

Theory," *The Philosophical Quarterly* (Pratap Centre of Philosophy, Amalner, India, Special Issue, 2001): 105–116; see also Ranjan K. Ghosh, "Professor Barlingay on the Meaning of Rasa," pp. 201–211, in the same issue.

6. This is brought about by the process of "*Sadharanikarana*" or transpersonalization as it has been explained by Abhinavagupta in his commentary on *The Natyasastra*. Please see R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta* (Varanasi, India: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1985).

7. Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), p. 323.

8. As to how this is brought about, please see R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*. This has been explained in a logically more elegant manner though somewhat differently by K. C. Bhattacharyya who speaks of it as "duplicated sympathy." Bhattacharyya considers the art situation in terms of three grades of feeling. The primary object-feeling may be understood as, for example, the child's experience of playing with a toy, so that for the child the feeling of joy is not distinguishable from the object. At the second level, a person who observes the child and her sense of joy identifies his feeling with that of the child. Such "feeling of feeling" or "sympathy" is quite detached from the object but not from the feeling of the child for the toy. Aesthetic enjoyment may be considered at a level even higher than this. If we imagine another person who identifies himself with the person who enjoys the feeling of the child (for the toy) then such a feeling may be characterized as "sympathy with sympathy." It is at this higher level of "duplicated sympathy that a feeling can be emotionally contemplated in a detached way." K. C. Bhattacharyya, "The Concept of Rasa," in *Studies in Philosophy*, ed. G. Bhattacharyya (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1983), p. 355.

9. As I have argued elsewhere: "In the main tradition of Indian aesthetics, *rasa* stands for what is created by the artist as well as what is experienced by the audience. *Rasa* as the created is not the same as what merely goes into its making. The competent viewer (*rasika*) is here called upon to actively participate in his commerce with the work of art because *rasa* cannot be evoked in a passive state of mind. What it means is that the viewer must detach himself from his immediate egoistic interests. The emotion experienced is not felt by the viewer as personal or as that of the artist; rather it is universal or 'transpersonal.'" Ranjan K. Ghosh, "Artistic Communication and Symbol: Some Philosophical Reflections," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 27 (1987): 319–325.

10. Clarifying the nature of emotion created in a dramatic presentation in Chapter VII, 1 of his *Natyasastra*, Bharata writes: "*vagangasatvopetan kavyarthan bhavayanti iti bhavah iti.*" See *The Natyasastra*, trans. M. Ghosh.

11. Poetry, here, stands in its widest connotation for dramatic and literary arts.

Definition, Dramatization, and Rasa

I am very pleased to learn from Professor Ghosh's comments that my theory of art as dramatization finds support from the rich tradition of Indian aesthetics and its preeminent theory of *rasa*. Ghosh is right that I

base my theory on Western sources (though my use of Old Testament material does extend my sources into the Asian continent), and I greatly appreciate his efforts to examine my views in a wider context of comparative aesthetics. Believing that art is rooted in natural and cultural factors of human experience that are widely shared throughout the world, but that art is also variously shaped by the different historical cultures that produce it, I think that cross-cultural aesthetic inquiry can be very illuminating. It seems particularly important in today's age of increasing globalization where the homogenization of cultures is combined with false stereotypes of exotic otherness in ways that conceal many of the aesthetically interesting differences and commonalities in the world's diverse cultural traditions. I am grateful to the Journal for welcoming such transcultural discussion. Before examining the connection between *rasa* theory and my pragmatist theory of art as dramatization, I should clear up some confusion with respect to Ghosh's first point about my theory.

I am surprised that Ghosh presents me as a champion of the classificatory sense of art and of classificatory definitions, since I have always been extremely critical of their dominance in contemporary analytic aesthetics. I have repeatedly argued that although being correctly classified as an artwork does not entail having aesthetic excellence, the concept of art as a whole has a deep and intrinsic connection with value that makes purely classificatory definitions not particularly helpful in enriching our understanding and appreciation of art. I have therefore persistently questioned whether there is "any good reason why we should try to extract [for definition] a purely classificatory concept of art." One reason why "art" is an essentially contested concept," I wrote in criticizing George Dickie's institutional theory as an aesthetic analogue of legal positivism, is "because it has a distinctively appraisive element and indicates a valued achievement, and therefore its use is worth contesting." I further argued that Dickie's attempt to define a purely classificatory sense of art in institutional terms by using such notions as "the artworld" and "candidate for appreciation" cannot be successful because those notions already imply value.¹ As I put the point in *Pragmatist Aesthetics*, "the very notion of appreciation presupposes a background where art is appreciated, just as the very concept of 'artworld' presupposes a world where art is valued as a cultural practice and achievement. Holistically speaking, art and value cannot be separated, which means that essentialistically defining art in a purely classificatory sense perversely eliminates what is essential to art, even though it be absent from many of the objects so classified."² More generally, I criticize purely classificatory definitions of art as "wrapper theories" that concentrate on the goal of perfectly covering the

and rich as with energetic activity, cognitive import, and practical value, proponents of *rasa* theory instead regard the contents of aesthetic experience as "significant neither cognitively nor conatively, for they belong to a different world," in which the self's "pragmatic aspect" is dissolved. Hence "the belief that a poetic statement can be valued for anything but its emotive element is a chimera."¹¹

