

# AESTHETICS

## An Ocean of Emotion: Rasa and Religious Experience in Early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Thought

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Though according to established doctrine (*siddhānta*), there is no difference between the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the Lord of Śrī [Nārāyaṇa] and Kṛṣṇa, *rasa* reveals Kṛṣṇa to be superior. Such is the nature of *rasa*.<sup>1</sup>

That Kṛṣṇa, the charming youth who herds cows in Vṛndāvana, is none other than Nārāyaṇa, the omnipotent, majestic Lord of Śrī, the goddess of wealth, is accepted by all Vaiṣṇava schools. That he is superior is one of the central teachings of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the cornerstone of Caitanya Vaiṣṇava theology, but is also more contested in Vaiṣṇava circles. What exactly is the basis for such a claim?

In this verse from the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (“The ambrosial ocean of devotional *rasa*”), Rūpa Gosvāmī, the most influential theologian of the school, highlights one of the main characteristics of theological thought in the Caitanya tradition. Though reasoning and theology have their place and are indispensable for spiritual aspirants, it needs to make room for experience and emotions. Rūpa’s theology, while rigorously systematic and vigorously analysed, is attempting to provide the theoretical framework for a very subjective and experiential goal. Devotion (*bhakti*) is his central concern, and he analyses the dynamics of its emotions in great detail, borrowing extensively from Sanskrit aesthetic theories. But for Rūpa, and indeed for the Caitanya tradition, devotion is more than an emotion. It is a state of being that translates into action, and leads to a state of divine absorption in which God alone can be fully known.

As the above verse highlights, the Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas teach a “polymorphic monotheism,” to borrow a term from Julius Lipner.<sup>2</sup> God manifests himself in various forms, “like a thousand rivers flowing from a lake” according to the *Bhāgavata*.<sup>3</sup> He is Brahman, the ground of all being, and interacts with his creation as the inner controller, the Supreme Self (*paramātmā*). He is Bhagavān, the personal, divinely embodied deity, and assumes various forms as he wills. These are all elaborately

<sup>1</sup> *Siddhāntatas tv abhede 'pi śrīṣa-kṛṣṇa-svarūpayoḥ, rasenoṭkṛṣyate kṛṣṇa-rūpam eṣā rasa-sthītiḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.59).

<sup>2</sup> Julius Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (Abingdon, 2010), p. 312.

<sup>3</sup> *Bhāgavata* 1.3.26.

described in the tradition's theological writings and its sacred texts. These texts are the primary source of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) about the nature of God, as they deliver us its established doctrine (*siddhānta*). But Rūpa emphasizes that these many forms of God are established not merely through rational deliberation and scriptural study, but above all through the experience generated by spiritual practice. As he writes in the *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* ("The concise essence of the *Bhāgavata*"), a work almost entirely devoted to the nature of God:

In the Lord exist numerous forms, which manifest to their worshippers in accordance with their worship (*upāsana*). Just as a object like milk always possesses attributes like colour and taste, and this single object is perceived [differently] by the various faculties—it is white to the eyes, sweet to the tongue—so the Supreme Lord, though one, is perceived variously by [different forms of] worship. Just as only the tongue can perceive its sweetness, and no other [faculty], and just as the eyes and the other senses grasp [only] their own object, so do all other forms of worship that depend on the external senses [only perceive part of God's attributes]. But devotion, which rests in consciousness, can perceive all these objects.<sup>4</sup>

Though one can catch a glimpse of God's nature by a variety of ways, only through devotion (*bhakti*), which, as we will see later, he defines as a total dedication of oneself and all one's faculties to God, can God be understood in his completeness, as a personal deity with infinite attributes. But even among those who have experienced God through devotion, there are differences of opinion—is Nārāyaṇa the fullest embodiment of God, as many Vaiṣṇavas from Southern India argued, or is Kṛṣṇa that, as Caitanya's followers declared?

According to Rūpa, this is not something that can be established through theology, but only through *rasa*. *Rasa*, literally "sap" or "essence," is a concept borrowed from Sanskrit aesthetics and literary theory surrounded by a very complex history of interpretation, but for Rūpa it signifies the culmination of devotional emotions, the state of bliss in which God is "tasted," "the most exalted form of Love (*prema*)" as Jīva Gosvāmī glosses it in his commentary on this verse.<sup>5</sup> This experience alone is the ground for establishing Kṛṣṇa's superiority. In other words, though devotion itself can help to reaffirm what theology (*siddhānta*) teaches regarding the personal nature of God, it reaches beyond theology in its highest states. It is thus the experience of the saints "whose minds are captured by Govinda, and who cannot be distracted even by the grace of the Lord of Śrī"<sup>6</sup> which establishes the supremacy of Kṛṣṇa.

Rūpa warns his readers that both the nature of God and the nature of devotion cannot be assessed by logic. In the beginning of the *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* he states his position unambiguously:

<sup>4</sup> *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.200–204.

<sup>5</sup> *Sarvoṅkṛṣṭa-prema-maya-raseny arthaḥ* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.59).

<sup>6</sup> *Tatrāpy ekāntinām śreṣṭhā govinda-hṛta-mānasāḥ, yeṣāṃ śrīśa-prasādo'pi mano hartuṃ na śaknuyāt* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.58).

I have rejected the obstinate devotion to the vast field of logic, and accept here only testimony, because it is the principle means of acquiring correct knowledge, since the sages have accepted the validity only of testimony, by referring to the rule “because scripture is the womb [of Brahman]” [*Brahma-sūtra* 1.1.3]. Moreover, by referring to the rule “logic is inconclusive” [*Brahma-sūtra* 2.1.11] they have clearly shown their disregard for logic.<sup>7</sup>

God’s nature cannot be ascertained in debates of doubting philosophers, because God’s nature is inconceivable (*acintya*),<sup>8</sup> and “things that are inconceivable should not be ascertained through logic.”<sup>9</sup> That is why logic is inconclusive, and why revelation is the most reliable means of obtaining knowledge of God, “whose might and majesty are inscrutable.”<sup>10</sup>

As God’s nature is inconceivable, so is devotion to him. Though love for God seems to function like any worldly emotion,<sup>11</sup> it is unlike any of these, because “by its connection with Kṛṣṇa it consists of dense bliss that is beyond the attributes of this world.”<sup>12</sup> Rūpa emphasizes that such divine love “consists of the special pure existence (*śuddha-sattva*)”<sup>13</sup> that is God’s own nature.<sup>14</sup> It is therefore not of this world, but rather a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa’s own potency in the heart of the devotee. As Rūpa writes, “the essence of the emotion called love is the play of [Kṛṣṇa’s] great potency, and its nature is inconceivable (*acintya*). Therefore, it can never be invalidated by logic.”<sup>15</sup> This “great potency” is Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure potency (*hlādinī śakti*),<sup>16</sup> by which he experiences the bliss of his own nature and causes others to experience that bliss.<sup>17</sup>

Trying to comprehend devotion through reasoning will therefore only lead to failure. Those who have no inclination for devotion to Kṛṣṇa—like “those burnt by superficial renunciation, those who possess dry knowledge, logicians, and especially

<sup>7</sup> *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.1.7–9.

<sup>8</sup> *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.109–110.

<sup>9</sup> *Acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāṃs tarkeṇa yojayet* (cited in *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.111 and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.93).

<sup>10</sup> *Bhagavān acintyaisvarya-vaibhavaḥ* (*Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.386).

<sup>11</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.76 and 2.4.199.

<sup>12</sup> *Kṛṣṇānvayād guṇātīta-prauḍhānanda-mayā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.75).

<sup>13</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1, 2.5.3, and 2.5.42.

<sup>14</sup> Jīva discusses the nature of *śuddha-sattva* at some length in *Bhagavat-sandarbha* 10.

<sup>15</sup> *Mahā-śakti-vilāsātmā bhāvo ’cintya-svarūpa-bhāk, raty-ākhyā ity ayaṃ yukto na hi tarkeṇa bādhitum* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.92).

<sup>16</sup> See Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1, 2.5.92, and 2.5.112. Rūpa does not refer explicitly to the *hlādinī śakti* in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, but does so in the *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, where he calls it “the great potency” and “the best of all potencies” (*hlādinī yā mahā-śaktiḥ sarva-śakti-varīyasī ...*, *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* 4.6). See also *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* 14.176 and 14.219, *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.242, and *Bhakti-sandarbha* 142.

<sup>17</sup> *yayā khalu bhagavān svarūpānandam anubhavati [...] yayaivaṃ taṃ tam ānandam anyān apy anubhāvayati* (*Pṛīti-sandarbha* 65).

Mīmāṃsakas<sup>18</sup>—will never understand the truth of devotion, but those who have even a little taste (*ruci*) for it will grasp it.<sup>19</sup> “The *rasa* of the Lord is utterly incomprehensible for those who are not devotees”; he explains “it can be continually relished only by those devotees for whom the Lord’s lotus feet are everything.”<sup>20</sup>

The Caitanya Vaiṣṇava tradition is perhaps best known for its intricate theology of emotions and devotional *rasa* (*bhakti-rasa*). In this chapter, I give a concise overview of early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava ideas on devotion, focussing on Rūpa’s *rasa* theory, as presented in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Though, as we will see, other early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava authors have developed theories of *rasa*—Kavikarṇapūra being the most prominent one—Rūpa’s has been the most influential, as it is the most systematic and most comprehensive theory.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the ideas of all these early devotees of Caitanya are significant, not just for their insight into the nature of religious experience and the role of emotions in spiritual practice, but also for their novel application of Sanskrit literary theory to devotion. The concept of *rasa* as understood by these theologians originated in the world of dramaturgy and literary criticism. Therefore, before we take a closer look at the *rasa* theories of Rūpa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīnātha Cakravartī, and Kavikarṇapūra, we will first need some background knowledge in Sanskrit literary theory.

### Rasa before Rūpa Gosvāmī

The concept of *rasa* is first articulated in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* (“A Treatise on Drama”) of Bharata, a very influential text on dramaturgy probably written in the first half of the first millennium AD. Bharata’s text analyses all aspects of drama, from plot development to costuming, acting, and dance, but no concept is more important in his dramaturgy than that of *rasa*. “Without *rasa*,” Bharata declares, “no significance arises.”<sup>22</sup>

So what is *rasa*? The word literally means “sap” as well as “taste” but has a very specific meaning in Bharata’s thought. According to Bharata, emotions are central to drama. The performance of the drama’s narrative through acting, words, costuming, music, and dance leads to a single goal: to properly depict and develop the emotions of the play’s protagonists. Bharata singles out eight emotions that

<sup>18</sup> *Phalgu-vairāgya-nirdagdāh śuṣka-jñānās ca haitukāḥ, mīmāṃsakā viśeṣeṇa bhaktiāsvāda-bahirmukhāḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.129).

<sup>19</sup> *Svalpāpi rucir eva syād bhakti-tattvāvabodhikā, yuktis tu kevalā naiva yad asyā apratiṣṭhatā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.45).

<sup>20</sup> *Sarvathaiḥ durūho ’yam abhaktair bhagavad-rasaḥ, tat-pādāmbuja-sarvasvair bhaktair evānurasyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.131).

<sup>21</sup> Rūpa’s own position within the tradition undoubtedly also played a role in this. For more on this, see Rembert Lutjeharms, “Rūpa Gosvāmī,” *Brill Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, vol. 4 (Leiden, 2012), pp. 386–7.

<sup>22</sup> *Na hi rasād ṛte kaścid arthaḥ pravartate* (*Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.34).

can be staged and be the subject of an entire play: amorous love, anger, courage, disgust, mirth, sorrow, wonder, and fear. These he calls the “lasting” or “dominant emotions” (*sthāyi-bhāva*). In order to realistically stage these emotions, first of all the proper causes of these emotions need to be present, which he calls the “excitants” (*vibhāva*). Later authors analyse these as being twofold: the “foundational” or “primary excitants” (*ālambana-vibhāva*), which are the object of the dominant emotion, such as the beloved, and the “stimulating excitants” (*uddīpana-vibhāva*), which are the factors that enhance the dominant emotion, such as the scenery, and therefore act as secondary causes. The actors also need to depict the characters’ appropriate responses to those emotions. These Bharata calls the “ensuants” (*anubhāva*), which are the physical or verbal actions that are caused by the dominant emotion, and indicate it. (Bharata also distinguishes a special type of ensuants, called *sāttvikas*, which are involuntary reactions, such as crying or fainting.) Finally, the dominant emotion needs to be properly developed with secondary emotions that support the dominant emotion. These he calls the “transient emotions” (*vyabhicāri-bhāva* or *sañcāri-bhāva*), and numbers 33. They are such emotions as suspicion, joy, anxiety, fortitude, and envy.

When properly nurtured, by depicting its causes and effects and by developing the dominant emotion with appropriate supportive emotions, these eight emotions become more delectable and attain the state of *rasa*. “*Rasa*,” he explains, “is manifested by the combination of the excitants (*vibhāva*), ensuants (*anubhāva*), and transient emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*).”<sup>23</sup> Thus love (*rati*) becomes the amorous *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*), anger (*krodha*) becomes the furious (*raudra-rasa*), courage (*utsāha-rasa*) the heroic (*vīra*), disgust (*jugupsā*) the horrific (*bībhatsa-rasa*), humor (*hāsa*) the comic (*hāsyā-rasa*), sorrow (*śoka*) the compassionate (*karuṇa-rasa*), wonder (*vismaya*) the marvellous (*adbhuta-rasa*), and fear (*bhaya*) the fearful *rasa* (*bhayānaka-rasa*).<sup>24</sup>

Bharata compares the different constituents that lead to a specific *rasa* to different spices and condiments that create the particular flavor or taste (*rasa*) of a dish. Though this flavor is inherent in the food itself, it can be tasted, and similarly the *rasas* produced in the drama through the above-mentioned components can be mentally “tasted” by the learned.<sup>25</sup> What is thus experienced, he says is called *rasa* (“taste”), “because it is tasted.”<sup>26</sup>

Though Bharata’s ideas are foundational for all later authors on *rasa*, not all agree on what *rasa* precisely is. Perhaps due to Bharata’s brevity and ambiguity, his ideas have been applied in two distinct ways. The oldest authors focus on the literary work and its production. They were primarily concerned with the development of the emotions of the protagonists, and taught that the principal emotions of the characters could be intensified through the narrative of the literary

<sup>23</sup> *Vibhāvānubhāva-vyabhicāri-saṃyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ* (*Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.34).

<sup>24</sup> *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.15.

<sup>25</sup> *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.31–33.

<sup>26</sup> *Rasa iti kaḥ padārthaḥ. Ucyate—āsvādyatvāt* (*Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.32).

work, by describing the appropriate circumstances that cause and enhance their emotions (*vibhāva*), their responses to those emotions (*anubhāva*), and developing the dominant emotion through suitable supportive emotional states (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*). This heightened state of the characters' dominant emotion they called *rasa*.

Around the end of the first millennium occurred a major shift in Sanskrit literary theory: authors on dramaturgy and poetics were no longer interested primarily in the literary work itself and the conditions that lead to its production, but rather to the reception of the literary work and the way the audience responds to it. Bharata's *rasa* theory was also central to this new approach, as it became the tool to explain way the audience reacts the way it does to a play or poem—why does literature affect us so?

Sheldon Pollock succinctly summarizes these two approaches as follows:

[A]s an affective phenomenon the text can be analyzed from the inside—how are the various components organized that are necessary to provide a rich representation of human emotions?—or from the outside—how is it that readers do in fact respond to such representations?<sup>27</sup>

The use of Bharata's *rasa* theory as a tool to explain and analyse the way a literary work contains emotion and realistically describes the emotional lives of its characters is most fully developed by Bhoja (eleventh century), a prolific author and a very influential literary theorist.<sup>28</sup> In his two works on poetics, the *Sarasvatī-kanṭhābharaṇa* ("A Necklace for Sarasvatī") and the voluminous *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* ("A Light on Passion"), Bhoja builds a very complex *rasa* theory, that had a profound influence on early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava authors.<sup>29</sup>

Bhoja analyses *rasa* in three stages. *Rasa* is dependent on a particular state of mind, without which it can not arise. This "particular quality of the ego (*ahamkāra*),"<sup>30</sup> is "the sense of self (*abhimāna*) that causes the experience of being

<sup>27</sup> Sheldon Pollock, "Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* and the Problem of *Rasa*: A Historical Introduction and Annotated Translation," *Asiatische Studien*, 52/1 (1998): p. 121.

<sup>28</sup> The best introduction to Bhoja's *rasa* theory is Pollock, "Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* and the Problem of *Rasa*." For a very thorough treatment of Bhoja's entire poetic system, see V. Raghavan, *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa* (Madras, 1978).

<sup>29</sup> See Rūpa's *Ujvala-nīlamanī* 15.3 and 15.102, Jīva's *Prīti-sandarbhā* 110 and his commentary on *Ujvala-nīlamanī* 15.185–187, Śrīnātha's *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.8, and Kavikarnapūra's *Alaṅkāra-kaustubha* 5.5. As we will see, Bhoja's influence on these authors extends well beyond these scattered references. See also Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, "Bhoja's *Rasa*-ideology and its Influence on Bengal *Rasa-śāstra*," *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, 13/2 (1963): pp. 106–19.

<sup>30</sup> *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.3.

conscious of pleasure and the like to be agreeable to the mind.”<sup>31</sup> This quality he also calls passion (*śṛṅgāra*) or Love (*prema*),<sup>32</sup> because “the fullest development of all emotions, like love (*rati*), amount to nothing but this—one is said to be ‘fond of love’, ‘fond of fighting’, ‘fond of anger’, ‘fond of joking’, and so on.”<sup>33</sup> This passion “alone causes the appearance and development of all the states of the self,”<sup>34</sup> and only when a person possess this can all the emotions Bharata speaks of become manifest. This quality can be called *rasa*, Bhoja argues, “because it is the potential of tasting.”<sup>35</sup>

When the cause of particular emotion is present that passion is, in a sense, activated, and leads to a particular expression of the emotion that is awakened by that cause. Bhoja writes:

Just as by the proximity of the moon a moon-stone becomes wet, just as by the proximity of the sun the sun-crystal burns, just as by the proximity of camphor a crystal dissolves, in the same way all the emotions, like love, anger and grief, arise from the mind which has this sense of self (*abhimāna*), qualified by the perception and senses whose form has changed by the proper primary excitants (*ālambana-vibhāva*) into that [object of his emotion].<sup>36</sup>

For example, a person sees his beloved (the primary excitant or *ālambana-vibhāva*) or something that reminds him of his beloved (a secondary excitant or *uddīpana-vibhāva*), which turns his passion, that specific sense of self (*abhimāna*), into love (*rati*, one of Bharata’s dominant emotions or *sthāyi-bhāvas*), and will lead him to act in a way proper to the occasion (the ensuants or *anubhāvas*). The emotion thus awakened is then mixed with and nourished by temporary emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāvas*) appropriate to the particular context, such as joy or recollection. The emotion is thereby intensified and raised to the state of *rasa*.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Aprātikulikatayā manaso mudāder yaḥ saṃvido ’nubhavahetur ihābhimānaḥ (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa 1.8).*

<sup>32</sup> See *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharāṇa 5.1, Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 662.*

<sup>33</sup> *Rasaṃ tv iha premāṇam evāmananti, sarveṣāṃ eva hi raty-ādi-prakarṣāṇāṃ rati-priyo raṇa-priyo ’marṣa-priyaḥ parihāsa-priya iti premṇy eva paryavasānāt (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 663).*

<sup>34</sup> *Sarvātma-sampad-udayātīśayaika-hetuḥ (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa 1.4).*

<sup>35</sup> *Tasyātma-śakti-rasaṇīyatayā rasatvam (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa 1.3).*

<sup>36</sup> *Yathendu-samidher gaṇḍakāḥ syandate, yathārka-sannidhes sūrya-kānto jvalati, yathā karpūra-sannidheḥ sphaṭiko vilīyate, tathā tebhyaḥ tebhya ālambana-vibhāvebhyas tad-ākāra-pariṇatendriya-buddhy-upādhi-yogino ’bhimāni-manasas te te rati-krodha-śokādayo bhāvāḥ samutpadyante (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 687).* As the following verses clarify, the three analogies given here correspond to the three dominant emotions love (moonstone), anger (sun-crystal), and grief (crystal).

