

# The Perfection of All Beauty and Joy: A Gauḍīya Vedāntic theology of devotional love

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When Western devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya who were introduced to Kṛṣṇa devotion through the teachings of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda encountered (and, in some cases, embraced) other preceptorial lineages of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in India from around 1970 on, a number of theological issues — hitherto considered entirely unproblematic — rose to prominence. One of these issues concerns the relationship between perfected devotion (*bhakti*), or pure love (*prema*), and the self. Following the teachings of the nineteenth-century theologian Kedarnath Dutt Bhaktivinod, Prabhupāda taught that perfected devotion is inherent or “dormant” in the self and only needs to be “awakened” or “revived” by devotional practice.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Bhaktivinod makes this a cornerstone of his theology: The *Jaīva-dharma* (“The *dharma* of the living being”), his most impressive theological treatise, is centered on the idea that pure devotion is the self’s *dharma*, its inalienable characteristic.<sup>2</sup> However, drawing on the teachings of the sixteenth-century authors Rūpa Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī, some preceptors of ascetic (*bābājī*) communities in Braj, whom the Western devotees encountered, argue that devotion is “not dormant in the heart

of the jiva [living being]. Consequently, bhakti is not inherent in the svarupa [essential nature] of the jiva.”<sup>3</sup> Rather, since perfected devotion is said to be part of God’s essential nature (*svarūpa*), it is not awakened, but rather bestowed, by grace channeled through the lineage of perfected preceptors.<sup>4</sup>

The issue is especially important in Gauḍīya theology, because it has great implications for devotion as practice (*sādhana-bhakti*), particularly for the advanced practice of “passion-pursuant” devotion (*rāgānugā bhakti*), in which the practitioner meditates on serving Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the divine realm, in a perfected body (*siddha-deha*), in a particular emotional relationship (*rasa*). Is this relationship with God inherent in the self, as Bhaktivinod claims,<sup>5</sup> and will it reveal itself naturally by devotional practice, or is this relationship revealed, if not awarded, by one’s preceptor?<sup>6</sup>

Given the theological importance of this topic for a devotional school, it is somewhat surprising that the issue was not directly addressed by the earliest theologians of the Caitanya tradition. Rūpa Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī, the tradition’s most influential theologians, both wrote a lengthy treatise on the nature of devotion (the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Bhakti-sandarbha*, respectively). They did indeed claim that perfected devotion is a manifestation of God’s own potency but did not spell out the implications of such a view, nor did they comment on how this should be understood in the light of earlier Vaiṣṇava theologies.

In Vedānta, the classical domain of Vaiṣṇava theology, the question of the self’s relation to devotion is not a thorny issue at all. Consider, for example, Rāmānuja’s view. “The word ‘devotion’ (*bhakti*),” he writes, “refers to a specific form of love, and love refers to a specific form of awareness (*jñāna*),”<sup>7</sup> In other words, devotion arises when one contemplates or is aware of God, whose nature is bliss (*ānanda*), and one attains union with God in the experience of that bliss. Devotion is precisely nothing more than such awareness, Rāmānuja stresses, for to know God is to love God, and to love is to experience bliss.<sup>8</sup> This state could therefore be said to be inherent in the self in several ways. First of all, the self’s eternal nature is pure awareness,<sup>9</sup> and it also has the inseparable property of awareness (*dharmabhūta-jñāna*),<sup>10</sup> which is now “contracted” but “unfolds” fully in the state of liberation, when the self attains union with God.

Secondly, the self is ontologically dependent on God, and the awareness of God is thus merely the recognition of one's real, dependent nature. Moreover, Rāmānuja argues, the state of union — which is the state of “higher devotion” (*parā bhakti*), that is, devotion as the end rather than the means<sup>11</sup> — is natural to the self. The self's nature (*svarūpa*) is “eternally obtained”;<sup>12</sup> the self's characteristics — including the pure awareness (*jñāna*) and the bliss (*ānanda*) it attains in the state of perfection — are eternal and merely obscured by ignorance in our current, embodied state.<sup>13</sup> Liberation — union with God — therefore consists merely in “the manifestation of the self's own nature (*svarūpa*),” not the arising of something new.<sup>14</sup>

In Gauḍīya theology, however, the issue is more complicated. As I have argued elsewhere, although early Gauḍīya theologians engaged extensively with Vedānta, they also distanced themselves from classical Vedānta.<sup>15</sup> This partially explains why this issue has been unsatisfactorily addressed by them. Generally, when Gauḍīya theologians discuss the nature of the self, they do so through classical Vedānta — particularly by relying on earlier Vaiṣṇavas, like Rāmānuja.<sup>16</sup> However, when they discuss devotion, they do not follow Vedānta. Devotion is generally not understood Upaniṣadically as “a specific form of awareness” (*jñāna-viśeṣa*), as Rāmānuja defines it; rather, devotion is taken to be distinct from, superior to, and independent of awareness (*jñāna*). In Gauḍīya texts, awareness (*jñāna*) is often understood to be the nondual awareness advocated by Advaitins.<sup>17</sup> This distinction is largely derived from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the main source for the Gauḍīya understanding of devotion. Although Gauḍīyas generally consider the *Bhāgavata* a Vedāntic text — indeed, a privileged commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* by its own author<sup>18</sup> — classical Vedāntic discourse is not always neatly integrated into the school's Purāṇic theology. Indeed, the tradition often oscillates between a classical Vaiṣṇava Vedānta discourse that engages with the Upaniṣads and the *Brahma-sūtras*, and a *Bhāgavata* discourse in which the central concerns of Vedānta are seen to be an Advaitin enterprise, detracting from, if not antithetical to, devotion.<sup>19</sup>

