaṭa, Hemacandra also provides additional material on some of the authors Abhinavagupta is allegedly quoting.

34 The passage as summarized and re-elaborated by Mammaṭa is also quoted ("repeated") or reworked in several other independent works of *alamkāraśāstra* (for instance, in Śiṅgabhūpāla's *Rasārṇavasudhākara*, *vilāsa* II, *vṛtti* ad 168ab, pp. 251–252) and in various commentaries on poetical texts, as for instance in Sūryadāsa's *Śṛṅgārataraṅgiṇī* commentary on the *Amaruśataka* (Pintucci 2014: 83–85). I sincerely thank Gaia Pintucci for these useful references. The present survey of the quotational *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the *rasasūtra* commentary is quite cursory and very personal. A more comprehensive examination of the issue would be an ideal subject for continuing this study.

35 On the aesthetic thought of Hemacandra in general, see Upadhyay 1987. For a German translation of the first two chapters of the *Kāvyaṅnuśāsana* (therefore including the passage under discussion), see Both 2003.

36 The lack of trustworthy critical editions for practically all of these texts might be a reason for minor differences in their textual reuse. See, in this regard, Freschi 2015, section 3.1.

37 An interesting counterexample is the above-mentioned (in section 3, as well as section 7) *intermezzo* in which Abhinavagupta presents his view on the issue of traditionality and novelty – not only does Hemacandra not expand on this, he actually expunges it. However, it is not clear at this stage of my research whether Hemacandra's omission is due to his disagreeing with Abhinavagupta.

One example of this is the explicit differentiation between everyday inferences and “aesthetic” inferences, reported with regard to Śaṅkuka’s opinion of *rasa* as a kind of imitation (*anukaraṇa*). *Rasa* is an object of an inferential process that is actually based on artificial (*kr̥trima*) or unreal premises and reasons, i.e., a dramatic performance. But this inferable object is different from those cognized in common inferences, insofar as its nature is enjoyable, just like saliva forming in the mouth due to the sight of someone else tasting an astringent fruit (*kaṣāyaphalacarvanaparapurūṣadarśanaprabhavamukhaprasekakalanākalpayā*). This graphic simile, useful for understanding the proxy-like nature of *rasa* in Śaṅkuka’s view, is absent in the texts of both Abhinava and Mammaṭa. It is currently impossible to determine whether Hemacandra had direct access to the work of Śaṅkuka or other authors, or whether here he was creatively elaborating on the text.

To conclude this brief analysis of an episode of quotational “repeat,”³⁸ one might presume that Hemacandra attempted to improve the text he was quoting: while he clearly considers this large textual chunk to be authoritative with regard to the nature of *rasa*, in no way does he see it as untouchable, as is proved by his active tampering with it. To a contemporary scholar, the text as reported by Hemacandra is considerably clearer than the original by Abhinavagupta; thus Hemacandra’s reworking seems quite effective and achieves the aim I have implicitly assumed it had.

In all its various degrees of liberty towards the repeated texts and in the wide variety of aims one might postulate for it, the phenomenon of “repeat” is decidedly in favor of the “traditionalistic” model of textual authority, usually common to all *śāstras*, insofar as long quotations from well-established works can be regarded as the mark of an understanding of history and novelty in line with the well-known Mīmāṃsā model of their theoretical negation (Pollock 1989c).

7 Conclusions: The alternate fortunes of the two paradigms of textual authoritativeness

To close this short survey of quotational scenarios, an analysis of the verses by Abhinavagupta mentioned in section 3 might be fruitful for illustrating

38 Cases in which Hemacandra expands, changes or reduces the text of the *rasasūtra* commentary could be analyzed from various perspectives, but this will have to be the focus of a different study.

various attitudes toward textual reuse as well as toward tradition and innovation:

*āmnāyāsiddhe kim apūrvam etat saṃvidvikāse 'dhigatāgamitvam | it-
thaṃ svayaṃgrāhyamahārhaHetudvandvena kiṃ dūṣayitā na lokāḥ ||
ūrdhvordhvam āruhya yad arthatattvaṃ dhīḥ paśyati śrāntim aveda-
yantī | phalaṃ tad ādyaiḥ parikalpitānāṃ vivekasopānaparamparā-
nām || citraṃ nirālambanam eva manye prameyasiddhau prathamāva-
tāram | sanmārgalābhe sati setubandhapurapraṭiṣṭhādi na vismayāya
|| tasmāt satām atra na dūṣitāni matāni tāny eva tu śodhitāni | pūrva-
praṭiṣṭhāpitayojanāsu mūlapraṭiṣṭhāphalam āmananti || (Abhinava-
bhāratī ad Nāṭyaśāstra 6, prose after 31, rāsasūtra, vol. 1, p. 277)³⁹*

If it is established by tradition, how can it be new? If there is an expansion in knowledge, it already belongs to a received tradition. How can the world not make such critiques by means of a hostile argument about what is knowable by oneself and determined by the highly honored [predecessors]?⁴⁰

39 To my knowledge, these complex verses have been translated four other times, always differently with regard to the problematic issue of traditionality and novelty (Gnoli 1968: 51–52, Kaviraj 2005: 127, Visuvalingam 2006: 8 and Graheli 2008: 24). For the sake of completeness, these other translations are listed in the appendix. In an earlier paper I already offered a translation of these verses (Cuneo 2013: 50, n. 1); the present rendering is a new attempt at making sense of them. I thank Philipp Mass, Elisa Freschi and Vincenzo Vergiani for their help and sagacious suggestions in improving my understanding of this passage, especially the first line.

40 The first verse is the most problematic, since both the meaning of certain words and the subdivisions in the sentences and clauses are far from clear. What seems certain is that common people (*lokaḥ*) will criticize (*dūṣayitā*) a behavior, as is laid down implicitly in the first line. Gnoli translates: “Why repeat truths disclosed already in the thought of our predecessor [*sic*] and thus behave as no one has behaved before? This double, serious and evident error will certainly be imputed to me by audience.” He understands the entire first line as a single question, and seems to conflate *āmnāyāsiddhe* and *saṃvidvikāse* in “disclosed already in the thought of our predecessors.” Then he renders [*a*] *dhigatāgamitvam* as “behave as no one has behaved before,” which is not convincing either for the meaning “to behave” or for the insertion of a negation, as he says “no one” (possibly he wants to read *adhigata-agamitvam* with a short *a* in the *sandhi*). For the second line, Gnoli implicitly adds the object “to me,” i.e., Abhinavagupta, which is not in the Sanskrit. Moreover, he renders the difficult compound *svayaṃgrāhyamahārhaHetudvandvena* as “double (*dvandva*), serious (*mahārha*) and evident (*svayaṃgrāhya*) error (*hetu*, probably, taken together with the verb *dūṣayitā*).” In a clearly innovation-oriented interpretation, Kaviraj understands the first line as three separate sentences: “What is new [in this idea]? It is already established in the tradition. With the development of the intellect/understanding people grasp [better] what