<sup>37</sup> *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 678.*

Though this resembles to a large extent Bharata's understanding of the dynamics of *rasa*, this is not the end of the *rasa* cycle according to Bhoja, because the multiple *rasas* that manifest are called such only in a secondary sense.<sup>38</sup> Such an emotion, even in its most fully developed form, "is experienced in the mind through contemplation (*bhāvanā*)," but "that which transcends the plane of contemplation and, transformed, is fully relished in the heart that is endowed with ego, is *rasa*."<sup>39</sup> At this stage, all the emotional components that helped to heighten the dominant emotion are absorbed in the *rasa* of Love (*prema*) and enhance it with their unique flavour.<sup>40</sup> Therefore Bhoja argues that "there are not many *rasas*; *rasa* is only singular, which is passion (*śṛṅgāra*)."<sup>41</sup> The eight *rasas* that Bharata describes are merely heightened forms of emotion (*bhāva*) that have not yet transcended thought; Bhoja only calls them *rasas* to conform to popular convention.<sup>42</sup>

Thus the whole *rasa* experience comprises three stages. In the first stage *rasa* exists only in its potential. It is singular and a particular aspect of consciousness that manifests as ego (*ahaṅkāra*), passion (*śṛṅgāra*), and a specific self-understanding (*abhimāna*). From this mental state, triggered by the presence of their proper excitants, the dominant emotions arise and reach their climax in their corresponding *rasa* experience. This is the second stage. Finally, the diversity of the various emotions that arose in the second stage coalesce again into a homogeneous, single *rasa* experience. Though the heightened emotions that develop in the second stage are sometimes called *rasas*, only this final stage, in which *rasa* is single, is really *rasa* for Bhoja, "because that is what is [actually] tasted."<sup>43</sup>

It is important to keep in mind that Bhoja's analysis of *rasa* is not just a theory of emotions, but a theory on how poets develop and depict the emotions of the characters in his literary work. Bhoja frames this analysis of *rasa* in a discussion on "expressions of *rasa*" (*rasokti*), in which the characters of the literary work express their own emotions,<sup>44</sup> and writes that the poet should develop the emotions of the poem or play's protagonists in such a way that they reach the level of *rasa*, whereas the feelings of the supporting characters should remain in the form of an emotion (*bhāva*).<sup>45</sup> In other words, Bhoja's interest is in the literary work itself and

<sup>38</sup> *Sa tu pāramparyeṇa sukha-hetutvāt ratyādi-bhūmasūpacāreṇa vyavahriyate (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 664).*

<sup>39</sup> *Yo bhāvvyate mānasi bhāvanayā sa bhāvah. Yo bhāvanāpathamatīya vivartamānah, sāhaṅkṛtau hr̥di paraṃ svadate raso 'sau (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa 1.10).*

<sup>40</sup> *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 690, Sarasvatī-kaṅthābharāṇa p. 613.*

<sup>41</sup> *Na hi bahavo rasāḥ, api tu eka eva śṛṅgāro rasah (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 684). See also Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa 1.6–12.*

<sup>42</sup> *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa 1.7.*

<sup>43</sup> *Āmnāsiṣur daśa rasān sudhiyo, vyaṃ tu śṛṅgāram eva rasanāt rasam āmanāmah (Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 4).*

<sup>44</sup> See *Sarasvatī-kaṅthābharāṇa 5.8, Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa pp. 678ff. and Pollock, "Bhoja's Śṛṅgāraprakāśa," p. 169.*

<sup>45</sup> *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa p. 665.*



the conditions that lead to its production, and uses the theory of *rasa* to explain how a poet can represent the fullness of human emotions in a literary work.<sup>46</sup>

Bhoja's approach is very different from that of the majority of authors writing after the eleventh century. In the second millennium the theory of *rasa* was increasingly used not to explain how emotions can be contained in literature, but rather how literature can lead to an emotional response in its audience. Why is it that we are moved to tears by a tragedy? And why do we enjoy that? Bhoja has little to say about the audience, but the audience's response becomes the main issue of many later authors on *rasa*. It is important to keep in mind, though, that these later authors start with very different assumptions, and have therefore a fundamentally different understanding of Bharata's ideas.

One of these later authors is Viśvanātha Kavirāja, an Oriyan author from the fourteenth century. Though Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* ("The mirror of literature")<sup>47</sup> is not one of the most influential works in the history of Sanskrit literary theory, it was very important to early Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas, who relied on it extensively to develop, and defend, their ideas of devotional *rasa*.<sup>48</sup>

The idea that the characters can experience *rasa*, as Bhoja and the earlier authors argued, does not make sense to Viśvanātha. *Rasa* is not just a more intense form of the dominant emotion, but a "transformation into another form, like [milk into] yoghurt."<sup>49</sup> Though it bears some resemblances to the emotions of the character, *rasa* is different from those emotions. It consists of uninterrupted and self-luminous consciousness and bliss, whose essence is "otherworldly wonder

<sup>46</sup> Bhoja does not discuss the role of the poet in this at great length, but does write that the emotional content of the literary work is dependent on his own experience: "If the poet has passion (*śṛṅgāra*)," he writes, "he will create a world of *rasa* in his poetry. If he does not have passion, everything will be devoid of *rasa*" (*Sarasvatī-kaṅṭhābharāṇa* 5.3).

<sup>47</sup> For a concise introduction to the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, see J.A. Honeywell, "The Poetic Theory of Viśvanātha," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 28/2 (1969): pp. 165–76.

<sup>48</sup> Jīva and Kavikarṇapūra in particular rely extensively on the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*. Jīva cites the work several times in the *Prīti-sandarbhā* (110, 111, 204), and Kavikarṇapūra's chapter on *rasa* in the *Alaṅkāra-kaustubha* is modeled on Viśvanātha's. Rūpa too cites the work in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.4.78), and though he speaks negatively about Viśvanātha in the introduction to the *Nāṭaka-candrikā* ("Moonlight on Drama"), those negative remarks should not be taken as a complete dismissal of his work. Viśvanātha claims that extra-marital affairs (like Kṛṣṇa's with the *gopīs*) are inappropriate for poetry, which is what Rūpa rejects, and his disagreement does not seem to go beyond that, as the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* is an important source for the *Nāṭaka-candrikā*. See Māns Broo, "Drama in the Service of Kṛṣṇa: Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Nāṭaka-candrikā*," in Bertil Tikkanen and Albion M. Butters (eds), *Pūrvaparaprajñābhīnandana: East and West, Past and Present. Indological and Other Essays in Honour of Klaus Karttunen* (Helsinki, 2011), pp. 55–65.

<sup>49</sup> *Vibhāvenānubhāvena vyaktaḥ sañcariṇā tathā, rasatām eti ratyādiḥ sthāyī bhāvah sacetasām. [...] Vyakto dadhyādi-nyāyena rūpāntara-prarīnato vyaktikṛta eva rasaḥ* (*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.1).

(*camatkāra*).<sup>50</sup> The emotions of the characters, on the other hand, are nothing like this, he explains:

The [dominant emotions] such as love which the characters experience do not become *rasa*, because they are limited, common (*laukika*), and separated by time [from the experience of *rasa* during the performance of the play]. ... How then can it obtain the form of *rasa*, since *rasa*'s nature is different from these three characteristics [i.e. it is not limited, not common (*alaukika*), and not influenced by time].<sup>51</sup>

Why can we experience the emotions of the characters as *rasa*, while they can not? And why do we experience even their unpleasant emotions like grief as pleasurable? Viśvanātha hints at this in the above passage: because, unlike the emotions of the characters, our experience of *rasa* is “uncommon” (*alaukika*). When scenes like Rāma’s banishment to the forest are depicted in poetry or drama, they move us, but do not generate the same sorrow in us that the characters experience, because the way we relate to such scenes is unlike the way we relate to our common, everyday experience. This is why we do not call Rāma the “cause” (*kāraṇa*) of the emotions we feel in response to the scene, but rather the “excitant” (*vibhāva*), and his expressions of his emotions not the “effects” (*kārya*), but rather the “ensuants” (*anubhāva*). Though our experience of *rasa* is, in a sense, founded on Rāma, it is a different causal relation than we know from our common experiences, and therefore needs a new terminology.<sup>52</sup>

But how can the emotions of the characters be experienced by the audience? “The excitants and the other components have the capacity of generalisation.” By this capacity of generalization or “commonization” (*sādhāraṇī-kṛti*), the audience identifies with the characters, and imagines himself to share their experience, to have it in common with them.<sup>53</sup> Thus, when a member of the audience experiences *rasa*, he can no longer think that “this belongs to another [the play’s protagonist]; this does not belong to another” and “this is mine; this is not mine.”<sup>54</sup> He cannot see the emotions of the characters as his own, Viśvanātha explains, as that would cause a cultured person to feel ashamed—how could he experience the love another man has for his wife?—or, in the case of negative emotions like fear, it

<sup>50</sup> *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.2–3.

<sup>51</sup> *Pārimityāl laukikatvāt sāntarāyatayā tathā, anukāryasya ratyāder udbodho na raso bhavet.*

[...] *Tasmāt kathaṃ rasa-rūpatām iyāt, rasasyaitad-dharma-tritaya-vilakṣaṇa-dharmakatvāt (Sāhitya-darpaṇa 3.19).*

<sup>52</sup> *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.7 and 3.29.

<sup>53</sup> *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.9–11.

<sup>54</sup> *Parasya na parasyeti mameti na mameti ca tad-[=rasa-]āsvāde vibhāvādeḥ paricchedo na vidyate (Sāhitya-darpaṇa 3.12).*

would give rise to anxiety and displeasure. But neither can he not see them as the characters', because that would imply there is no experience of *rasa*.<sup>55</sup>

Viśvanātha argues that the excitants and so on are not the causes of *rasa*, but rather its components. *Rasa* is not the effect of these elements, but rather the experience of them. Like Bharata, he uses a gustatory analogy: as the flavor of sherbet arises from all its ingredients, like sugar and pepper, so is *rasa* too a "tasting" of all the elements that constitute it.<sup>56</sup> Thus, when the audience becomes aware of the emotional developments of the characters in the literary work, through the depiction of the causes and effects of their emotions, they have an emotional response to it, which is the experience of the protagonist's dominant emotion, transformed through the other components, into *rasa*. This alone is what is called *rasa*, according to Viśvanātha. It can only belong to the audience, not the characters, because the emotion needs to be generalized and this can only occur in the "uncommon" causal relations that a literary experience provides.

### **Rasa and Religious Experience**

It is these theories of emotions and aesthetic experience, first articulated by Bharata and developed by authors like Bhoja and Viśvanātha, that form the foundation for Rūpa's theology of devotion. He applies their ideas to religious emotions, and in so doing moves beyond the world of literature, into the world of spiritual practice, and, ultimately, into the realm of God.

But Rūpa was not the first to apply *rasa* to religious experience. The *Bhāgavata Purāna*, though not using the entire technical vocabulary of Bharata, repeatedly talks of *rasa* in relation to devotion.<sup>57</sup> In Hindu sacred texts, the term *rasa* has been associated with the bliss that is attained in the state of liberation at least since the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, which describes God as "consisting of bliss" (*ānanda-maya*) and declares that "he [God] is indeed *rasa*. When one obtains this *rasa*, one becomes blissful."<sup>58</sup> But while the *Taittirīya* does not use the term *rasa* in its

<sup>55</sup> *Raty-āder api svātma-gatatvena pratītau sabhyānām vṛīḍātānkādir bhavet, paragatatvena tv arasyatāpātāḥ (Sāhitya-darpaṇa 3.11).*

<sup>56</sup> *Sāhitya-darpaṇa 3.15, 3.20.*

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, *Bhāgavata* 1.1.3, 1.1.19, 1.5.19, 1.18.14, 3.15.48, 3.20.6, 3.25.25, 4.4.15, 4.31.21, 5.1.5, 6.3.28, 6.9.39, 6.9.41, 7.7.45, 10.13.33, 10.21.9, 10.33.25, 10.42.1, 10.47.58, 10.61.3, 10.70.19, 10.87.43, 12.4.40, and 12.13.15.

<sup>58</sup> *Raso vai saḥ. Rasaṃ hy evāyaṃ labdhvānandī bhavati (Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.7.1).* Śrīdhara Svāmī links the *Bhāgavata*'s idea of *rasa* with this *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* passage in his commentary on *Bhāgavata* 1.1.3 and 10.87.34. Though later (and contemporary) Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas invoke this passage regularly to highlight that God embodies *rasa*, it is hardly used in the writings of the earliest theologians. Rūpa, Śrīnātha, and Kavikarṇapūra do not refer to it at all. Though Jīva discusses the entire *Taittirīya* passage in a few places (see *Sarva-saṃvādinī* pp. 39–47, 118 and 126–7; see also *Prīti-sandarbhā* 5), his primary

specific literary sense—but rather in the sense of “essence” or even “taste”<sup>59</sup>—the *Bhāgavata* frequently does. The *Bhāgavata* is clearly aware of the dramaturgical concept of *rasa*,<sup>60</sup> and throughout its 12 books it frequently uses the term *rasa* to refer to the joy gained from listening to narrations of Kṛṣṇa’s play, one of the main devotional acts the text prescribes. “We do not become satiated,” we read in the first book, “with [the narrations about] the heroic acts of he who has the highest fame, which become ever sweeter to those listeners who are knowledgeable of *rasa*.”<sup>61</sup> One of its opening verses exhorts the reader to “drink this *rasa* of the *Bhāgavata*”<sup>62</sup> and in the final chapter the *Bhāgavata* declares that “one who is satiated with its ambrosial *rasa* will not love anything else.”<sup>63</sup> The term is not exclusively used in literary contexts, however. Kṛṣṇa is said to possess “all *rasas*”<sup>64</sup> and is once called “he who bestows *rasa*,”<sup>65</sup> while his devotees are often described as being those “who know *rasa*,”<sup>66</sup> their minds being like “bees longing for the nectar of the *rasa* of Brahman”<sup>67</sup> or immersed in “the *rasa* of the honey of the illustrious Lord’s blessed lotus feet.”<sup>68</sup>

It is therefore no surprise that we find the first developments of an aesthetics of devotion in authors closely associated with this Purāṇa, like the commentator

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concern with the passage is similar to that of earlier Vedānta theologians, and centers on the masculine pronoun used here to refer to God, as well as the duality between God and the living being that is expressed in this section. In those passages he does not seem to take the term *rasa* in the specific sense that it has obtained in literary theory. Only when commenting on *Bhāgavata* 1.1.3 does Jīva quote the passage to highlight that God is talked of as *rasa*, and is clearly borrowing here from Śrīdhara (see *Krama-sandarbha* 1.1.3, which is identical to his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.226, where the *Bhāgavata* verse is cited; and *Prīti-sandarbha* 110, which too is a commentary on this *Bhāgavata* verse). Jīva also cites the passage, without further comment, in *Krama-sandarbha* 2.10.6 and *Prīti-sandarbha* 5.

<sup>59</sup> Śāṅkara, for example, takes *rasa* here to denote the different tastes, like sweet and sour, which “cause satisfaction” or “create bliss”: *raso nāma tṛpti-hetur ānanda-karo madhurāmlādiḥ prasiddho loke*. Sureśvara interprets it as “essence” (*sāra*) in his *Taittirīyopaniṣad-vārtika* (2.7.22).

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, *Bhāgavata* 10.33.25, 10.61.3 and 10.70.19.

<sup>61</sup> *Vayaṃ tu na vitṛpyāma uttama-śloka-vikrame yac-chṛṇvatām rasa-jñānām svādu svādu pade pade* (*Bhāgavata* 1.1.19).

<sup>62</sup> *Pibata bhāgavataṃ rasam* (*Bhāgavata* 1.1.3).

<sup>63</sup> *Tad-rasāmṛta-tṛptasya nānyatra syād ratiḥ kvacit* (*Bhāgavata* 12.13.15).

<sup>64</sup> *Bhāgavata* 10.87.34.

<sup>65</sup> *Bhāgavata* 10.42.1.

<sup>66</sup> See *Bhāgavata* 1.1.19, 1.5.19, 1.18.14, 3.15.48, 3.20.6, and 4.31.21.

<sup>67</sup> *Yat-pāda-padmaṃ mahatām mano-’libhir niṣevitam brahma-rasāsavārthibhiḥ ...* (*Bhāgavata* 4.4.15).

<sup>68</sup> *Bhagavata uttama-ślokasya śrīmac-caraṇāravindu-makaranda-rasa āveśita-cetasah* (*Bhāgavata* 5.1.5). For a similar expression, see also *Bhāgavata* 6.3.28.

Śrīdhara Svāmī (fourteenth century),<sup>69</sup> and especially Vopadeva (thirteenth century), who wrote extensively on the *Bhāgavata*, together with his patron and commentator Hemādri. Though early Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas viewed devotional *rasa* somewhat differently from these authors, they were intimately familiar with their works, and were significantly influenced by them.<sup>70</sup>

In the [*Bhāgavata*-]*Muktā-phala* (“The Pearls of the *Bhāgavata*”), an anthology of *Bhāgavata* verses, Vopadeva outlines a very simple theory of devotional *rasa*. In chapter 11 of the *Muktā-phala*, Vopadeva lists nine types of devotees of Viṣṇu, classified according to “the experience of devotional *rasa* in the form of the comic, amorous, compassionate, furious, fearful, horrific, peaceful, marvellous, and heroic [*rasa*].” This devotional *rasa*, he continues, is a wonder (*camatkāra*) that arises from acts of devotion like hearing about Viṣṇu’s play or the acts of his devotees, as described by Vyāsa and others.<sup>71</sup> Vopadeva’s analysis is simple, but his patron Hemādri develops this in his commentary on the *Muktā-phala*, bringing Vopadeva’s views in dialogue with those of classical Sanskrit literary theorists. The stimulating excitants (*uddīpana-vibhāva*) of this ninefold devotional *rasa*, he writes, “are activities like hearing about the acts [of Viṣṇu], and its foundational excitants (*ālabhana-vibhāva*) are the devotees of Viṣṇu; its ensuants (*anubhāva*) are ... such things as being stunned; and its transient emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*) are resolve, and so on.” The dominant emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*) of this ninefold devotional *rasa*, Hemādri argues, is “absorption of the mind by some means.” These means by which the mind can be absorbed in God are Bharata’s dominant emotions, such as love (*rati*) and humor (*hāsyā*), as depicted in literary works.<sup>72</sup> In other words, it is through these emotions, according to Hemādri, that the mind can become absorbed in God, and when a devotee’s mental state is properly nourished through devotional acts like listening to devotional narratives, he comes

<sup>69</sup> See particularly his commentary on *Bhāgavata* 10.43.17, but also his comments on *Bhāgavata* 1.1.3, 10.33.37, 10.41.28, 11.22.52, and 12.12.19-20.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Rūpa’s *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 4.3.54 and *Ujvala-nīlamanī* 15.151, Śrīnātha’s *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.8, Jīva’s *Tattva-sandarbhā* 26 and his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.2.35. Jīva was very familiar with Hemādri’s commentary on the *Muktā-phala*, and cites it several times in the *Sandarbhās* (see *Tattva-sandarbhā* 26; *Bhāgavat-sandarbhā* 59 and 85; *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhā* 29; *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 100 and 234). He also refers to Hemādri’s *magnum opus*, the voluminous *Catur-vargacintāmaṇi* (“The Touch-stone of the Four Topics”), in *Tattva-sandarbhā* 22 and 23, and to his commentary on Vopadeva’s *Hari-līlā* (“The Play of Hari”) in *Prīti-sandarbhā* 158.