Since early Gauḍīya theologians do not go to Vedānta for their theology of devotion, their analysis is remarkably different from that of previous Vaiṣṇavas like Rāmānuja. Rūpa Gosvāmī, the tradition's most influential theologian of devotion, analyzes

perfected (*sādhya*) devotion — devotion as the end, rather than the means — as a manifestation in the self of God’s divine potency. It is “a specific form of pure being (*śuddha-sattva*)”<sup>20</sup> and “the play of his great potency.”<sup>21</sup> It is thus part of God’s essential nature. In a commentary on the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Jīva does not argue that this devotion is a specific form of awareness of the self, but rather of God: “Here ‘pure being’ (*śuddha-sattva*) refers to a mode of the self-illuminating, essential potency (*svarūpa-śakti*) of the Lord, called awareness (*saṃvit*), not a specific mode of illusion (*māyā*).”<sup>22</sup> Rūpa Gosvāmī calls it a “specific form of [God’s] pure being,” he explains, because it is particularly a manifestation of God’s potency of bliss (*hlādinī-śakti*).<sup>23</sup>

Why do they argue this? As Jīva’s comment indicates, this theology of devotion is primarily articulated and defended not against earlier Vaiṣṇava Vedānta views, but rather against Advaita Vedānta. The influence of the devotional Advaita Vedānta that emerged from the *Bhāgavata* on the early Gauḍīya tradition is immense. Jīva builds his entire theology on that of Śrīdhara Svāmī, an Advaitin (though also Vaiṣṇava) commentator on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*,<sup>24</sup> and Rūpa’s theology of devotional *rasa* builds on ideas of other Advaitin commentators on this text, like Lakṣmīdhara Kavi.<sup>25</sup> Gauḍīya theology is remarkably accommodating to Advaita ideas: Both the notion of Brahman and liberation (*mokṣa*) — the two central concerns of Vedānta — are generally understood in Advaita terms, and God (*bhagavān*) and devotion are considered superior to these, rather than identical with them, as is the case in Rāmānuja’s theology.<sup>26</sup> It is because of this profound Advaita influence that Gauḍīyas need to distance themselves from Advaita views, such as the view that devotion is merely a mental state and hence a product of the illusory world of duality (*māyā*).

But there is also a more important reason why they argue for devotion being an aspect of God’s essential nature (*svarūpa*). While many elements of the earlier Vaiṣṇava theologians are accepted by Gauḍīyas, there is a marked difference in Gauḍīya theology: God is freely admitted to be, in some sense, passible. The reason that devotion has to be a potency of God is because God himself is drawn to devotion. Devotion “attracts Śrī Kṛṣṇa,” Rūpa writes, because “having made Hari share in pure love (*prema*), devotion brings Hari

under control.”<sup>27</sup> But since God, who is perfect and full, has to be impassible — any change in his being would imply a lack and an imperfection — he can only be attracted to what is part of his own being. Devotion is thus not merely the experience of God’s bliss by his devotee, but also God’s own experience of his own bliss through his devotee.<sup>28</sup>

While the position that devotion is a manifestation of God’s potency thus helps to address some theological difficulties, it also raises others. If perfected devotion is to be considered perfection, it would have to be a state that is natural to the self, because otherwise it would imply that such a state is impermanent, and it would thus be an artificial imposition on the self, not unlike the state of being in this world of rebirth. Gauḍīya theologians address the first part of this argument — that devotion would not be perfect because it would be produced. Jīva, for example, raises the objection that perfected devotion (*bhāva*) is produced, because it is obtained, and hence it cannot be a person’s ultimate goal. This argument does not hold, he writes, because devotion is a “specific mode of a specific form of God’s potency” and hence eternal and perfect, not something newly created.<sup>29</sup>

The argument’s second part — that it would be an artificial imposition on the self — is not directly addressed but relates to assumptions in classical Vedānta. In classical Vedānta, the state of perfection is believed to be a state of freedom, in which the self realizes its essential nature and thereby returns to its natural or original state. Rāmānuja, as we have seen, thus talks of it as a state that is “eternally obtained,” and Śaṅkara similarly describes liberation not as a change, but as a realization of what the self has always been, namely Brahman.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, it is precisely considered perfection for this reason — because it is not obtained. Therefore, as Wilhelm Halbfass has shown, in Vedānta, liberation is often talked about as a return to health and the system of Vedānta as a medicinal cure. Perfection is thus “a rediscovery and retrieval of an identity and [an] inherent, underlying perfection that has always been there, and that has to be freed from obscuration, confusion, and disturbance.”<sup>31</sup> Are Gauḍīya theologians understanding the state of perfection differently? For devotional love to be perfection in the Vedāntic sense, it would have to be something that is not imposed on the self, but

rather a return to or rediscovery of the self's essential nature. It is this issue that I will address here.

I offer in this article a preliminary attempt to articulate an explicitly Vedāntic theology of devotion that draws upon Gauḍīya theologians — particularly Jīva Gosvāmī and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. I will consider here only the question whether devotion is innate to the self or bestowed, and argue that this very question — and the dichotomy it creates — is unhelpful; it unnecessarily obfuscates the issue. As mentioned, this question is related to a range of other contentious issues, such as the place and nature of *rāgānuṣā bhakti*, the ontological nature of the “perfected body” (*siddha-deha*), and the devotee's specific relationship with God, but these topics are beyond this article's scope. I will address here only the more foundational question of the nature of devotion itself. But first we need to consider the nature of the self, as understood in Gauḍīya theology.

## The characteristics of the self

The self is that which is referred to by the notion of “I” (*aḥam-ārtha*). Although by absorption in matter our understanding of that “I” is distorted and results in our identification with our changing bodies, Jīva argues that this misidentification does not change the true referent of “I,” which is the abiding pure self, whose nature is awareness.