they understood earlier.” He does not connect *āmnayasiddhe* and *saṃvidvikāse*, and he renders [*a*]dhiḡatāgamītvam in cognitive terms. For the second line, he seems to understand *svayaṃgrāhyamahārhaḡetudvandvena* as the object of blame: “[the one] who seeks to contradict the precious self-justifying ideas of the tradition?” However it is difficult to find a one-to-one correspondence in the original. Visuvalingam is clearly tradition-oriented in his translation and understands the first line as two pieces of critique. I am again not convinced of the rendering of [*a*]dhiḡatāgamītvam, for which he gives: “why bother to cram down these stifling canons?” With this he is forced to use the *kiṃ* twice to introduce both rhetorical questions (see Appendix). Graheli translates: “How can this be anything new, if it was established by tradition? It is just the apprehension of something already known, albeit within an expanded awareness. Isn’t because of such a conflict, between something readily available and something of great value, that people find faults?” Again [*a*]dhiḡatāgamītvam is rendered in cognitive terms, but he is forced to add “albeit” to make better sense of the sentence, which is also possible although not obvious from the Sanskrit. Extremely interesting is his rendering of the problematic compound in the second line, but I am not sure what the two elements of the conflict are supposed to be. Elisa Freschi (personal communication) also proposes to understand *-dvandva* as conflict, but a conflict between the two options given in the first line. Namely, if it is new, it cannot be part of tradition and if there is a development, it already belongs to tradition. I am sympathetic to this reading, although I am not sure in this case how to make good sense of the rest of the compound (*svayaṃgrāhyamahārhaḡetu-*). In my 2013 paper, I tried to understand the first line as a single sentence “There should be no wonder (*kiṃ āpūrvam etad*) in following what is already known ([*a*]dhiḡatāgamītvam) in the disclosure of knowledge (*saṃvidvikāse*) as established by tradition (*āmnayasiddhe*).” I am less convinced of this now, and thus have opted here for a critique of the introduction of novelty in the first *pāda* and, in the second, the reason for that, i.e., the fact that any development in understanding can only obtain for those who already belong to a tradition. However, I also find Graheli’s translation here possibly convincing. For the second line, I understood the term *dvandva* as “quarrel,” “strife,” as I still do, but I am less convinced now of my previous understanding of the passage as an implicit critique of the world in its hypercritical attitude towards novelty (I had understood an implied object and translated “does not the world spoil [everything]”). As Gnoli and Visuvalingam seem to do, it is also possible to understand *dvandva* as simply “two,” “a couple,” and thus to translate “by means of two (*dvandva*) reasons (*hetu*) that are self-evident and valuable,” possibly referring to the claim to novelty *per se* and the claim to novelty without previously belonging to a tradition. Philipp Maas (personal communication) suggests understanding the first line as two pieces of critique: “If it is established by tradition, how can it be new? If there is an expansion of knowledge, how can it be found (*adhigata*) to belong to the tradition (*-āgamītvam*)?” These rhetorical questions would be meant to criticize Abhinava’s enterprise from two perspectives. If he establishes what is already established by tradition, he does not achieve anything new. If he achieves something new, this would be not part of tradition. In this interpretation, the *-dvandvena* of the second line would refer to this very “pair of opposing arguments.” Even more clearly in this interpretation, the following verse would represent a reply to these critiques. I am quite sympathetic to this reading. However, I still prefer the understanding I chose because it allows for the actual development of knowledge within a tradition, even in

Ascending ever higher, the unwearied intellect beholds the truth, which is nothing but the fruit of the succession [of steps] on the ladder of discrimination, as conceived by the ancients.⁴¹

Wonderful is, I believe, the first manifestation in the establishment of the knowable, as it is completely supportless. [But], once the right path has been taken, it is no cause for wonder that bridges are built, cities are founded and so on and so forth.⁴²

the mouth of an adversary, which I consider a more plausible stance. Clearly I do not claim to have resolved the difficulties of this passage. But, as I argue below, I find that the complexity, polysemy and ambiguity of this and the following verses have a programmatic and purposeful nature.

- 41 This verse, representing Abhinavagupta's reply to the critiques of the first verse, seems to be claiming that knowledge develops in an almost Enlightenment-like way, with the intellect ascending progressively ever higher until it beholds the truth. However, its progression is enabled only by a ladder that consists of the previous doctrines. The exact meaning or at least an appropriate rendering of the word *paramparā* is not clear, as is reflected in the various translations. Gnoli reads: "the doctrines which have succeeded each other on the ladder of thought." Visuvalingam has: "treading the rungs of discrimination, the conceptual ladder built up by generations of forerunners." Kaviraj translates: "the succession of intellectual/theoretical steps of the staircase prepared by the scholars of old." Moreover, he adds an interesting note on the *varia lectio* "*alam*" for "*phalam*": "This would alter the meaning of the assertion dramatically and suggest a Wittgenstein-like point that once the results have been reached, we can throw away the ladder" (Kaviraj 2005: 140, n. 23). Graheli renders "the fruit of the many theories conceived by former thinkers on the ladder of discrimination." In any case, the tension between the development of novelty and the centrality of tradition remains part and parcel of this elegant stanza.
- 42 This verse does not pose too many problems. It simply seems to argue that, after the difficulties of inception, anything becomes easier. As cleverly pointed out by Philipp Maas (personal communication), the use of the term *avatāra* probably refers to the descent of the knowledge about the theater from Brahṃā to mankind, which received it with a fair degree of astonishment. However, both the translation and the relation between the words *citra* and *nirālabana* are not obvious. Gnoli understands them on the same level and renders them as "doubtful and vacillating." Kaviraj relates the one to the other and translates: "It is fascinating [*citra*], I think, that the first appearance of things seems to be without a prior supporting cause [*nirālabana*]." Visuvalingam understands them on the same level, as Gnoli does, and freely paraphrases: "Groping in so many directions and, indeed, without a firm foothold ..." Graheli, like Kaviraj, understands them as connected (the fact of being *nirālabana* is *citra*) and renders *citra* with "strange." I definitely opt for correlating and subordinating the two adjectives, but translate *citra* as "wonderful." The word *citra* does have different and opposite nuances, and I am not at all adamant in my choice of the positive "wonderful" in the face of the more cautions "strange." As Elisa Ganser has suggested to me (personal communication), one more meaning of *citra* is "varied," "multifarious," and the phrase might

