
The *vīthī*, *lāsya* and *nāṭikā*, and the *daśarūpa* List in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*

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Abstract: This article aims to show that the term *vīthī*, the tenth in the *daśarūpa* list of plays found in the early dramatic treatises, does not refer to a play but to a number of small-scale dramatic scenes. As such, the *vīthī* is an exception in the list, which otherwise is made up of fully-fledged plays. However, as a collection of scenes, it does form a group with numbers 8 and 9, the *prahasana* and *bhāṇa*, each of which has two lives, namely as complete plays and as scenes within plays. The *vīthī* plays we have are all late reconstructions based on the general characteristics mentioned in the dramatic treatises. In some of the treatises the *daśarūpa* list is extended by the *lāsya*, another term designating a number of minor dramatic scenes which involve singing and dancing. It will be argued that the *lāsya* – as well as another set of minor dramatic types, the *uparūpakas* – came to be included into the dramatic theory through its occurrence within the *nāṭikā*, a type of play that is presented as a mixture of the *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa*, numbers 1 and 2 in the *daśarūpa* list, and was consequently not counted separately. It will furthermore be shown that the *daśarūpa* list consists of three clearly distinct groups, namely of 1–2 (*nāṭaka*, *prakaraṇa* and supernumerary *nāṭikā*) and 8–10 (*prahasana*, *bhāṇa* and *vīthī*), separated by a group of five types of play (3–7) dealing with battle and its aftermath. Of the latter five no early, classical examples have come down to us; apparently their topics have fallen outside the sphere of interest of the *kāvya* literary tradition.

Keywords: *Daśarūpa*, *vīthī*, *lāsya*, *uparūpaka*, *nāṭikā*, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, *Daśarūpaka*, *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*

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1. Introduction

Chapter 18 of the Baroda edition of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (NŚ) is dedicated to what is known as the ten types of plays (*daśarūpa*). The order in which the plays are presented is the following:

1.	<i>nāṭaka</i>	10–43
2.	<i>prakaraṇa</i>	44–56
	<i>nāṭikā</i>	57–61
3.	<i>samavakāra</i>	62–76
4.	<i>īhāmṛga</i>	77–82
5.	<i>ḍima</i>	83–88
6.	<i>vyāyoga</i>	89–92
7.	<i>utsṛṣṭikāṅka</i>	93–100
8.	<i>prahasana</i>	101–106
9.	<i>bhāṇa</i>	107–110
10.	<i>vīthī</i>	111–126ab

The number “ten” appears to have been sacrosanct, as becomes apparent when we have a closer look at the list. In the *Nāṭyaśāstra* the *nāṭikā* is presented as a subtype of the *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa* here, and in the introductory “table of contents” in NŚ 18, 2–3ab it is not mentioned at all.¹ Furthermore, in Ghosh’s edition of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* the *vīthī* is followed by a twelfth type of play, namely the *lāsya*, which is not mentioned in the table of contents either, or indeed included in the numbering. In the Baroda edition, however, the *lāsya* is not found in Chapter 18 but in 19, appearing among various sets of minor building blocks making up the plot of a play. In Dhanañjaya’s *Daśarūpaka* the *nāṭikā* is likewise not counted (3, 42–48), while the *lāsya* is accommodated in the *bhāṇa* (3, 53–54), with which, as we will see, it shares the theatrical *ākāśabhāṣita* device. The Paramāra king Bhoja (11th century), in the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* (Chapter 11, pp. 713–720), first treats the ten plays from *nāṭaka* to *vīthī*, leaving out the *nāṭikā*, ending the text with the words *iti daśarūpakam etad bharatācāryānusārato gaditam* (p. 720, l. 9). Next, he describes the *nāṭikā*, to which he adds yet another play, namely the *saṭṭaka*, evidently a subtype of the *nāṭikā*. In the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* the *lāsya* is dealt with in Chapter 12, pp. 757–761, after which follows a detailed treatment of the so-called *vīthyaṅgas*, which I will go into below.

¹ As will be shown below, the order of the ten plays in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 18, 10–126ab is meaningful, though the order in the table of contents in vv. 2 and 3ab, which is determined by metrical considerations, is not:

nāṭakam saprakaraṇam aṅko vyāyoga eva ca
bhāṇaḥ samavakāraś ca vīthī prahasanaṃ ḍimaḥ (2)
īhāmṛgaś ca vijñeyaḥ daśamo nāṭyalakṣaṇe (3ab).

The *daśarūpa* list not only accommodates more than the ten types of plays of its title, it also contains some rare types of which no early specimens have come down to us, namely the *vyāyoga*, *samavakāra*, *ḍima*, *īhāmṛga*, *utsyṣṭikāṅka* and *vīthī*. The plays of these types that we do have, all quite late, are most probably reconstructions on the basis of the definitions provided in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and later treatises on drama. Furthermore, as will be shown, the list forms a heterogeneous collection, with the *vīthī* being the odd one out. The description of the *vīthī* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* does not provide for a play like the other *rūpas* in the list, that is, a complete play with a well-developed plot. The term *vīthī* appears to cover a set of minor scenes found embedded in a play, and the *Nāṭyaśāstra* mentions altogether thirteen such scenes, called *vīthyaṅgas*, “*vīthī* members”. The term *lāsyā* likewise covers a number of small-scale dramatic performances, but it is exceptional for different reasons: it is made up mainly of dancing and singing, features that are rare in the other plays of the list.

In what follows I will have a closer look at the *daśarūpa* list and the position of the *vīthī* and *lāsyā* in it. The exceptional nature of the *vīthī* raises the question of what it, or rather its *aṅgas*, is doing in the list of ten complete plays. After having gone through the thirteen *vīthyaṅgas*, I will turn to the list and in particular to the relationship of the *vīthī* with the *prahasana* and *bhāṇa*. As to the *lāsyā*, like the *vīthī*, it appears to be a heading for a number of minor dramatic scenes; the *Nāṭyaśāstra* distinguishes ten of them. However, while the inclusion of the *vīthī* in the *daśarūpa* list has never been questioned, the *lāsyā* is almost certainly a later addition. Not only that, it has also been moved around: in Ghosh’s edition it occurs immediately after the *vīthī*, while in the Baroda edition the *lāsyā* is found in the next chapter among the so-called *sandhis*. After having had a closer look at what may have determined the respective positions of the *lāsyā* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, I will suggest that the addition of the supernumerary *lāsyā* to the dramatic theory may have taken place in the wake of the addition of the equally supernumerary *nāṭikā* to the *daśarūpa* list, as a provisional reconstruction of the *Werdegang* of this list.

2. The *vīthī* passages in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*

The *vīthī* section in Chapter 18 opens in v. 111 with the words:

*bhāṇasyāpi hi nikhilaṃ lakṣaṇam uktaṃ tathāgamānugatam
vīthyāḥ samprati nikhilaṃ kathayāmi yathākramaṃ viprāḥ.*

I have given a description of the characteristics of the *bhāṇa*, complete and (*tathā*) based on the learned tradition. Now, o brahmins, I will offer a complete description of the characteristics (*nikhilaṃ*, scil. *lakṣaṇam*) of the *vīthī* (i.e., of the *vīthyaṅgas*) one by one (*yathākramaṃ*).

Next, it is said that its topics may cover all (the eight) *rasas* and that it abounds in all the (thirty-six) *lakṣaṇas*,² has thirteen members (*aṅgas*), consists of just one act, and is performed by one or two actors (*hārya*) only, who represent low, middle or high characters (*prakṛti*). After this, in vv. 113cd–114, the names of the thirteen *vīthyaṅgas* are given, followed in vv. 115–126ab by short descriptions of the individual members.

3. The thirteen *vīthyaṅgas*

The general character of the *vīthyaṅgas* is clear: they consist of small segments of text spoken by the actors (note the words *vacana*, *vāk(ya)*, *pada*, *vivāda*, *ucyate*, *artha*), which may, for instance, involve mutual misunderstandings and confusion. In many cases there is also a strong comic element (*hāsyā*) present. However, due to the brevity of the characterisations in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* it is not easy for each of the thirteen *aṅgas* to reconstruct a specific dramatic scene. For information of that kind, scholars (e.g., LÉVI 1963) have tended to turn to Abhinavagupta's commentary (10th cent., available in the Baroda edition) and to later treatises on drama and their commentaries, which by way of illustration often quote specimens from known Sanskrit plays. However, apart from the fact that it is not always easy to go back from these scenes in classical plays to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* definitions, it is questionable if we may assume an unbroken tradition between the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and these later treatises and commentaries. In this connection I may point to the definition of the Guṇa *mādhurya* in *NŚ* 16, 104. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* describes the flaw (*doṣa*) of annoying people by again and again telling them the same thing, which in certain circumstances, however, proves to be a *guṇa*, or effective strategy. It is in this sense that *mādhurya* is used in Aśoka's Rock Edict 14 from the third century BCE. The various interpretations of the later commentarial tradition (and in this case that given in the *Arthaśāstra* as well) should subsequently be interpreted as attempts to make sense of a term that was no longer understood.³ Therefore, the following discussion of the *vīthyaṅgas* is as a matter of principle restricted to the bare text of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Even though the texts do not always speak for themselves, the general character of the *vīthyaṅgas* is clear.

I will proceed to discuss the thirteen *vīthyaṅgas* in the order as found in the Baroda edition, in the list in *NŚ* 18, 113cd–14 and the passages offering brief descriptions of them in *NŚ* 18, 115–126ab. The order in Ghosh's edition in 20, 114–15 and 117–129 respectively differs slightly from the one in the Baroda edition, as shown in the following overview:

² For the *lakṣaṇas*, see RAGHAVAN 1973: 1–52.

³ See TIEKEN 2006 and 2023: 117–119.

Baroda	Ghosh
Chapter 18, 113cd–114, 115–126ab	Chapter 20, 114–115, 117–129
1. <i>udghātyaka</i>	id.
2. <i>avalagita</i>	id.
3. <i>avaspandita</i>	id.
4. <i>nālikā</i>	<i>asatpralāpa</i>
5. <i>asatpralāpa</i>	<i>prapañca</i>
6. <i>vākkelī</i>	<i>nālikā</i>
7. <i>prapañca</i>	<i>vākkelī</i>
8. <i>mṛdava</i>	<i>adhibala</i>
9. <i>adhibala</i>	<i>chala</i>
10. <i>chala</i>	<i>vyāhāra</i>
11. <i>trigata</i>	<i>mṛdava</i>
12. <i>vyāhāra</i>	<i>trigata</i>
13. <i>gaṇḍa</i>	<i>gaṇḍa</i>

udghātyaka

The definition of the *udghātyaka* reads as follows (vv. 115cd–116ab):

*padāni tvagatārthāni ye narāḥ punar ādarāt
yojayanti padair anyais tad udghātyakam ucyate.*

When characters repeat a message which has not come across, using other, carefully selected words, we speak of *udghātyaka*.