Because one who has no sense of “I” cannot be absorbed in the other [i.e., matter], and because the false ego (*aḥaṅkāra*), which arises by our absorption in the other, has the ability to obscure [our real identity], there is clearly a different sense of “I.” And because that is grounded only in the pure nature (*svarūpa*) of the self, it is clearly not caused by material existence.<sup>32</sup>

In other words, if we did not individually exist, we could not be wrong about the nature of that existence: There has to be a real “I” for a false “I” to be possible. This “I” is thus not temporary or illusory,

as an Advaitin might claim, but an essential and eternal characteristic of the self, even if our current understanding of it may be wrong.<sup>33</sup>

So the self that is the true “I” — the notion of individuality by which we know we exist — is distinct from the inert body with which it wrongly identifies and is also distinct in each body, in each person.<sup>34</sup> It is not inert,<sup>35</sup> because it is aware of itself as an “I.” As awareness, the self is self-revealing: It reveals itself to itself.<sup>36</sup> It does not need anything else to become aware, just as a lit lamp does not need anything else to illuminate itself.<sup>37</sup> Awareness (*jñāna*) is the self’s essential nature (*svarūpa*), because without it the self would not exist.<sup>38</sup> However, the self is also aware of what is other than itself, such as the body and the world. Not only is its essential nature thus awareness but it also has the capacity to be aware.<sup>39</sup> As consciousness it spreads through the body, it can also become aware of the world around itself with its sensory faculties as its instruments. This property of awareness (*dharma-bhūta-jñāna*), Baladeva argues, is not accidental, as Advaitins claim, but rather inalienable to the self. It is inseparable from awareness, like the sun’s rays, which illumine the world, are inseparable from the sun, which is pure light.<sup>40</sup> Even though the self may not always manifest its capacity to be aware — as for instance in deep sleep, where there is no other to be aware of — it always exists as a capacity, “like virility [in a male child],” say the *Brahma-sūtras*.<sup>41</sup>

The self wrongly identifies with the actions of the body of which it is aware,<sup>42</sup> but it is not a passive witness. The self is active in two ways: It acts indirectly through the body, as when the self acts in the world using the faculties of the body, but also acts directly, by its control of the body and its faculties. Although the body is thus, in some sense, also an agent, the self’s agency is primary, like that of a woodcutter who performs the act of wielding his axe, which itself performs the act of cutting.<sup>43</sup> To further this analogy: Both the axe’s and the woodcutter’s agency depend on the will (*icchā*) of the woodcutter, which only sometimes makes them act; in the same way, both the body’s and the self’s agency depend on will or intention, which are characteristics of the self, not the body.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the self’s agency (*kartrtva*) is also primary in the sense that its agency does not arise from the self’s contact with the body, as Advaitins claim, but is an inseparable characteristic of the self that continues

in the state of liberation, when it no longer has any connection with matter.<sup>45</sup> Also, the *Brahma-sūtras* argue that the self must be an agent for scripture to be meaningful.<sup>46</sup> If the self had no agency, the injunctions of scripture would be pointless, and by that the very principle of devotional practice, too: There would be nothing to impel to act, since matter — which includes the mind and intellect — is insentient and thus incapable of being instructed to act. Finally, since the self is clearly the entity that experiences its actions, as it is conscious,<sup>47</sup> it has to be the agent;<sup>48</sup> otherwise, the self would suffer the consequences of actions it did not commit. Hence the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* declares that it is “awareness (*viññāna*) [i.e., the self] that performs sacrifice and that performs acts.”<sup>49</sup>

To summarize: The self is that which is denoted by the notion of “I.” It is consciousness itself but also has the capacity to be conscious. It is distinct from the bodies it inhabits but is the agent of the actions that the body performs, as well as the experiencer of those actions. With this understanding of the nature of the self, we can now proceed to consider the self’s relation to God.

## The self and God

Ontologically, the self is a part of God, not in the sense that it is a portion of God that has been chipped off him, for the Upaniṣads state that God and the self are indivisible, unchanging, and beginningless,<sup>50</sup> but rather in the sense that the self is dependent on God as a part is dependent on the whole. The self is a part of God, but distinct from him. God resides within the self, as the Upaniṣads declare, sustains it, and rules it from within.<sup>51</sup> This dependency on God is eternal, and not the temporary result of ignorance, because it is the self’s very nature to be a dependent part of God. This can thus not be changed, even in the state of liberation.<sup>52</sup>

To explain this relationship, both Jīva and Baladeva turn to the Purāṇic and Pāñcarātric image of potency (*śakti*). Just as the sun’s rays, which are the sun’s potency, are distinct from, dependent on, and part of the sun, so is the self distinct from, dependent on, and part of God.<sup>53</sup> The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and *Nārada Pañcarātra* describe the self as God’s “liminal potency” (*taṭastha-śakti*).<sup>54</sup> It is liminal,



Jīva explains, because it stands between God's "external potency" (*bahiraṅga-śakti*), which is matter, and God's own "internal potency" (*antaraṅga-śakti*), which constitutes his own being. The self is beyond matter, because it is conscious and matter is not, and because its nature is thus similar to God's own nature. "There is no difference between the two [God and self]," Jīva explains, "because both are of the nature of consciousness; hence it is profitless to think of them as entirely different from each other."<sup>55</sup> Therefore, whereas matter is the "external" or "separated" (*bhinna*) potency of God, the self is his superior (*para*) potency.<sup>56</sup> But though the self's nature is similar to that of God, the self is also different from God, Jīva explains, because God is never tainted by the self's imperfections that are caused by ignorance, "just as a ray of the sun may be concealed by shadow in a particular place, but the sun itself is not concealed." The self thus stands between matter and God, even if its nature is God's.<sup>57</sup>

