

section of the whole society including even hermits. The audience responded with smiles and nods and shouts of joy and prolonged cheers and presents of clothes in ecstatic hilarity. How they expressed their disapproval is not, however, known.

Although Bharata thus considers Siddhi as one of the principal factors in dramatic presentation - in fact as the most important factor, being the result aimed at - subsequent writers on dramaturgy seem to have practically ignored it. The reason seems to be the great emphasis that came to be placed on *rasa* as the central element in the drama to be delineated by the actors and enjoyed by the spectators and everything else being considered as the means to achieve this aim. The commentary of Abhinavagupta has, no doubt, served to highlight this aspect. Siddhi is the achievement of success and both human and divine factors contribute to it. The index of success is the satisfaction of the spectators and this satisfaction results from their enjoyment of aesthetic pleasure which we call *rasa*.

Abhinavagupta does not confuse *rasa* with *siddhi*, or for that matter anything else with any other. But Prof. S. S. Barlingay states that Abhinavagupta identified *rasa* with *siddhi* and in the post-Abhinavagupta era, *rasa* was identified with *ānanda* and since the concept of *ānanda* was very similar to that of *siddhi*, *rasa* was substituted for *siddhi*.³⁸ He further states that in certain arts like the staged drama the art object and the meaning of the art object can be clearly distinguished and Bharata did so and called the form of the art object *rasa* and located in the meaning concepts like *sthāyibhāva* and *siddhi*.³⁹ Although *siddhi* can be accommodated within the meaning of art, it is doubtful whether Bharata's own treatment of *rasa* will lend support to the view that it stands for the art object.⁴⁰

38. Vide 'Some concepts in Bharata's theory of Drama' in *Indian Aesthetics and Art Activity*, Indian Institute of Advanced study, Simla, 1968, p. 20.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

40. I propose to examine this in a separate paper.

THE TRANSVESTITE IN SANSKRIT STORY AND DRAMA

GEORGE T. ARTOLA

University of Toronto

By means of the expression *tṛtiyā prakṛtiḥ* 'the third nature' India has recognized the phenomenon of sexual deviation from an early historical period, as mirrored in such ancient texts as the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and the *Kāmasūtra*. Scholars, wishing to define *tṛtiyā prakṛtiḥ* in an effort to apply the phrase to the type of individual to whom it corresponds, have been unsuccessful primarily because they have been content to employ loosely such unscientific terms as 'darkness,' 'eunuch,' 'hermaphrodite,' and 'third sex'.¹ A better approach to a more accurate and acceptable definition of *tṛtiyā prakṛtiḥ* should involve direct reference to technical Sanskrit texts in which this expression is used in specific context and also to later Sanskrit literary works in which appear personages whose behavior indicates that they have appropriated, for one reason or another, the character to which is applicable the term *tṛtiyā prakṛtiḥ*.

Tṛtiyā prakṛtiḥ, according to *śāstra* and *kāvya* texts presently accessible, more obviously manifests itself as transvestism. The transvestite as a social being appears from time to time in Sanskrit story and drama. When we wish to interpret the rôle of the transvestite, we are obliged to ask ourselves: are we concerned here with a momentarily assumed transformation or are we witnessing the realistic portrayal of a sexual deviant? The object of this study is to answer this question on the basis of two kinds of Sanskrit texts: those in which the characteristics of the

1. Sukumar Sen ('darkness'), Richard Schmidt, T. Venkatacharya ('eunuch'), M. Ghosh ('hermaphrodite'), T. Venkatacharya ('third sex'); for specific references, see below.

transvestite are described in specific terms, and those in which the transvestite, as a literary personage, enacts a defined rôle.²