For Śrīdhara’s influence on early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava authors, and particularly Jīva, see Ravi Gupta, *The Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta of Jīva Gosvāmī: When Knowledge Meets Devotion* (Abingdon, 2007), pp. 65–84.

<sup>71</sup> *Bhakti-rasasyaiva hāsyā-śṛṅgāra-karuṇa-raudra-bhayānaka-bībhatsa-śāntādbhūta-vīra-rūpenānubhavāt. [...] Vyāsādibhir varṇitasya viṣṇor viṣṇu-bhaktānām vā caritrasya nava-rasātmakasya śravaṇādīnā janitāś camatkāro bhakti-rasaḥ* (*Muktā-phala* p. 183).

<sup>72</sup> *Muktā-phala* p. 187.

to experience one of the nine forms of devotional *rasa*. Though both Vopadeva and Hemādri analyze devotion as *rasa*, their application of the *rasa* theory is still very grounded in its literary origins: the *rasa* of devotion is experienced by listening to poetic and Purāṇic stories of Viṣṇu and his devotees, which is also the emotion's stimulating excitant.<sup>73</sup>

### Early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Theories of *Rasa*

Though Rūpa's *rasa* theory became the dominant one in the Caitanya tradition, he was not the only Caitanya Vaiṣṇava to think of devotion in relation to *rasa*. In fact, the notion of devotional *rasa* is one that is shared by most authors in this early period, and one that is repeatedly used to interpret the life of Caitanya himself. Murāri Gupta, a close companion of Caitanya and his oldest biographer, describes the master as "he who dances to devotional *rasa*,"<sup>74</sup> and Vṛndāvanadāsa, another biographer, states he was "eager for the *rasa* of devotion to himself."<sup>75</sup> Indeed, Kavikarṇapūra argues, it is because he desired to relish that *rasa* gained from devotion to himself that he descended to this world as Caitanya.<sup>76</sup> His entire life thus exemplified the search for that experience of devotional *rasa*, and thereby he also taught others this special devotion. Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, an ascetic devotee of Caitanya, calls him the moon that "made the ocean of the ambrosial *rasa* of great love (*prema*) swell"<sup>77</sup> and writes that due to his presence people are now "introduced to loving devotion (*prema-bhakti*), sweet with the radiant *rasa* of profound and lofty emotions."<sup>78</sup>

Nevertheless, though it was common to think of devotional emotions in terms of *rasa*, only a few of Caitanya's devotees developed a theory of devotional *rasa*.<sup>79</sup> One important early figure is Śrīnātha Cakravartī, a contemporary of Rūpa who resided in Bengal. In his *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* ("The Box Containing the Thoughts of Caitanya"), which is a commentary on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*,

<sup>73</sup> Hemādri comments that it the *rasa* of devotion can also be experienced through "seeing, praising, remembering, and acting" (*śravaṇādineti ādi-śabdād darśana-kīrtana-smaraṇābhīnayaṅ*, see *Muktā-phala* p. 187), but it is unclear whether he intends these terms to be understood in a general sense or with specific reference to drama and poetry.

<sup>74</sup> *Bhakti-rasābhīnartakāḥ* (*Kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛtam* 1.1).

<sup>75</sup> *Nija-bhakti-rasa-kutuhalī* (*Caitanya-bhāgavata* 3.9.216).

<sup>76</sup> *Svānanda-rasa-satṛṣṇaḥ kṛṣṇa-caitanya vighraho jayati* (*Alaṅkāra-kaustubha* 1.1).

<sup>77</sup> *Prasārita-mahā-prema-pīyūṣa-rasa-sāgare caitanya-candre ...* (*Caitanya-candrāmṛta* 36).

<sup>78</sup> *Gambhīrodāra-bhāvōjjvala-rasa-madhura-prema-bhakti-praveśaḥ* (*Caitanya-candrāmṛta* 121).

<sup>79</sup> Both Rūpa and Śrīnātha claim that their ideas were inspired by their teacher Caitanya. See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.2 and the opening and closing verse of *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā*.

Śrīnātha develops a theory of *rasa*. While his treatment is relatively brief and not very systematic, it is significant as it differs from Rūpa's understanding of devotion.<sup>80</sup>

Rather than discussing the *rasa* of devotion (*bhakti-rasa*) as Rūpa does, Śrīnātha analyses devotion with *rasa* (*rasa-bhakti* or *sarasā bhakti*). He explains this concept as follows:

Devotion is the mental state that arises when there is an awareness of something worshipable (*upāśyatva-jñāna*). If this is connected with another state of mind [such as] a dominant emotion, like love, it is then called devotion with *rasa* (*rasa-bhakti*). One should not doubt this, considering that since two mental states are not attained simultaneously, they must occur in succession. This being so, one should see both in devotion with *rasa*: the aspects of devotion in its nature as devotion (*bhaktitva*) and the constituents of *rasa* in its nature as *rasa* (*rasatva*). In devotion devoid of *rasa*, however, only the aspects of devotion [are found].<sup>81</sup>

Śrīnātha classifies 10 “worshippers with *rasa*” (*rasopāsaka*), based on Bharata's eight *rasas* together with the peaceful *rasa* and the *rasa* of Love (*prema-rasa*).<sup>82</sup> These different emotional states arise only when the proper causes are present, and are therefore not permanent. “Devotion does not have a single *rasa*,” Śrīnātha writes, “nor does a devotee have one [type of] devotion.”<sup>83</sup> However, Śrīnātha does also discuss “natural” (*svābhāvika*) *rasas* of devotees, that are permanent while the other *rasas* appear and disappear according to the situation. Arjuna's natural *rasa*, for example, would be the *rasa* of friendship (*sakhya*), but when he witnessed Kṛṣṇa's awesome cosmic form at Kurukṣetra he experienced the fearful *rasa*. Śrīnātha does not say more about this, but as we will see this does resemble Rūpa's analysis of primary and secondary *rasas*.

<sup>80</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Śrīnātha's views on *rasa*, see Rembert Lutjeharms, “Splendour of Speech: The Theology of Kavikarṇapūra's Poetics,” Unpublished D.Phil. Dissertation (Oxford University, 2010), pp. 143–50.

<sup>81</sup> *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.8.

<sup>82</sup> *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.8. The 10 are Kubjā (*śṛṅgāra*), the earth (*karuṇa*), Arjuna (*bhayānaka*), Nārada (*hāsyā*), the Kaurava women (*adbhuta*), Bhīṣma (*vīra*), the king of the *asuras* (*bībhatsa*), Bhṛgu (*raudra*), Piṅgalā (*śānta*), and the *gopīs* (*prema-rasa*). Śrīnātha's position is slightly unclear, as earlier he argued for 11 *rasas*, the eleventh being based on the emotion “love for a god, etc.” (*Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.8). It is not unlikely, however, that he intends to use this eleventh *rasa* to defend the possibility of all the others being experienced in relation to God, as his disciple Kavikarṇapūra does in his *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* (5.32), as we will see later. In that same section, he also dismisses parental affection (*vatsala*), subsuming it under the *rasa* of Love (*prema*), but elsewhere in his commentary he does include a *rasa* of *vātsalya* (see *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 7.5.23–24), and as we will see, he also accepts a *rasa* of friendship (*sakhya-rasa*).

<sup>83</sup> *Bhaktir eka-rasā nāsti na bhakto'py eka-bhaktimān* (*Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.8).

Kavikarṇapūra, a disciple of Śrīnātha and a very prolific author, discusses *rasa* along these lines in the *Caitanya-candrodaya* (“The Rise of the Caitanya Moon”), a 10-act play on the life of Caitanya. In act three, Kavikarṇapūra gives an allegorical account of the genesis of devotion. God’s Grace, the father, and Attachment-to-God’s-people, the mother, gave birth to a son, named Discernment, and to many daughters, who were all named Devotion. “Those daughters,” Kavikarṇapūra writes, “first formed two groups: those that had *rasa* and those that did not. Those without *rasa* were numerous based on their bonds with the modes of nature (*guṇa*). Those with *rasa* divided into ten.”<sup>84</sup> Of these 10, however, six *rasas* are especially proper in combination with devotion: “The luminous, the wondrous, peace and mirth, affection and parental affection—these six *rasas* here are best. Seeking shelter in them, these six Devotions are most proper.”<sup>85</sup>

Both Kavikarṇapūra and Śrīnātha write that among all these devotions with *rasa*, one is supreme: devotion with the *rasa* of Love (*prema-rasa-bhakti*). The dominant emotion of this type of devotion, Śrīnātha argues, is “possessiveness” (*mamakāra*), by which the devotee comes to see Kṛṣṇa as his own.<sup>86</sup> Kavikarṇapūra modifies this a little, and writes that its dominant emotion is “melting of the heart” (*citta-drava*), but agrees with his teacher that it leads to an emotional state in which the devotee and Kṛṣṇa lose their separate individuality and become one in love.<sup>87</sup> This emotion and its *rasa* is primarily exemplified in the love of the cowherd girls (*gopīs*) for Kṛṣṇa,<sup>88</sup> but is also more fundamental. Echoing Bhoja, both Śrīnātha and Kavikarṇapūra explain that this *rasa* of Love is the foundation for all other emotions and all other *rasas*, which are all mere fragments of it: “Whence all emotions and all *rasas* emerge, and into which they all merge back, like waves in the ocean—that is called Love. All *rasas* are fragments of bliss but this is said to be unbroken bliss. In the unbroken, the features of the fragments appear as if each separately present.”<sup>89</sup>

Though Śrīnātha assigns the different *rasas* to characters of the *Bhāgavata*, his interest in *rasa* is clearly not literary. Rather, *rasa* is for him a tool to explain

<sup>84</sup> *Caitanya-candrodaya* 3.4 and 6. In *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.5, Kavikarṇapūra accepts 11 *rasas* (excluding *bhakti-rasa*), which are Śrīnātha’s 10 with parental affection (*vātsalya*). The 10 dominant emotions he mentions here are presumably the dominant emotions of these, except the dominant emotion of *prema-rasa*, which occupies a special place as we will see below.

<sup>85</sup> *Caitanya-candrodaya* 3.7.

<sup>86</sup> *Caitanya-mata-māñjuṣā* 10.22.12.

<sup>87</sup> *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.5 and 5.34.

<sup>88</sup> See *Caitanya-mata-māñjuṣā* 10.22.12 and *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.34.

<sup>89</sup> *Caitanya-candrodaya* 3.8–9. Kavikarṇapūra reiterates here Śrīnātha’s views in *Caitanya-mata-māñjuṣā* 11.12.8, and expresses the same idea also in *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.35.



the nature of devotion.<sup>90</sup> His disciple Kavikarṇapūra, however, develops a sophisticated literary *rasa* theory in the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* (“The Kaustubha of [Literary] Ornaments”), the earliest and most comprehensive Caitanya Vaiṣṇava work on poetics, in which he uses Bharata’s *rasa* theory more traditionally, to explain the way literary works can both embody and generate emotions.

In his analysis of *rasa*, Kavikarṇapūra is profoundly influenced by Viśvanātha’s *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, but also thinks of *rasa* in Bhoja’s terms. For Kavikarṇapūra the dominant emotion is not the emotion of the literary characters that the audience becomes aware of through a literary performance, as it is for Viśvanātha, but rather a mental state of the audience itself. He writes:

There is a quality of consciousness, free from the modes of passion and ignorance and with the nature of pure existence (*suddha-sattva*), which is the bulb from which the relish [of *rasa*] sprouts. This the wise call the dominant emotion. For the audience [of a literary work] it becomes manifold by the varieties of excitants (*vibhāva*).<sup>91</sup>

Though he is talking here of the dominant emotion, and not of *rasa*, his description of it is reminiscent of Bhoja’s first stage of *rasa*. He reinterprets the dominant emotion—which for the other theorists we have so far seen was an emotion like love, wonder or anger—as a particular quality of consciousness, which is really the potential of *rasa*: it is the “bulb from which the relish [of *rasa*] sprouts.” This dominant emotion or permanent condition (*sthāyi-bhāva*) is singular, Kavikarṇapūra argues, but becomes diversified by various excitants that are

<sup>90</sup> In one place, however, he does discuss the realisation of *rasa* in a literary context. Commenting on the *Bhāgavata*’s third verse, which exhorts the reader to drink the *rasa* of the *Bhāgavata*, he comments that the persons addressed here are those “who know *rasa* (*rasika*), who are expert in imagination (*bhāvanā*), and who are firm in the *rasa* of Love (*prema*)” and that the *rasa* they should drink is that of the *gopīs*: *He bhāvukā bhāvakā vā, he kuśalā he bhāvanā-caturā vā; rasikāḥ—prema-rasa-niṣṭhāḥ! Bhāgavatam rasaṃ pibata; bhagavatīnām gopīnām ayaṃ bhāgavatas tam (Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā 1.1.3)*. He has nothing further to say on this, but his ideas are somewhat reminiscent of earlier authors on poetics, like Vidyānātha (thirteenth–fourteenth century), the author of the *Pratāparudra-yaśo-bhūṣaṇa* (“An Ornament of [King] Pratāparudra’s Fame”), who was significantly influenced by Bhoja and like him applies *rasa* to the characters of the literary work, but argues that the audience and even the actors can experience the characters’ *rasa* if they are imaginative and able to identify with them (see *Pratāparudra-yaśo-bhūṣaṇa* 4.91).

<sup>91</sup> *Āsvādānkura-kando’sti dharmah kaścana cetasaḥ, rajas-tamobhyāṃ hīnasya suddha-sattvatayā sataḥ*

*sa sthāyī kathyate vijñāir vibhāvasya prthaktayā, prthag-vidhatvaṃ yāty eṣa sāmājikatayā satām (Alaṃkāra-kaustubha 5.3–4).*

depicted in the play. Thus, an epic saga will transform that special mental state into courage, whereas an amorous play will awaken love in the audience.<sup>92</sup>

This single dominant emotion, Kavikarṇapūra writes, is the material cause of *rasa*, whereas the excitants are its efficient cause.<sup>93</sup> *Rasa* is thus merely a transformation of this mental state, and therefore, since the dominant emotion is for Kavikarṇapūra essentially singular, so is *rasa*. “Because *rasa* has the characteristic of bliss,” he writes, “it is single.” It appears to be of many types, he continues, because the dominant emotions act as limiting qualifiers (*upādhi*),<sup>94</sup> coloring, as it were, that experience of bliss with the characteristics of the standard dominant emotions that were aroused in the mind of the audience by the excitants of the literary work.<sup>95</sup> Though Kavikarṇapūra follows Viśvanātha in locating *rasa* in the audience, it is very difficult not to see Bhoja’s three-staged *rasa* scheme in this analysis.

Moreover, Kavikarṇapūra also does not deny that there is a *rasa* of the characters, internal to the literary work. The audience’s experience he calls the “dramatic *rasa*” (*nāṭya-rasa*), which he distinguishes from a different type of *rasa* that is experienced in the world (*loka*) and does not require the distance a dramatic performance creates.<sup>96</sup> This type of *rasa* belongs not just to world of the characters, but also to the “real” world, and is therefore quite different from that of the audience. Like the *rasa* of the audience it is a transformation of the dominant emotion, but for the characters the different dominant emotions, such as love, anger, or sorrow, are ordinary emotions, rather than different emotional states that are created by witnessing the emotions of literary characters. When it comes to the real world, not all emotions can therefore be raised to the state of *rasa*. Unpleasant emotions, like fear or disgust, do not become pleasurable to the person who experiences them when they are intensified, but only when they are experienced by the audience for whom the causes of the fear or similarly unpleasant emotions are not real. In other words, there is no fearful *rasa* in this world—except, Kavikarṇapūra argues, when the object of such negative emotions is Kṛṣṇa. Only when the excitants are non-material can an unpleasant emotion be experienced as somehow pleasurable. Thus Arjuna could experience the fearful

<sup>92</sup> Kavikarṇapūra argues that this will not occur for everyone: love, fear, or sorrow, for example, could not appear in the mind of sages, since they have no attachment to this world. See *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.18.

<sup>93</sup> See *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.2.

<sup>94</sup> *Rasasyānanda-dharmatvād aikadhyam bhāva eva hi upādhibhedān nānātvaṃ, ratyādaya upādhyayaḥ* (*Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.15).

<sup>95</sup> Kavikarṇapūra states that the traditional dominant emotions, like fear, love, or mirth, are the accidental cause (*asamavāyi-kāraṇa*) of *rasa*. They are like the color of the threads that form a cloth—the threads are the cloth’s material cause, and their color, the qualities of that material cause, are the accidental cause, determining the specific qualities of the cloth. See *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.2.

<sup>96</sup> See *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.5 and 5.18–19.

*rasa*, because the object (*ālāmbana-vibhāva*) of his fear was Kṛṣṇa's wondrous cosmic form, and thus the source of an otherworldly bliss.<sup>97</sup>

As this illustrates, Kavikarṇapūra is not exclusively concerned with devotional *rasa* in the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*. Whether the play a person watches or the poem he reads is about ordinary characters or about Kṛṣṇa and his divine play, *rasa* will be realized in a similar way in the audience, but will be of a different kind: the former will be material (*prākṛta*), as it is caused by material excitants, whereas the latter will be non-material or transcendental (*aprākṛta*), as its excitants are transcendental.<sup>98</sup> Kavikarṇapūra does not talk of "devotion with *rasa*" in the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* as he does in the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, since his interest is here not devotion itself but rather the realization of *rasa* in relation to a literary work. Nevertheless, his understanding of devotional *rasa* (*bhakti-rasa*) is clearly marked by his teacher's thought. The dominant emotion of devotional *rasa* is love (*rati*) for a god, a guru, or a similarly superior personality,<sup>99</sup> and its transient emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*) are such sentiments as humility and self-loathing.<sup>100</sup> This emotion does not quite correspond to the emotional devotion taught by Caitanya, and Kavikarṇapūra therefore argues that "devotional *rasa* which has Śrī Kṛṣṇa as its object becomes ten-fold with the dominant emotions such as love (*rati*),"<sup>101</sup> leading thus to mental state that is a combination of a "knowledge of something worshipable" which humbles the devotee and causes him to be disgusted with anything other than God, and one of the emotions commonly experienced in this world, like amorous love, parental affection, wonder, or mirth. For Kavikarṇapūra, however, not all forms of transcendental *rasa* are devotional. Kaṃsa, Kṛṣṇa's uncle who was fated to be killed by him, lived his life consumed by fear. Though his fear was not devotional like Arjuna's, it was nevertheless transcendental because its object was Kṛṣṇa, and because his fear caused him to perceive Kṛṣṇa constantly, it could turn into *rasa* and give rise to some form of bliss.<sup>102</sup>

Kavikarṇapūra is the first Caitanya Vaiṣṇava to develop a systematic poetics.<sup>103</sup> His ideas on *rasa* have not been as popular as Rūpa's, but are remarkable as he

<sup>97</sup> *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.27.