For the self to know its true nature, therefore, it has to know God. Knowledge of itself as the "I," distinct from the body, but the witness and the agent of the body's actions, is incomplete. The self knows itself only when it knows God. The *Bhāgavata* defines liberation as "giving up what is alien to itself and abiding as one's essential nature (*svarūpa*),"<sup>58</sup> and Jīva therefore comments that the "essential nature" referred to here is God's:

"Abiding as one's essential nature" refers to the realization of one's essential nature. But because even in the state of worldly existence the self abides only in itself, and because knowledge of him [i.e., God] arises when what is alien to itself—which refers only to ignorance of him—is destroyed, therefore "essential nature" here directly refers only to that of the supreme self. Like the sun is for the photons of his rays, he is the highest essential nature, as the whole, for the individual selves.<sup>59</sup>

Only when the self realizes it is a dependent part of God, separated from him by its ignorance, does it truly know itself. The Upaniṣads therefore call God our "self" (*ātmā*) or our "supreme self"

(*paramātmā*), because only in him do we find our identity.<sup>60</sup> He is our self, not in the sense that we are him, Baladeva writes, but because he gives us our existence (*sattā*).<sup>61</sup> As he explains elsewhere, scripture declares the oneness of two things when the mode of being (*vr̥tti*) of one is dependent on the other.<sup>62</sup> Thus, when the sage Vāmadeva declares, “I am Brahman,”<sup>63</sup> he is not asserting himself to be God, but rather that God is the cause of his own mode of being, and thus his true “I.”<sup>64</sup>

As the self is one with yet distinct from God, this oneness with God is generally expressed in Gauḍīya theology through the idea of servitude. The self “is a servant of Hari alone, and never of anyone else.”<sup>65</sup> Or, as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja puts it, “The essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the self is as an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.”<sup>66</sup> Baladeva therefore writes that the oneness of God and the self is like that of “the creator and created, the ruler and the ruled, the support and the supported, the lord and the servant, the friend and the befriended, the one that has to be obtained and the one who obtains.”<sup>67</sup>

The self does not only depend on God for its mere existence but also for its very characteristics, which are inseparable from its being. The self is similar to God in nature but also atomic (*aṇu*).<sup>68</sup> The implication of this, both Jīva and Baladeva emphasize, is that the self is incapable of anything on its own and is dependent on God for every aspect of its being.<sup>69</sup> As we have seen, the self is awareness and has the capacity (*śakti*) to be aware, but that capacity too is dependent on God, as the Upaniṣads claim: “There is no other seer than him.”<sup>70</sup> This does not contradict the self-illuminating nature of the self, Jīva argues: “When [the self] is revealed by the supreme self (*paramātmā*), that does not make it revealed by something other than itself, like a pot [which cannot reveal itself, but has to be revealed by a lamp], because the supreme self is its supreme nature (*svarūpa*), and thus it does not have to be revealed by something other than itself.”<sup>71</sup>

Similarly, though the self is indeed an agent, it cannot act on its own but only through the supreme agency of God, who causes everyone to act. Baladeva compares the agency of the self to a seed, and God’s agency to the rain — both are necessary for a plant to grow and fructify, but the seed determines what type of fruits arise. God thus causes the self to act in accordance with its intention

(*prayatna*). Hence, though its actions are performed by God, the self remains responsible for them; otherwise, scriptural injunctions would once again be meaningless.<sup>72</sup> Baladeva therefore calls God the “causative agent” or “prompter” and the self the “prompted agent,” because without God’s assent, the self is incapable of performing any action.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, in exerting its agency on the body, the self is equally dependent on God: “The body, its faculties, life air, mind, and intellect perform their actions when penetrated by a fraction of him,” according to the *Bhāgavata*.<sup>74</sup>

The self, as a part of God, thus shares in the nature of God, who is its true self. The self is dependent on God not just for its existence, but also for its capacity to be aware and its own agency.

## The self and devotion

Having examined the nature of the self in Gauḍīya theology, we now can turn to its relation to devotion. We have already seen that the self is awareness (*jñāna*). Jīva stresses, however, that the self is not *mere* awareness, but is also bliss (*ānanda*).<sup>75</sup> However, because the self is atomic, as we have seen,<sup>76</sup> the bliss of the self alone is “immensely minute.”<sup>77</sup> The fullness of its bliss is only attained “by being the receptacle of pure love [of God].”<sup>78</sup> It is thus in the love that arises in perfected devotion that this bliss of the self is fully realized. It is that bliss that makes us love our self<sup>79</sup> and is that which motivates us to act — “who indeed would breathe in, who would breathe out, if that bliss were not in the space [of the heart]?” says the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.<sup>80</sup>

How is bliss attained? The self that turns away from God is ignorant of its true nature and identifies with ever-changing body-based identities. Although desiring to experience bliss, the self suffers because it has turned away from God, in whom its true nature — and its bliss — is to be found. Devotional practice therefore is the turning toward God through worship. This leads to an awareness of God and culminates in a direct experience of him and his bliss.<sup>81</sup> Having attained faith in devotion by an encounter with devotees,<sup>82</sup> the practitioner who desires to attain this experience performs acts of devotion in the company of like-minded

souls, centered around the worship of God's image, God's name, and so on — which are nondifferent from God, who is nondual and hence nondifferent from that which represents him. Devotional practice thus essentially consists of placing oneself constantly in the presence of God until, by constant practice, the self's ignorance is removed so that it can come to experience God.<sup>83</sup> When the self's ignorance which, as it were, separated it from God, is fully destroyed, it attains “the highest sameness” with him,<sup>84</sup> as it manifests qualities like those of God. Freed from ignorance and the influence of matter, the self — the liminal potency of God — thus rests fully in God's essential nature, in which it finds its identity.