On the basis of the available textual variants mentioned in the Baroda edition it is possible to reconstruct another text in which a particular twist to the situation is given: for the benefit of very simple-minded people (*ye narāḥ svalpabuddhayaḥ*) the text, (though) perfectly clear as it is (*padāni gatārthāni*), is explained with the help of synonyms (*paryāyair eva bodhyante*).⁴

⁴ The *vīthyaṅgas udghātyaka* and the *avalagita* (for which, see below) are also mentioned among the five “members” (*aṅgas*) of the *āmukha*, or “introduction”, to a play (*NS* 20, 33). For their definitions, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* refers to the section dealing with the *vīthyaṅgas* (*udghātyakāvalagitalakṣaṇam kathitaṃ mayā*, 20, 34ab), that is, to *NS* 18, 115 and 116 respectively. These five *āmukhāṅgas* also include the *kathodghāta*, which resembles the *udghātyaka*: an actor enters upon the scene for the first act, repeating or paraphrasing parts of a text spoken before by the *sūtradhāra* in the introduction (*NS* 20, 35):

*sūtradhārasya vākyam vā yatra vākyārthaṃ eva vā
grhītvā praviśet pātram kathodghātaḥ sa prakīrtitaḥ.*

avalagita

The second *vīthyaṅga*, the *avalagita* (vv. 116cd–117ab), is defined as:

*yatrānyasmin samāveśya kāryam anyat prasādhyate
tac cāvalagitaṃ nāma vijñeyaṃ nāṭyayokṭṛbhiḥ.*

As mentioned above, and as we will see below, the *vīthyaṅgas* describe small speech segments, though in the definition of the *avalagita* words for spoken text are absent.⁵ In Lévi's paraphrase of it (LÉVI 1963: 113), "Lorsqu'une première affaire est engagée déjà [*samāveśya*], une autre s'y substitue en la continuant", it seems to describe a switch in the characters' actions or behaviour (*affaire*): they engage in one activity, which is abandoned for the sake of another, which would somehow be a continuation of the former and be carried out to the end. In Abhinavagupta's interpretation, however, we do have a speech segment. As an illustration of *avalagita* he refers to a brief exchange between the king and *vidūṣaka* from Harṣa's *Ratnāvalī*, p. 32, in which the king is asked if it makes him happy to look at the woman in a painting that someone had left lying in the palace garden. The king, in turn, asks if it is happiness when his eyes have the greatest problems to detach themselves from her thighs or breasts and move on to any of her other limbs. In this way he (involuntarily) presents himself as a man smitten with love. While apart from the context there is nothing in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* text to take it as a definition of a verbal exchange, it is also difficult to see how it accounts for the *Ratnāvalī* scene. Below, a more or less literal translation, or rather paraphrase, is given:

When an aim (*kāryam*) has been inserted into (or: made dependent on) another aim (*anyasmin samāveśya*) and (in the end) that other aim⁶ (or: yet another, third, aim) is realised, among experts of dramatic performances that should be known by the name *avalagita*.

avaspandita

The *aṅga avaspandita* is defined as follows (vv. 117cd–118ab):

*ākṣipte'rthe tu kasmimścic chubhāśubhasamutthite
kauśalyād ucyate'nyo'rthas tad avaspanditaṃ bhavet.*

When something is rejected because the outcome may or may not be pleasant (and) someone adroitly (*kauśalyād*) joins the conversation to suggest something else, that will be an example of *avaspandita*.

⁵ For *prasādhyate* Ghosh's edition (*NS* 20, 118) reads *praśasyate*, "is praised", which, however, is not found among the textual variants mentioned in the Baroda edition.

⁶ Normally, the meaning "the other" is reserved for *itara*. However, we have to do with a construction *anya* ... *anya* here.

*nālikā*⁷

The definition of the fourth *vīthyaṅga*, the *nālikā* (v. 118cd), is tantalisingly brief:

hāsyenopagatārthaprahelikā nāliketi vijñeyā.

for which I suggest the following translation:

nālikā is when a funny solution is offered to a riddle.⁸

asatpralāpa

The definition of *asatpralāpa* (v. 119) speaks for itself:

*mūrkhajanāsannikarṣe hitam api yatra prabhāṣate vidvān
na ca grhyate'sya vacanaṃ vijñeyo'asatpralāpo'sau.*

When a learned man addresses a bunch of fools, who fail to appreciate his good intentions, that should be known as *asatpralāpa*, or “wasted words”.

vākkeli

No. 6, *vākkeli*, defined in v. 120ab as *ekadviprativacanā vākkeli syāt prayoge'smin*, is a situation in which the characters are involved in an argument in which one of them reacts to a statement of the other by playfully (*kelī*) disagreeing by varying on it (*prativacana*, “echo”) one or two times.

prapañca

The definition of *prapañca* (vv. 120cd–121ab) reads:

*yad asadbhūtaṃ vacanaṃ samstavayuktaṃ dvayoḥ parasparaṃ yat tu
ekasya cārthahetoḥ sa hāsyajananaḥ prapañcaḥ syāt.*

As I see it, the definition describes a comic situation (*hāsyajananaḥ*) in which of two people each goes out of his way to praise (*vacanaṃ samstavayuktaṃ*) the other (*parasparaṃ*), knowing that the praise lacks any ground (*asadbhūtaṃ*) but (*yat tu ... ca*) hoping to profit from it (*arthahetoḥ*).

⁷ Together with the *gaṇḍa*, for which see below, the *nālikā* is itself also part of the *trigata* in the *pūrvaraṅga*; see *NS* 5, between 134 and 135, quoted below, p. 274.

⁸ Or “*nālikā* is a riddle, the solution of which comes with mirth”.

mṛdava

In the next *vīthyaṅga*, *mṛdava*, the two characters cannot agree on what are excellent qualities and what defects; this time the reasons for these opinions (*kāraṇād*) are provided:

*yat kāraṇād guṇānām doṣṭikaraṇam bhaved vivādakṛtam
doṣaguṇīkaraṇam vā tan mṛdavaṃ nāma vijñeyam* (vv. 121cd–122ab).

When two people disagree, explaining (*kāraṇād*) why certain virtues are actually defects, or certain defects virtues, that (*aṅga*) is to be known by the name *mṛdava*.

adhibala

The *vīthyaṅga adhibala* is defined as follows (vv. 122cd–123ab):

*paravacanam ātmanaś cottarottarasamudbhavaṃ dvayor yat tu
anyonyārthaviśeṣakam adhibalam iti tad budhair jñeyam*.

It describes a situation in which two characters are locked in an endless altercation (*uttarottara*) in which at every point one of them makes a suggestion the other retorts, saying he sees it differently (*anyonyārthaviśeṣaka*).

chala

The definition of *chala* (v. 123cd) is brief again. It reads:

anyārtham eva vākyaṃ chalam abhisandhānahāsyaroṣakaram.

chala is an expression, which, inadvertently (?*anyārtham*), convinces people, makes them laugh or makes them angry.⁹

trigata

For the *trigata* there are two definitions. The one commented upon by Abhinavagupta reads (v. 124):

*śrutisārūpyād yasmin bahavo'rthā yuktibhir niyujyante
yad dhāsyam ahāsyam vā tat trigataṃ nāma vijñeyam*.

In it [viz. the *trigata*] many meanings are artfully attached to (a sentence, etc.) owing to a resemblance of sound. This, which may have a comic or non-comic character, is to be distinguished by the name Trigata (trans. KUIPER 1979: 181).

⁹ The Baroda edition mentions the following alternative definition:

*yatrādau prativacanair vilobhayitvā paramparākāraiḥ
tair evārthavihīnair viparītaḥ*

Unfortunately, the text of the final part of this verse is not specified.

The second definition, which in the Baroda edition is relegated to the part dealing with the textual variants (p. 458), reads:

*yad udāttavacanam iha ca tridhā vibhaktaṃ bhavet prayoge tu
hāsyarāśasamprayuktaṃ tat trigataṃ nāma vijñeyam.*

The passage has been translated by KUIPER (1979: 181) as:

When in a performance a talk of (non?-)exalted¹⁰ characters is divided over three (characters) and it has the comical sentiment, it is to be distinguished as a Trigata.

The translation of *tridhā vibhaktaṃ* is inspired by the *trigata* scene in the *pūrvaraṅga*, which is described in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 5, 133cd–134 and during which three actors are on stage, namely the *sūtradhāra* and his two *pāripārśvikas*, or assistants (see below). This is assumed to have given the scene its name *trigata*. However, this translation of *tridhā vibhaktaṃ* does not align with the information supplied in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 18, 112cd, according to which the *vīthī* is performed by either one or two actors (or *hārya* in *vīthī syād ekāṅkā tathaikahāryā dvihāryā vā*). This has raised the question of whether the *vīthyaṅga trigata* and the *trigata* in the *pūrvaraṅga* are one and the same. According to KUIPER 1979: 185 they are, that is, historically, the *pūrvaraṅga trigata* being the original. It should be noted, though, that the fact that in the *pūrvaraṅga* the scene is performed by three actors¹¹ is not a distinctive feature of the *trigata* scene: the *pūrvaraṅga* is in its entirety performed by three actors, the above-mentioned *sūtradhāra* and the two *pāripārśvikas*.¹² Apart from that, the *sūtradhāra* and the two *pāripārśvikas* have different roles in the *trigata* scene. To put it simply: the two *pāripārśvikas* are involved in a dispute, the *sūtradhāra* listens and, as an outsider, pronounces judgement. The relevant passage in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* consists of two parts, namely 5, 133cd–134 and two verses not commented upon by Abhinavagupta, and are therefore not included in the numbering in the Baroda edition:¹³

tathā ca bhāratībhede trigataṃ samprayojayet (133cd).

¹⁰ The Baroda edition mentions a variant reading *yatrā(yac cā)nudāttavacanam*. I will return to this variation below.

¹¹ See also the expression *naṭādītritaya* in *Daśarūpaka* 3, 16 about the *trigata* in the *pūrvaraṅga*, to be quoted below.

¹² *NS* 5, 65–67 describes the entrance of the *sūtradhāra* and the two *pāripārśvikas* (*praviśeyur samam trayah*), and 5, 136 deals with how all three of them leave the stage (*niṣkrāmeyuḥ samam trayah*) after they have been invited to start the performance of the play itself (*prarocanā*) and after the announcement of the topic of the play (*kāvyavastunirūpaṇa*) (for the *prarocanā* and *kāvyavastunirūpaṇa*, see TIEKEN 2001a: 96–97). At one point in the so-called *citra* variety of the *pūrvaraṅga* a fourth person, called a *caturthakāra*, makes his appearance (*NS* 5, 150).