The first *sūtra* of the *aupariṣṭakaprakaraṇa* of Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra* (II, 9) informs us of the two types of those of 'the third nature': *dvidhā tṛtīyā prakṛtiḥ strirūpiṇi puruṣarūpiṇi* 'the third nature is of two types: (1) female and (2) male,' meaning (1) the male takes on the appearance of a female and (2) the female takes on the appearance of a male. The remaining *sūtras* of the section define more specifically the differences between the two types of sexual deviants and they elaborate exhaustively upon sex practices, mostly of the male homosexual (*napuṃsaka*, according to the commentary titled *Jayamaṅgalā*), which must have been current in the time of Vātsyāyana.³ In a discussion of the manner of walking on the stage, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Ghosh ed., XIII, 191b-192a) instructs the male assuming a female rôle as follows:

*striveṣabhāṣitair yuktaṃ prekṣitāprekṣitās tathā,
mṛdumundagatiś caiva pumān strībhāvam ācaret.*

The man, with a soft and slow walk, should affect the nature of a woman, with the dress and the speech of a woman and; likewise, looking (at permissible objects) and not looking (at prohibited objects).

The Sanskrit equivalents for 'transvestite' are: *strirūpiḥ*; *striveṣaḥ* and *mahilāveṣaḥ* (used as *bahuvrihi* compounds); *kumārīveṣadharaḥ* (masc.) and *kumāraveṣadhara* (fem.). Elsewhere in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* we come upon the word *varṣavara* which is used to denote a trusted member of the *antaḥpura*. 'He' is joined there by the company of other 'male' attendants, such as the *kañcukīya*, the *kārūka*, the *aupasthāyika* and the *nirmuṇḍa*, whose duties are to run errands for the women and to protect young maidens,

2. We are not concerned here with the folkloric motif 'change of sex' which has been admirably studied by W. Norman Brown, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, XLVII, 1927, 4-24.
3. The only reliable translation of the *Kāmasūtra* is that of Richard Schmidt, *Das Kāmasūtram des Vātsyāyana*, Leipzig, 1900 mostly in German with embarrassing parts in Latin.

according to these two verses of the Baroda text (vol. III, 1954, ch. XXIV, 68-69, in which *sā* refers to *tṛtīyā prakṛtiḥ*:

*sā tv antaḥpurasaṃcāre yojyā pārthivaveśmani,
kārukā kañcukiyāś ca tathā varṣavarāḥ punaḥ.
aupasthāyikanirmuṇḍa strīṇāṃ preṣaṇakarmani,
rakṣaṇaṃ ca kumārīṇāṃ bālikānāṃ prayojayet.*

The dictionary definition 'eunuch' is applied indiscriminately to *varṣavara* and to *nirmuṇḍa*, but this is far from satisfactory since 'eunuch' is more accurately applied to a male who has been castrated.⁴ The nature of each is explicitly stated in the *Bhāvaprakāśana* of Śāradātanaya; with reference to *varṣavaras* (Baroda ed., 1930, p. 192, lines 19-20):

*alpasattvāḥ strīsvabhāvāḥ klibā niṣkāminaḥ svataḥ,
jātyā vā kāmanirmuktās te tu varṣavarāḥ smṛtāḥ.*

The *varṣavaras* are said to be, either by birth or by their own volition, cowardly, effeminate, weak, inamorous and without (heterosexual) desire.

A similar description is found in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Baroda ed., 1954, vol. III, ch. XXIV, 71), on which Śāradātanaya must have based his verse. The traits mentioned in both texts do not necessarily indicate that the *varṣavaras* underwent castration and that the *varṣavaras* are to be considered eunuchs. Since we have two different manuscript readings, *varṣavara* and *varṣadhara*,⁵ it is suggested here that the former is a misreading of the latter, and moreover, that *varṣadhara* is either a misreading for *veṣadhara*, in the sense of a male who wears the dress of a female, a shortened

4. For the general reader, the most satisfactory analysis of the biological eunuch is contained in the note, "Indjan Eunuch," appended to the third volume of N. M. Penzer's editions (entitled *The Ocean of Story*) of C. H. Tawney's translation of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* of Somadeva, London, 1925, pp. 319-329. Terms for 'eunuch' in Sanskrit and methods of castration are given, the latter with several illustrations from contemporary practices, accompanied by a bibliography that aims at completeness.
5. The Baroda text prefers *varṣavara*, while Ghosh's Calcutta edition refers only to *varṣadhara*.

form of *kumāriveśadhara*, that is, a transvestite, or, less likely, it refers, as Ghosh intimates, to one who is able to hold back his sperm.⁶ From the description of the *nirmuṣṭas* which is given in the *Bhāvaprakāśana* (*loc. cit.*, p. 193, lines 11-12) we learn that they are truly eunuchs, for they are depicted *inter alia* as *vilup-tāṅgāḥ* 'having their sex organs removed'.