<sup>98</sup> *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.16.

<sup>99</sup> *Saiva devādi-viṣayā ratir bhāvaś ca kathyate [...] ādi-śabdād guru-prabhṛtiś ca (Alaṃkāra-kaustubha 5.10).*

<sup>100</sup> *Vyabhicārī nirveda-dainyādi (Alaṃkāra-kaustubha 5.36).* Kavikarṇapūra later defines *nirveda* as *sva-jugupsā (Alaṃkāra-kaustubha 5.301).*

<sup>101</sup> *Sa punar bhakti-rasaḥ śrī-kṛṣṇāśrayo bhavan ratyādibhir sthāyibhir daśa-vidho bhavati (Alaṃkāra-kaustubha 5.31).* For what these 10 *rasas* are, see above.

<sup>102</sup> See *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha 5.27: Bhaye 'pi kṛṣṇa-sphūrtes tat-sambandhād ānanda evety aprākṛta eva.*

<sup>103</sup> Rūpa wrote a work on dramaturgy, the *Nāṭaka-candrikā* ("Moonlight on Drama"), in which he discusses the narrative elements of drama, like the types of characters and the various transitions between scenes, as well as some stylistic elements. He does not, however, discuss any of the aspects directly related to the actual performance of drama, and

is the first devotee of Caitanya to develop a *rasa* theory that is not exclusively concerned with devotional ideas, but with the experience of *rasa* in general, including that grounded in worldly literary works.<sup>104</sup>

Furthermore, though there are some noteworthy parallels with Rūpa's notion of secondary devotional *rasas*, as we will see later, Śrīnātha's "devotion with *rasa*" theory was not further developed after Kavikarṇapūra. It is nevertheless very important in the history of the school, as it allowed these early authors to relate the new, emotional devotion Caitanya and his gurus, Īsvara Purī and Mādhavendra Purī, taught, with older conceptions of devotion that were "intellectual" rather than "emotional," to use Friedhelm Hardy's typology.<sup>105</sup> "Devotion with *rasa*" both shows the continuity with the past—like the older devotion, it is still an "awareness of something worshipable"—but also the novelty of the devotion taught by Caitanya—it is now infused with emotions like mirth, love, and wonder.

### Rūpa's Theology of *Rasa*

With that background knowledge, we can now turn to Rūpa's *rasa* theory. Rūpa develops his theory of devotional *rasa* in two works: the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, which analyses the nature of devotion and religious experience, and the *Ujvala-nīlamanī* ("The Splendid Sapphire"), in which he applies the *rasa* theory to Kṛṣṇa's amorous play with the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana. The remainder of this chapter will examine Rūpa's *rasa* theory as outlined in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, as well as the way it was further developed by his nephew Jīva in his commentary on this text, and in the final two volumes—the *Bhakti-sandarbha* ("A Treatise on Devotion")

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has very little to say about the realisation of *rasa*. For more on this text, see Broo, "Drama in the Service of Kṛṣṇa."

A *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-śeṣa* ("A Supplement to the Ambrosial [Ocean of] Devotional *Rasa*") is sometimes attributed to Jīva, but his authorship seems very unlikely. The work is intended as a supplement to Rūpa's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, and covers all aspects of Sanskrit poetics except *rasa* (which the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* deals with), and relies extensively on Kavikarṇapūra's *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*. The only Caitanya Vaiṣṇava works comparable to the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* were written centuries later, by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣana, who composed two works on poetics: the *Sāhitya-kaumudī* ("Moonlight on Literature") and the *Kāvya-kaustubha* ("The Kaustubha of Poetry").

<sup>104</sup> By contrast, Jīva argues that there can be no material *rasa*, because material objects do not lead to happiness, but rather to disgust. "Therefore," he concludes, "I should not believe that worldly excitants could produce *rasa*. And if it were to produce *rasa*, it could always only produce the horrific *rasa*" (*Tasmāl laukikasyaiva vibhāvādeḥ rasa-janakatvaṃ na śraddheyam. Taj-janakatve ca sarvatra bībhatsa-janakatvam eva sidhyati. Prīti-sandarbha* 110).

<sup>105</sup> See Friedhelm Hardy, *Viraha-bhakti: The Early History of Kṛṣṇa Devotion in South India* (Delhi, 1983), pp. 36ff.

and the *Prīti-sandarbha* (“A Treatise on Love”)—of his six-volume theological masterpiece, the *Bhāgavata-sandarbha* (“A Treatise on the *Bhāgavata*”).

Unlike the earlier authors that we have seen, Rūpa’s *rasa* theory is firmly embedded in a very developed theology of devotion, that includes both a very elaborate discussion on ritual practice as well as a comprehensive analysis of the different stages of religious experience. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Rūpa draws, as it were, a map of the realm of devotion, that the aspiring devotee can use to navigate that wondrous world and at last arrive in Kṛṣṇa’s own land.

In the beginning of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Rūpa offers two definitions of devotion—first his own followed by one found in a sacred text—and while the commentators on the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* attempt to demonstrate that both definitions are really stating the same,<sup>106</sup> they do highlight various aspects of devotion as understood by Rūpa.

Rūpa defines the highest devotion as “continuous service for Kṛṣṇa that is pleasing to him, free from desires for anything else, and unobstructed by [other pursuits] like gnosis (*jñāna*) and ritual action (*karma*).”<sup>107</sup> He follows this definition with one from the *Nārada-pañcarātra*, an important text on Kṛṣṇa worship: “Devotion is said to be attendance on the Lord of the bodily faculties (*hr̥ṣīkeśa*) with these faculties (*hr̥ṣīka*), that is freed from every designation (*upādhi*) and that is pure by being dedicated to him.”<sup>108</sup>

Rūpa outlines three stages of devotion: devotion in practice (*sādhana-bhakti*), devotion with emotion (*bhāva-bhakti*), and devotion with Love (*prema-bhakti*). Though a distinction can be made between the first stage and the other two stages—in the first one merely practices devotion, whereas in the latter two one has obtained love for Kṛṣṇa and thus *lives* devotion<sup>109</sup>—Rūpa considers them all devotion, and as such the above definitions have to apply to both the stage of practice as the stage of perfection. In other words, they are both prescriptive, instructing the aspiring devotee how to practice and attain this “highest devotion,” as well as descriptive, illustrating what the nature of this highest devotion is like for those who have attained it.

<sup>106</sup> See Jīva and Mukunda’s commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.12.

<sup>107</sup> *Anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam, ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir uttamā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11). Unlike Kavikarṇapūra who writes of devotion conditioned by the modes of this world (*guṇa*), Rūpa does not discuss “lower” devotion in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

<sup>108</sup> *Sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ tat-paratvena nirmalam, hr̥ṣīkeṇa hr̥ṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyaṭe* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.12).

<sup>109</sup> Jīva declares these last two to be the two stages of devotional perfection, or “devotion that is to be attained” (*sādhya-bhakti*) in his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.1. Rūpa does not call them as such in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, though he would not object to it, since the difference between *bhāva* and *prema* is one of gradation, as we will see.

Devotion's primary characteristic is that it is a continuous action for Kṛṣṇa that gives him pleasure. Jīva explains that the word "service" (*śīlana*) here is used in the two senses of its Sanskrit verbal root: it is both active and inactive, and appears both as activity (*ceṣṭā*) performed with one's body, speech, or mind, and as emotion (*bhāva*).<sup>110</sup> It is important to note, however, that this division between the active service using the body and mind, and the inactive service by emotions, does not correspond to the division between devotion in practice (*sādhana-bhakti*) and accomplished devotion (*sādhya-bhakti*). The goal of devotional practices is not a passive state devoid of action of pure emotion that is attained when devotion is perfected. Jīva explains that even in the state of accomplished devotion there is still action, like the physical responses to the emotions that are experienced, such as dancing, singing, or laughing, that help to increase the intensity of the emotions.<sup>111</sup>

For devotion to be pure (*nirmala*) and topmost (*uttama*), as described in the above two definitions, it has to be "devoid of desires for anything else" and "freed from all designations." These are principally the desires for enjoyment in this world and the desire to be freed from the suffering of this world, and are expressed generally through the religious paths of ritual action (*karma*) and gnosis (*jñāna*). The former of these is ritualistic religion, pursued to satisfy worldly desires and sustain the social structure, whereas gnosis generally manifests itself as a practice of meditation on an attributeless absolute leading the practitioner to liberation, conceived as a state of nondual awareness.<sup>112</sup> Neither of these pursuits can "obstruct" devotion, and the devotee needs to renounce the desire for their goals to properly dedicate himself to devotion, because they are incompatible with it. "As long as the fiend of longing for enjoyment or liberation resides in the heart, how can the joy of devotion arise there?" Rūpa asks.<sup>113</sup> Or, as Jīva puts it, "how can one travelling east obtain an object moving west?"<sup>114</sup>

<sup>110</sup> *Dhātva-arthas ca dvidvidhaḥ. Pravṛtti-nivṛtṭy-ātmakaḥ kāya-vān-mānasīyas tat-tat-ceṣṭā-rūpaḥ; prīti-viśādātmacro mānasaś tat-tad-bhāva-rūpaś ca* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11). See also Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.13, where he talks of *kriyā-rūpā* and *bhāva-rūpā bhakti*.

<sup>111</sup> See Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1: *tatra ceṣṭā-rūpā dvidvidhā—bhāva-bhakteḥ sādhanā-rūpā kārya-rūpā ca. Kārya-rūpā tu rasāvasthāyām anubhāva-rūpā ca.*

<sup>112</sup> Jīva stresses that it is only this that is understood by the terms *karma* and *jñāna* in Rūpa's definition of devotion: "Knowledge (*jñāna*) here means the search for undifferentiated Brahman, but does not include the search for the nature of him that is to be worshipped, because this [knowledge] is undoubtedly required. And ritual action (*karma*) here refers to the daily and occasional rituals mentioned in the *smṛtis* and other texts, but not to rituals used in worship [of Kṛṣṇa], since they are continuous service (*anusīlana*) to him." (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11: *Jñānam atra nirbheda-brahmānusandhānam, na tu bhajanīya-tattvānusandhānam api, tasyāvāśyāpeṣaṇīyatvāt. Karma cātra smṛtyādyuktaṃ nitya-naimittikādi, na tu bhajanīya-paricaryādi, tasya tad-anusīlana-rūpatvāt.*)

<sup>113</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.22.

<sup>114</sup> *Vāruṇī-dig-gataṃ vastu vrajann aindrīm kim āpnuyāt.* This is part of a verse he attributes to the *Viṣṇu Purāna*, cited in his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.254

This reflects Rūpa's concern to find a middle path between a sensual attachment to the world—as nurtured in the path of ritual action—and a salvation from its sorrows by a complete renunciation of the world—as emphasized on the path of gnosis. The devotee should not mortify his body to purge his mind of worldly desires, but should use his body to worship Kṛṣṇa. As the definition of the *Nārada-pañcarātra* states, he “serves the Lord of his bodily faculties, with his faculties.” Those that are eligible for the practice of devotion should “not be too attached, nor eager for renunciation,”<sup>115</sup> and while acts of renunciation may be somewhat useful in the beginning,<sup>116</sup> “the saints believe that it causes the heart to harden.” It is thus not suitable for devotion, which is by nature “very tender.”<sup>117</sup> Or, as Sanātana, Rūpa's older brother, puts it, “renunciation dries up *rasa*.”<sup>118</sup> Rūpa warns against the practice of “superficial renunciation” (*phalgu-vairāgya*) that rejects things that are associated with Kṛṣṇa, considering them to be material, and instead urges for a “proper renunciation” (*yukta-vairāgya*), where one is unattached to this world, but always properly employs worldly things in relationship with Kṛṣṇa.<sup>119</sup> Devotion itself is therefore the means to become detached from this world: “For a person who relishes the worship of Hari, even the strongest passion for worldly objects generally dissolve.”<sup>120</sup> One's body and the world do not have to be rejected, but used to worship Kṛṣṇa. Thus devotion becomes “pure” or “devoid of the desire for anything else” by a total dedication to Kṛṣṇa, “by having him as one's highest” (*tat-paratvena*) if we translate the expression of the *Nārada-pañcarātra* literally.

The only qualification for devotion, Rūpa teaches, is faith or conviction (*śraddhā*) in devotion,<sup>121</sup> which arises “by some great fortune” by meeting saintly devotees.<sup>122</sup> Confident in the importance and efficacy of devotion, the devotee

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and in *Bhakti-sandarbha* 147.

<sup>115</sup> *Nāṭisakto na vairāgya-bhāg* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.14).

<sup>116</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.248.

<sup>117</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.249.

<sup>118</sup> *Vairāgyam rasa-śoṣakam* (*Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.2.205).

<sup>119</sup> Mukunda explains that the word “proper” here only implies “that which is suitable for one's eligibility” (*yathārham svādhikāropayukta-mātram*, on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.255).

<sup>120</sup> *Ruciṃ udvahatas tatra janasya bhajane hareḥ, viṣayesu gariṣṭho 'pi rāgaḥ prāyo vilīyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.254). “Fondness” (*ruci*) here refers to one of the later stages of devotion as listed in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.15–16.

<sup>121</sup> *Śraddhā-mātrasya tad-bhaktāv adhikāritva-hetutā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.191). For a lengthy discussion on the meaning and role of *śraddhā* in Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism, see Rembert Lutjeharms, “First Faith: On the Meaning and Role of *śraddhā* in Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Thought,” *ISKCON Studies*, 2 (forthcoming).

<sup>122</sup> *Kenāpy atibhāgyena jāta-śraddho 'ya sevane ...* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.14). Jīva states that this “great fortune” is the impressions (*saṃskāra*) attained from meeting great saints: *Atibhāgyena mahat-saṅgādi-jāta-saṃskāra-viśeṣeṇa* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.14). Jīva discusses this at great length in the *Bhakti-sandarbha* (179–187).

commences his devotional practices, which can be of two types: practice enjoined by scripture (*vaidhī-bhakti*), and practice motivated by the desire to follow the passion (*rāga*) of an associate of Kṛṣṇa. The former practice centers largely on the worship of the image in the temple, and includes the devotional practices elaborately taught in various Vaiṣṇava scriptures. Five of these practices Rūpa considers particularly potent as they can easily produce emotion (*bhāva*) and reveal Kṛṣṇa: lovingly attending Kṛṣṇa's image; relishing the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*; being in the company of like-minded devotees; chanting Kṛṣṇa's names; and residing in Vraja, Kṛṣṇa's land.<sup>123</sup>

The second type of practice, however, is not impelled by the injunctions of scripture, but rather by an intense desire for a relationship with Kṛṣṇa<sup>124</sup> similar to that of one of his perfected devotees, like a lover, a friend, a dependant, or a parent.<sup>125</sup> This type of practice, which is born from a spontaneous attraction or fondness (*ruci*) is "characterised by the lack of attraction to anything contrary to devotion."<sup>126</sup> This type of practice arises spontaneously, and is therefore superior and more powerful than the practice that is impelled merely by scriptural injunctions,<sup>127</sup> because injunctions are intended for those that do not act out of their own accord.<sup>128</sup> Rūpa stresses that until such sentiments arise, the devotee should continue pursuing the scriptural path,<sup>129</sup> for, as Jīva explains, scripturally guided devotional practices are a way to help along those practitioners who are not naturally motivated to worship God. Such beginners in devotion do not yet have a fondness (*ruci*) for devotion and are easily distracted and discouraged by the various forms of distress in this world, but these scripturally guided practices

<sup>123</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.238 and 244.

<sup>124</sup> Jīva states that *rāgānuga-sādhana* is generally only pursued for Kṛṣṇa: *sā ca śrī-kṛṣṇa eva mukhyā* (*Bhakti-sandarbhā* 325).

<sup>125</sup> In the section on *rāgānugā*, Rūpa only writes that amorous and parental relationships inspire *rāgānuga* (see *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.273ff.), but elsewhere he states that friendship is also suitable for this practice (see 1.2.193). Jīva includes the relationship of a dependent (*dāsya*) in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 310 and 312.

<sup>126</sup> *Ata evāsyā janma-lakṣaṇam bhakti-vyatirekeṇānyatṛānabhirucitvam ity ādy api jñeyam* (*Bhakti-sandarbhā* 310).

<sup>127</sup> *Tato vidhi-mārga-bhaktir vidhi-sāpekṣeti sā durbalā. Iyaṁ tu svatantraiva pravartate iti prabalā ca jñeyā* (*Bhakti-sandarbhā* 310).

<sup>128</sup> See Jīva's comments in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 312: *codanā tu yasya svataḥ-pravṛttir nāsti, tad-viśayaiva*. The implication is that *rāgānugā* is not enjoined by scriptural injunctions (*vidhi*), as Rūpa writes in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.292. Jīva states so even more explicitly in the *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 310, where he says it is "impelled by fondness (*ruci*) alone, because it is not impelled by proper injunctions" (*ruci-mātra-pravṛtṭyā vidhi-prayuktatvenāpravṛttatvāt*). He defends this position at some length in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 312.

<sup>129</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.293.



help them to gradually immerse their minds in God and come to this spontaneous practice of devotion.<sup>130</sup>

The devotee pursuing this passion (*rāga*) of a particular perfected devotee should immerse himself in the narrations of Kṛṣṇa's play, particularly those that express the desired relationship with Kṛṣṇa, and serve Kṛṣṇa with the physical or "practitioner's body" (*sādhaka-rūpa*) as well as the "perfected body" (*siddha-rūpa*).<sup>131</sup> The latter, Jīva explains, is "a body that is envisaged in the mind and is suitable for the type of service that is desired."<sup>132</sup> Jīva stresses that a devotee who pursues this passion does so only internally, through meditation, "because it is generally proper only to practice such worship mentally for one who has not yet become his lover."<sup>133</sup>

Rūpa comments that some scriptural practices, such as listening to narrations about Kṛṣṇa and praising Kṛṣṇa, should not be given up, and Jīva too stresses that such practices do not have to be rejected, but just accompanied with a different meditation suitable for the type of relationship the devotee follows internally.<sup>134</sup>

Though the practitioner meditates continuously on a particular perfected devotee's relationship with Kṛṣṇa, Jīva stresses that the practitioner should never consider himself to be the perfected devotee he tries to emulate, but rather follow that devotee's example, "otherwise, they too would make the mistake similar to that of worshipping oneself as the Lord (*aham-grahopāsanā*)."<sup>135</sup>

<sup>130</sup> *Bhakti-sandarbha* 312.