¹³ The passage is also dealt with in TIEKEN 2001a: 94–97.

*vidūṣakas tv ekapadāṃ sūtradhārasmitāvahāṃ
asambaddhakathāprāyāṃ kuryāt kathanikāṃ tataḥ* (134).

and:

*vitaṇḍāṃ gaṇḍasaṃyuktāṃ¹⁴ nālikāṃ¹⁵ ca prayojayet
kas tiṣṭhati jitaṃ kenetyādikāvyaṃprarūpiṇīm.
pāripārśvikasañjalpo vidūṣakavirūpitaḥ
sthāpitaḥ sūtradhāreṇa trigataṃ samprayujyate.*

The first section presents only two characters, a *vidūṣaka* and the *sūtradhāra*. However, from the second section it becomes clear that there are three of them: beside the *sūtradhāra*, two *pāripārśvikas*, or assistants, who are involved in some kind of altercation (*sañjalpa*) in which one of them plays the role of *vidūṣaka*, or *Verstehrder*, interrupting the other with loud objections (*gaṇḍa*), interjections (or incomplete sentences? *ekapadā*), critical remarks (*vitaṇḍā*) and enigmatical utterances (*nālikā*), and with questions about their texts (*kāvyanirūpiṇī*), such as “who(se interpretation) holds, who (of us) has won?”.¹⁶ As can be seen, the *sūtradhāra* is merely an onlooker here, who at first is only amused (*smita*) but in the end also has to decide which of the two parties has won (*sthāpita*). In this connection it should be noted that the *trigata* is the counterpart of the ritual fight between the *devas* and *asuras* during the *raṅgapūjana* described in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 3, 92–93 (KUIPER 1979: 165 and 192). The specification *bhāratībhede* (v. 133cd), “in the verbal mode”, defines the contrast between the *trigata* and the fight, which involved real, physical violence. In the verbal contest, however, the *sūtradhāra* does not seem to add an argument, a third, of his own; he merely decides which of the two parties wins.

It cannot be ruled out that the *pūrvaraṅga trigata* is original and had been inserted into the list of *vīthyaṅgas* without any adaptation. At the same time, it may be questioned if the expression *tridhā vibhakta*, and *trigata* as such, too, does indeed refer to the number of characters in the scene. As I see it, *tridhā vibhakta* could equally well be translated as “analysed in three ways”, thus making the same point as *yasmin bahavo'rthā* (see above) and *anekārtha* in *Daśarūpaka* 3, 16 about the *trigata* in the *pūrvaraṅga*:

*śrutisāmyād anekārthayojanaṃ trigataṃ tv iha
naṭādītritayālāpaḥ pūrvaraṅge tad iṣyate.*

¹⁴ For the *vīthyaṅga gaṇḍa*, see below.

¹⁵ For *nālikāṃ* instead of *tālikāṃ* of the Baroda text, or the variant reading *nāmikāṃ*, see KUIPER 1979: 178, n. 290. For the *vīthyaṅga nālikā*, see above.

¹⁶ I do not take *kāvya* in *kāvyanirūpiṇī* to refer to the text of the play which is performed next, but to the arguments that are passed between the two *pāripārśvikas*.

Found side-by-side with the expression *śrutisārūpya*, the verb *vibhaj-*, and *bahavo'rthā* and *anekārtha* seem to describe the exercise of solving double entendres like *śleṣas* and *yamakas*. The term *trigata*, in turn, may be taken as a formation like *dvigata*, “ambiguous, zweideutig”.¹⁷ While in a *dvigata* discussion one participant disagrees with the interpretation of a certain utterance made by the other, after which the discussion is closed, in a *trigata* the one disagrees with the interpretation given by the other, and so on. The two are thus locked in an endless altercation, which requires a third party to bring an end to it, as happened in the *pūrvaraṅga*. As such, the *trigata* resembles the *vīthyaṅga adhibala* (see above), but differs from it in that the conflict is apparently not so much about the interpretation of a situation as about how a textual utterance should be broken up or analysed (*śrutisārūpya*, *vibhaj-*). Thus, Patañjali (*Mahābhāṣya* I, p. 14, lines 12–14 and the repetition of the passage in III, p. 388, lines 8–10) for *dvigata* cites the example *śveto dhāvati*, “a person dressed in white runs away”, which can also be analysed as *śvā ito dhāvati*, “the dog runs away from here”. To return to the *pūrvaraṅga trigata*, the role of *vidūṣaka*, or *Verstehrder*, is not reserved for one of the *pāripārśvikas* in particular; with the next round in the discussion it is taken upon himself by the other.

Finally, a brief note may be added on the variants *udātta-* and *anudāttavacana* in the *vīthyaṅga trigata*. As noted, Kuiper left open which might have been the original reading. Furthermore, while he translated “talk of an (non-)exalted person”, he also pointed to several instances in which *udātta* refers to words as well as people (KUIPER 1979: 180, fn. 297). As to the latter question, a crucial passage is in my opinion *Nāṭyaśāstra* 18, 34, which provides a description of the so-called *praveśaka*, or interlude:

*nottamamadhyamapurūṣair ācarito nāpyudāttavacanakṛtaḥ
prākṛtabhāṣācārah prayogam āśritya kartavyaḥ.*

It is indeed clear that in this passage the phrase *nāpyudāttavacanakṛta* does not refer to the social position of the speakers – this is already dealt with in *nottamamadhyamapurūṣa*, or, for that matter, to the language – the *praveśaka* is performed by servants who speak a Prākṛit (*prākṛtabhāṣā*). Instead, the phrase seems to refer to the low level of the discussion, which is about trivialities. This does of course not rule out that in another context (*an*)*udāttavacana* may refer to “talk of a (non-)exalted **person**”. At the same time it is difficult to decide if in the definition of the *vīthyaṅga trigata* we should read *udātta-* or *anudāttavacana*. In contrast to the *praveśaka* and *pūrvaraṅga trigata*, which feature assistants (servants), in the case of the *vīthyaṅga trigata* nothing is said about the status of the speakers – the characters in the *vīthyaṅgas* may belong to either the *uttama*, *madhya*(*ma*) or *adhama* category, who speak Sanskrit and

¹⁷ See WEBER 1873: 483.

Prākṛit respectively.¹⁸ We could thus be dealing with a discussion in solemn Sanskrit about trivialities or one in “vulgar” Prākṛit about solemn topics, which would each in their own way produce a comic effect.

vyāhāra

vyāhāra is the presentation, with a touch of humour, of events taking place before one’s very own eyes (v. 125ab):

pratyakṣavṛttir ukto vyāhāro hāsyaleśārthaḥ.

*gaṇḍa*¹⁹

Finally, *vīthyaṅga* no. 13, *gaṇḍa* (vv. 125cd–126ab) is described as follows:

*saṃrambhasaṃbhramayutaṃ vivādayuktaṃ tathāpavādakṛtaṃ
bahuvacanākṣepakṛtaṃ gaṇḍaṃ pravadanti tattvajñāḥ.*

According to the wise, *gaṇḍa* involves violent and confused speech, disagreements, cursing and loud objections.

After this overview of the thirteen *vīthyaṅgas* and before turning to the question of the position of the *vīthī* in the *daśarūpa* list, brief comments should be made on the names of the *vīthyaṅgas* and the order in which they are dealt with. As to the names of the *vīthyaṅgas*, I have so far made no attempt to translate the Sanskrit titles, except in the case of *asatpralāpa*. The reason for that is that as descriptions of specific dramatic scenes, the meanings of the titles provided by the Sanskrit dictionaries do not seem to be sufficiently informative and would, in turn, require (complex) circumscriptions. Therefore, it is decided that translations given of the definitions, even though they do not always speak for themselves, should do. As to the second point, as seen, the order of the *vīthyaṅgas* in Ghosh’s edition differs from the one above, which is that of the Baroda edition. Typically, in both editions the order is that of the respective lists heading the detailed treatment of the *vīthyaṅgas*, Baroda 18, 113cd–114 and Ghosh 20, 114–115. It is nevertheless difficult to establish which was the first, the list, in which the order is determined by metrical considerations, or the detailed treatment of the *vīthyaṅgas*? Furthermore, there does not seem to be an obvious system to the order in which the thirteen *vīthyaṅgas* are dealt with. Occasionally, one may identify a few pairs in the one edition, which are,

¹⁸ See NŚ 18, 113ab: *adhamottamamadyābhir yuktā syāt prakṛtibhis trisṛbhiḥ*. This passage was misunderstood by KUIPER 1979: 183, who took the word *prakṛti*, which describes the type of characters present in the scene, to refer to the actors on stage, totalling three. This contradicts the immediately preceding rule (v. 112cd) which states that in the *vīthī* there are only one or two actors on stage.

¹⁹ The *gaṇḍa* is also part of the *trigata* in the *pūrvaraṅga*; see above, fn. 7. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* passage in question is quoted above, p. 274.

however, separated in the other. One example is the pair *prapañca* and *mṛdava*, the numbers 7 and 8 in Baroda. This pair revolves around the contrast of praise which lacks any foundation (*asadbhūta*) and trying to decide what makes (*kāraṇād*) someone praiseworthy: in Ghosh's edition they are found as numbers 5 and 11, respectively. If besides the definition in the *daśarūpa* chapter the one in the *pūrvarāṅga* chapter is taken into account as well, it is possible to see a relationship between the *trigata* and *ganḍa*, numbered 12 and 13 in Ghosh's edition. In the Baroda edition, however, they are separated by the intervening *vyāhāra*. In connection with the question of the order of the *vīthyaṅgas* it is nevertheless telling that the last in the list describes such impolite behaviour such as cursing and making loud objections, as if there is a movement from polite conversation to quarrels – which, however, does not seem to be the case.

4. The *vīthī* in the *daśarūpa* list

As discussed in the previous section, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* provides a list of thirteen independent microscenes under the heading “*vīthī*”. The definitions do not bear witness of a complete play with a plot or story line, which agrees with the fact that there are no contemporary *vīthī* plays, the earliest examples being two plays by the Kerala author Rāmapāṇivāda from as late as the eighteenth century. These two plays will be discussed further below. At this point, we may go into the question of what this collection of scenes is doing in an enumeration of complete plays with proper plots. To this end, we need to take a closer look at the structure of the list. Its introduction suggests that the list is organised on the basis of the number of *vṛttis*, or styles, which are called the “mothers” (*māṭṛkā*) of all poetic compositions (*kāvya*), and as such would define the nature of the performance and the differences between the various types of plays.²⁰ Four styles are distinguished, namely *bhāratī*, in which speech predominates, *sāttvatī*, in which speech and bodily acting serve to present one's mental state, *kaiśikī*, the elegant style portraying people in love, and *ārabhaṭī*, a violent style causing fear and terror. The first two items on the list, the *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa*, and by implication the *nāṭikā* as well, are said to make use of all four styles and the remaining eight have in common that they lack *kaiśikī* (*NS* 18, 7 and 9ab). The *ḍima* also lacks the *bhāratī vṛtti* (v. 88), and the *utsṛṣṭikāṅka* has only the *bhāratī vṛtti* (v. 96).