Following the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.12.69), Jīva distinguishes three aspects of God's internal potency, which constitutes his essential nature: the potency of being (*sandhinī*), the potency of awareness (*saṃvit*), and the potency of bliss (*hlādinī*). He explains them as follows:

Although God is sometimes spoken of as the essential nature of being, in the sense that he causes us to understand all existing things, such as the “pot-ness” of a pot, [...] that by which he exists and causes [others] to exist is [the potency] of being (*sandhinī*), which causes space, time, and all things to exist. Similarly, though he is awareness, that by which he is aware and causes [others] to be aware is [his potency of] awareness (*saṃvit*). And similarly, though he is bliss, that higher form of awareness by which he knows that bliss and causes others to know it is [the potency] of bliss (*hlādinī*).<sup>85</sup>

We already saw how the self is dependent on God for its existence and how this is accentuated in the state of liberation, when the self realizes its essential nature (*svarūpa*) in God. But the other two potencies also act on the self that has realized its essential nature, and they allow the self to develop its characteristics to the fullest in the state of liberation. The self's capacity to be aware is covered “by turning away from the Lord, and when that [covering] is destroyed by turning toward the Lord, it appears,” Baladeva writes.<sup>86</sup> Indeed,

the self can become omniscient in the state of liberation,<sup>87</sup> through God who grants the self its “ancient wisdom.”<sup>88</sup> More importantly, by being aware of its true nature the self attains full awareness of God. What the self attains through God’s potency of awareness, however, is not new to the self. Rather, the self merely reveals more of itself: “Just as the splendour of a gem is not created by washing away the dirt, so is the [full] awareness of the self not created by removing its flaws.”<sup>89</sup> The qualities the self attains in this state of perfection were earlier obscured by ignorance and are thus not newly acquired, but merely manifested when the self becomes fully governed by God’s internal potency.

Since God’s potency of bliss is “a higher form of awareness,” Jīva stresses that the bliss that is attained in the state of perfection is similarly not newly gained:

Then the self attains unique, spotless, and everlasting bliss (*āhlāda*), the perfection of all beauty and all joy. The bliss of the self whose nature (*svarūpa*) is God is eternal. When it arises [...] it does not disappear. Like a spotless mirror shines when the dust is removed, so does the bliss of the self, whose impurities have been consumed by the fire of knowledge. So by the destruction of impure qualities, qualities like [full] awareness shine forth. They are not created, for they belong to the self eternally.<sup>90</sup>

The self’s bliss is thus God’s bliss, because the self’s essential nature (*svarūpa*) is God’s. Since the self is eternally a part of God, that bliss belongs to it also eternally, even if it is only realized when the self realizes its true nature and is in union with God.

In that state, the acts of devotion, too, are performed through God’s potency. The *Brahma-sūtras* state that the liberated self can assume a body at will,<sup>91</sup> and Baladeva comments that such a body consists of God’s potency and always desires to execute his will. Because the liberated self understands that his essential nature is God’s and because the body with which it acts and perceives God consists of God’s potency, it entirely lives in the nondual reality of God, as the *Bṛhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* describes: “When there

seems to be duality, one smells the other, one sees the other, [...] one is aware of the other. But when the [supreme] self becomes all this for him, who would one smell and by what means? Who would one see and by what means? [...] Who would one be aware of and by what means?"<sup>92</sup> The liberated self, who has realized its essential nature in God, perceives God through sensory faculties that consist of God's own potency. "Abandoning his mortal frame, the person immersed in God reaches God, and then he sees through God, hears through God, perceives everything through God."<sup>93</sup> Although the self still has agency in that state, as Baladeva stresses,<sup>94</sup> its agency is not only aligned with God's but is also exercised through God's potency, and its every act, performed out of devotion, is fully expressed by God's potency of awareness and his potency of bliss.<sup>95</sup>

Perfected devotion thus arises from the union of the self and God, when the self realizes its identity and dependence on God, and when its own characteristics of awareness and agency are expressed through God's own potencies. When viewed separately, the self's bliss may be said to be minute, but its true bliss is God's, which it attains when it loves God.

## Conclusion

We can now see that the argument that devotion must be either innate in the self or bestowed by God is misleading, because it implies a difference between the self and God, whereas the self's essential nature is God's. The characteristics of the self — its awareness, its agency, and even its existence, expressed through the sense of "I" — are, ultimately, all God's. The same is true for the self's bliss. Perfected devotion — pure love (*prema*) — is this bliss, and is thus neither entirely innate nor entirely bestowed. It can be said to be innate in the self, because the self's essential nature is God's, but it can also be said to be bestowed, since devotion can only be relational, and thus it can only arise when the self is in union with God and experiences God through God's own potencies, such as his potency of bliss (*hlādinī-śakti*). The self thus has the capacity for devotion, and that capacity is actualized when the self realizes its true identity in God. As Jīva puts it, these qualities exist in the self

like virility exists in a boy, though that virility is only manifested when the boy reaches puberty.<sup>96</sup>

Gauḍīya theology teaches a doctrine both of difference (*bheda*) as well as nondifference (*abheda*). Jīva emphasizes that a person desiring devotion should not focus on nondifference, which scripture teaches to those interested in the path of nondual awareness (*jñāna*), because it does not foster devotion.<sup>97</sup> But nondifference is nevertheless crucial to understand the significance of devotion in Gauḍīya theology. It is because the self is nondifferent from God that devotion is at all possible. The self can be united with God in the experience of his bliss through devotion precisely because they share the same nature.

When seen in the context of this theology of “difference-and-nondifference” (*bhedābheda*), the dichotomy we started with no longer holds. Thus devotion can be said to be both inherent in the self as well as a manifestation of God’s potency of bliss. And therefore, because the self is a dependent part of God, pure devotion — which is a manifestation of God’s potency of bliss — Jīva explains, “is natural for the self. Indeed, the self depends on that [pure devotion], which is natural to it.”<sup>98</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 See, for example, Prabhupāda (1982), p. 20, and Prabhupāda (1989), p. 623 (on *Gītā* 12.9).