<sup>131</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.294–295.

<sup>132</sup> *Siddha-rūpeṇa antaś-cintitābhīṣṭa-tat-sevopayogi-dehena* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.295).

<sup>133</sup> *Tat-preyasī-rūpeṇāsiddhāyās tādrśa-bhajane prāyo manasaiva yuktatvāt* (*Bhakti-sandarbha* 311). Later on, however, some theologians, like Rūpa Kavirāja (seventeenth century), argued that the practitioner of *rāgānuga* should not just express their desire for a particular relationship in meditation, but also physically, by acting and dressing like the devotee they attempt to emulate. See David Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* (New York, 1988), pp. 98–104, and Neal Delmonico, "Trouble in Paradise: A Conflict in the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Tradition," *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, 8/1 (1999): pp. 91–102.

<sup>134</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.296 and *Bhakti-sandarbha* 312. In this section of the *Bhakti-sandarbha*, Jīva also argues that some devotees may continue performing some *vaidhi* practices for the guidance of the people (*loka-saṅgraha*), echoing Kṛṣṇa's teachings in *Bhagavad Gītā* 3.20.

<sup>135</sup> *Anyathā bhagavatya aham-grahopāsanāvat teṣv api doṣaḥ syāt* (*Bhakti-sandarbha* 312). See also Viśvanātha's commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.306. *Aham-grahopāsanā* is a practice wherein one meditates on oneself as being God, as expressed in such Upaniṣadic passages as "I am Brahman" (*aham brahmāsmi*, *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.4.10). Jīva sometimes speaks negatively about this practice, as in this passage (see also *Bhakti-sandarbha* 176), and argues that a devotee may lose his devotion and fall to such meditation if he maintains prolonged friendship with those who ardently desire liberation (see his comments on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.55). In other places, however, he speaks

The practice of devotion (*sādhana*), of both varieties, has only one intention: “by any means, the mind should be immersed in Kṛṣṇa.”<sup>136</sup> By such immersion into meditation on Kṛṣṇa, the devotee sheds all his sins,<sup>137</sup> purges his mind of all those traits that lead him to sin,<sup>138</sup> and removes the ignorance by which he identifies with his body.<sup>139</sup> He obtains all virtues, and is at peace with everyone.<sup>140</sup> Once the devotee’s mind is thus calmed and his attachment to this world has decreased, love for Kṛṣṇa (*rati*) can appear. Rūpa describes it as follows:

In the heart of devotees whose deficiencies have been dispelled by devotion and whose minds are clear and bright, who are fond of *Śrī Bhāgavata* [*Purāṇa*] and delight in the company of sensitive devotees, who live for the glorious joy of devotion to Govinda’s feet, and who perform acts conducive to Love (*prema*), love (*rati*) appears as pure bliss, splendid by both mental impressions (*saṃskāra*) [of past lives and the present life].<sup>141</sup>

The love that appears, Rūpa claims, is an “eternally perfected (*nitya-siddha*) emotion.”<sup>142</sup> This emotion is not the effect of something of this world—like our common emotions are—but rather transcendental to this world, as it is a special form of Kṛṣṇa’s own pure nature.<sup>143</sup>

When it manifests in the mind of a devotee, Rūpa explains, it follows the way his mind functions, but it only *appears* to be manifested by different mental states, as it is “self-luminous,”<sup>144</sup> that is, it is self-revealing; it alone can manifest itself, like the sun which is only visible by its own luminosity.

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of it favorably, justifying such worship “due to the reason that one becomes qualified to worship the Lord only when one has attained some similarity to him” (*Paramātmā-sandarbhā* 105, in Gupta, *Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta*, p. 192). See also *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 214, 216, and 286.

<sup>136</sup> *Tasmāt kenāpy upāyena manaḥ kṛṣṇe niveśayet* (*Bhāgavata* 7.1.32, quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.4). Jīva uses this verse to particularly emphasise the importance of *rāgānuga-sādhana*; see *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 312, 323, and 325, and Jīva’s commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.274–275.

<sup>137</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.18–23.

<sup>138</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.24. Mukunda explains that this “seed” (*bīja*) of sin “consists of mental impressions” (*vāsanā-mayaṃ*).

<sup>139</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.25. See particularly Jīva’s commentary on this verse, where he cites *Bhāgavata* 1.2.17–21.

<sup>140</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.27–32.

<sup>141</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.7–9.

<sup>142</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.2.

<sup>143</sup> *Śuddha-sattva-viśeṣa* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1). See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.75.

<sup>144</sup> *Svayaṃ-prakāśa-rūpā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.4).

Jīva argues that this state of devotion is a manifestation of both Kṛṣṇa's potency of awareness (*saṁvit-śakti*) and his pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*), the latter being merely a special form of the former:<sup>145</sup> "that by which he is aware and causes [the living beings] to be aware, is [his potency of] awareness ... That higher form of awareness, by which he knows that joy and causes others to know it, is the pleasure [potency]."<sup>146</sup> In other words, the emotion that arises from the repeated practice of meditation on Kṛṣṇa through various devotional acts, leads to an awareness of Kṛṣṇa's nature, and, as that knowledge of him increases and one becomes more aware of his blissful nature, the devotee will experience Kṛṣṇa's bliss through this emotion.

As this love is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's inner potency and thus part of his very being, it is very rare and can only be obtained by grace. "Kṛṣṇa does not bestow this quickly even to those who worship him,"<sup>147</sup> Rūpa explains. "Intense, but dispassionate, practice, even if pursued for a very long time, cannot obtain it. And Hari [Kṛṣṇa] does not give it quickly."<sup>148</sup> Rūpa does not dismiss human agency, however. He makes a distinction between those that have obtained the fulfillment of devotion through "a dedication to spiritual practice,"<sup>149</sup> and those that have obtained it through grace.<sup>150</sup> For the former, love for Kṛṣṇa arises gradually, first as fondness (*ruṅi*), then as attachment (*āsakti*), and finally as love (*rati*),<sup>151</sup> whereas for the latter it arises "suddenly, without spiritual practice."<sup>152</sup> The former, Rūpa adds, is the normal way; the latter occurs rarely.<sup>153</sup> In other words, according to Rūpa, Kṛṣṇa can bestow his grace unconditionally, yet generally does so in

<sup>145</sup> See Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1, 1.3.4–5, and 2.5.93.

<sup>146</sup> *Tathā saṁvid-rūpo'pi yayā saṁvetti saṁvedayati ca, sā saṁvit. Tathā hlāda-rūpo'pi yayā saṁvid-utkata-rūpayā taṁ hlādam saṁvetti saṁvedayati ca, sā hlādinīti vivecanīyam* (*Bhagavat-sandarbha* 88).

<sup>147</sup> *Yā kṛṣṇenātigopyāsu bhajadbhṛtyo'pi na dīyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.42).

<sup>148</sup> *Sādhanaughair anāsaṅgair alabhyā sucirād api, hariṇā cāśvadeyeti dvidhā sā syāt sudurlabhā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.35).

<sup>149</sup> *Sādhanābhiniveśa* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.6).

<sup>150</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.6–23 and 2.1.282–289. Rūpa specifies that this grace can be Kṛṣṇa's or his devotee's (see *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.6).

<sup>151</sup> *Sādhanābhiniveśas tu tatra niṣpādayan rucim, harāv āsaktim utpādaya ratim saṁjanayaty asau* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.8).

<sup>152</sup> *Sādhanena vinā yas tu sahasaivābhijāyate, sa bhāvah kṛṣṇa-tad-bhaktā-prasādaja itīyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.15). Mukunda adds that those who have love for Kṛṣṇa but have practised only a little are generally considered in this category, even though they are not "without practice": *ataḥ keṣūcīj janeṣu kiñcit sādhanē saty api bhāvas tu kṛpayaivety abhiprāyaḥ*.

<sup>153</sup> *Ādyas tu prāyikas tatra dviṭīyo viralodayaḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.6).

accordance with our actions. The devotee's agency is thus not irrelevant, though it is not the only cause.<sup>154</sup>

Rūpa writes that this love is “splendid by both mental impressions (*saṃskāra*),” namely those that are acquired in the devotee's present life as well as his past life.<sup>155</sup> A mental impression (*saṃskāra* and *vāsanā*)<sup>156</sup> is a residue of past actions that remains in the mind and creates predispositions. When one is practicing devotion, these impressions determine what type of devotional practice one will be disposed to,<sup>157</sup> and those impressions created by one's spiritual practice—whether performed in the present life or in a previous life—will determine the nature of the love for Kṛṣṇa that arises. While both types of practices Rūpa has described in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*—the practice that is scripturally guided and the practice that pursues passion—lead to love for Kṛṣṇa, the type of love that is attained is different, since these two paths involve a different practice and thus result in different proclivities.<sup>158</sup> As we have seen earlier, Rūpa argues that this emotion (*bhāva*) is not a manifestation of the mind, but of Kṛṣṇa's divine nature. The specific nature of this love for Kṛṣṇa, however, will be manifested in accordance with the traces left in the mind of previous experiences. “Love attains a specific nature corresponding to the specific nature of its recipient, like the reflected sun [is reflected differently] in crystals, and other objects.”<sup>159</sup>

Devotees who have not nurtured a particular emotion in relation to Kṛṣṇa during their devotional practice, and thus do not have developed a specific predisposition for a specific emotion, will gain a generic love for Kṛṣṇa, which Rūpa calls “transparent” (*svaccha*) and compares to a crystal, as it will take on the

<sup>154</sup> Though Rūpa does not argue this, the idea of injunction-based devotional practice (*vaidhī-sādhana*) also implies human agency, as scriptural injunctions would be meaningless if the devotee had no agency. This is an idea that is developed in *Brahma-sūtras* 2.3.33 (*kartā śāstrārthavattvāt*). The relationship between human and divine agency is discussed a little later, in *Brahma-sūtra* 2.3.40–41. Jīva discusses this section of the *Brahma-sūtras* in his *Sarva-saṃvādinī* (pp. 111–13).

In his poetry, however, Rūpa often expresses a total dependence on God's grace. See *Padyāvalī* 59–61 and *Stava-mālā* p. 274.

<sup>155</sup> *Saṃskāra-yugalajjalā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.9). See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.6.

<sup>156</sup> Though some authors make a distinction between *saṃskāra* and *vāsanā*, Rūpa does not. See, for example, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.6 and 2.1.9, where both terms are used to refer to the same notion.

<sup>157</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.264. If one attains love for Kṛṣṇa (*bhāva*) not by spiritual practice, but by grace, appropriate predispositions (*vāsanā*) will arise in the devotees mind; see *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.22.

<sup>158</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.14.

<sup>159</sup> *Vaiṣiṣṭyam pātra-vaiṣiṣṭyād ratir eṣopagacchati, yathārkaḥ pratibimbātmā sphaṭikādiṣu vastuṣu* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.7).

tinge of whatever emotion they reflect on.<sup>160</sup> If the devotee, however, consistently contemplated a specific emotional connection with Kṛṣṇa and associated with devotees of a similar disposition, the predispositions created by these activities will color his love with one of five emotions:<sup>161</sup> tranquillity (*śānti*), affection (*prīti*), friendship (*sakhya*), parental affection (*vātsalya*), and amorous love (*priyatā*).<sup>162</sup> The first of these, love with tranquillity (*śānti-rati*), is the least developed. It arises in sages and ascetics who have renounced sensual pleasures, experienced the bliss of their own self (*ātmā*), and developed a love for Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Self (*paramātmā*).<sup>163</sup> Though they experience the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Kṛṣṇa, they do not know his charming play (*līlā*).<sup>164</sup>

The other four forms of love, however, arise from a profound sentiment of goodwill (*anukūlatā*) to Kṛṣṇa, and are characterized by a sense of “myness” (*mamatā*).<sup>165</sup> This sense of possessiveness or “myness” is generally considered one of the causes of bondage: the understanding of humanity is blinded by the notions of “I” (*aham*) and “mine” (*mama*), which lead to an erroneous identification with the body, and a sense of ownership of those things related to the body, like family and material possessions. A devotee, who sees through this illusion and dedicates everything to God, gives up these notions.<sup>166</sup>

When the devotee, already detached from the delusions of this world, develops love for Kṛṣṇa, however, he gains a new identification, as Jīva explains in the *Prīti-sandarbhā*. By constantly relating to Kṛṣṇa through one of these four emotions, the devotee begins to see Kṛṣṇa as his master, equal, dependant, or lover. By this a specific sense of self (*abhimāna*) arises in the devotee, by which he sees himself as one who has to be favored by him, one who is a friend of him, one who has compassion for him, or one who is his beloved.<sup>167</sup> Thus a new sense of

<sup>160</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.12–16. Rūpa also distinguishes a “general” (*sāmānya*) love, which is entirely undifferentiated, and is experienced “by common people and children”; see *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.9–11.

<sup>161</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.38: *ratir vāsanayā svādvī bhāsatē kāpi kasyacit*. In his commentary on this verse, Jīva stresses that this is determined only by a single *vāsanā*.

<sup>162</sup> *Śuddhā prītis tathā sakhyam vātsalyam priyatety asau, svaparārthyaiva sāmukhyā punaḥ pañca-vidhā bhavet* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.6). *Śuddhā* is of three types, as Rūpa explains later on (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.8), one of which is *śānti*, which is the only variety that can become *rasa* and that Rūpa elaborately discusses in the third section of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

<sup>163</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.17–18.

<sup>164</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.1.6.

<sup>165</sup> *Atha bheda-trayī hr̥dyā rateḥ prīty-ādir īryate, gāḍhānukūlatotpannā mamatvena sadāśritā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.22). Rūpa here, and in successive verses, only mentions the first three types of love, but presumably the fourth has to be included.

<sup>166</sup> See *Paramātmā-sandarbhā* 45–46.

<sup>167</sup> *Saiva khalu prītir bhagavat-svabhāva-viśeṣāvīrbhāva-yogam upalabhya kañcid anugrāhyatvenābhimānāyati kañcid anukampitvena kañcin mitratvena, kañcit priyātvena*

possessiveness (*mamatā*) arises that is not based on a false identification with the temporary body, but rather on a specific character of Kṛṣṇa that he relates to. As Jīva summarizes it in the *Prīti-sandarbhā*:

The possessiveness (*mamatā*) for the Lord is only caused by his specific sense of self (*abhimāna*) in regards to himself, and this specific sense of self is said to be caused by a specific disposition (*svabhāva*) of him [Kṛṣṇa]. Now, this appears first, and right after that appears the specific possessiveness. Therefore, in some way, Kṛṣṇa's disposition (*svabhāva*) alone is the root cause of the love (*prīti*) for him.<sup>168</sup>

Though these five emotions are all forms of love for Kṛṣṇa, they are not all equal. The tranquil love for Kṛṣṇa, which “does not have a hint of possessiveness”<sup>169</sup> and is “devoid of sense of self (*abhimāna*),”<sup>170</sup> is the lowest form, and Jīva calls devotees with this love “marginal” (*taṭastha*).<sup>171</sup> The remaining four also each become successively sweeter,<sup>172</sup> culminating in the “sweet” amorous love (*madhurā rati*).<sup>173</sup>

It is at this stage that Rūpa incorporates the *rasa* theory of classical Sanskrit literary theory. As Rūpa explains, “in this context, love (*rati*) for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is said to be the dominant emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*).”<sup>174</sup> It is this love, which manifests through the practice of devotion (*sādhana-bhakti*) in the state of devotion with emotion (*bhāva-bhakti*), which will be heightened by the other elements and become *rasa* in the third stage of devotion: devotion with Love (*prema-bhakti*).

The excitants (*vibhāva*) of this love for Kṛṣṇa are “the causes by which love is relished.”<sup>175</sup> “They excite (*vibhāvayanti*) the various specific tastes of love,” Rūpa explains, “which is why the wise call them excitants (*vibhāva*).”<sup>176</sup> Like the literary theorists, Rūpa divides these into two groups, the primary causes (*ālambana-vibhāva*), which directly cause love, and the secondary causes

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ca (*Prīti-sandarbhā* 84).

<sup>168</sup> *Bhagavad-viṣayā matatā tu svātma-gata-tādīyābhimāna-viśeṣa-hetukaiva, tad-abhimāna-viśeṣaś ca tat-svabhāva-viśeṣa-hetuka ity uktam. Sa ca prathamam āvirbhavati. Tad-anantaram eva matatā-viśeṣa āvirbhavati. Tasmād yathā tathā tat-svabhāva eva tat-prīter mūla-kāraṇam* (*Prīti-sandarbhā* 94).

<sup>169</sup> *Mamatā-gandha-varjitā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.18).

<sup>170</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.1.32.

<sup>171</sup> *Kim ca teṣu eteṣu bhagavat-priyeṣu sāmānya-sāntau taṭasthākhyau* (*Prīti-sandarbhā* 84).

<sup>172</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.38. See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.115.

<sup>173</sup> Rūpa calls the amorous love thus in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.5.1 and 3.5.19.

<sup>174</sup> *Sthāyī bhāvo 'ra sa proktaḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-viṣayā ratiḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.2). See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.2, 1.3.10 and 1.3.13.

<sup>175</sup> *Tatra jñeyā vibhāvās tu raty-āsvādāna-hetavaḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.14).

<sup>176</sup> *Rates tu tat-tad-āsvādā-viśeṣāyātiyogyatām, vibhāvayanti kurvantīty uktā dhīrair vibhāvakāḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.87).

(*uddīpana-vibhāva*), which enhance that emotion. The principal primary cause is naturally Kṛṣṇa himself, whereas things related to him, such as his attributes, his devotees, his actions, his abode, the holy days devoted to him, and so on, are its secondary causes. But Rūpa adds another, important, category to this. Kṛṣṇa, who is the object (*viśaya*) of love for Kṛṣṇa, is not the only primary excitant; the devotee, who is the subject (*ādhāra*) of that love, is equally so. As the subject of the emotion, he too is a primary excitant or cause of love, since he determines the specific nature of that love for Kṛṣṇa.<sup>177</sup> We have already seen how this love is dependant on the subtle mental imprints (*vāsanā*) created by previous experiences,<sup>178</sup> but Rūpa also states that persons have also different psychological dispositions. "Because various types of devotees are different, there are various types of minds," he writes, and due to their distinct psychological nature, their experience of devotional emotions will vary.<sup>179</sup>

The ensuants (*anubhāvas*) are the physical responses to love, which "cause it to be perceived (*anubhāvayanti*) and permeate the mind with its profound taste."<sup>180</sup> These are actions like singing, dancing, laughing, sighing, and so on. A special type of these ensuants are the eight responses (*sāttvika-bhāvas*), which arise involuntarily when the mind (*sattva*) is overcome with emotion.<sup>181</sup>

Finally there are the transient emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāvas*), which "move (*caranti*) in a specific way (*vi*) towards (*abhi*) the dominant emotion."<sup>182</sup> These emotions are 33 in number and are identical to those of the literary theorists. They are also called variable (*sañcārī*) "because they make love move (*sañcārayanti*) and thus make it manifold."<sup>183</sup> Rūpa likens them to waves, which rise and fall into the ambrosial ocean of the dominant emotion, increasing it, and then merging back into it.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>177</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.16.