Another arrangement, on the basis of the *sandhis*, is described in *Nāṭyaśāstra* 19, 44–47. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* divides the plot into successive developments (*sandhis*): *mukha*, or introduction, in which the problem to be solved is

²⁰ *NS* 18, 4:

*sarveṣāṃ eva kāvyānāṃ māṭṛkāḥ smṛtāḥ
ābhyaṃ vinissṛtaṃ hy etad daśarūpaṃ prayogataḥ.*

For more detailed information on the *vṛttis* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, see BANSAT-BOUDON 1992: 169–180 and *passim*.

explained, *pratimukha*, in which the first steps are taken to tackle the problem, *garbha*, in which the aim is in sight, *vimarśa* or *avamarśa*, in which doubt arises about a successful outcome, and *nirvahaṇa*, the dénouement.²¹ The *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa* (the *nāṭikā* is not mentioned separately) have all five *sandhis*, the *ḍima* and *samavakāra* have only four, lacking the *avamarśa sandhi*, the *vyāyoga* and *īhāmṛga*, in which *garbha* and *avamarśa* are absent, only three, and the *utsṛṣṭikāṅka*, *prahasana*, *bhāṇa* and *vīthī*, only two, namely the *mukha* and *nirvahaṇa*.

In these two ways the list is presented as one going from (long) plays with complex plots to (shorter) plays with less elaborate plots. I believe, however, that there is yet a third, more precise and more meaningful division, dividing the plays into three distinct groups. The first group is formed by the *nāṭaka*, *prakaraṇa* and *nāṭikā*. The first two are long plays of five to ten acts. The plot of the *nāṭaka* is an adaptation of a well-known story from mythology featuring kings and seers²² and deals with royal concerns like the king's efforts to find a proper heir to the throne (e.g., Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā*). The story of the *prakaraṇa*, by contrast, is of the playwright's own invention²³ and the action is set in a non-royal milieu²⁴ of such type as traders and caravan leaders²⁵ (e.g., Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭīka*).²⁶ As already indicated, the *nāṭikā*, with four acts at the most, is a mixture of the former two types:²⁷ in contrast to the *nāṭaka* the story is invented by the playwright and in contrast to the *prakaraṇa* the action is set in the royal milieu²⁸ (e.g., Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra*). If these characteristics do not necessarily make the three (or two) types a group – though note the mutual division of labour which is highlighted by the *nāṭikā* – their nature as a group becomes clearer if we go further down the list. Doing so shows that

²¹ For the *sandhis*, “portions de sens”, see BANSAT-BOUDON 1992: 132–136.

²² NŚ 18, 10:

*prakhyātavastuviṣayaṃ prakhyātoḍṭtanāyakaṃ caiva
rājarṣivamśyacaritaṃ tathaiva divyāśrayopetaṃ.*

²³ NŚ 18, 45:

*yatra kavir ātmaśaktyā vastu śarīraṃ ca nāyakaṃ caiva
autpattikaṃ prakurute prakaraṇam iti tad budhair jñeyam.*

²⁴ NŚ 18, 49:

*nodāttanāyakaḥṭṭam na divyacaritaṃ na rājasambhogam
bāhyajanasamprayuktaṃ taj jñeyam prakaraṇam tajjñaiḥ.*

²⁵ NŚ 18, 48:

*vipraṇiksacivānām purohitāmātyasārthavāhānām
caritaṃ yan naikavidhaṃ jñeyam tat prakaraṇam nāma.*

²⁶ A much earlier example of the *prakaraṇa* is the Aśvaghōṣa's *Śāriputraprakaraṇa*.

²⁷ NŚ 18, 57:

*anayoś ca bandhayogād anyo bhedaḥ prayokṛbhiḥ kāryaḥ
prakhyātas tv itaro vā nāṭakayoge prakaraṇe vā.*

²⁸ NŚ 18, 58ab: *prakaraṇanāṭakabhedād utpādyam vastu nāyakaṃ nṛpatim.*

the following five play types form a group that is clearly separate from the *nāṭaka*, *prakaraṇa* and *nāṭikā*, and, as we will see, from the next three types of plays as well, as they all deal with battle and its aftermath. Thus, the theme of the three-act *samavakāra* is the battle between the *devas* and *asuras*²⁹ as presented in the *Amṛtamanthana*, “The Churning of the Ocean”. This play is referred to in the myth about the origin of drama in *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Chapter 4, and is performed by Bharata at the request of Brahmā before an excited audience of both gods and demons.³⁰ The *ḍima* is likewise just one extended battle scene in four acts.³¹ The same myth referred to above mentions the performance of the *ḍima Tripuradāha*, or “the Burning of the Three Cities”, an heroic feat performed by Śiva.³² By contrast, the *vyāyoga*, a one-acter, does not feature any god but a great number of well-known men (epic characters?), who are involved in all kinds of violent actions.³³ With the *īhāmṛga*, probably a one-acter as well, we are back in the world of the gods: the theme is a fierce battle between gods about a heavenly maiden.³⁴ These four plays are, as a group, concluded by the *utsṛṣṭikāṅka*. The scene of this one-acter is set after the battle in which the wives lament the heroes killed.³⁵

While the above five plays are about the same topic – as said, all deal with battle and its aftermath – the three plays that follow, namely the *prahasana*, *bhāṇa* and *vīthī*, do not seem to have anything like that in common. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* does not provide any information about their topics or plots. It does mention the plays’ characters: saints, ascetics and other marginal figures, such as courtesans and servants in the *prahasana*,³⁶ a scoundrel or a man-about-

²⁹ The *samavakāra* is *devāsura*bījakṛta (NŚ 18, 63).

³⁰ NŚ 4, 4:

*tasmin samavakāre tu prayukte devadānavāḥ
hṛṣṭāḥ samabhavan sarve karmabhāvānudarśanāt.*

³¹ NŚ 18, 86cd: *yuddhaniyuddhādharṣaṇasaṃpheṭakṛtās ca kartavyaḥ.*

³² NŚ 4, 10cd: *tathā tripuradāhas ca ḍimasaṃjñāḥ prayojitaḥ.*

³³ NŚ 18, 92:

*na ca divyanāyakaḥ kṛtaḥ kāryo rājarṣināyakanibaddhaḥ
yuddhaniyuddhadharṣaṇasaṃgharṣakṛtās ca kartavyaḥ.*

³⁴ NŚ 18, 78ab: *divyapuruṣāśrayakṛto divyastṛīkārāṇopagatayuddhaḥ.* See also *amarastṛī* in 18, 81.

³⁵ NŚ 18, 95:

*karuṇarasaprāyākṛto nivṛttayuddhodhataprahāras ca
stṛīparidevītabahulo nirveditabhāṣitaś caiva.*

The function of the *utsṛṣṭikāṅka* (*aṅka* for short), if not for the group as a whole, then for the individual plays of the group, was already acknowledged by RAGHAVAN 1933: 281: “The *Aṅka* is, so to say, an epilogue or a sequel to a *Samavakāra*, *Īhāmṛga*, *ḍima* or *Vyāyoga*. These four plays depict fights among gods and other *Prakhyāta* heroes while the *Aṅka* depicts the result of those fights.”

³⁶ NŚ 18, 103:

bhagavattāpasaviprair anyair api hāsyavādasambaddham

town in the *bhāṇa*,³⁷ and, as already noted above, characters of all social classes (high, low and middle) in the *vīthī*. Furthermore, we learn that the *prahasana* is full of amusing conversations and characters wearing extravagant clothes and behaving accordingly;³⁸ the one act of the *bhāṇa* is said to be full of activity and to present all kinds of situations;³⁹ and, as seen above, a *vīthī* is a brief scene of humorous and enigmatic exchanges. There is one thing all the plays do have in common, though. In this connection it should be noted that there are two versions of the *prahasana* and *bhāṇa*, fully fledged plays and brief dramatic scenes presumably of the same format as the *vīthyaṅgas*.⁴⁰ Thus, the three acts of the *samavakāra*, beside having scenes of disaster and fraud, are full of *vīthī* and *prahasana* scenes.⁴¹ The *bhāṇa* makes use of a particular theatrical device, namely of holding an imaginary conversation with someone who is not on the stage but, so to speak, “in the sky” (*ākāśe*).⁴² A full-length *bhāṇa* play consists of a string of such conversations. At the same time, in, for instance, the

kāpuruṣasamprayuktaṃ parihāsabhāṣaṇaprāyam.

NŚ 18, 105:

*veśyācetanapūṣakaviṭadhūrtā bandhakī ca yatra syuḥ
anibhṛtaveṣaparicchadaceṣṭitakaraṇais tu saṃkīrṇam.*

³⁷ NŚ 18, 110:

*dhūrtavīṭasamprayojyo nānāvasthāntarātmakāś caiva
ekāṅko bahuceṣṭaḥ satataṃ kāryo budhair bhāṇaḥ.*

³⁸ See *hāsyavādasambaddha*, *parihāsabhāṣaṇaprāya* and *anibhṛtaveṣaparicchadaceṣṭitakaraṇa* in the passages quoted in fn. 36.

³⁹ NŚ 18, 110 quoted in fn. 37.

⁴⁰ The fully fledged *prahasana* plays include incidental scenes of the *vīthī* type; see NŚ 18, 107ab: *vīthyaṅgaiḥ saṃyuktaṃ kartavyaṃ prahasanaṃ yathāyogam*. See also Bhoja’s *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, Chapter 11, p. 720, line 5: *ughātyakādibhir idam vīthyaṅgair miśritaṃ bhavet miśram*, which concludes the description of the mixed (*saṃkīrṇa*) *prahasana* and takes care of a smooth transition to the *vīthī* mentioned next; the individual *vīthyaṅgas* are dealt with in Chapter 12, pp. 761–769.

⁴¹ NŚ 18, 65ab: *aṅkas tu saprahasanaḥ savidravaḥ sakapaṭaḥ savīthikāḥ*.