Kāmasūtra II, 9, 5 advises the male to act like a *veśyā* 'prostitute': *veśyāvaccaritaṃ prakāśayet*. How this may be accomplished has already been explained in the second *sūtra*, which states that he should recreate the dress (*veśam...anukurvita*) and also the conversation, the graceful gestures, the emotion, the softness, the timidity, the simplicity, the delicacy and the bashfulness of a woman. Note that in this enumeration *veśa* is the first item mentioned, showing that above all he is to become a transvestite.

For what purpose and under what circumstances should the male assume the rôle of a female, and the female that of a male? The *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Ghosh ed., XIII, 189b-190a) replies to this question in a reliable and broadly relevant way:

*vyājena sevyā vāpi tathā bhūyaś ca vañcanāt,
stri puṃsaḥ prakṛtiṃ kuryāt sribhāvaṃ puruṣo 'pi vā.*

A woman should take on the nature of a man or a man should take on the nature of a woman by way of disguise, for sexual intercourse and even more so, out of deception.

The key words *vyāja*, *vañcana* and *sevā* may serve us as captions under which we may examine the rôle of the transvestite in Sanskrit story and drama in order to reply to the question which we initially posed, namely, was transvestism in ancient India merely a fictional

6. It is not clear whether Ghosh's interpretation rests on a dictionary definition of the word or on his own knowledge of Indian sex practices. It is known that *coitus reservatus* was and still is performed by the Indian male, primarily for religious reasons, just as it must have been practiced in the art of courtly love in the middle ages of Europe. However, it has only been resorted to in heterosexual activity, and hence this characteristic of the *varśadhara* does not agree with the nature and actions of the sexual deviant described by Śaradatanaya.

motif or was it truly a realistic social phenomenon? In the case of the former query, we may be able to discover how often and for what aesthetic reason transvestism as a literary device was utilized by Indian poets and dramatists.

VYĀJA. At the beginning of the third act of the *Nāgānanda* of Harṣa the *viṣa* named Śekharaka appears on the stage intoxicated (*mattaḥ*) from drinking too much *surā* and he pines for his beloved Navamālikā: "What is Śekharaka without his Navamālikā?" At the same time Ātreya the *vidūṣaka*, sweetly smelling with perfumes and garlands as gifts from a wedding celebration, enters the scene and he is immediately attacked by a swarm of bees. He asks himself: "So what shall I do now in this predicament?" For his own safety he disguises himself: "I'll get away from them, having donned the dress of a woman, with these red garments and using the upper one as a veil." (*raktāṃśukayugaleṇa striveśaṃ vidhāyottariyakṛtāvagunṭhano gamiṣyāmi*). His disguise, however, is only partially successful, for he is perceived and pursued by the *viṣa* who in his impaired condition mistakes him for Navamālikā. The scene of the altercation which ensues is a veritable masterwork of comedy-farce, created by Harṣa to convey *hāsyarasa* to his audience.