<sup>178</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.6, 2.5.133, and 2.5.38.

<sup>179</sup> *Vividhānām tu bhaktānām vaiśiṣṭyād vividhaṃ manaḥ (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.4.257). Rūpa then goes on to list different types of minds in the following verses.

<sup>180</sup> *Tām cānubhāvayanty antas tadvanty āsvāda-nirbharām ity uktā anubhāvās (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.88).

<sup>181</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.3.1–2. These eight are stupefaction, perspiration, bristling of the hair, stuttering, trembling, change of color, tears, and fainting. Rūpa calls them *anubhāvas* in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.3.20 and 2.5.88. According to Jīva, the *anubhāvas* too arise from a mind overcome with emotion, but are conscious responses (*buddhi-pūrvaka*). See Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.3.1–2.

<sup>182</sup> *Ye vyabhicāriṇaḥ viśeṣeṇābhimukhyena caranti sthāyinaṃ prati (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.4.1).

<sup>183</sup> *Sañcārayanti vaicitrīm nayante tām tathā-vidhām, ye nirvedādayo bhāvās te tu sañcārīṇo matāḥ (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.89). See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.4.2.

<sup>184</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.4.3.

When all these elements combine, the dominant emotion is intensified and becomes *rasa*, “the pinnacle of wonder of dense bliss.”<sup>185</sup> This is the third stage of devotion: devotion with Love (*prema-bhakti*). The difference between *rasa* or Love (*prema*) and the dominant emotion of love (*rati*) is merely one of gradation. Love for Kṛṣṇa (*rati*) is the first stage of Love (*prema*)—like the first rays of the rising sun.<sup>186</sup> When this dominant emotion “condenses, completely softens the heart and is marked by a high degree of possessiveness (*mamatva*)” it is known as Love (*prema*).<sup>187</sup> This arises from a direct experience of Kṛṣṇa or things related to him, and leads to a single, unified experience in which all the elements that help to heighten the specific dominant emotion merge and form the specific taste of that *rasa*. Following Viśvanātha, Rūpa compares this to a beverage, whose individual ingredients combined create its distinct taste. However, “just as when the ingredients like pepper and sugar have become one in sherbet,” he adds, “one of these sometimes stands out, so too in the case of *rasa* can [one of its components] like the excitant [be tasted individually].”<sup>188</sup>

To summarize, whereas the dominant emotion (*bhāva*) is “experienced by the wise with undivided intellect in their mind through deep mental impressions (*saṃskāra*) in a state of contemplation,”<sup>189</sup> *rasa* “is understood to be that which, having surpassed the path of contemplation (*bhāvanā*), produces wonder (*camatkāra*) and is relished in the heart brightened by [pure] being (*sattva*).”<sup>190</sup> The distinction between the two, the commentators explain, is like the distinction between meditation (*dhyāna*) and trance (*samādhi*)—the latter is a further development or more intense form of the former.<sup>191</sup>

Thus the five forms of love for Kṛṣṇa lead to five distinct flavors of *rasa*: love with tranquillity (*śānti-rati*), experienced by the sages, becomes the peaceful devotional *rasa* (*śānta-bhakti-rasa*); affection (*prīti*), experienced by Kṛṣṇa’s subordinates, becomes the affectionate devotional *rasa* (*prīta-bhakti-rasa*);

<sup>185</sup> *Praudhānanda-camatkāra-kāṣṭhām* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.10). Rūpa uses a similar expression at *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.81.

<sup>186</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.1–2.

<sup>187</sup> *Samyañ-masṛṇita-svānto mamatvātiśayāṅkitāḥ, bhāvāḥ sa eva sāndrātmā budhaiḥ premā nigadyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.1).

<sup>188</sup> *Yathā marica-khaṇḍāder ekībhāve prapānake, udbhāsaḥ kasyacit kvāpi vibhāvādes tathā rase* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.84). See also *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.16.

<sup>189</sup> *Bhāvanāyāḥ pade yas tu budhenānanya-buddhinā, bhāvyaḥ gādha-saṃskāraiś cīte bhāvāḥ sa kathyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.133).

<sup>190</sup> *Vyatītya bhāvanā-vartma yaś camatkāra-kāra-bhūḥ, hr̥di sattvojjvale bādham svadate sa raso mataḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.132). Jīva explains that *sattva* here refers to the special *śuddha-sattva* discussed earlier: *sattvaḥ bhāva-kāraṇatvena pūrvam uddiṣṭaḥ śuddha-sattva-viśeṣaḥ*.

<sup>191</sup> *Samādhi-dhyānāyor ivānāyor bheda iti bhāvāḥ* (Jīva and Mukunda on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.133). See Edwin Bryant, *The Yoga-sūtras of Patañjali* (New York, 2009), pp. 303–10 (commenting on *Yoga-sūtras* 3.2–3).



friendship (*sakhya*), experienced by Kṛṣṇa's friends, becomes the amicable devotional *rasa* (*preyo-bhakti-rasa*); parental affection (*vātsalya*), experienced by Kṛṣṇa's superiors, becomes the tender devotional *rasa* (*vatsala-bhakti-rasa*); and when the sweet amorous love (*madhurā-rati*), experienced by Kṛṣṇa's lovers, is nurtured, it becomes the sweet devotional *rasa* (*madhura-bhakti-rasa*).

Rūpa does not do away with all the other *rasas* of Bharata, but rather integrates them into his theory. He redefines love (*rati*), the dominant emotion of Bharata's amorous *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*), as love for Kṛṣṇa, and identifies its five different varieties, as we have just seen. But he also emphasizes that this is really only one dominant emotion: "although fivefold, the primary emotion, love, is here said to be one, because of its unity."<sup>192</sup> While this love is the "primary" dominant emotion, Bharata's seven remaining emotions are "secondary (*gauṇī*) dominant emotions."<sup>193</sup> Unlike love for Kṛṣṇa, the primary dominant emotion, these seven secondary emotions are not a manifestation of a special pure being (*śuddha-sattva-viśeṣa*) and thus not inherently a form of devotion.<sup>194</sup> But when love for Kṛṣṇa contracts itself and is dominated by one of these seven secondary emotions, they too become a form of love.<sup>195</sup> Thus there is a love with mirth (*hāsa-rati*), a love with amazement (*vismaya-rati*), a love with courage (*utsāha-rati*), a love with sorrow (*śoka-rati*), a love with anger (*krodha-rati*), a love with fear (*bhaya-rati*), and a love with disgust (*jugupsā-rati*).<sup>196</sup> These seven secondary emotions are not permanent. They arise only in certain circumstances and in some devotees in the course of Kṛṣṇa's play, but disappear when another emotion becomes more prominent. They therefore have the character of transient emotions, but they can become dominant and raised to *rasa* in appropriate circumstances.<sup>197</sup> Rūpa stresses, though, that these can only be considered forms of devotional *rasa* (*bhakti-rasa*) if they are linked with love, for without it they are "worthless."<sup>198</sup> Rūpa's reasoning here is remarkable, as he creates an entire new system of *rasa*, but does so within the framework of Bharata's system. He keeps all of Bharata's eight *rasas*, and

<sup>192</sup> *Pañcadhāpi rater aikyān mukhyas tv eka ihoditaḥ (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.114).*

<sup>193</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.39–40.*

<sup>194</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.42.*

<sup>195</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.42–43.*

<sup>196</sup> Rūpa adds that all of these are experienced in relation to Kṛṣṇa, except the last one (love with disgust), which is felt for one's the body, and other such things, since love for Kṛṣṇa is incompatible with disgust for him. See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.41.*

<sup>197</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.44–45 and 4.7.14.* See also Rūpa's discussion at *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 4.8.43–50.*

<sup>198</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.46–47.*

has no need to introduce new *rasas* or dominant emotions—not even the peaceful *rasa*<sup>199</sup>—while simultaneously making room for others.<sup>200</sup>

In Rūpa and Jīva’s analysis of devotional *rasa*, as outlined above, we find several of Bhoja’s key ideas—such as the primacy of love and the importance of the sense of self (*abhimāna*)—and if we think of Rūpa’s elaborate analysis of religious experience in terms of the classical *rasa* theory, it is clear that Rūpa follows Bhoja’s general approach. Through his dedication to spiritual practice, the devotee attains the dominant emotion of love for Kṛṣṇa, and thereby becomes a character in the play of Kṛṣṇa. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Rūpa discusses categories of protagonists (*nāyaka*) used in classical dramaturgy, and argues that Kṛṣṇa, who engages in a wide variety of plays with his devotees, embodies all of them. He is the “crown jewel of all leading men,” who eternally radiates all excellences.<sup>201</sup> He is the central figure of the devotional drama, and the devotee enters into that drama, taking on a supporting role through his devotion. It is through this participation in Kṛṣṇa’s divine play, by interacting with Kṛṣṇa, who is the excitant, reciprocating with him through the ensuants, and allowing the particular flavor of one’s love for him to become enhanced by the transient emotions, that *rasa* is realized in the heart of the devotee.

In other words, in Rūpa’s *rasa* theory literature is not needed for the realization of *rasa*. The excitants do not have to be presented in literature, but merely have to appear in one’s experience (*anubhava*), which means, as Jīva emphasises, that it is not dependent on compositions of great poets, as is the case with the “common

<sup>199</sup> The peaceful *rasa* is the one *rasa* most frequently added to Bharata’s eight, and is even included in some recensions of the *Nāṭya-sāstra*. Abhinavagupta, a prominent Śaiva theologian who wrote a commentary on Bharata’s text, including this interpolated passage, developed an influential *rasa* theory in which this *śānta-rasa* plays a prominent role. See Ashok Aklujkar and Edwin Gerow, “On *Śānta Rasa* in Sanskrit Poetics,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 92/1 (1972), and J.L. Masson and M.V. Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta’s Philosophy of Aesthetics* (Poona, 1970). Rūpa seems entirely unaware of Abhinavagupta’s works, and even voices the objection to *śānta-rasa* sometimes given in works on poetics: “Experts on dramaturgy do not consider this [*rasa*], because calmness [which is commonly considered its dominant emotion] is without change. But because we accept the love known as tranquillity [as its dominant emotion], this should not be objected” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.1.46).

<sup>200</sup> Rūpa refers several times to only eight *rasas* or eight dominant emotions in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, rather than 12. See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.4.250, 2.5.73 and 2.5.114.

<sup>201</sup> *Nāyakānāṃ śiro-ratnam kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam, yatra nityatayā sarve virājante mahā-guṇāḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.17). Rūpa argues later on that Kṛṣṇa embodies the four classical types of leading men—noble and brave (*dhīrodātta*), noble and playful (*dhīra-lalīta*), noble and peaceful (*dhīra-śānta*), and noble and haughty (*dhīroddhata*). See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.224–240.

*rasa*.<sup>202</sup> For literary theorists like Viśvanātha literature is absolutely necessary for the realization of *rasa*. The characters, their emotions and emotional responses have to be depicted either visually, on stage, or aurally, through the recitation of a poem. These are necessary so the audience can perceive the literary work's dominant emotion, and then, by generalization, experience it as *rasa*. Without them, no *rasa* can arise. Rūpa, however, is not concerned with just literature. For him, *rasa* can be experienced anywhere, in any context, if the proper causes, effects, and accessories are present. As he explains:

Some, who are very fond of literature, say that the use of poetry and drama about the Lord is the main cause of these elements [like the excitants]. However, the ultimate cause is be the power of this love, which possesses an amazing wealth of sweetness that is beyond logic.<sup>203</sup>

But Rūpa does not end there. As he says here, the power of this extraordinary love is the ultimate cause of the manifestation of its causes, effects, and accessories. Though the excitants are seen to be the causes of the emotions, the reverse can be said: it is this love for Kṛṣṇa that manifests its causes. "The charming love turns Kṛṣṇa and other things into excitants, and so on," Rūpa writes, echoing both Bhoja's and Kavikarṇapūra's views, "and with these very things thus transformed, it strengthens itself—like the ocean, which fills the clouds with its own water, and becomes filled with water by their rains."<sup>204</sup>

In other words, if someone does not possess love for Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will not be the object of his love. Though this is, in a way, true for any emotion, this does gain a special significance when it comes to the divine. Rūpa states a little later, love (*rati*) reveals Kṛṣṇa to be charming, and when Kṛṣṇa is experienced as such, he will increase that love.<sup>205</sup> This brings us back to the very nature of this emotion: it is a potency of Kṛṣṇa's own nature (*svarūpa-śakti*). As a special transformation of his potency of awareness (*saṃvit-śakti*), it makes the devotee aware of Kṛṣṇa's nature, and then—as his pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*)—makes him experience his bliss.

<sup>202</sup> *Kṛṣṇādibhir vibhāvādyair gatair anubhāvādhvani ... (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.10)*. Jīva comments as follows: *anubhāvādhvani gatair iti na tu laukika-rasavad atra sat-kavi-nibaddhatāpekṣeti bhāvah*.

<sup>203</sup> *Eteṣāṃ tu tathā-bhāve bhagavat-kāvya-nātyayoh, sevām āhuḥ paraṃ hetuṃ kecit tat-pakṣa-rāgiṇaḥ. Kintu tatra sudustarka-mādhuryādbhuta-sampadaḥ, rater asyāḥ prabhāvo 'yaṃ bhavet kāraṇam uttamam (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.90–91)*. See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.97*.

<sup>204</sup> *Vibhāvatādīn āṇīya kṛṣṇādīn mañjulā ratiḥ, etair eva tathābhūtaiḥ svaṃ saṃvardhayati sphuṭam*.

<sup>Y</sup>*athā svair eva salilaiḥ paripūrya balāhakān, ratnālayo bhavaty ebhir vṛṣṭais tair eva vāridhiḥ (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.94–95)*.

<sup>205</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.98*.

Moreover, when it comes to love for Kṛṣṇa, not even all the elements normally needed for *rasa* to appear are needed. “The saints, by hearing even a little about Hari, relish *rasa*,”<sup>206</sup> writes Rūpa, and Jīva adds that even this is not limited to literature: one could even remember Kṛṣṇa, or hear a faint note of his flute, and become lost in the bliss of *rasa*.<sup>207</sup> Though the excitants may thus be incompletely present and unaccompanied by any of the other components, this will not deter *rasa*, Rūpa explains, because “if the true nature of mere fragment of the excitants or one of the other components arises, it immediately becomes complete by the manifestation of the [full] four components.”<sup>208</sup>

This not to say that Rūpa is not interested in literature. Rūpa himself is a very talented poet, and he also wrote a work on the poetic aspects of drama, the *Nāṭaka-candrikā* (“Moonlight on Drama”). Rūpa does admit that literature can help in the realization of *rasa*, and even adds that it is particularly useful for those who have “a young sprout of love (*rati*)”; for them, “poetry and drama become somewhat a cause for the excitants, and so on.”<sup>209</sup> And, as Jīva points out, many of the exemplary devotees, like Hanumān and Parīkṣit, are constantly relishing poetry in praise of God, and the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa’s most intimate companions, longed to listen to narrations about him.<sup>210</sup>

But how does this literary *rasa* theory integrate with his religious revisioning of *rasa*? What exactly happens when a devotee, who has attained a specific form of the dominant emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*), becomes absorbed in a poem about Kṛṣṇa’s play with his devotees that has its own dominant emotion? What is here the *rasa* that is tasted? And what about the other components that lead to the realization of *rasa*, such as the excitants (*vibhāva*) and ensuants (*anubhāva*)—do they belong to the poem’s protagonists or to the devotee who is in the audience?

Jīva addresses these issues in the *Prīti-sandarbhā*. He explains that there are two types of devotees that experience *rasa*: those that participate in Kṛṣṇa’s play, for whom *rasa* manifested “on its own,” and those who “imagine themselves to participate in it.”<sup>211</sup> For these latter, Jīva explains, there are two possibilities for realizing *rasa*: they can listen to accounts of the Lord and those that participate in his play, or they can listen to descriptions of the sweet attributes of Kṛṣṇa. If

<sup>206</sup> *Harer īṣac-chruti-vidhau rasāsvādaḥ satām bhavet (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.97). See also Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.11.*

<sup>207</sup> *Premādimitām tu yathā-kathāñcit smaraṇam api tatra hetuḥ yeṣām ṣaḍjādimaya-svara-mātram api tatra hetur bhavati (Prīti-sandarbhā 111).*

<sup>208</sup> *Sad-bhāvaś ced vibhāvādeḥ kiñcin-mātrasya jāyate, sadyaś catuṣṭayākṣepāt pūrṇataivopapadyate (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.106).*

<sup>209</sup> *Nave raty-aṅkure jāte hari-bhaktasya kasyacit, vibhāvātvaḍi-hetutvaṃ kiñcit tat kāvya-nāṭyayoh (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.96).*

<sup>210</sup> See Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.97.*

<sup>211</sup> *Kim ca, bhagavat-prīti-rasikāḥ dvividhāḥ—tadīya-līlāntah-pātināḥ tad-antah-pātītābhīmāninaś ca. tatra pūrveṣāṃ prāktana-yuktyā svata eva siddho rasaḥ (Prīti-sandarbhā 111).*

they do the latter, there is no difficulty, and *rasa* will manifest as it does for those that live with Kṛṣṇa, “independently” (*svatantra*). But the other option is more problematic: the devotee does not listen merely to poetic descriptions of Kṛṣṇa’s play, but to narratives about Kṛṣṇa’s associates, who have their own specific love for Kṛṣṇa. Whose dominant emotion determines the nature of the *rasa* experience—the characters’, as in the classical *rasa* theory, or the devotee’s, as in Rūpa’s *rasa* theory? As Jīva explains, it is indeed the devotee’s dominant emotion that determines the nature of the *rasa* experience, but the characters’ dominant emotion does play an important role in this realization. “If he can become part of Kṛṣṇa’s play [described in the poem] because he has similar proclivities (*vāsanā*),” he writes, “then the [permanent] emotion, which is of a similar nature, makes the excitants and so on of the specific [character] that is part of Kṛṣṇa’s play generalised for him who imagines himself likewise.”<sup>212</sup>

Because the devotee has the same love for Kṛṣṇa as the protagonists of the play, he can identify with them and imagine himself to be playing a similar role in relation to Kṛṣṇa as they do in the poem or play. Jīva cites Viśvanātha to illustrate this:

When it [*rasa*] is relished, the excitants and so one are no longer [experienced as being] separate, [making it impossible to think] “this is another’s, this is not another’s” and “this is mine, this is not mine.”<sup>213</sup>

Rūpa similarly describes this generalization as “removing the restraints of the relations of ‘self’ and ‘other’”<sup>214</sup> and explains that “in the process of generalisation, there is a potency in the excitants and so on by which the experiencer perceives himself identical with them.”<sup>215</sup>

However, because Rūpa and Jīva see *rasa* as a permanent and all-pervading characteristic of the devotee’s life, rather than an experience produced by and limited to the performative context of a stage or recitation, this realization of *rasa* through generalization can only occur when the dominant emotion of both the devotee in the audience and the character are of a similar nature. If this is not the case, *rasa* can not arise, as the specific form of the devotee’s dominant emotion can not be sufficiently intensified. Jīva explains two situations in which *rasa* cannot arise:

<sup>212</sup> *Yadi samāna-vāsanas tal-līlāntah-pātī bhavet tadā svayaṃ sadṛśo bhāva eva tasya tal-līlāntah-pātī-viśeṣasya vibhāvādikam tādr̥śatvābhimānini sād̥hāraṇī karoti* (*Prīti-sandarbhā* 111).