⁴² On this and other theatrical devices, like “speaking to oneself” (*ātmagatam*) or “asides” (*janāntika* or *apavāritam*), see BANSAT-BOUDON 1992: 138–145. As to the *ākāśabhāṣita*, the actor listens to the voice in the sky and his reaction is directed to the sky as well. In his edition of the *Śakuntalā* MONIER-WILLIAMS 1876: 96 refers to several such scenes in Sanskrit plays in which an actor addresses a person in the sky who is visible only to him, in his mind’s eye, so to say. One of these passages is found in Śūdraka’s *Mudrārākṣasa*, on p. 68, in which Cāpakya looks at the sky and addresses the Nanda king’s minister who would seem to be standing in front of him (*pratyaḥśavad ākāśe lakṣyaṃ baddhvā*) (for an English translation of the passage, see VAN BUITENEN 1971: 189). Another passage is found in Kālidāsa’s *Vikramorvaśīya*, Act 4, after stanza 5/68, at which point Purūravas enters, looking at the sky and in his madness addressing Urvaśī’s kidnapper (*tataḥ praviśaty ākāśabaddhalakṣaḥ sonmādo* [v.l. *unmattaveṣo*] *rājā. sakrodhaṃ. āḥ durātman rakṣas tiṣṭha tiṣṭha. kva me priyatamām ādāya gacchasi*) (edition SCHARPÉ 1956: 98). LÉVI 1963: 95 refers to a passage from the fourth act of Kālidāsa’s *Śakuntalā* (pp. 162–163, v. 13/91), where all those present on the stage listen to a voice from the sky (*ākāśe*). For an English translation, see COULSON 1981: 98.

third act of Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā*, we find such a scene in the *viṣkambhaka*, or interlude. In this scene, the actor, a pupil of the local ascetic, pretends to listen to Śakuntalā's friend Priyaṃvadā, who is not physically present on the stage, and repeats, presumably *verbatim*, what she had said to him, introducing it with the words *kiṃ bravīṣi*, "what did you say?" His reply is directed at the invisible Priyaṃvadā in the sky.⁴³

Among the three members of this group the *vīthī* stands apart, as, while we have fairly early examples from the first millennium of *prahasana* and *bhāṇa* plays, plays called *vīthīs* made their appearance only in the eighteenth century. To begin with the *prahasana*, probably the earliest example is the *Mattavilāsa* attributed to the Pallava king Mahendravarman I (circa 590–630).⁴⁴ The earliest *bhāṇa* is Śyamilaka's *Pādatāḍitaka* (before 900 CE?).⁴⁵ As noted, the earliest examples of *vīthī* plays date only from the eighteenth century. All earlier examples of "vīthīs" consist of short scenes embedded in regular plays. According to Raghavan, Bhoja in his *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* mentions two *vīthī* plays, the *Mālatikā* and *Indulekhā*,⁴⁶ neither of which has unfortunately come down to us. All we have of these plays are quotations providing examples of the *udghātyaka* and *nālikā* from the *Mālatikā* (*Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, Chapter 12, pp. 761 and 766, respectively) and of the *trigata* from the *Indulekhā* (p. 764). Furthermore, the term *vīthī* is not part of the title (e.g., *Mālatikāvīthī*); relevant passages are introduced by the words *yathā mālatikāyāṃ / indulekhāyāṃ vīthyāṃ*, "as in the *vīthī* in the *Mālatikā/Indulekhā*", in which the word *vīthī* may well refer to *vīthī*

⁴³ For an English translation of the *viṣkambhaka*, see COULSON 1981: 70–71.

⁴⁴ For the *Mattavilāsa* and Mahendravarman I's authorship, see TIEKEN 1993.

⁴⁵ The date of this play is discussed in detail by the editor of the text, Godard Schokker, who distinguishes between external and internal evidence (SCHOKKER 1966: 13–31). As to the external evidence, a reference to the play's author, as Śyāmadeva, in Rājaśekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* suggests 875 CE as a *date ante quem*. However, it is uncertain if Śyāmadeva, who Rājaśekhara claims to be the author of a treatise on poetics, is indeed the same person as the playwright Śyāmilaka. In addition, Schokker refers to Abhinavagupta's commentary of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, which mentions, and quotes from, the *Pādatāḍitaka* twice, thus showing that the play was more or less well known before or in the tenth century in practically the same form as we now have it. On the basis of the internal evidence gleaned from the text itself, consisting of historical people and data mentioned in it, Schokker arrives at a much earlier date, namely between 455 and 510 CE. As I see it, however, this type of evidence is to be treated with the greatest care, as we may be dealing with a historical setting and should not underestimate the classical authors' skills in piecing together an internally consistent and convincing historical picture (see the Śuṅga milieu in Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra* or the Nanda-Maurya conflict in Śūdraka's *Mudrārākṣasa*).

⁴⁶ RAGHAVAN 1963: 592 writes: "While illustrating the Vīthyaṅgas, Bhoja draws instances from two regular Vīthīs called *Mālatikā* and *Indulekhā*. This is something; for even the *Daśarūpaka* which is especially devoted to the treatment of the ten types of drama, does not give any specimen of the Vīthī and the Avaloka upon it illustrates all the thirteen Aṅgas from every kind of drama and even from non-dramatic compositions but not from any kind of Vīthī".

scenes in these two plays.⁴⁷ In addition we have the first act of Bhavabhūti's *Mālatīmādhava* (8th cent.), which is given the title "*bakulavīthī*". However, all acts in this play have titles referring to a striking object or incident in the act in question: Act 2, for instance, is called *dhavalagrha*, "the white pavillion", and Act 5 *śmaśānaparikrama*, "going around in the cremation ground". In the first act, the *bakula* flower is the object of an intricate, punned, *vīthī*-like passage.⁴⁸

And then, in the eighteenth century, out of the blue, we have two complete plays called *vīthīs* by Rāmapāṇivāda, the *Candrikā* and *Līlāvātī*.⁴⁹ Though the *vīthī* is not the only play for which early examples are lacking, the point is that these two *vīthīs* are exceptionally late. Thus, the first examples of the *ḍima* and *samavakāra* after the mythical *Tripuradāha* and *Amṛtamanthana* mentioned in Chapter 4 of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, are the *Tripuradāhaḍima* and *Samudramathanasamavakāra* by Vatsarāja (12th cent.), included in the anthology *Rūpakaṣaṭka*. Besides the *Karpūracaritabhāna* and *Hāsyacūḍāmaṇiprahasana*, this collection contains the *Rukmiṇīpariṇaya-īhāmṛga* and *Kirātārjunīavyāyoga* by the same playwright. Furthermore, it should be noted that the *Madhyamavyāyoga* is definitely not a work of the pre-Kālidāsa author Bhāsa.⁵⁰ Finally, there do not seem to be plays of the *utsṛṣṭikāṅka* type.⁵¹

Turning to the two *vīthīs* by Rāmapāṇivāda, in the *prastāvanā* of the *Candrikā* the author mentions the features that would make it a *vīthī*:⁵²

⁴⁷ Going by the titles of the two plays, which refer to the respective female protagonists, their plots might have been those of the *nāṭikā*.

⁴⁸ For the text, see p. 23 of Coulson's edition, and for an English translation of the passage in question, see COULSON 1981: 321.

⁴⁹ In the introduction to his edition of the *Līlāvātī* Sugyan Kumar Mahanty, in addition to the *Bakulavīthī*, *Indulekhā* and *Mālatikā*, mentions a *Mādhavavīthikā* or *Mādhavivīthī*, a *Kāmadattā*, *Premābhirāma* and *Sītākalyāṇavīthī*, none of which have come down to us apart from the last one (MAHANTY 2020: 14–20). As to the *Sītākalyāṇa* by Veṅkappiah, it is Mahanty who identifies it as *vīthī*, not its eighteenth-century author. On pp. 52–53 Mahanty mentions a number of "modern" Sanskrit *vīthīs*.

⁵⁰ See TIEKEN 1997.

⁵¹ MAHANTY 2020: 19 provides a list of eight plays by the eighteenth-century author Veṅkappiah which, besides a *bhāna*, *ḍima*, *samavakāra*, *vīthī*, *prahasana* and *īhāmṛga*, includes an *utsṛṣṭikāṅka*, the *Rukmiṇīsvayamvara*.

⁵² The verse is quoted in RAJENDRAN 1985. In this connection I want to draw attention to NŚ 18, 115 (according to the Nepalese manuscript ḍ):

*trayoḍaśa sadāṅgāni vīthyām etāni yojayet
lakṣaṇam punar eteṣāṃ pravakṣyāmy anupūrvaśah.*

It seems to say that a *vīthī* (play) should always (*sadā*) contain the just mentioned thirteen members, that probably means "all the above thirteen members". This idea was taken up by MAHANTY 2020: 33–40, who with a fine dust comb went through the *Līlāvātī* trying to identify the *vīthyaṅgas* and claiming to have found examples of all thirteen of them. Apart from the fact that for *asatpralāpa*, "useless talk" (p. 10), Mahanty points to a passage consisting of

*pātradvayaprayojyā bhāṇavad ekāṅkikā dvisandhiś ca
ākāśabhāṣitavatī kṛtrimam itivṛttam āśritā vīthī.*

As to the plot (*itivṛtta*), it is of the playwright's own invention (*kṛtrima*), that is, it is not a story borrowed from epic mythology. The play is performed by two actors (*pātradvaya*). In the *Candrikā* and *Līlavatī* these two actors divide between them the roles of the king and *vidūṣaka*. However, to present the other characters of the story, like the queen and servant girls, recourse is taken to the *ākāśabhāṣita* device known in particular from the *bhāṇa*. Like the *bhāṇa* (*bhāṇavad*), the *vīthī* consists of one act (*ekāṅka*) and two *sandhis*, or successive developments that make up the plot. The specification of one act is found in *NŚ* 18, 112 and means that the play has a plot, uninterrupted by intervals of one or more days. The characterisation "two *sandhis*" is obvious taken from *NŚ* 19, 44–47, in which the ten major plays are divided into groups on the basis of the number of *sandhis* they contain, and the *vīthī* is put into one group along with the *prahasana*, *bhāṇa* and *utsṛṣṭikāṅka* (see above). The characterisation "two *sandhis*" looks tailored to plays, which, however short and simple, indeed consist of at least two *sandhis*, namely an opening and a *dénouement*. Admittedly, it is difficult to interpret *vīthī* scenes in this light, as they consist of brief utterances or equally brief exchanges. In this connection it must be noted, though, that two *sandhis* are the absolute minimum: a *sandhi* on its own, whether it is the *mukha*, *pratimukha*, *garbha*, *vimarśa* or *nirvaḥaṇa*, is meaningless, as each, except the last one, anticipates the following (the *mukha* the *pratimukha*, the *pratimukha* the *vimarśa*, etc.). Furthermore, even a short exchange or a riddle leads to a *dénouement* of sorts, producing laughter, some form of agreement or the *eureka* or *sphoṭa* feeling of having reached a solution.