Therefore, here, I do not refute but refine the views of the wise, which hand down the result of the root-foundation in constructions that were erected in the past.⁴³

My understanding of these verses is far from final, and my feeling is that their meaning is bound to remain at least partly ambiguous. Moreover, my contention is that this ambiguity might be intentional and programmatic. I believe that Abhinavagupta was possibly trying to find a viable in-between path that could satisfy both those who upheld a “traditional” view and who upheld an innovation-oriented view. In other words, he was possibly trying to reconcile two very different models, one of textual authority and the other of positive evaluation of novel knowledge. Along these lines of interpretation, he seems to be, on one hand, following the idea that the only source of understanding is in the transhistoric past of the onset of traditional lore, represented in this case by the work of Bharata and its infallible description-cum-prescription of the dramatic arts and their workings. However, on the other hand,

therefore refer to the “varied first crossing in the ascertainment of the knowable,” i.e., the multiplicity of the opinions of previous commentators.

43 The last verse is comparatively easier. Abhinavagupta claims that he is only refining the theories of his predecessors. However, the close of the construction metaphor is not crystal clear. Gnoli changes the metaphor and underlines the traditionality of Abhinava’s enterprise by speaking of “the harvest” of thought that the predecessors have left us as a legacy. In contrast, in an interpretation that favours novelty over tradition, Kaviraj seems to understand the term *yojanā* as “bringing coherence” in reference to what has been previously established and posits “the establishment of entirely new truths/foundations” – I am not sure what Sanskrit terms he is translating – as its result. In a clearly tradition-oriented but markedly interpretive and free rendering, Visuvalingam speaks of “the blueprints bequeathed by our predecessors,” in which it is possible to recognize “the foundations of this crowning achievement” of Abhinavagupta. But he does not respect the syntax of the verse (*āmananti* is rendered as a first person singular, it seems). Graheli respects the architectural metaphor and follows the text very closely. Thus the views of the wise “pass down a fruit whose support is rooted in formerly supported theories.” There might be some difficulty in connecting the word *mūla* in the compound with the preceding *pūrvapratiṣṭhāpitayojanāsu*, although *sāpekṣasamāsas* are commonly accepted, and I would rather stick even more closely to the metaphor and understand the word *yojanā* as some kind of building. In any case, Graheli’s translation is the one closest to mine, in which I have tried to give a very plain rendering. Moreover, I would argue that the word *mūla* is a clear reference to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and that the constructions are the various commentaries. Therefore, Abhinavagupta might be suggesting a quasi-archeological feat, as he is going back to the “authentic” fruit of the original foundation preserved as a part of later constructions, like Roman capitals in medieval churches. I am arguing for an interpretation that mediates between the novelty-oriented one and the tradition-oriented one, since I believe Abhinavagupta was trying to find a sort of perfect middle ground.

he seems also to accept a more novelty-oriented meta-theory that permits and possibly values development and increase in knowledge and understanding thanks to a chain of progressively more refined thinkers.