<sup>213</sup> *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.12. Jīva cites this verse in *Prīti-sandarbhā* 111 and in his commentary to *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.101.

<sup>214</sup> *Sva-para-sambandha-niyama-nirṇayaḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.102).

<sup>215</sup> *Śaktir asti vibhāvādeḥ kāpi sād̥hāraṇī-kṛtau, pramātā tad-abhedena svam yayā pratipadyate* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.103). Rūpa ascribes this verse to Bharata, but it is not found in the current editions of Bharata’s *Nāṭya-śāstra*.

If, however, there is a difference in proclivities (*vāsanā*) then the excitants, accompanying emotions, and ensuants generally become generalised. These would then merely enhance (*uddīpana*) his specific emotion, but there would be no realisation of *rasa*. And if his proclivities would conflict [with those of the character], as in the case of a lover with a parent, then, by seeing the emotions, like parental affection, only his general love would be enhanced, not his specific emotion, and there would be no realisation of *rasa*.<sup>216</sup>

In other words, when the dominant emotions of the devotee who is a member of the audience and the devotee who is the protagonist in the poem or play are dissimilar, the poem or play would generally enhance the love of the devotee in the audience but not sufficiently to turn it into *rasa*. However, if the two emotions are not just dissimilar but opposite,<sup>217</sup> as when a devotee whose love for Kṛṣṇa is parental watches a play about a devotee who loves Kṛṣṇa amorously (or vice versa), this would also not occur as one cannot see Kṛṣṇa both as one's child and as one's lover. Nevertheless, because the play is about Kṛṣṇa, the primary excitant of the devotee's love, his love will still be stimulated, but not the specific flavor of his love, as Kṛṣṇa is not presented in the play as the object of that *specific* form of love. Thus, in no way does devotional literature diminish these emotions, even if they are conflicting.

Rūpa and Jīva's application of this notion of generalization is remarkable as it allows him to bridge the devotional *rasa* theory with that of the literary world. Though Rūpa's use of the *rasa* theory is in general firmly grounded in the older understanding of *rasa*, where it is an emotional state that belongs to the protagonists of a poem or play, he thus is also able to incorporate the views of the later theorists, like Viśvanātha, and explain how the devotion of a devotee who has already entered the divine drama of Kṛṣṇa through his spiritual practice (or through grace) can be enhanced when he begins to watch a drama or listen to a poem about Kṛṣṇa's play with his devotees.

### Concluding Thoughts

Having said all this, we can now return to the question that we started with. Why is Kṛṣṇa superior to any other manifestation of God? Rūpa addresses this question in a slightly different way in the *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* (1.5.86–92):

<sup>216</sup> *Yadi tu vilakṣaṇa-vāsanā tadā vibhāvānām sañcāriṇām anubhāvānām ca prāyaśa eva sādharmaṇyaṁ bhavati. Tena tad-bhāva-viśeṣasyoddīpana-mātram syāt, na tu rasodbodhaḥ. Yadi tu viruddha-vāsanāḥ syāt, yathā vatsalena preyasī, tadāpi tasya prīti-sāmānyasyaiva vātsalyādī-darśanenoddīpanam bhavati, na bhāva-viśeṣasya; na ca rasodbodho jāyate (Prīti-sandarbhā 110).*

<sup>217</sup> Rūpa discusses what emotions are compatible and incompatible at some length in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 4.8.

In sacred texts, like the teachings of the *Mahā-vārāha* [*Purāṇa*] we hear the following: “All the forms of the Supreme Self are eternal and everlasting. They know no growth or diminution, never arise from matter, and are imperishable. Rather, they are an abundance of supreme bliss and in all respects pure perception. All are complete with all excellences and free from all blemishes.” Moreover, the *Nārada-pañcarātra* states: “Just as chrysoberyl has different colours, like blue and yellow, so the infallible Lord, by different meditations, appears differently.” Therefore, why is it said that there is a hierarchy of these [forms of God]?

It is said that, because he is the Supreme Lord, [these forms] are all complete. Nevertheless, it is recognised that not all potencies (*śakti*) are displayed in [all] these forms. [Those forms that] always display only a small portion of his potencies, are called a portion (*aṁśa*), and those that display his various potencies, in accordance with his desire, are called complete (*pūrṇa*). Potency [refers to] the excellences, such as majesty, sweetness, compassion, and splendour. The hierarchy is thus based on the manifestation and non-manifestation of these potencies. Though a candle and a bonfire have the same potency when it comes to burning down a town and other things, it is only from the bonfire’s ability to remove such discomforts as coldness that one obtains happiness. In the same way, in accordance with the display of his excellences his devotees can rightly obtain happiness when their worldly existence is destroyed.

Jīva explains that God’s “Godhood (*bhagavattā*) generally manifests in two ways: as supreme sovereignty (*aiśvarya*), and as supreme sweetness (*mādhurya*).” God’s sovereignty or majesty, he continues, is expressed through his lordship or “godness” (*prabhutā*), while his sweetness is the captivating nature of his character, qualities, form, age, and play.<sup>218</sup> The potency Kṛṣṇa embodies to a degree never seen in any of God’s other forms is this charm or “sweetness” (*mādhurya*), which makes everything about him attractive,<sup>219</sup> even to those who hate him.<sup>220</sup> Rūpa analyses this sweetness to be fourfold: the “sweetness of his play” (*līlā-mādhurya*), the “sweetness of his flute” (*venu-mādhurya*), the “sweetness of his form” (*rūpa-mādhurya*), and that of his devotees, who excel all other devotees by the power and purity of their love (*prema*).<sup>221</sup>

It is this quality or potency (*śakti*) that distinguishes Kṛṣṇa from Nārāyaṇa, and even the rustic Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa from the regal Dvārakā Kṛṣṇa: Rūpa writes

<sup>218</sup> *Tatra bhagavattā tāvat sāmānyato dvidvidhaiva: paramaiśvarya-rūpā parama-mādhurya-rūpā ceti. Aiśvaryaṃ prabhutā. Mādhuryaṃ nāma ca śīla-guṇa-rūpa-vayo-līlānām sambandha-viśeṣānām ca manoharatvaṃ (Prīti-sandarbhā 97).*

<sup>219</sup> *Tan mādhuryaṃ bhaved yatra ceṣṭādeḥ sprhaṇīyatā (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.257).*

<sup>220</sup> See *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.66.

<sup>221</sup> See *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.41–43 and 2.1.209–217.

that Kṛṣṇa manifests this sweetness fully in Dvārakā, fuller in Mathurā and fullest in Vraja.<sup>222</sup> Only in Vraja, therefore, can God be fully known, as it is only there, playing with his most intimate devotees, that he reveals the extraordinary sweetness of his form and play.

It is this potency of sweetness that allows the devotee of Kṛṣṇa to experience and express a greater intimacy and a fuller range of emotions in relation to him, than would be possible if his sovereignty were to be fully revealed. As Jīva explains, the experience merely of God's majesty "generates a sense of fear, awe and gravity" whereas the experience of his sweetness generates love (*prīti*).<sup>223</sup> In other words, it is only when God's "god-ness" is replaced by the sweetness of his "human-ness," as Jan Brzezinski put it,<sup>224</sup> that all the range of emotions discussed earlier can arise. Only in this intimacy can the notion of "myness" (*mamatā*) by which the devotee comes to see God not just as his benevolent master, but as his intimate friend, his dependent child, or his supremely beloved.

It is therefore Kṛṣṇa, who manifests such a degree of sweetness that his majestic qualities are eclipsed, alone who is "the embodiment of all ambrosial *rasas*."<sup>225</sup> Only in relation to him can such a vast variety of emotions arise—like conviviality, anger, amorous love, worry, and compassion. It is that emotional depth and richness experienced by Kṛṣṇa's devotees that determine according to Rūpa that Kṛṣṇa is indeed superior to Nārāyaṇa, even though theologically both are alike—like the bonfire and the candle in the above *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* passage.

Now, in closing, it is important to keep in mind that for Rūpa and the Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas, Kṛṣṇa is not just a transcendent deity who enjoys his play with his dearest devotees in a divine realm, and descended to this realm only once, at the close of the previous age of Dvāpara. One of the remarkable aspects of Rūpa's *rasa* theory is how centered all this is in the human person and in the here and now. Rūpa stresses that Kṛṣṇa's play is not just something of the past or something happening exclusively in the divine realms, but rather that it can be experienced at any time, by those who are "overpowered by Love (*prema*)":<sup>226</sup>

Even today, if his beloved devotees, pained by longing, desire to see that very play, Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of compassion, then reveals it to them.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>222</sup> *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.223.

<sup>223</sup> *Tatrasāyāya-mātrasya sādhasya-sambhrama-gaurava-buddhi-janakatvaṃ mādhyaya-mātrasya prīti-janakatvaṃ iti sarvānubhava-siddham eva (Prīti-sandarbhā 97).*

<sup>224</sup> Jan Brzezinski, "Does Kṛṣṇa Marry the *Gopīs* in the End?" *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies*, 5/4 (1997): p. 53.

<sup>225</sup> *Akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.1).*

<sup>226</sup> *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.392.

<sup>227</sup> *Ced adyāpi didṛkṣeran utkaṅthārtā nija-priyāḥ tām tām līlām tataḥ kṛṣṇo darśayet tām kṛpā-nidhiḥ (Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta 1.5.391).*



As we have seen, Rūpa emphasizes that devotion (*bhakti*) should not lead to a complete negation of the world, but rather to a detached engagement of the material world in the service of Kṛṣṇa. He defines devotion as serving the Lord of one's body with that very body and teaches that proper renunciation consists of using material objects to worship God. Furthermore, Rūpa teaches that this is true both for the practitioner and for that devotee that has already attained love for God, and, contrary to the earlier Vaiṣṇava schools, that embodiment does not restrict this, because one can attain liberation even while in this body: "One who desires to serve Hari with actions, mind and speech in truly all conditions is said to be liberated while still living (*jīvan-mukta*)."<sup>228</sup>

Furthermore, this experience of devotion to God is all-encompassing, in the sense that even one's everyday experiences in this world are absorbed in it and enhanced by it. As we have seen, it is this love for Kṛṣṇa that creates the excitants that will in their turn enhance this love. Thus, while living in Purī, Orissa, Caitanya would see the sand dunes to be Govardhana, the mountain that Kṛṣṇa lifted as a child, and the ocean as the river Yamunā that flows through Vṛndāvana—the ordinary objects were transformed into excitants due to his dominant emotion of love for Kṛṣṇa.<sup>229</sup>

Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas like Rūpa, Jīva, Śrīnātha, and Kavikarṇapūra, therefore, did not see emotion as something to be shunned, but rather as something to be refined and to be intensified. It is only in relation to Kṛṣṇa, as Kavikarṇapūra suggests, that all emotions find their fruition, because he is "the sprout from which all pure *rasas* [grow],"<sup>230</sup> and it is from that Love (*prema*) for Kṛṣṇa that all emotions naturally emerge and merge back into, like waves of the ocean. The experience of that range of emotions for Kṛṣṇa is crucial for these theologians, as it points to the essential characteristics of the highest nature of God.

<sup>228</sup> *Īhā yasya harer dāsyē karmanā manasā girā nikhilāsv apy avasthāsu jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.187).*

<sup>229</sup> See *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 3.14.84ff. and 3.18.26–30.

<sup>230</sup> *Sarva-suddha-rasa-vṛnda-kandalah (Alaṅkāra-kaustubha 5.88).*

## READING

# Two Discourses on Rasa

Translated by Rembert Lutjeharms

### Devotion with Rasa: Śrīnātha's *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā*

The first passage translated here is from Śrīnātha Cakravartī's *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* ("The Box Containing Caitanya's Teachings"), which is a commentary on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Śrīnātha's *rasa* theory is important, as it is one of the earliest attempts to explain devotion in terms of *rasa* within the Caitanya tradition. As the passage below well illustrates, his analysis is significantly different from Rūpa's.

The passage below is Śrīnātha's commentary on *Bhāgavata* 11.12.8. In this chapter of the *Bhāgavata*, Kṛṣṇa praises saintly company and declares that merely by associating with his devotees one can attain him, irrespective of one's spiritual practices (or lack thereof), and no matter what material condition one may be in. Thus, he continues, devotees like "[the demons] Vṛtra and Prahāda, Vṛṣaparva, Bali, Bāṇa, as well as Maya and Vibhīṣaṇa; [the monkeys] Sugrīva, Hanumān, Jāmbavān, the elephant [Gajendra], [the birds] Jaṭāyu and Garuḍa, the hunter, Kubjā, the *gopīs* in Vraja, the wives of the Vedic Brahmins, and others like them" all attained Kṛṣṇa merely due to contact with the saints.<sup>231</sup> In a very characteristic fashion, Śrīnātha divides this long list of devotees into two groups: those that belong to a previous age (*yuga*), like Bali and Hanumān, and the list's final four—Kubjā, the *gopīs*, the wives of the Vedic Brahmins, and Kṛṣṇa's queens (the "others like them" of the *Bhāgavata* verse, according to Śrīnātha)—who belong to this age "in which I [Kṛṣṇa] descended."<sup>232</sup> As we will see below, this division becomes the foundation for Śrīnātha's teachings about the special nature of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, who allows for much greater intimacy and a richer emotional experience. Kṛṣṇa then speaks the following verse:

By absolutely pure emotion the *gopīs*, the cows, the mountains, the deer, and other simple minded creatures achieved final perfection and quickly attained me.  
(*Bhāgavata* 11.12.8)<sup>233</sup>

<sup>231</sup> *Bhāgavata* 11.12.3–6.

<sup>232</sup> See *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā* 11.12.3–6.

<sup>233</sup> *Kevalena hi bhāvena gopyo gāvo nagā mṛgāḥ, ye 'nye mūḍha-dhiyo 'nāgāḥ  
siddhā mām īyur añjasā.*

Commenting on this verse, Śrīnātha outlines his understanding of *rasa* and devotion, including his notion of the *rasa* of Love (*prema-rasa*). None of the verses Śrīnātha cites here are from any known texts; it is possible that they are his own compositions, or that they are from the *Rasa-bhakti-candrikā* (“Moonlight on devotion with *rasa*”), a work that Śrīnātha mentions in this section but that is otherwise unknown.

### **Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā 11.12.8**

Objection: why was Kubjā earlier listed (*Bhāgavata* 11.12.6) in the second group?

That is confidential. [She was listed there] because devotion is of various types. The first division is between [devotion] devoid of *rasa* and devotion with *rasa*. That devoid of *rasa* is [also] of various types: it may be influenced by goodness (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*), or ignorance (*tamas*), or be free from the three modes (*nirguṇa*). [Devotion] influenced by goodness is of two types—mixed and pure—and that which is mixed is [again] of two types: mixed with ritual action (*karma*), or mixed with gnosis (*jñāna*).

Now, the eleven *rasas* [correspond to devotion] with *rasa*: [the first] eight are those beginning with the amorous [as listed in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*]; the ninth is the peaceful; the tenth is Love (*prema*). Bhojadeva declares that the eleventh is [the *rasa*] of parental affection, but in reality that is included in Love.<sup>234</sup> Therefore the eleventh is known as adoration (*bhāva*). As it is said:

It is declared that “adoration is love for a god, and so on”.<sup>235</sup> If fully nourished by extraordinary excitants and so on, adoration too attains the state of *rasa*. [Thus] that adoration is considered a *rasa*.

<sup>234</sup> This comment of Śrīnātha is quite peculiar, since Bhoja never states this in either the *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* or the *Śrīṅgāra-prakāśa*. In the *Samarāṅgana-sūtradhāra* (“The Director of Battlefields”), however, Bhoja lists 11 *rasas*, one of which is *prema*, which he defines as follows: “The *rasa* which is born from the joy of seeing one’s beloved, from the birth of a son, or from the obtainment of wealth and causes the hair to bristle is said to be Love (*prema*)” (*Artha-lābha-sutopatti-priya-darśana-harṣa-jah; samjāta-pulakodbhedo rasaḥ premā sa ucyate*, 82.8). The inclusion of the joy arising from the birth of a son (*sutopatti*) might provide the rationale for Śrīnātha’s inclusion of *vatsala* in *prema*.

<sup>235</sup> Śrīnātha here reinterprets and builds on the ideas of Mammaṭa (eleventh century), who writes in his influential work *Kāvya-prakāśa* (“A Light on Poetry”) that “love for a god and so on, as well as a transient emotion that is suggested, is called ‘emotion’ (*bhāva*)” (*Ratir devādi-viṣayā vyabhicārī tathāñcītaḥ bhāva proktaḥ, Kāvya-prakāśa* 4.35). The idea is that devotion to a god is, according to Mammaṭa, not a suitable dominant emotion that can be developed into *rasa* throughout a play, but like a transient emotion can be supportive of another emotion. In devotional texts like the *Bhāgavata*, the word *bhāva* is often used not in the technical sense Mammaṭa intends here, but to refer to the state of love in devotion, or “adoration,” as I translated it here. Śrīnātha and his disciple Kavikarṇapūra are thus able

Devotion accompanied by these *rasas* is called devotion with *rasa*. The ancients considered that [all] the *rasas*, beginning with the amorous, are one, though they are distinct by such [expressions] as glancing at each other—as is the case with the blessed wives of the Vedic Brahmins.

Devotion is the mental state developed when there is the knowledge of something being worshipable (*upāśyatva-jñāna*). If this is connected with another state of mind [such as] the dominant emotions like love, it is then called devotion with *rasa* (*rasa-bhakti*). One should not doubt this, considering that since two mental states are not attained simultaneously, they must occur in succession. This being so, one should see both in devotion with *rasa*: the aspects of devotion in its nature as devotion (*bhaktitva*) and the constituents of *rasa* in its nature as *rasa* (*rasatva*). In devotion devoid of *rasa*, however, only the aspects of devotion [are found].

Thus, since the amorous (*śṛṅgāra*) is the first of the *rasas*, Kubjā, as a devotee with the amorous *rasa*, is mentioned first [in the second group of devotees listed in *Bhāgavata* 11.12.3–6]. As it is said,

Kubjā in the first, [the goddess] earth in the compassionate, Pārtha in terror, Nārada in mirth, the beautiful Kaurava women in wonder, Bhiṣma, king of the Kurus, in heroism, the lord of the demons in the horrific, Bṛghu, best of the sages, in the furious *rasa*, Piṅgalā in the peaceful, and the young girls in Love (*prema*). One should understand these ten as worshippers with *rasa* (*rasopāsaka*).

These are of this type since they have the knowledge of something worshipable and the components of *rasa*.