In at least one instance the use of disguise in the *Viddhaśālabhañjikā* of Rājaśekhara is more serious. Since he does not have a male heir, Candravarman, *mahārāja* of Lāṭa (corresponding to present day Gujarat), disguises his daughter Mṛgāṅkavati as a young man so that she may gain easy entrance into the palace of Vidyādharamalla, *mahārāja* of Karpūravarṣa, her future spouse. She becomes thereby *kumāraveśadharā* and she is called Mṛgāṅkavarman.⁷ In order to keep Mṛgāṅkavarman in the *antaḥpura*, away

7. For an analogous situation of a princess as sole heiress whose father encourages her to dress and act as a man, witness the case of Christina, Queen of Sweden (reigned 1633-1654), whose story has been dramatized in French at least three times by Frédéric Soulié, Dumas 'the elder' and Brault; cf. C. B. Wicks, *The Parisian stage*, Part II, Univ. of Alabama Press, 1953, p. 15. A forthcoming motion picture on incidents in the life of the Swedish Queen will feature the Norwegian actress Liv Ullmann, recreating the rôle originally played by Greta Garbo. The

from the roaming eyes of her husband, the chief wife insists upon dressing 'him' as a girl, and it is in this disguise that she is brought to the attention of Vidyādharamalla. Another use of transvestism in the Viddhaśālabhañjikā will be discussed below under *vañcana*.

VAÑCANA. In a brief and very humorous scene of the second act of the Viddhaśālabhañjikā the *vidūṣaka* is made object of a prank by the chief wife of Vidyādharamalla. He is married to one of the *ceṣas* (male servants) of the palace, dressed as a bride (*kṛtavadhūṣiveśah*), and the two of them enact the wedding ceremony with its vows and ritual until the servant finally confesses his real identity, followed by an outburst of maledictions from the *vidūṣaka*. The 'substitute bride' motif is also employed by Bhavabhūti in his *Mālatīmādhava*. In order to deceive Nandana, the *pratināyaka*, and to forestall his marriage with Mālatī, the Buddhist nun Kāmandakī, the skillful *entremetteuse*, encourages Makaranda, Mādhava's dear friend, to masquerade as Mālatī and undergo a wedding ceremony without arousing the suspicion of Nandana. When the latter is repulsed by Makaranda, he becomes enraged and refuses to have anything to do with Mālatī, thereby freeing her to marry Mādhava.⁸ The deception and revelation are

disguise of a female in male attire was a favorite device in Spanish plays of the Siglo de Oro. In at least six plays of Tirso de Molina (1571-1648) the heroine masquerades as a male, often for comic effect as in *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* (Madrid, 1635), which was adapted in the 1960 film *The Golden Falcon*, with Naida Grey and Frank Latimore. In the eighteenth century Thai drama *Inao* (founded on a story in Middle Javanese), one of the heroines, Butsaba, who eventually marries Inao, is previously abducted by him and the two of them live in a forest, until one day she escapes in the guise of a young man and then travels through the country under the name Unakan, accompanied by a female servant; cf. P. Schweisguth, *Étude sur la littérature siamoise*, Paris 1951, p. 159.

8. Louis H. Gray (Journal of the American Oriental Society, XXVII, 1906 4-5) pointed out the parallel between the marriage of Cārāyaṇa, the *vidūṣaka* of Rājaśekhara's play, and that of Morose of the *Epicoene*, or *The Silent Woman* of Ben Jonson (1573-1637). However, there is a significant difference. The 'substitute bride' motif is used by Rājaśekhara,

adroitly spread over the end of the sixth act and the beginning of the seventh, maintaining thereby a high pitch of comic relief.

The hero who disguises himself as the heroine in order to defeat his own rival for her affections is instrumental in showing another aspect of *vañcana*, which we find well portrayed in the *Daśakumāracarita*, originally a brief episode in the extensive prose *mahākathā*, the *Avantisundarikathā* of Daṇḍin. Puṣpodbhava, one of the young *upanāyakas*, narrates his adventures, during the course of which he falls in love with Bālacandrikā, the sister of his friend Candrapāla, who is also loved by Dāruvarman, the *pratināyaka* of the story. Spreading a rumor that Bālacandrikā will marry the one who destroys the *yakṣa* which has possessed her, Puṣpodbhava dresses as Bālacandrikā ("Therefore I deftly affixed to the proper portions of my person the frippery appropriate to a pretty girl—gems, anklets, girdle, bracelets, armbands, earrings, necklaces, silks and powder—and made myself feel natural in a stunning frock, and with my darling called at the fellow's door").⁹ After they enter Dāruvarman's house, Puṣpodbhava takes advantage of the rumor and the occasion to kill his rival.