To return to the main issue at stake – the cultural history of *alaṃkāra-* and *nāṭyaśāstra* and their relation to novelty and tradition – I argue that we should examine this question with the same flexibility, cautiousness and attention to multivocality that I tentatively attribute to Abhinavagupta in these verses. As far as the evidence goes, it seems that in both the self-representation and the practice of literary and dramatic theory two competing understandings of tradition and innovation and two parallel ways of dealing with the reuse of earlier materials coexisted and were therefore in a continuous, dynamic interrelation. It is thus not at all surprising to find numerous examples of both approaches, both traditionalistic and non-traditionalistic. Also unsurprising is Abhinavagupta’s attempt, at least in my interpretation, to bridge the gap between the two tendencies and to reconcile them in a unified semi-historical narrative.

Moreover, contrary to the early centuries of *alaṃkāraśāstra* when the *laukikatva* model argued by McCrea seems to have been common within the conflicts between the various authors, and contrary to the centuries between the 9th and the 11th, when the mostly Kashmirian thinkers vied fiercely with each other for establishing the correctness of ever newer theories in accordance with what I call the “dismantling tradition” strategy,⁴⁴ I would argue that after Abhinavagupta’s momentous contribution and after the composition of Mammaṭa’s *Kāvyaṣāstra*, the traditionalistic tendency seems to have gained the upper hand. Indeed, Mammaṭa’s work virtually assumed the role of a root text (*mūla*) – for which the incredible number of commentaries⁴⁵ on this text are ample evidence – and Abhinavagupta’s understanding of artistic epistemology and ontology often became the norm, albeit with numerous

44 It is interesting to note that it is exactly in 9th-century Kashmir (and with Udbhata) that the two fields of knowledge start to intersect and merge into a single system of knowledge, i.e., poetics-cum-dramaturgy (*alaṃkāra-* and *nāṭyaśāstra* taken together, which might be called *sāhityaśāstra*, although this term has not been used emically very often). It seems safe to postulate that the convergence of theories and practices coming from the different domains of poetry and drama was one of the theoretical causes for the blossoming of philosophical speculation. A possible avenue of research is the hypothesis that authors hailing from Kashmir had a more novelty-oriented stance and the rest of South Asian authors, a more tradition-oriented one, but this geographical typology is currently only educated guesswork.

45 It is “the most often commented upon *śāstra* text in Sanskrit literature” (Cahill 2001: 23). For an idea of the number of commentaries, see the indeed long but still non-exhaustive list in Cahill 2001: 23–37.

exceptions.⁴⁶ But then again, a general caveat must be stated. Many theoreticians of the second millennium kept writing independent treatises that challenged any strictly univocal interpretation of the tradition, although there were those who did give in to the traditionalistic, transhistoric model of textual authority, as for instance the aforementioned case of Śāradātanaya’s *Bhāvaprakāśana*. Therefore, the two models of coping with novelty, the “novelty-smuggling strategy” and the “tradition-dismantling strategy,” seem to have enjoyed alternating fortunes. This followed, as evinced above, recognizable patterns – for instance, the prevalence of the traditionalistic view in the second millennium and in texts more strictly related to the tradition of *nāṭya-śāstra*. But there were also unpredictable cases. As I have shown, a potential reason, although probably not the only one, for the alternating in history of two epistemic modes and models of innovation and preservation of cultural legacy is the fusion of the two *śāstras* in question, with their very different meta-theoretical pedigrees. Further research in this direction remains a desideratum.

As a last remark, to offset the meta-theoretical tendency prevalent in our contemporary world, i.e., the anti-traditionalistic model that treasures novelty, originality and authoriality over anything else, I would like to draw attention to what I consider an evident rhetorical advantage – or maybe *the* advantage – of the “novelty-smuggling” strategy over the “tradition-dismantling” one. In the agonistic realm of any cultural discourse, the “novelty-smuggling” strategy offers a possibility for exploiting the accepted authoritativeness and trustworthiness of traditional knowledge – that is, its status as a paradigmatic abode of truth – as a device for validating and legitimizing something new. Furthermore, to disguise innovative theories, “traditionality” can be employed to advantage as a defense against the allegedly baseless and dangerous nature of novelty as such.