I now turn, in conclusion, to the issue of dramatization. The idea of *rasa* as "enacted emotion on the stage" (or more generally an emotion that is heightened and formally framed) certainly fits my account of art as dramatization. But my notion of dramatization (for better or for worse) is wider, because it is not fixed narrowly on emotion or even on feelings in general. What my theory requires is heightened experience or activity within a formal frame; it does not require that what is framed or experienced be especially emotional and certainly does not require that it be a specific art-emotion that is opposed to "life-emotions" (Chari, p. 288; Thampi, p. 77). Of course, believing that all experience and activity has an affective dimension, I think what is framed will always have some affective aspect. Yet this feeling need not be the key element of what is framed or even be what justifies the framing, although I happily recognize that feelings are certainly a very crucial factor in many, if not most, artworks.

Perhaps the most interesting difference between *rasa* theory and my account of art as dramatization concerns the notion of framing and the art/life relationship. I argue that dramatization involves "intense experience captured and shaped within a special formal frame" and that art's formal frames serve not only to focus, refine, and thus accentuate "the lived fervor" of the experience but also to demarcate it from "the rest of life," a bracketing that paradoxically further sharpens the "lived intensity" of the experience. Although these frames distinguish aesthetic experience from "the ordinary space of life," I do not think that they establish or reflect any fixed divide between art and life. Art is a real part of life, and our experiences of art are an important part of our real-life experiences and often possess "explosively vital life-feeling." I thus argue that art's framed diversion from "ordinary life" is but a wise "path of indirection that directs us back to experience life more fully... [and] that the long-established art/life dichotomy... [is better understood as] a functional distinction that surely seems to dissolve with the idea of the art of living" (pp. 369–371). So when Ghosh affirms my idea of the frame as serving to make art "discontinuous with life around," I want to add that it also serves (through the overflowing power of aesthetic experience) in reconnecting art to life.

Although *rasa* theory clearly recognizes that art cannot be "totally away from our familiar world"

(since even the account of *rasa* is built on the emotional states or *bhāvas* of ordinary life in general), it seems to insist on a much firmer division between art and life, sharply distinguishing between special art-emotions and "real life-feeling" (Ghosh, pp. 294). *Rasa* and the delight of aesthetic experience are often described as *alaukika*. This term is frequently rendered simply as "nonordinary" or "extraordinary," though Ghosh elsewhere also characterizes it as "supernatural."¹² Pragmatism likewise recognizes that aesthetic experience (in the most robust and positive sense of this term) is an extraordinary experience. But, acknowledging the underlying continuity between art and life, pragmatism sees the distinction between aesthetic experience and ordinary life experience not in terms of the having of a special kind of emotion essentially different from those of life (and certainly not in terms of supernatural emotions), but rather in terms of aesthetic experience being an intensification, refinement, and reshaping of qualities and feelings that exist in what we call ordinary life. (Ordinary life, we should remember, is itself full of formal, institutional frames and staged actions.)

In trying to clarify the differences between *rasa* theory and my account of art as dramatization, I may be magnifying some of these differences, which may, for the most part, be merely differences of emphasis or cultural temperament. I therefore want to close by affirming the striking convergences between pragmatist aesthetics and Indian *rasa* theory that Ghosh's paper perceptively raises and that may help bring aesthetic experience, feeling, drama, and pleasure back to the center stage of philosophy of art and help promote the transcultural study of aesthetics.¹³

RICHARD SHUSTERMAN
Department of Philosophy
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122

INTERNET: shusrich@temple.edu

1. Richard Shusterman, "Positivism: Legal and Aesthetic," *Journal of Value Inquiry* 16 (1982): 323, 324.

2. Richard Shusterman, *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 39. My critique of the importance of the merely classificatory sense of art does not, of course, mean that I deny that "art" can be used in this sense; its being "parasitic" does not entail being unreal.

3. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, this issue. Page references to this paper appear parenthetically in the text.

4. G. B. Mohan Thampi, "'Rasa' as Aesthetic Experience," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 24 (1965): 75.