The use of deception to punish someone who is guilty of incompetence in the performance of his duties is somewhat out of the ordinary, to say the least. However, in Sanskrit comedies (*prahasanas*), functioning principally as social satires, we should expect to meet this kind of exaggerated situation, created by the comic poet to convey *hāsyarasa*. The first act of Harijivanamiśra's *Adbhutatarāṅga*¹⁰ satirizes *brāhmaṇas* and physicians of the royal court who are to be punished by their master because of their inefficiency and hypocrisy. The punishment that is decided upon,

as by Bhavabhūti, solely in a brief humorous episode, whereas in Jonson's comedy it is the theme around which the entire play revolves, for the "Silent Woman" is a noisy young man, trained and dressed in his rôle, who lures Morose into a mock marriage, performed by imposters, in order to assure a rich legacy for Morose's deserving nephew.

9. *The Ten Princes* (A. W. Ryder's translation), University of Chicago Press, 1927, p. 42.
10. For a study of Harijivanamiśra's comedies, cf. *Sanskrita Ranga Annual*, Madras, IV (1965), pp. 35-45.

after supposedly consulting the *smṛtis*, is not only ridiculous but also smutty. Since one of the *brāhmaṇas* cannot satisfy his wife sexually because he is suffering from piles, another *brāhmaṇa* is assigned to replace him in the bed-chamber, for this is his punishment decreed by the *mahārāja*. The royal physician, since he did not cure the *brāhmaṇa* of his malady, receives the same punishment. The wife is summoned, but it is the *vidūṣaka* named Jambhaka who presents himself, wearing her dress and ornaments. At this moment a third *brāhmaṇa* appears and he is known to have been the former lover of the wife. Immediately Jambhaka embraces him in a peculiar manner and of course he is astonished, although somehow he suspects that it is Jambhaka. He does not reveal this, for he is willing to go along with the deception. The physician and Jambhaka enter the bed-chamber, where the former discovers how he was really punished. The *mahārāja* suspects that this has happened, but to assure himself he summons Jambhaka. His doorkeeper does not move; he merely smiles and remains silent. It is then that the *mahārāja* realizes that an *adbhuta*, an amazing thing, has occurred.

SEVĀ. The careful guarding of the women's quarters whether attached to a royal palace or constructed as a portion of a private residence, was always very essential in order to keep out male intruders. The *Kāmasūtra* mentions various ways for the male to enter undetected the *antaḥpura*, one of which is the female disguise.¹¹ The purpose of the *nāyaka* in invading the *antaḥpura* is to remain with his beloved, having married her by the *gāndharva* rite. In other instances, the adulterous inclinations of a wife make her arrange for the entrance of her lover. The male in both cases becomes temporarily a transvestite, in order to engage in heterosexual activity (*sevā*).

The fifth *ucchvāsa* of the *Daśakumāracarita* narrates the adventures of Pramati, who has been transported miraculously to the royal palace where at first sight he falls in love with Princess Navamālikā. Equally miraculously he finds himself restored to his

11. Richard Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 373: *Gewöhnlich lassen die Frauen im Harem in Frauenkleider gehüllte Lebemänner mit den Dienerinnen eintreten.*

original site. In order to return to the presence of Navamālikā he uses the services of Pāñcālaśarman, who is to pretend to be a *brāhmaṇa* with a daughter (Pramati as *kumāriveśadharaḥ*) who is to be kept in the *antaḥpura* until the return of her suitor who has gone to Ujjayinī. The plan is successful; in Pramati's own words: "The fruition of my wishes followed according to schedule; and like a bee, I tasted the flower of my virgin jasmine."¹²

Throughout the pages of the *Śukasaptati* we get glimpses of adulterous wives who resort to all kinds of tricks in order to deceive their husbands. The tales which relate their escapades are actually fables, for their function is didactic in terms of the frame-story, and consequently the entire work is to be considered a *nidarśanakathā*. In the sixty-second fable we find a fascinating account of transvestism for the purpose of *sevā*. Since the fable is presently accessible only in Schmidt's German translation,¹³ a detailed summary would seem appropriate here.