Traditionalistic or tradition-oriented views have often, and often correctly, been regarded as conservative and prone to cultural and political fundamentalism. Moreover, any claim of truth is also a claim of power, and therefore any meta-theory of validation – be it traditionalistic or not – runs the risk of being used to shut the intellectual field and freeze both the cultural discourse and the power structures that inform it, to the deep detriment of the subaltern.⁴⁷

46 For instance, consider the famous works of Bhānudatta (15th century), recently translated in Pollock 2009 for the Clay Sanskrit Library. Otherwise, consider the new school of *alaṅkāraśāstra* as described in Bronner 2002 and 2004, in which self-conscious innovation comes back in fashion.

47 This politically flavored conclusion might seem out of place at the end of a discussion

Appendix: Four translations of Abhinavagupta's intermezzo

Gnoli (1968: 51–52): “Why repeat truths disclosed already in the thought of our predecessor [*sic*] and thus behave as no one has behaved before? This double, serious and evident error will certainly be imputed to me by audience. Tireless, the mind of man climbs ever higher to gaze on truth. This is just the fruit of the doctrines which have succeeded each other on the ladder of thought. In the beginning, the crossing of the river of the knowable is, I know, agitated and supportless: but as we advance doggedly along this road, we cease to be amazed by built bridges, city foundations, or anything else. A rich and fruitful harvest may be culled by posterity from the inheritance of thought left to it by predecessors. Thus the doctrines of the sages of antiquity will only be refined by us here and not refuted.”

Kaviraj (2005: 127): “What is new [in this idea]? It is already established in the tradition. With the development of the intellect/understanding people grasp [better] what they understood earlier. Otherwise, would people not blame who seeks to contradict the precious self-justifying ideas of the tradition? That the intellect, never flagging, constantly rises upwards and understands the meaning of theories/truths – is not that the very fruit of the succession of intellectual/theoretical steps of the staircase prepared by the scholars of old? It is fascinating, I think, that the first appearance of things seems to be without a prior supporting cause, yet once the proper way is found, it is not surprising that bridges can be built and cities constructed. Therefore, I have here not found fault with the ideas of these good (earlier) thinkers, but only refined them. They say that in bringing coherence to the views established earlier, the result is similar to the establishment of entirely new truths/foundations.”

Visuvaligam (2006: 8): “When it has been already established by tradition, why these pretentious claims to originality? When self-conscious thought blossoms so freely on its own, why bother to cram down these stifling canons? With these two objections, ever so precious and within easy reach, what’s then left that this world has not turned to derision? Climbing ever higher and higher, knowing no repose, the intellect finally perceives the

on a seemingly non-political field of knowledge, poetics-cum-dramaturgy, and the shifts in epistemic stances on normative validation in its cultural history. However, the highly social, moral and political nature inherent in the normative nature of discussions on matters of aesthetic taste has often been shown in contemporary theory (see, for instance, Bourdieu 1996 and 2003, and Rancière 2004) as well as in contemporary scholarship on *alaṃkāraśāstra* and *nāṭyaśāstra* (see Pollock 2001, Leavitt 2011, and Ganser and Cuneo 2012).

truth of things. This is the reward of treading the rungs of discrimination, the conceptual ladder built up by generations of forerunners. Groping in so many directions and, indeed, without a firm foothold, such I say, is our first plunge into the ocean of certain knowledge. Once the right path has been found and cleared, building bridges and founding entire cities, such architectural feats are no cause for wonder. Therefore, far from having been overturned and demolished here, the views of fellow truth-seekers have been merely refined. In the blueprints bequeathed by our predecessors, we recognize the foundations of this crowning achievement of our own labors!”

Graheli (2008: 24): “How can this be anything new, if it was established by tradition? It is just the apprehension of something already known, albeit within an expanded awareness. Isn’t because of such a conflict, between something readily available and something of great value, that people find faults? Climbing higher and higher, the restless intellect observes reality, which is the fruit of many theories conceived by former thinkers on the ladder of discrimination. Indeed, what I find strange is that the first approach in the ascertainment of the object of knowledge can be groundless, while to build bridges and cities – once the right path has been determined – is not a reason of surprise. Therefore, here the opinions of wise people have not been censured, but rather improved, because they pass down a fruit whose support is rooted in formerly supported theories.”

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