- 2 *Premāi jīvera nitya-dharma* (*Jaiva-dharma*, p. 13). It is worth noting that Bhaktivinod does not seem to establish this doctrine to refute the notion that devotion is *not* inherent in the self, but rather to refute that something else is the self's eternal *dharma*.
- 3 Das (2014), p. 15. Since I wrote this paper, in 2016, a few other publications have appeared that take a similar position: see, for example, Dasa (2021), especially chapter 8.
- 4 Although it is has sometimes been understood this way, this debate is not about whether divine grace or work leads to perfection. Both sides of the debate argue that while, ultimately, divine grace is primary in the attainment of devotion, human agency is nevertheless important, too. Rūpa Gosvāmī states that love for Kṛṣṇa, the perfected state of devotion, is attained either by “dedication to practice (*sādhana*) or, for the exceedingly fortunate, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa or his devotee,” adding that the former, by which love for Kṛṣṇa is gradually attained, is common but that the latter, which happens suddenly and without any practice, “rarely occurs” (*sādhanābhinveśena kṛṣṇa-tad-bhaktayoḥ tathā / prasādenātīdhanyānām bhāvo dvedhābhijāyate / ādyaḥ tu prāyikas tatra dvitīyo viralodayaḥ*, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.6; see also 1.3.7–8 and 1.3.15).
- 5 See *Jaiva-dharma*, p. 361: *jagate varttamāna jīva-sakala svīya svīya svabhāva-bhede pañca-vidha rasera āśraya*. See also *Jaiva-dharma*, p. 365.
- 6 For more on *rāgānugā bhakti* and the various ways in which the practice is understood, see Haberman (1988), especially pp. 116–23.
- 7 *Bhakti-śabdaś ca prīti-viśeṣe vartate, prītiś ca jñāna-viśeṣa eva* (*Vedārtha-saṃgraha* 141).
- 8 *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* 141–42.
- 9 *Śrī-bhāṣya* 2.3.19.
- 10 *Śrī-bhāṣya* 2.3.30 and *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* 43.
- 11 See *Vedārtha-saṃgraha* 141.
- 12 [...] *nitya-prāptasyāpi svarūpaśya* [...] (*Śrī-bhāṣya* 4.4.2).
- 13 See *Śrī-bhāṣya* 4.4.3: *ataḥ pratyag-ātmanaḥ apahata-pāpmatvādayaḥ svābhāvikā guṇāḥ, paraṃ jyotir upasampannasyāvirbhavanti, na utpadyante. [...] Ataḥ jñānānandādi-guṇānām, karmaṇa ātmani saṅkucitānām, paraṃ jyotir upasampadya karma-rūpa-bandha-kṣaye. Vikāsa-rūpāvīrbhāvo nānupapanna iti [...]*.

- 14 *Yaṃ dasā-viśeṣam āpadyate saḥ svarūpāvīrbhāva-rūpaḥ, na apūrvākārotpatti-rūpaḥ* (*Śrī-bhāṣya* 4.4.1).
- 15 Lutjeharms (2018a) and Lutjeharms (2018b), pp. 88–95.
- 16 See Jīva's *Paramātmā-sandarbhā* 18–47 and his *Sarva-saṃvādinī*, pp. 89–124, and Baladeva's *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.16–51.
- 17 See Lutjeharms (2018a).
- 18 See *Tattva-sandarbhā* 21. For a counterview, see Lutjeharms (2018b), pp. 88–95.
- 19 The distinction I draw is important to keep in mind when reading across Gauḍīya theology, since the way key terms are understood can change dramatically from text to text, depending on what discourse one is drawing from. We see this, for example, clearly in the treatment of liberation. At times perfected devotion is said to surpasses liberation (see, for example, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.33, 1.2.22–57), and particularly the liberation of union (*sāyujya*), which is understood in an Advaita sense (see *Prīti-sandarbhā* 21). At other times, however, liberation is interpreted devotionally—since devotional love is “special liberation” (*vimuktī*, see Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.203: *vimuktir viśiṣṭā muktiḥ sā prema-bhaktiḥ*)—and some Gauḍīya authors interpret even union devotionally, as earlier Vaiṣṇava Vedāntins do (see *Govinda-bhāṣya* 4.4.4). I have addressed this issue more fully elsewhere (see Lutjeharms, 2018a). To avoid confusion, I will use the term “perfection” to refer to Rūpa and Jīva's notion of perfected devotion (*sādhyā-bhakti*) as well as devotional concepts of liberation, such as Baladeva's understanding of union, since both are seen to be the highest end.
- 20 *Śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1).
- 21 *Mahā-śakti-vilāsātmā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.92).
- 22 *Atra śuddha-sattvaṃ nāma bhagavataḥ sva-prakāśikā svarūpa-śakteḥ saṃvid-ākhyā vṛttiḥ, na tu māyā-vṛtti-viśeṣaḥ* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1).
- 23 *Hlādinī-vilāsa-rūpā* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.5.92). See also Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.1, and *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 139 and 142.
- 24 See Gupta (2007), pp. 65–84.
- 25 See Delmonico (1990), pp. 176–183, 229.
- 26 See Lutjeharms (2018a).