In a village called Gambhīra a *rājaputra* named Kuhana had two wives, Śobhikā and Tejikā, of whom he was exceptionally jealous. Both were attractive and inclined toward adultery. In order to guard them well Kuhana had built a house outside the village near a river. One day his wives asked him to summon for them a coiffeur so that they might be pretty. The boorish husband obliged by calling Bhrāmaka the hairdresser and while the latter performed his task Kuhana watched them from the street. Having given Bhrāmaka a bracelet, the wives asked him to supply them with a lover, which he agreed to do. He had a young friend who, although he had neither beard nor moustache, was very potent sexually. Having dressed him as a woman (*striveṣaṃ kārayitvā*), he introduced him to Kuhana as his beloved, from whom he must separate while he works in another village. The *strirūpi* is entrusted to the care of Kuhana and will remain with his two wives.

12. A. W. Ryder's translation, p. 155.

13. *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, X (1893), pp. 180 ff. for Sanskrit text; German translation, Kiel, 1894, pp. 89 ff.

During the day he maintained his disguise, at night he became *kāmuka* (their lover). In time Kuhana became enamoured of "her" and announced that by order of the goddess he would start a great festival the following day, during which all three of them were to dance naked before the goddess. How did *strirūpi* manage to do this? With a piece of cloth he tied down his penis, bound it tightly and having drawn the image of a vagina on the cloth, he was able to dance naked. He sang a Prakrit verse whose meaning the *rājaputra* didn't understand; then his wives explained it: "The *rājaputra* will make love to another woman if and when the jockstrap breaks." Kuhana, ignorant of female nature, let the *strirūpi* remain in his house.

Up to now, in both drama and prose fiction, we have met only the feigned transvestite, portrayed either for comic relief or for expediency and assigned this role for a short period of time. Such disguises in literary texts are not exclusively restricted to Sanskrit literature as it reflected the social set-up of a particular era.¹⁴ The *Kāmasūtra*, however, suggests that a more enduring transvestite must have been a member of Indian society, albeit of the lowest strata. The character and actions of this social being may have inspired the fictional counterpart.

Where may we find a realistic picture of this type of transvestite? We must have recourse to the most sociological of Sanskrit social texts, the *bhāṣa* or satirical monologue. It is precisely in the *bhāṣa* entitled *Ubhayābhisārikā* that we see vividly depicted the character, actions and thoughts of the true transvestite. As the *viṭa* *Vaiśikācala* walks through the streets of *Pāṭaliputra* he meets friends and acquaintances whose sole preoccupation revolves around sex. He indicates generally that he is pleased to see them, and he is always willing to offer help and advice in all that relates to amorous affairs. However, there is one excep-

14. We find them also in Arabic literature, particularly in the *Alf Laila wa-Laila*, according to Louis H. Gray, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, XVIII. pp. 45-46.

tion: he sees *Sukumārikā*, a creature he wishes to avoid. As far as he is concerned, "she" is "Death on the High Street." His attempts to avoid "her" are in vain, for "she" runs after him. By way of greeting he uses what would ordinarily be a benediction; addressed to "her" it is but a caustic remark: My dear, may you never be a widow and may you have many sons" (*vāsu, avidhavā bahuputrā bhava*). He follows this with a verse describing "her" sexual allure, which has been well translated by Professor T. Venkatacharya:

The amorous play of women is excelled by your movements of the eyebrows, wanton glances, trembling lips, flourishes of the arms, pretty manner and playful smiles. Your buttocks are broad and spacious with their girdle exposed, disarranged, rolling and slipping down. O large-eyed one, from whose house are you coming, with your heart not satisfied with love-making?¹⁵