Objection: In works like the *Muktāphala* Vopadeva and others explain all these devotees with *rasa* very differently: people like Kaṁsa are in fear and people like Hiranyaśipu are in anger.<sup>236</sup> What unprecedented path of yours is this where you ignore these and [instead] mention Pārtha (Arjuna)?

It is true. If they were devotees and had devotion as defined above, then they would be devotees with *rasa*; but since they do not have devotion they are certainly not devotees. However, they achieved perfection because their [emotions] like fear caused [Kṛṣṇa] to be vividly and continuously manifested [to them]. [The *Bhāgavata* (7.1.31)] states: “Kaṁsa by fear, Caidya [Śiśupāla] by envy and others [have attained his abode].” Thus they attained perfection only by the vivid manifestation [of Kṛṣṇa caused] by their pure fear, not by devotion.

Objection: In regards to devotion with the fearful [*rasa*], the permanent nature (*sthāyitva*) of the dominant emotion, such as fear, does not occur in the

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to use Mammaṭa’s idea to establish that devotion, whose dominant emotion is “adoration” (*bhāva*), can indeed become *rasa*. Śrīnātha does not develop this in the passage given here, but Kavikarṇapūra does so (see *Alaṅkāra-kaustubha* 5.13 and 5.32).

<sup>236</sup> See *Muktā-phala* 14.1–25 for Hiranyaśipu and the heroic *rasa*, and *Muktā-phala* 15.1–6 for Kaṁsa and the fearful *rasa*.

mentioned examples of Pārtha, etc. Only that which remains even in the absence of the excitants is truly the dominant emotion. Fear arose only when Pārtha saw [Kṛṣṇa's] horrific form, but it was not there before.

It is not like this, since disgust (*jugupsā*) is transient. Certainly no one's mind remains perpetually disgusted, but rather only at the time of seeing the [appropriate] excitants. How [then] does it have a permanent nature? Therefore, the dominant emotion is a particular state of mind that is associated with the realisation of the nature of *rasa* (*rasatva*) and is distinct from the excitants and so on. That [a person] like Pārtha is a devotee with [a *rasa*] like the fearful is caused by time; it is not natural (*svābhāvika*). Rather, friendship (*sakhya*) is natural [for Arjuna]. And thus [it is said]:

Devotion does not have a single *rasa*, nor does a devotee have one [type of] devotion. Whatever his disposition [in a particular situation], that [*rasa*] is declared as taught by tradition.

Objection: it seems that the *gopīs* too have the amorous [*rasa*]. Why do you describe them as having the *rasa* of Love (*prema-rasa*)?

This is true.

Partial (*khaṇḍa*) bliss enters naturally into complete (*akhaṇḍa*) bliss; thus all *rasas* are certainly contained in the *rasa* of Love. Like waves in the ocean, all emotions (*bhāva*), and even [all] *rasas* emerge from and merge back into the dense bliss that is the *rasa* of Love.

I merely mention this here, and, fearing long windedness, do not illustrate this here. [For more information] one should look in the *Rasa-bhakti-candrikā* ("Moonlight on devotion with *rasa*").

Thus the *gopīs* only have Love, not sexual desire (*kāma*). When [the *Bhāgavata* (7.1.31)] states that "the *gopīs* [attained perfection] by sexual desire (*kāma*)", the word *kāma* here means desire (*abhilāṣa*), which is another synonym for Love (*prema*).

Therefore [the Lord] himself states [in this verse] "certainly by pure emotion (*bhāva*) the *gopīs* [attained me]". [The particle] *hi* means "certainly", and "by emotion" means "by Love". And by the *gopīs*' company, the cows [attained me]; by their company the immovable mountains, in which they continuously roam, [attained me]; by their company the bucks, and the fawns that live with them. By their continuous company, other simple-minded creatures attained perfection, became peaceful, and easily attained me with these very bodies. What is the nature [of this perfection]? It is final, which means there is no return from it.

### Can Devotion Become *Rasa*? Jīva Gosvāmī's *Prīti-sandarbhā*

This is a passage from Jīva's *Prīti-sandarbhā* ("A Treatise on Love"). Throughout the work Jīva generally uses the word *prīti* rather than *prema* to refer to the higher states of Love, as *prīti* refers not just to an emotive state but also emphasizes its blissful character. As he explains, "The word 'love' (*prīti*) certainly denotes happiness, and is synonymous with 'joy' (*mud*), 'delight' (*pramoda*), 'rapture' (*harṣa*), and 'bliss' (*ānanda*). 'Emotion' (*bhāva*), 'affection' (*hārda*), 'friendship' (*sauhr̥da*), and so on, are also said to be synonyms of the state of love (*prīyatā*)."<sup>237</sup>

The passage translated here—an excerpt from *Prīti-sandarbhā* 110—is important as it is the most scholastic attempt to justify not just the idea of devotional *rasa*, but also Rūpa's specific categorization of this type of *rasa*. Jīva first engages with the "worldly scholars of *rasa*"<sup>238</sup> and attempts to show that devotion or love (*prīti*) not only fulfills all the criteria necessary for an emotion to become *rasa*, but that it does so to a higher degree than the worldly emotions of the literary theorists. Citing the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, Jīva then illustrates the way worldly *rasa* arises, what its essential nature is, and what the nature of its experience is, and then shows how devotion exceeds these three characteristics as Viśvanātha describes them—its relation to the mode of goodness (*sattva*), its similarity to the experience of Brahman, and its uncommon wonder (*camatkāra*).

In the second half of this section, Jīva briefly attempts to defend Rūpa's classification of *rasa*. Though he cites the works of several classical literary theorists in this section—like Bhoja's *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* and Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*—he declares to rely on "the scholars of transcendental *rasa*" to accomplish this, and the author he relies on most is Śrīdhāra Svāmī, the *Bhāgavata* commentator. *Bhāgavata* 10.43.17 describes how when Kṛṣṇa walked into Kāṁsa's arena he was perceived differently by the various people present. Commenting on this verse, Śrīdhāra Svāmī writes that "the Lord, who embodies all *rasas* beginning with the amorous, then appeared according the desire of everyone [present]"<sup>239</sup> and explains that Kṛṣṇa thus evoked a specific emotion in each person present: "The *rasas* that were manifested to the wrestlers and the

<sup>237</sup> *Prīti-śabdena khalu mut-pramoda-harsānandādi-paryāyaṃ sukham ucyate. Bhāva-hārda-sauhr̥dādi-paryāyā prīyatā cocyate (Prīti-sandarbhā 61).*

<sup>238</sup> Jīva's use of the word *laukika* is slightly ambiguous. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, in classical Sanskrit literary theory the term *laukika* meant "common" and referred to the common emotional experience of the characters, experienced "in the world" (*loka*), in contrast to the *rasa* experience which is "uncommon" (*alaukika*), because it is produced by "uncommon" causes, namely the dramatic performance. Jīva, however, also uses the term *alaukika* in the sense of *aprākṛta*, "non-worldly" or "non-material." Kavikaṁpūra does the same in the *Alaṁkāra-kaustubha* (see, for example, *Alaṁkāra-kaustubha* 5.16).

<sup>239</sup> *Tatraśṛṅgārādi-sarva-rasa-kadamba-mūrtirbhagavāṁsattadabhiprāyānusāreṇa babhau (Śrīdhāra Svāmī on Bhāgavata 10.43.17)*

others are listed in order in the following verse: ‘The furious and the wonderful, the amorous, the comic, the heroic, as well as compassion, the fearful and the horrific, the peaceful, and [the *rasa*] of devotion with Love (*prema*).’<sup>240</sup> Jīva tries to align these 10 *rasas* with Rūpa’s five primary *rasas*, and thus give more support to his teachings.

### ***Prīti-sandarbhā* 110**

This love (*prīti*) for him [i.e. Kṛṣṇa] is naturally said to be a dominant emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*), which, when brought together with its causes, effects and accompanying [emotions], reaches the state of *rasa*, just like the [dominant emotions] of the scholars of worldly poetry, such as love. The causes and so on are called, in chronological order, excitants (*vibhāva*), ensuants (*anubhāva*) and transient emotions (*vyabhicārī*). Because it is a type of love, it certainly is an emotion (*bhāva*).

The nature of the dominant emotion is said to consist of the following characteristics according to the works on *rasa*:

The dominant emotion is that source of beauty which is not destroyed by favourable or unfavourable emotions, but turns the others into itself. (*Daśa-rūpaka* 4.34)

The nature of the excitants and so on will be discussed elsewhere, as they will be taught with their characteristics of exciting and so on.

Thereafter, when it manifests in a specific way due to a specific manifestation of the causes and so on, and is brought together with these [excitants, ensuants and transient emotions], this love for the Lord is called the *rasa* of love for him. This is also called *rasa* consisting of devotion or the *rasa* of devotion (*bhakti-rasa*). Thus it is said: “Enriched emotions attain the state of *rasa*.”

Now, one should consider that devotion which the worldly scholars do not consider a valid *rasa* because it lacks the constituents of *rasa* to have a worldly (*prākṛta*) god as its object.

The constituents necessary for the realisation of *rasa* are threefold: (1) the suitability of the emotion itself (*svarūpa-yogyatā*), (2) the suitability of its entourage [such as its causes and effects] (*parikara-yogyatā*) and (3) the suitability of the person [who experiences *rasa*] (*puruṣa-yogyatā*).

<sup>240</sup> *Mallādiṣv abhivyaṅgī rasāḥ kramena ślokena nibadhyante: “raudro ’dbhutaś ca śṛṅgāro hāsyam vīro dayā tathā. bhayānakaś ca bībhatsaḥ śāntaḥ sa-prema-bhaktikaḥ”* (Śrīdhara Svāmī on *Bhāgavata* 10.43.17). Rūpa also refers to this passage of Śrīdhara’s commentary in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.2.1. Commenting on this *Bhāgavata* verse, Śrīnātha too refers the reader to Śrīdhara’s commentary.

Even when it comes to worldly *rasa* the essential nature of dominant emotions like love is suitable, because it has the form of a dominant emotion and because it is agreed that it is identical with pleasure. Now, the nature of a dominant emotion exists in love for the Lord, and it has been proven that it surpasses the happiness of Brahman, which is an ocean whose waves consist entirely of such pleasure.

And similarly, the entourage [of worldly emotions], such as its causes, are in themselves unfit to become excitants and so on, because they are common (*laukika*). However, they become uncommon (*alaukika*) by the skill of a good poet's composition, and thereby suitable [to evoke *rasa*]. But in the case of love [for the Lord], they are by themselves [suitable] because their nature is extraordinary and uncommon, as we have shown [earlier in this treatise] and will shown [later on].

Finally, the suitability of the person is such a mental impression (*vāsanā*) of, as it were, a person like Śrī Prahlāda. It is understood that without these, [*rasa*] is not evoked even with worldly poetry. As it has been said: "The pious experience the flow of *rasa*, like *yogīs* [experience the bliss of Brahman]." (*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.3) And also: "The relishing of *rasa* does not arise without the mental impressions of love and so on." (*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.8).

The realisation of worldly *rasa*, its nature, and the nature of its experience is described as follows:

[Arising] from the predominance of goodness (*sattva*), indivisible, consisting of self-manifested consciousness and bliss, free from the touch of anything else that is to be known, resembling the tasting of Brahman, and whose life air is extraordinary wonder (*camatkāra*)—*this rasa* is relished by some authorities like one's own nature as being non-different [from its own experience]. (*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.2–3)

But when it comes to love for the Lord the transcendental pure existence (*visuddha-sattva*) is the cause, [as the *Bhāgavata* (4.3.23) states]: "The pure existence is known as *vasudeva*, because in that state the Supreme Person Vāsudeva is fully revealed." I have explained the transcendental nature of this existence (*sattva*) in the *Bhagavat-sandarbhā*.

Likewise, that love for the Lord surpasses the experience of Brahman is expressed in verses like these:

The bliss embodied beings can derive from meditating on your lotus feet or by hearing the stories of your devotees, O Lord, does not exist even in Brahman, though it is your own power. (*Bhāgavata* 4.9.10)

And,

Those who know *rasa*, and are expert in the stories of your fame, which are pure and worth reciting, have taken shelter at your feet and do not care for



liberation or other blessings, which bestow fear when you frown your eyebrows.  
(*Bhāgavata* 3.15.48)

The wonder [of transcendental *rasa*] is even higher [than that of worldly *rasa*], as is explained in statements like the following:

[The form the Lord had] obtained to show the power of his own *yoga-māyā*, the complete embodiment of his auspicious perfection, [...] astonished [even] himself. (*Bhāgavata* 3.2.12)

Moreover, this *rasa* is established in accordance with the opinion of older scholars of transcendental *rasa*. The author of the *Śrī Bhagavan-nāma-kaumudī* [i.e. Lakṣmīdhara] explained it in general, while the venerable [Śrīdhara] Svāmī has analysed in detail the five divisions of *rasa*, beginning with *śānta*, and has shown that they are only five in number, in [his commentary] on this verse:

Kṛṣṇa, who entered the arena with his elder brother, was appeared to the wrestlers as a lightning bolt, to the men (in the assembly) as the best among men, to women as Cupid personified, to the cowherds as one of their own, to the impious kings as a punisher, to his parents as a child, to the king of the Bhojas (Kaṁsa) as death, to the ignorant as the Universal Form, to the *yogīs* as the Supreme Truth, and to the Vṛṣṇīs as the supreme Deity. (*Bhāgavata* 10.43.17).<sup>241</sup>

[The *rasa*] of the women is the amorous (*śṛṅgāra*) *rasa*; that of the cowherds who are of the same age [as Kṛṣṇa] is intimate friendship (*preyas*), whose dominant emotion is jestful friendship, indicated [in Śrīdhara's commentary] by the word "comic" (*hāsyā*). In his opinion, "to the cowherds" (*gopānām*) means "to Śrīdhāma and so on." [The *rasa*] of the father is [the *rasa* of] parental affection (*vatsala*), whose dominant emotion is tenderness (*vātsalya*), of which "compassion" is a synonym. [The *rasa*] of the *yogīs* is the peaceful (*śānta*), which consists of both

<sup>241</sup> Jīva here tries to read Rūpa's *rasa* theory into Śrīdhara's commentary. Śrīdhara mentions ten kinds of *rasas* (*raudro 'dbhutaś ca śṛṅgāro hāsyam viro dayā tathā. bhayānakaś ca bībhatsaḥ śāntaḥ sa-prema-bhaktikaḥ*), and to come to the five (primary) *rasas* of Rūpa, Jīva has to make a few adjustments. First of all, the "negative" *rasas* (*raudra*, *bhayānaka*, and *bībhatsa*) are eliminated because they are in opposition to love (*prīti*). The remaining *rasas* are then equated with Rūpa's *rasas*: Śrīdhara's compassion (*dayā*) is equated with Rūpa's parental affection (*vātsalatā*); Śrīdhara's mirth (*hāsyā*) with Rūpa's fraternal affection (*preyas*); and the Vṛṣṇīs' devotional *rasa* (*sa-prema-bhaktika*) with Rūpa's *rasa* of servitude (*dāsyā* or *prīti*) (cf. *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.2.1). Two other *rasas* which do not fit in Rūpa's five-*rasas*-scheme still remain: the marvellous (*adbhūta*) and the heroic (*vīra*). Jīva argues that the marvellous is present in every *rasa* as it is the essence of any *rasa* (cf. *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 4.2.13). Because it is therefore nondifferent from the five primary *rasas*, there is no harm in mentioning it separately. How Jīva eliminates the heroic *rasa* is not clear.

devotion and gnosis (*jñāna*). The Vṛṣṇīs' *rasa* consists of devotion. In the same way, he explains that the *rasa* of the men [in the assembly] consisting of general affection.

Finally, he mentions the marvellous *rasa* (*adbhuta*), because it is the life air of all *rasas*, which is indicated [only as a separate *rasa*] when the specific qualities of [*rasas*] like the peaceful are absent. As Dharmadatta said:

The essence of *rasa* is wonder (*camatkāra*) and [this wonder] is perceived everywhere. The marvellous *rasa*, although everywhere, exists in the essence of *rasa* wonder. Therefore the learned Nārāyaṇa has said that [the only] *rasa* is the marvellous *rasa*. (*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.3)

[Śrīdhara] Svāmī accepts here [also] the *rasas* of the wrestlers such as the furious (*raudra*). I do not approved of these here, because they are opposed to love. This is the opinion of the scholars of transcendental (*alaukika*) *rasa*.

In the same way, some scholars of worldly (*laukika*) *rasa*, like king Bhoja, regard the affectionate (*preyas*) and parental affection (*vatsala*) as *rasa*. Thus it is said: "The affectionate [...] has fondness (*sneha*) as its dominant emotion." (*Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* 5.74) This is as follows:

"Whatever I like, my beloved does." Thus he thinks, but does not know that he likes whatever she does. (*Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* 5.74)

This verse is given as an illustration to denote the special type of friendship (*sakhyā*) between a husband and wife. Similarly, [it is said about parental affection]:

Because it clearly produces wonder, they recognise [also] the *rasa* of parental affection (*vatsala-rasa*). Its dominant emotion is tenderness, and sons and so on are considered to be its foundational excitants (*alambana-vibhāva*). (*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.251)

Likewise, Sudeva and others accept the devotional [*rasa*].<sup>242</sup>

Moreover, if we examine the matter, the happiness of worldly [emotions] like love is only apparent, because it ends in suffering. The Lord himself declares this: "happiness is transcending happiness and distress, [and] distress is expecting happiness in sensual enjoyment." (*Bhāgavata* 11.19.41) He does not accept even their tranquillity (*śama*) when he states "fixing one's intelligence on me is tranquillity" (*Bhāgavata* 11.19.36).<sup>243</sup> As for the type of happiness [derived from emotions] like disgust (*jugupsā*), even the worldly [scholars] detest this.

<sup>242</sup> Sudeva is the author of the *Rasa-vilāsa*, and is also referred to in Rūpa's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 3.2.2, *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* 5.3 and *Nāṭaka-candrikā* 10. None of his works have survived.

<sup>243</sup> *Śama* is often considered to be the *sthāyī-bhāva* of *śānta-rasa*.

In Śrī Nārada's teachings all these are criticised, while the *rasa* [experienced] in relation to the Lord is praised:

Poetical words which never describe the world-purifying glories of Hari is regarded by sages as a place of pilgrimage for crows. Swans, who dwell in desired places, do not delight in them. [But] saintly persons hear, sing and approve of that speech about him in which the names of the unlimited [Lord], marked by his glories, [are mentioned] at every verse, even if [such a composition is] grammatical incorrect, [because it] destroys the sins of men. (*Bhāgavata* 1.5.10–11)

And in the words of Śrī Rukmiṇī:

Inside there is [just] flesh, bones, blood, worms, faeces, mucus, bile and air, which is covered by skin, facial hair, bodily hair, nails, hair on the head. The foolish woman who does not smell the fragrance of your lotus feet, worships [such] a living corpse, considering it to be her husband. (*Bhāgavata* 10.60.45)

Therefore, I could not believe that *rasa* arises from worldly excitants. And if *rasa* is generated, it will always only lead to the horrific *rasa* (*bībhatsa-rasa*).

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# Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Philosophy

Tradition, Reason and Devotion

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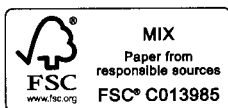
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