- 27 *Kṛtvā hariṇṇ prema-bhājaṇṇ priya-varga-samanvitaṇṇ / bhaktir vaśī-karotī śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī matā* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.41). See also *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.151–53.
- 28 See *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 142–43; *Prīti-sandarbhā* 65–66; *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.1.36 and 3.4.12.
- 29 *Bhāvasya sādhyatve kṛtrimatvāt parama-puruṣārthatvābhāvaḥ syād ity āśaṅkyāha nityeti. Bhagavac-chakti-viśeṣa-vṛtti-viśeṣa-tvenāgre sādhaṅgīyamāṇatvād iti bhāvaḥ* (Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.2).
- 30 See, for example, Śaṅkara on *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.6.
- 31 Halbfass (1991), p. 250. Halbfass explains that this could involve “the idea of a ‘return’ in a nontemporal sense” (p. 250). Jīva also uses a medicinal metaphor in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 1.
- 32 *Atra niraham-bhāvasya parābhīh ānāsambhavāt parāveśa-jātā-haṅkārasya cāvarakatvād asty eva tasmīnṇ anyo’ham-bhāva-viśeṣaḥ. Sa ca śuddha-svarūpa-mātra-niṣṭhatvān na saṃsāra-hetur iti spaṣṭam.* (*Paramātma-sandarbhā* 29)
- 33 *Paramātma-sandarbhā* 29.
- 34 See *Paramātma-sandarbhā* 32: *sādHITE ca svarūpa-bhūte’ham-bhāve pratikṣetraṇṇ bhinnatvam api sādhitam.*
- 35 *Na jaḍaḥ* (*Paramātma-sandarbhā* 19; see also 20).
- 36 *Svasmai svayaṇṇ-prakāśaḥ* (*Paramātma-sandarbhā* 27).
- 37 *Yathā dīpaś cakṣuḥ prakāśayan svarūpa-sphūrtiṇṇ svayam eva karoti na tu ghaṭādi-prakāśavat tad-ādi-sākṣepaḥ. Tasmād ayaṇṇ svayaṇṇ prakāśaḥ* (*Paramātma-sandarbhā* 27).
- 38 *Sa jñāna-lakṣaṇo guṇaḥ sāro yatra tathāvat. Sāro vyabhicāra-rahitaḥ svarūpānubandhūti yāvat.* (*Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.27)
- 39 See *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.26–29, *Sarva-saṅgvādīnī*, pp. 89–90.
- 40 See *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.28. See also *Paramātma-sandarbhā* 35: *jñānaṇṇ ca nityasya svābhāvika-dharmatvān nityam.*
- 41 *Puṃstvādivat tv asya sato’bhīvyakti-yogāt* (*Brahma-sūtra* 2.3.29). See *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.29.
- 42 *Parābhīdhyānena prakṛtyāveśena prakṛtir evāham iti mananena prakṛti-guṇaiḥ kriyamāṇeṣu karmasu kartṛtvam ātmani manyate* (*Paramātma-sandarbhā* 29).
- 43 *Yathā ca takṣobhayathā* (*Brahma-sūtras* 2.3.38). See also *Sarva-saṅgvādīnī*, pp. 104–5.
- 44 *Svecchānusāreṇa takṣā kadācit karoti na karoti ca sva-veśmany*

- akleśāṃ nirvṛttiṃ ca labhate tadvat jīvo'pīty arthaḥ* (*Sūkṣma-ṭikā* 2.3.38). For more on intention, see *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.40.
- 45 See *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.32, 2.3.38, *Sarva-saṃvādinī*, pp. 104–5.
- 46 *Kartā śāstrārthavattvāt* (*Brahma-sūtras* 2.3.31). See also *Brahma-sūtras* 2.3.37.
- 47 See *Paramātma-sandarbha* 36: *atha bhoktrvaṃ samvedana-rūpatvena yathā tatraiva cid-rūpe paryavasyati*.
- 48 *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.36.
- 49 *Vijñānaṃ yajñāṃ tanute, karmāṇi tanute'pi ca* (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.5.1). See *Sarva-saṃvādinī*, p. 104 and *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.34.
- 50 *Na ceśasya māyayā paricchedaḥ, tasya tad-aviśayatvāt. Na ca taiṅka-cchinna-pāṣāṇa-khaṇḍavat tac-chinnas tat-khaṇḍo jīvaḥ acchedyatva-śāstra-vyākopāt vikārādy-āpatteś ca* (*Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.41); *etādṛśatvaṃ cāsyā svataḥ svarūpata eva na tu paricchedādīnā* (*Paramātma-sandarbha* 37); *acchedyatvād akhaṇḍatvābhyupagamāc ca brahmaṇaḥ ādimattāpātāc ca jīvasya* (*Sarva-saṃvādinī*, p. 106).
- 51 *Ya ātmani tiṣṭhan ātmānam antaro yamayati* (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, *Mādhyandina-śākhā*; cited in *Sarva-saṃvādinī* pp. 107, 113, 119, 123, *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.39)
- 52 *Tasya bhāvas tattvaṃ tad eva svabhāvaḥ prakṛtir yasya sa paramātmaika-śeṣatva-svabhāvaḥ. Tathābhūtas cāyaṃ sarvadā mokṣa-daśāyām apīty arthaḥ* (*Paramātma-sandarbha* 37).
- 53 *Parasyāṃśo jīvaḥ aṃśur ivāṃśumataḥ tad-bhinnaś tad-anuyūyī tat-sambandhāpekṣīty arthaḥ* (*Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.41). See also *Paramātma-sandarbha* 37, *Prīti-sandarbha* 5.
- 54 *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 6.7.62: *yayā kṣetra-jña-śaktiḥ sā veṣṭitā nṛpa sarva-gā / saṃsāra-tāpān akhilān avāpnoty atra santatān; Nārada-pāñca-rātra* (cited in *Paramātma-sandarbha* 37); *yat taṣasthaṃ tu cid-rūpaṃ sva-saṃvedyād vinirgatam / rañjītam guṇa-rāgeṇa sa jīva iti kathyate*.
- 55 *Vailakṣanyaṃ visadrśatvaṃ nāsti, dvayor api cid-rūpatvāt; atas tayor atyantam anyatva-kalpanāpārthā* (*Paramātma-sandarbha* 42, citing Śrīdhara's commentary on *Bhāgavata* 11.22.11).
- 56 See *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.4-5 and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 6.7.61, both cited in *Paramātma-sandarbha* 37.
- 57 *Taṣasthatvaṃ ca māyā-śakty-atītatvāt. Asyāvīdyāparābhavādī-rūpeṇa doṣeṇa paramātmāno lepābhāvāc cobhaya-koṭāv apraveśāt*.