The emphasis, obviously, is on "her" physical attributes, but "her" entire behavior should be viewed in the light of *Kāmasūtra* II, 9, 2. *Sukumārikā* requests the assistance of the *viṭa* since "she is *mānini*, that is, "her" lover *Rāmasena*, brother-in-law of the *rāja*, has deserted "her" for *Ratilatikā*. The *viṭa*, offering to effect a reconciliation, blames *Rāmasena* for his error in preferring *Ratilatikā*, whereupon he proclaims, in a most sarcastic manner, the advantages of *Sukumārikā* over *Ratilatikā*:

Though tightly embraced, your breasts cause no obstruction to making love;¹⁶ the seasonal period does not destroy your passion every month, O fortunate one! You will have no embryo which would be the enemy of the fulfilment of the grace and beauty of fresh youth. If he

15. Vararuci, *Ubhayābhisārikā*, ed. by A. K. Warder and trans. by T. Venkatacharya, Sambamurthy, Madras, 1967, p. 70.

16. Professor Venkatacharya glosses this: they (the breasts) are undeveloped. Actually, they are non-existent, since we are not dealing here with a female before puberty but with a male. Missing this point results, unfortunately, in missing the humor and sarcasm of the verse.

abandons you who have such good qualities, then he:
abandons the festival of love.¹⁷

To Sukumārikā is aptly applied the term *tṛtiyā prakṛtiḥ*. Professor Venkatacharya has rightly rejected Sen's interpretation that the words mean 'darkness.'¹⁸ The Jayamaṅgalā is correct in glossing them as *napuṃsaka* 'not really a male,' but it is inaccurate to translate, in the context of the Ubhayābhisārikā, *napuṃsaka* as 'eunuch,' in view of what has been stated above with regard to the correct employment of this word. Neither in the verses nor in the prose text can we find any indication that Sukumārikā is a eunuch, and consequently Professor Venkatacharya's explanation is misleading and unsuitable. Sukumārikā is, frankly speaking, a male homosexual (*napuṃsaka*) who is also a transvestite (*strirūpi*).¹⁹

17. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

19. The description of the kind of sexual activity in which Rāmaṣena and Sukumārikā engage forms part of the subject matter of the *aupariṣṭaka-prakarāṇa*, and the pertinent *sūtras* have been translated into Latin by Schmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-210. The figure of the transvestite within the framework of the homosexual sub-culture of present-day America has been treated in motion pictures, for example in Frank Simon's remarkable and tasteful documentary *The Queen* (1968); this film and the Sanskrit texts we cited are significant as evidence of the historical span of transvestism from an ancient epoch in India to contemporary times in the Western World.

A NOTE ON SOME LĪLĀTILAKAM PROBLEMS

K. N. EZHUTHACHAN

Tirupati

The 14th century Malayalam grammar, *Lilātilakam* written in Sanskrit, has been edited and translated into Malayalam by a number of scholars. But even the most erudite and comprehensive commentaries have left out many problems unsolved. Some of them do not have the proper perspective. Some scholars do not seem to have been aware of the existence of the problems. They appear to accept the views of the author at their face value without questioning them or checking their sources. There are occasions when the author of the text has misunderstood and misrepresented facts either intentionally or unintentionally. Recent researches have thrown some welcome light on some of the problems, but still it seems that much has to be done in this line. There are textual problems also, for the work has been edited from a single original and the copies taken from it show the same mistakes everywhere. Concerted attempts of scholars may improve the position and succeed in placing in the hands of readers a better edition of the work with a more reliable translation. These remarks however, do not lessen in any way the importance of the available work which is invaluable in the study of medieval Malayalam. A few examples of the problems not yet discussed properly or fully understood are noted below.

The Maṇipravāḷa style

The author asserts that *maṇipravāḷa* is found in Malayalam or Keralabhāṣā only, but it has been proved beyond doubt that this system of writing, wherein the local language was freely mixed with Sanskrit with its inflected and uninflected forms, existed in the medieval times all over South India and was even known to the Kashmirian Abhinavagupta (11th cent. A.D.). While commenting on the *ardhasaṃskṛta* to be used in *dhruvā* song (Ch. 32. 409) he says :

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