It may well have been the case that the positioning in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of the *vīthī* side-by-side to the *prahasana* and *bhāṇa* and the fact that it consists of two *sandhis* and thus must have a plot of sorts has suggested the idea that beside the *vīthyāṅgas* there should have been a *vīthī* play, which, however, as far as we know, there is not. As with Vatsarāja earlier, for instance, with the *ḍima* and *vyāyoga*, the challenge was taken up by Rāmapāṇivāda, who also provided his own definition of such a play, by which definition he made the number of actors one of the most distinctive features.

The *daśarūpa* list in fact appears to be a heterogeneous collection of three groups of plays, the last one of which does not consist of plays but of minor scenes. Two of the three scenes in this group have been blown up to the size of complete plays and with the third type of scene this seems to have happened only very late. If the *vīthī* is exceptional in the *daśarūpa* list as a whole, it is less so in this third

"incoherent talk" (p. 35), I want to argue that one may find, if not all thirteen, at least quite a number of *vīthyāṅgas* in any classical Sanskrit play.

group where it follows the *prahasana* and *bhāṇa*. There is, therefore, no reason to assume that the *vīthī* is a later (misplaced) addition to the list. In any case, the same list with the *vīthī* as the tenth member is already found in Abhinavagupta's commentary (10th cent.), Dhanañjaya's *Daśarūpaka* (10th cent.) and Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* (11th cent.). In the dramatic tradition the inclusion and position of the *vīthī* in the list have apparently never been questioned. What is more, as minor dramatic scenes the *vīthī* has attracted another set of such scenes. In Ghosh's edition of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* the *daśarūpa* list does not end with the *vīthī* but is continued by the so-called *lāsyāṅgas*.⁵³ However, in contrast to the *vīthī*, the position of the *lāśya* (I use the singular here for a *lāsyāṅga* or the *lāsyāṅgas* to match the term *vīthī* for a *vīthyaṅga* or the *vīthyaṅgas*) in the list has proved to be less stable: in the Baroda edition it is found among the *sandhis* and related elements in the next chapter, in the *Daśarūpaka* it is treated as a subtype of the *bhāṇa*, and in the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* it is, as in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, dealt with side by side with the *sandhis*. Apart from the question of which of the two editions, Ghosh or Baroda, might present the more original situation, I want to deal with the question of how the *lāśya* came to be added to the *daśarūpa* list in the first place, and will try to show that it is linked to that other addition to the list, the *nāṭikā*: it is in this type of play that we come across the earliest examples of minor dramatic scenes like the *lāśya* and an even later arrival in the dramatic treatises, the *carcarī*.

5. The *lāśya*

The *Nāṭyaśāstra* distinguishes ten *lāsyāṅgas*, each of which deals with a particular erotic situation, for instance, a woman deserted by her lover or a woman who is frustrated after having failed to meet her lover.⁵⁴ A *lāśya* is performed by a single – female – actor and is accordingly said to have the appearance of a *bhāṇa* (*bhāṇākṛtīvad*, *NS* 19, 118ab).⁵⁵ An interesting example is the so-called *uktapratyukta lāśya*, which consists of a dialogue between an angry woman and a man trying to appease her and in which the female actor thus impersonates both characters.⁵⁶ The various erotic situations enacted in the *lāśyas* are treated in *NS* 19, 117–137. On the basis of these situations, which are said to be invented

⁵³ The *lāsyāṅgas* mentioned in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* are *geyapada*, *sthitapāṭhya*, *āsīna*, *puṣpagaṇḍikā*, *pracchedaka*, *trimūḍhaka*, *saindhavaka*, *dvimūḍhaka*, *uttamottamaka* and *uktapratyukta*. In the *Nāṭyaśāstra* to this list of ten are added an eleventh (*citrapada*) and twelfth (*bhāvika*).

⁵⁴ For a (French) translation of the passages in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and Abhinavagupta's commentary on these passages, see BANSAT-BOUDON 1992: 281–340.

⁵⁵ As indicated above, in the *Daśarūpaka* the *lāśya* is presented as a subtype of the *bhāṇa*.

⁵⁶ *NS* 19, 135:
kopaprasādajaniṭam sādhiḥṣepapadāśrayam
uktapratyuktam evaṃ syāc citragītārthayojitam.

by the author, the *lāsyā* is linked to the *prakaraṇa*.⁵⁷ As to the form or script of the play, the *lāsyā* consists of a string of independent stanzas in different metres, which besides *ṛtta* metres (e.g., the *śloka*) include a number of moric metres which are specifically associated with songs (e.g., the *śīrṣaka*, *narkuṭaka* and *khañjaka*).⁵⁸ The metres used in the *lāsyā* are dealt with in *NS* 31, 330–367. The texts of the songs, which are often distorted by the requirements of the *rāga* and *tāla*, are supported by meaningful dance movements (*karaṇa*).⁵⁹ For actual examples of how these descriptions might have worked out in practice we may turn to the 150 *kali* poems of the Tamil anthology *Kalittokai* (8th or 9th cent. at the earliest) and to Jayadeva’s *Gītagovinda* (12th cent.). Before proceeding it should be noted that in *Tolkāppiyam* 3, 56 the *Kalittokai* – and the *Paripāṭal*, about which more below – are both characterised as dramatic genres, and Jayadeva says that his *Gītagovinda* “is meant to be danced” (TIEKEN 2001b: 163–164). While, as I will show, they look very much like *lāsyās* as defined in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, it is difficult to make out if they are *lāsyās*, as there appears to have been a wide range of minor dramatic scenes of the *lāsyā* type. As far as the *kali* poems are concerned, there is positive evidence that they were traditionally taken to belong to these types (TIEKEN 2001b: 185–190). Thus, the so-called *kuravai* poems, which depict a festival scene and as such belong to the so-called *uparūpakas* (see below), have been included in the *Kalittokai* as poems 101–108. In doing so the compilers of the *Kalittokai* followed Bhoja, who misunderstood the definition of the *hallīsaka*, as the *kuravai* scene is called in the Sanskrit tradition, and did not include it in the category of *prekṣaṇas*, or “spectacles”, the scenes of which are set on the street and are performed by many actors. Instead, Bhoja included it in the category of *nartanakas*, which consisted of, among other dramatic scenes, the *lāsyā* (see below) and which are set on a stage and have only one (female) actor.

In *Kalittokai* 44, a typical *kali* poem, a girl addresses a boy on behalf of her friend. The boy is delaying his decision to approach the girl’s parents and ask them for her hand. In the first seven lines of the poem, the go-between describes a mountain slope watered by a waterfall coming down from the opposite mountain in order to try and convince the boy that he will flourish once he has brought the girl to his house.

After this scene the metrical pattern changes. We get three short stanzas in which the go-between describes to the boy how the girl stores away her grief about her lover’s wickedness deeply in her heart, which may be paraphrased as follows:

⁵⁷ *NS* 19, 118cd: *prakaraṇavad ūhyakāryāsaṃstavayuktaṃ vividhabhāvam*.

⁵⁸ The *geyapada lāsyā* features a woman, seated and singing (*gīyate*) a wordless (*śuṣka*) song (*NS* 19, 121). Note also *geya* in 19, 126, *gīta* in 19, 128 and 135, and *gāna* in 19, 126.

⁵⁹ Note in this connection *svyaktakaraṇānvitam* in *NS* 19, 131, “provided with expressive *karaṇas*, or dance positions”.

Even if her grief is great, my friend hides your lack of grace from me, for she is afraid that if I hear about it I will upbraid you in front of others.

Even if this great illness is overpowering her, my friend hides your lack of grace from the village, for she is afraid that if they hear about it the villagers will chase you away.

Even if she suffers from a deadly illness, my friend hides your lack of grace from her companions, for she is afraid that they will tell others about your lack in virtues.

These three stanzas are concluded by the short phrase “like this”, which underlines the status of the preceding stanzas as independent poems. The refrain and the instances of rhyme visible in the Tamil originals give the stanzas a clear song-like character. Next, the metrical pattern changes once more. What follows is a conclusion by the go-between, who again speaks directly to the boy:

Thinking of the terrible things such as these, which could happen to you, she protects you with such rare virtue. But let us go quickly to cure her from this suffering.

We find a similar variation between songs and narrative stanzas describing the setting in which the songs are sung in the *Gītagovinda*. The narrative stanzas which serve to introduce this text are in *vr̥tta* metres (e.g., *śārdūlavikr̥ḍita*), while the songs are in moric metres, accompanied by indications of *rāga* and *tāla*. There are, however, four ways in which the *Gītagovinda* poems deviate from the descriptions given in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* as well as from the *kali* poems. To begin with, the *Gītagovinda* is in Sanskrit, while the *lāśya*, in which the speaker is a woman, is in Prākṛit – it should be noted that the use of Tamil in the *kali* poems has the same function as that of a Prākṛit in Kāvya literature.⁶⁰ The *Gītagovinda* may be the outcome of a literary experiment introduced at the court of Jayadeva’s patron, the Bengali king Lakṣmaṇasena, where at least one other “translation” of a literary text into Sanskrit was made, namely Hāla’s *Sattasāi* into Govardhana’s *Āryasaptaśatī*.⁶¹ Secondly, while in the *kali* poems the number of songs may vary, in the *Gītagovinda* eight songs is the standard. Thirdly, the songs are concluded by a so-called *bhaṇitā*, in which Jayadeva is

⁶⁰ Prākṛit is explicitly mentioned in the case of, for instance, the *saindhava* in *NS* 19, 131cd: *prākṛitair vacanair yuktaṃ viduḥ saindhavakaṃ budhāḥ*. Tamil in classical Caṅkam poetry is occupying the very same slot as Prākṛit in Sanskrit Kāvya literature (TIEKEN 2001b and 2008).

⁶¹ See TIEKEN 2010: 70. Or, as KNUTSON 2014: 74 describes the process: “Sanskrit was made vernacular”. (I take the opportunity to note that Knutson should have read my book on Tamil Caṅkam poetry (TIEKEN 2001b) more carefully. He mixes up several of my findings when he writes on p. 81 that “Herman Tiekens has suggested, however, that the studied simplicity of the *Gītagovinda*’s songs hearkens unmistakably back to early Tamil poetry”). On Lakṣmaṇasena’s court poets, see PISCHEL 1893.

identified as the author of the songs.⁶² In connection with such *bhaṇitās* we find yet another elaboration of the *Gītagovinda* type, namely in Tamil Bhakti poetry. Like the songs in the *Gītagovinda*, the Bhakti poems, consisting of nine or ten songs, are followed by a *bhaṇitā* of sorts which identifies the singer-saint and the place or temple at which he sang the songs.⁶³ Fourthly, in the *Gītagovinda*, and the same applies to the Tamil Bhakti poems, the characters are no longer anonymous lovers but epic and purāṇic figures: Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and Śiva and Viṣṇu.

Unfortunately, the above Tamil and Sanskrit examples of *lāsyā*-like dramatic scenes are all relatively late.⁶⁴ In this connection it should be noted that it is doubtful if Bansat-Boudon's, and my own (TIEKEN 2001b: 152–195, 2009, and 2010), identification of the play within a play in Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra* (5th cent.?) as an example of a *lāsyā pur sang* holds good. In this play within a play, or a so-called *garbhāṅka*, with the performance of which the heroine of the main play, Mālavikā, is to prove her artistic superiority as well as that of her dance teachers.⁶⁵ The play seems to have consisted of at least four songs in Prākṛit, only one of which (the final, fourth?) was actually performed. It has been attributed to Śarmiṣṭhā (*śarmiṣṭhāyāḥ kṛti*), who appears to have a double function: Śarmiṣṭhā, a figure known from epic mythology, is not only the author of the text but also the singer of the songs, who, moreover, like Mālavikā had lived for some time disguised as a servant at the court of the king, who would have become her husband if everything had gone according

⁶² E.g.:

Poet Jayadeva sings
To describe Krishna's desolation.
When your heart feels his strong desire,
Hari will rise to favour you.
Wildflower-garlanded Krishna
Suffers in your desertion, friend.
(trans. MILLER 1977: 91)

⁶³ E.g.:

Ārūraṅ sang ten mellifluous Tamil verses
in perfect order
about the One who is in Ōṅakāntaṅṭaḷi,
who rides the one lovely bull.
(trans. SHULMAN 1990: 43)

⁶⁴ Forsongs with *bhaṇitās* in these seventeenth-century Newari play *Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānāṅka* or in Tamil plays performed at festivals, see TIEKEN 2010: 63–66.

⁶⁵ The term *garbhāṅka* is absent in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and appears only in later treatises on drama (see BANSAT-BOUDON 1992: 445, fn. 267). According to this author the Sanskrit term *nāṭyāyita* in *NŚ* 22, 48 would refer to a play within a play. As I have shown in my review of Bansat-Boudon's book, her interpretation of this stanza may have missed the point (TIEKEN 1998: 172–173).

to plan.⁶⁶ This is a typical motif of the *nāṭikā* type of play exemplified in the *Mālavikāgnimitra*. Mentioning the name Śarmiṣṭhā is thus the functional equivalent of the introductory stanzas in the *Kalittokai* or the summarising *bhaṇitās* in the *Gītagovinda* and Tamil Bhakti poetry. However, an important argument for Bansat-Boudon to identify the scene as a *lāsya* is based on the first line of the fifth stanza of the first act: *yat yat prayogaviṣaye bhāvīkam upadiśyate mayā tasyai*, “tout *bhāvika* dont je lui enseigne le jeu” (p. 442). According to her the word *bhāvika* would stand for the twelfth, supernumerary *lāsyaṅga* (*NS* 19, 137), in which a woman sees her lover in a dream. However, as I have shown elsewhere (TIEKEN 1998: 174), the phrase “whatever *bhāvika*” (*yat yat bhāvīkam*) does not refer to a specific scene. The line may instead be translated as “whatever I teach her in the matter of acting *bhāvas* (emotions)”. Furthermore, with a figure and a situation known from the epics the “plot” is not an invention by the author, which is one of the characteristics of the *lāsya* (see above, fn. 57). It is, however, something the *garbhāṅka* shares with the Tamil Bhakti poems and the *Gītagovinda*, which deal with the well-known mythology of well-known gods and are sung by presumably well-known poets and saints. Finally, it should be noted that the scene in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* is not explicitly identified as a *lāsya*. On page 4 a servant speaks about a *caliam ṇāma ṇaṭṭaam*, that is, “a short play called *Calia*” (SCHARPÉ 1956: 11 and 132 mentions the variants *calidaṃ* and *chaliṃ*). However, from *deva catuspadotthaṃ calitam udāharanti* (p. 31), “Sir, they mention a *calita* (vl. *chalikam*, SCHARPÉ 1956: 19), which consists of a *catuspadā* or of *catuspadās*, (as a fine example of their repertoire)”, it would seem that *c(h)ali(t)a* rather than the title is the name of the type of play. Interestingly, as the name of a type of play *chalita* is found in Daṇḍin’s *Kāvyaḍarśa* I 39 in an enumeration of minor dramatic scenes: “a *lāsya*, a *chalita*, a *śalyā*, etc”. In Bhoja’s *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* (pp. 723–724) the *chalita* lives on in the guise of *chalika*: *śamyālāsyaacchalikadvipadyādi*. The plays mentioned belong to the category of minor dance scenes (*nartanaka*) featuring one actress-cum-dancer (*nartakī*) performing on a stage (*sadasi*). Bhoja’s treatment of the *śalyā/śamyā* – he defined it twice, namely as a *chalika* and as a *lāsya* (RAGHAVAN 1963: 558–559) – shows that in his time this type of play was no longer known. However, what the list does show is that the *chalita/chalika* and *lāsya* would represent different types within a larger group. If the

⁶⁶ *Mālavikāgnimitra*, pp. 37–42:

*Ganadāsa (praviśya): deva śarmiṣṭhāyāḥ kṛtir layamadhyā catuspadā/ tasyās
caturvastunaḥ prayogam ekamanāḥ śrotum arhati devaḥ/*

.....

*Mālavikā/ upavahanam kṛtvā catuspadaṃ vastu gāyati/
dullaho pio tassiṃ bhava hiaa niraśam
amho apaṅgao me papphurai kiṃpi vāmo/
eso so ciradiṭṭho kahaṃ uvaṇaidavvo
ṇāha maṃ parāhīṇaṃ tui gaṇaya satīṇaṃ//
iti yathārasaṃ abhinayati/*

short scene in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* is indeed a specimen of a *chalita/chalika*, then it would be distinguished from the *lāsyā* by its epic heroine (*Śārmiṣṭhā*) and by its format, that is, consisting of a *catuspadā*.⁶⁷

If the *garbhāṅka* in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* is not an example of the *lāsyā*, it is the earliest example of a minor dramatic scene belonging to the same category as the *lāsyā*. It seems that we are dealing with a literary experiment, one which, moreover, appears to be typical of the *nāṭikā*, for in another play of this type, Harṣa's *Ratnāvalī* (7th cent.), we come across a unique example of a festival scene, called a *carcarī*, which belongs to the category of *uparūpakas*.

6. The *carcarī*

The *carcarī* scene consists of dancing and singing. In classical Sanskrit plays songs and dance are rare.⁶⁸ Another type of small-scale plays full of singing and dancing besides, for instance, the *lāsyas* are the *uparūpakas*. Bhoja in his *Śṅgāraprakāśa*, Chapter 11, pp. 721–725, distinguishes altogether twelve types of *uparūpakas* (RAGHAVAN 1963: 545–574).⁶⁹ These plays differ from the *lāsyas* by such things as their setting (festivals celebrated on the streets, in public places), the number of actors (crowds) and language (a Prākṛit going into the direction of Apabhraṃśa).⁷⁰ For dramatic texts in which the participants of festivals are put on the stage where they are speaking (joking and quarreling), singing and dancing, we have, once more, to turn to Tamil literature, namely to the *Paripāṭal* (8th or 9th cent. at the earliest).⁷¹ Because of its setting at festivals, one of the *uparūpakas*, the *carcarī*, has provided the Jainas with an ideal format for pious sermons and treatises dealing with their religious practices, which make up large parts of the early medieval Apabhraṃśa literature. In classical Sanskrit literature, however, we do not find stand-alone *uparūpakas* like the

⁶⁷ The *catuspadā* is dealt in a mere three verses in *NS* 31, 327–329, which are immediately followed by no fewer than 36 verses on the various metres of the *lāsyā* in 330–366. In 328ab the *catuspadā* is said to be performed by one, two or more (female) actors (*ekasyā vā bahūnām vā dvayor vātha prayojitam*). It is impossible to make out if in the *chalika* in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* other characters besides *Śārmiṣṭhā* are involved. According to Bhoja, however, the *nartanakas*, to which the *chalika* would belong, have only one actress-dancer (see above).

⁶⁸ On the *dhruvā* songs, which are part of the performance without being a regular part of the text or script of a play (except in Kālidāsa's *Vikramorvaśīya*), see TIEKEN (2008: 363–365). An example of a song is found in *Śakuntalā* Act 5, v. 104 (p. 183), which is *ākāśe gīyate* and is described by the king as a *rāgaparivāhiṇī gīti*. There are more, but their number is relatively small.

⁶⁹ The twelve types are *śrīgadita*, *durmilitā*, *prasthāna*, *kāvya*, *citrakāvya*, *bhāṇa*, *bhāṇikā*, *goṣṭhī*, *hallīsaka*, *rāsaka*, *nāṭyarāsaka* and *carcarī*.

⁷⁰ For a more detailed discussion of the *uparūpakas*, see TIEKEN 2001b: 174–190. For the Prākṛit/Apabhraṃśa of the *uparūpakas*, see TIEKEN 2001b: 180–182 and 2008: 356–361.

⁷¹ For the *Paripāṭal* poems as examples of *uparūpakas*, see TIEKEN 2001b: 170–190.

Paripāṭal poems but only descriptions of festivals in texts such as plays.⁷² An example is the *hallīsaka* scene in the Trivandrum play *Bālacarita* discussed by HARDY 1983: 80–85, which is not a play within a play but a description by one of the characters of the play of a *hallīsaka* festival (as indicated above, the same festival as the one in the *kuravai* poems in the Tamil *Kalittokai*) taking place offstage. Another example is Rājasekhara's *Karpūramañjarī* (IV 915–18), in which the king is invited to look at the preparations for the *vaṭasāvitrī* festival. What follows is a description in verse by the king's companion, the *vidūṣaka*, of the various dances performed by the festival crowd. The *Karpūramañjarī* dates from the tenth century and the *Bālacarita* cannot be earlier than the seventh (COUTURE 1994) and is most likely even considerably later (TIEKEN 1993 and 1997). The *carcarī* found in the first act of the *Ratnāvalī* by the seventh-century king-poet Harṣa is most likely the earliest example.⁷³ It starts off as a description of a festive crowd in the streets of the town, but when a servant girl enters singing a song sung by this crowd, the imaginary festival spills over into the main scene of the drama performed on stage.⁷⁴

7. The place of the *uparūpaka* and *lāsyā* in dramatic treatises

The *uparūpakas* are a late arrival in dramatic treatises. They are not found in the main text of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, but eight of them are mentioned in Abhinavagupta's commentary on *NS* 4, 268 (p. 179), admittedly with reference to earlier scholars (*tad uktaṃ cirantanaiḥ*). The earliest detailed descriptions of the *uparūpakas* are found only in the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* (Chapter 11, pp. 721–725), which, as indicated, mentions altogether twelve types, almost immediately after the *daśarūpa* list.⁷⁵

⁷² A detailed description of a festival, and the singing and dancing taking place at it, is found in, for instance, the *Harivaṃśa* (II, Appendix No 29D, 164–515). For a discussion of this passage, see TIEKEN 2001b: 174–175.

⁷³ The passage is discussed in detail in TIEKEN 2001b: 178–182.

⁷⁴ The song is a so-called *dvipadīkhaṇḍa*, consisting of two *āryās* followed by a *gīti*.

⁷⁵ The descriptions of the ten main type of plays run from the *nāṭaka* upto and including the *vīthī*, but omit the *nāṭikā*. This passage is concluded by the statement that these are the ten types recognized in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (*iti daśarūpakam etad bharatānusārato gaditam*, p. 720, l. 9). This is followed by descriptions of the *nāṭikā* and *saṭṭaka*, both subtypes, the former of the *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa*, and the *saṭṭaka* of the *nāṭikā*. It should be noted that in Chapter 11 only the general characteristics of the *vīthī* are mentioned: one act, one or two actors and thirteen scenes. Before that, a link has been established with the preceding *prahasana*, which is said to contain *vīthyaṅgas* (p. 720, l. 5: *udghātyakādibhir idam* (scil. *prahasanam*) *vīthyaṅgair miśritaṃ bhaven miśram*). However, the individual *vīthyaṅgas* are not treated here, but in the next chapter. After the *nāṭikā* and *saṭṭaka*, which is followed by some additional information of a general nature about the *nāṭaka* and *utsṛṣṭikāṅka*, come the twelve *uparūpakas* (pp. 721–725). Chapter 11 is concluded by a section on text types which lack any kind of acting, dancing or singing, like the *ākhyāyikā* and *upakhyāna* (pp. 725–727).

As we have seen, the *lāsyā* is dealt with in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, though the Baroda and Ghosh editions differ in which context it is discussed. Before going into this, I want to draw attention to *NS* 19, 117 (= Ghosh 20, 132):

anyānyapi lāsyavidhāv aṅgāni tu nāṭakopayogīni (v.l. nāṭake prayuktāni)
(t)asmād viniḥsṛtāni tu bhāṇa ivaikaprayogāni.

Both versions do not, or not yet, seem to acknowledge *lāsyas* as short stand-alone plays such as found in the poems in the Tamil *Kalittokai* anthology (if these poems are *lāsyas*). They speak of *lāsyas* as plays within a play⁷⁶ referred to as *nāṭaka*, the most inclusive type of play. According to the second line the *lāsyāṅgas* stand out (*viniḥsṛtāni*) in these plays by being performed as *bhāṇas*.⁷⁷ For Dhanañjaya, the author of the *Daśarūpaka*, this was a reason to accommodate the *lāsyā* in the *daśarūpa* list as a subcategory of the *bhāṇa*. In the Ghosh edition, however, the *lāsyā* is treated immediately after the *vīthī* from *NS* 20, 132 onwards and formally added to the ten members of the *daśarūpa* list: the passage is concluded with the words *iti daśarūpavidhānam sarvaṃ proktaṃ mayā hi lakṣaṇataḥ*, 20, 150ab. The situation in the Ghosh edition resembles that in Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*. By contrast, Chapter 18 of the Baroda edition ends with the last item of the list (*gaṇḍa*) and an announcement of the topics to be dealt with in the following chapter, namely the *sandhis* or building blocks of the plot (*NS* 18, 126cd): *punar asya śārīragataṃ sandhividhau lakṣaṇam vaksye*. These *sandhis* are the five *avasthās* (vv. 8–19), the five *arthaprakṛtis* (vv. 20–35), the five *sandhis* (vv. 36–49), the 64 *sandhyaṅgas* (vv. 49–104), the 21 *sandhyantarās* (vv. 107–109) and the five types of entr'actes, namely the *viṣkambhaka*, *cūlikā*, *praveśaka*, *aṅkāvatāra* and *aṅkamukha* (vv. 110–116). Then (vv. 117–137) follows the description of the *lāsyā* and its ten types, introduced as yet another type of *aṅga*, or scene, found in a classical play (*nāṭaka*; v. 117ab). After this the *Nāṭyaśāstra* returns to the *nāṭaka*, which among all the types of plays offers the most space for the *aṅgas* passed review in the chapter (19, 138–153). However, the *lāsyā* is the only scene that has not been assigned a fixed position in the story. To illustrate how this works for the other items, the 64 *sandhyaṅgas* may serve as an example. They consist of short utterances (e.g., *narma*, “joke”, *prārthanā*, “supplication”) or minor incidents (e.g., *toṭaka*, “quarrel”, *niṣedhana*, “opposition”), which are divided over the five *sandhis*, e.g., the first twelve are assigned to the *mukha sandhi* (vv. 57–58ab), the next thirteen to the *pratimukha sandhi* (vv. 58cd–61a) and so on. As to entr'actes,

⁷⁶ *anyāni* in *anyāni* [...] *aṅgāni* refers to the other *aṅgās* that precede; in the Baroda edition the *lāsyāṅgas* are preceded by the 64 *aṅgāni sandhiṣu* in *NS* 19, 57–104, in the Ghosh edition they are preceded by the *vīthyaṅgas*.

⁷⁷ *(t)asmād* refers back to *nāṭaka* in the first line. Compare the phrase *(t)asmād viniḥsṛtāni* (scil. *lāsyāṅgas*) with *ābhyām viniṣṣṛtaṃ hy etad daśarūpaṃ* in *NS* 18, 4 (quoted in fn. 20): “these ten types of plays are distinguished from each other by these (the *sandhis*)”.

found immediately before the *lāsyāṅgas*, they are all found between the acts into which the plot is divided and serve to introduce an act or else provide a smooth transition from one act to the other. At the same time, the size of these *lāsyāṅgas* shows a superficial resemblance to these entr'actes, which may have been why they were placed immediately after them. Even so, in the chapter as a whole they seem to fall out of tune.

It is difficult to decide which of the two versions of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is the more original one, Ghosh's or the one in the Baroda edition.⁷⁸ Possibly, placing the *lāsyā* among the *sandhis* was just a temporary measure and its move to a position after the *vīthī* a step taken on second thought. Whatever the case, this moving around of the *lāsyā* does show that we are most probably dealing with a later addition to the dramatic repertory. The same applies to the *uparūpakas*, which seem to have been added to the dramatic repertory even later. It is interesting to see that the earliest examples of such small-scale dramatic scenes are found inserted in *nāṭikās*, a type of play the status of which in the *daśarūpa* list is uncertain. It was as if it were smuggled into an existing list as a subtype of the *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa* in the same way in which the *lāsyā* was given a place in the *Daśarūpaka* as a subtype of the *bhāṇa*. It may therefore be asked if the *nāṭikā* and these minor dramatic scenes are related, in the sense that the latter have found a place in the dramatic theory through their occurrence in a new kind of play, the *nāṭikā*.⁷⁹

8. Concluding remarks

As I have tried to show, the *vīthī* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* does not refer to a complete play but consists of a set of short scenes. It forms an independent group among ten plays together with the *bhāṇa* and *prahasana*, which, however, besides being short scenes like the *vīthī*, have second lives as complete plays. If the inclusion of the *vīthī* as a collection of short scenes in the *daśarūpa* list is not self-evident, it has nevertheless never been questioned. The number "ten" was strictly adhered to, in particular at the cost of the *nāṭikā*. In the *Nāṭyaśāstra* this play was treated as just a subtype, namely of the *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa*, and in Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* it was together with the *saṭṭaka* placed after the

⁷⁸ The version of the Baroda edition is supported by Abhinavagupta's commentary from the tenth century; as indicated, the author of the *Daśarūpaka* incorporated the *lāsyā* as a subtype of the *bhāṇa* into the list of ten (*Daśarūpaka* 3, 51cd–53). Bhoja, in the eleventh century, placed the *lāsyā* among the *sandhis* in Chapter 12, as done in the Baroda edition, though he took the *vīthyāṅgas* with it, leaving "the" *vīthī* behind in Chapter 11. It would seem that between the tenth and eleventh centuries two parallel but different versions of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* circulated.

⁷⁹ As indicated above, in *NŚ* 19, 117 the *lāsyā* is presented as a play within a play of the *nāṭaka* type. Most probably, as the first in the *daśarūpa* list and the most inclusive type of play the *nāṭaka* seems to stand muster for the other types of plays in the list.

vīthī outside the *daśarūpa* list. It has been treated like the *lāśya*, which in one treatise is placed after the *vīthī* and in the other among the *sandhis*. The *lāśya* is one example of a larger category of short dramatic scenes mainly consisting of singing and dancing. This category includes the *chalika* and the so-called *uparūpakas*. The latter types of short dramatic scenes are demonstrably later additions to the dramatic theory. It may be asked if the way the *nāṭikā*, *lāśya* and *uparūpaka* are treated in the dramatic theory could indeed not be part of one and the same intervention in that theory. Or, as I have suggested, we may well be looking here at a new type of play, the *nāṭikā*, that had somehow found its way into the list, and that it might also have been through the occurrence of small-scale dramatic scenes in this new type of play that first the *lāśyas* and next the *uparūpakas* have come to be accommodated in the dramatic theory.

With or without the *nāṭikā*, the *daśarūpa* list is a curious compilation, in which at least three distinct groups may be distinguished. The first one is a collection of plays with plots borrowed from epic mythology (*nāṭaka*) and *purāṇic* history (*prakaraṇa*) respectively; and the third one seems in the first place to be a collection of scenes which had the potential of being expanded to the size of full-blown plays. Like the *nāṭaka* of the first group, the five plays that make up the second group have plots and characters borrowed from epic mythology. What is more, they have in common that they all deal with battle and its aftermath. What they also have in common, though, is that they seem to have fallen outside the range of the classical literary tradition; the examples we have are all late reconstructions on the basis of the summary definitions in the handbooks. This sets them completely apart from the plays of both the first and third group, which have survived and come down to us in the form of texts as part of the learned Kāvya literary tradition. All this raises interesting new questions that require further study, about, for instance, the milieu in which the battle plays were composed and performed, and who patronised their authors.

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