- Tasya tac-chaktive saty api paramātmanas tal-lepābhāvaś ca yathā kvacid eka-deśa-sthe raśmau chāyayā tīraskṛte'pi sūryasyātīraskāras tadvat (Paramātma-sandarbhā 37). See also Prīti-sandarbhā 5.*
- 58 *Muktir hitvānyathā-rūpaṃ svarūpeṇa vyavasthītiḥ (Bhāgavata 2.10.6).*
- 59 *Yataḥ svarūpeṇa vyavasthītir nāma svarūpa-sākṣātkāra ucyate, tad-avasthāna-mātrasya saṃsāra-daśāyām api sthītatvāt, anyathā-rūpatvasya ca tad-ajñāna-mātrārthatvena tad-dhānau taj-jñāna-paryavasānāt. Svarūpaṃ cātra mukhyaṃ paramātma-lakṣaṇam eva. Raśmi-paramāñjūnām sūrya iva sa eva hi jīvānām paramo'ṃśī-svarūpaḥ. (Prīti-sandarbhā 1)*
- 60 *See Brahma-sūtras 4.1.3: Ātmeti tūpagacchanti grāhayanti ca (cited in Sarva-saṃvādīnī, p. 123).*
- 61 *Sva-sattā-pradattvādīnā svātma-bhūtam ity apare (Govinda-bhāṣya 4.1.3).*
- 62 *Śāstraṃ khalu yad vṛttir yad-āyattā taṃ tādrūpyeṇa upadiśati (Govinda-bhāṣya 1.1.30).*
- 63 *Ahaṃ brahmāsmi (Bṛhad-āraṇyaka 1.4.10).*
- 64 *Govinda-bhāṣya 1.1.30. Also see Rāmānuja's Śrī-bhāṣya 1.1.30: jīvātma-vācīnām ahaṃ-tvam-ādi-śabdānām api paramātmany eva paryavasānaṃ jñātvā...*
- 65 *Dāsa-bhūta harer eva nānyasyaiva kadācana (Padmottara Purāṇa, cited in Paramātma-sandarbhā 19 and Govinda-bhāṣya 2.3.43).*
- 66 *Jīvera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa (Caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.20.108).*
- 67 *Sraṣṭr-sṛjyatva-nīyanṭr-nīyamyatvādhārādheyaṭva-svāmi-dāsatva-sakhā-sakhītvā-prāpya-prāptṛtvādi-rūpa-nānā-sambandha-vyapadeśāt [...] Tasmāt tat sṛjyatvādi-sambandhavāms tad-bhinno jīvas tad-upasarjanatvāt tad-aṃśa ucyate. (Govinda-bhāṣya 2.3.41)*
- 68 *See Govinda-bhāṣya 2.3.18–25, Paramātma-sandarbhā 33 and Sarva-saṃvādīnī, pp. 95–97.*
- 69 *Tadvad eva ca parameśvara-śakty-anugraheṇaiva te [= kartṛtva-bhokṛtvādi-svarūpa-dharmāḥ] kārya-kṣamā bhavanti (Prīti-sandarbhā 5).*
- 70 *Nānyo'to'sti draṣṭā (Bṛhad-āraṇyaka 3.7.23). See Bhāgavat-sandarbhā 19 and Sarva-saṃvādīnī, p. 111.*

- 71 *Na cāsau paramātma-prakāśyatve ghaṭavat para-prakāśyaḥ paramātmanas tat-parama-svarūpatvena para-prakāśyatvābhāvāt (Paramātma-sandarbha 27).*
- 72 *Govinda-bhāṣya 2.3.40.*
- 73 *Tasmāt jīvaḥ prayojya-kartā, pareśas tu hetu-kartā. Tad-anumatiṃ antarāsau kartuṃ na śaknotīti sarvam avadātām (Govinda-bhāṣya 2.3.40). Hetu-kartā prayojaka (Sūkṣma-ṭikā 2.3.40).*
- 74 *Dehendriya-prāṇa-mano-dhīyo'mī yad-aṃśa-viddhāḥ pracaranti karmasu (Bhāgavata 6.16.24, cited in Paramātma-sandarbha 35 and Bhagavat-sandarbha 19).*
- 75 *"Jñāna-mātrātmako na ca" [Paramātma-sandarbha 19, citing a verse ascribed to Jāmātṛ Muni] ity atra cid-ānandātmaka ity api hetv-antaram (Paramātma-sandarbha 28). In Paramātma-sandarbha 22 Jīva explains that it is not mere awareness, because it also has awareness as a property or the capacity to be aware (dharma-bhūta-jñāna or jñāna-śakti).*
- 76 *Ātmanāsau nānantānanda-śālī bhavati, tasyāṇutvāt (Govinda-bhāṣya 4.4.20).*
- 77 *See Prīti-sandarbha 65: ato natarāṃ jīvasya svarūpānanda-rūpā, atyanta-kṣudratvāt tasya.*
- 78 *Ānandatvam nīrupādhi-premāspadatvena sādhayati (Paramātma-sandarbha 28).*
- 79 *See Bhāgavata 10.14.54, cited in Paramātma-sandarbha 28.*
- 80 *Ko hy evānyāt kaḥ prānyāt yad eṣa ākāśa ānando na bhavati (Taittirīya 2.7.1).*
- 81 *Tatrābhidheyam tad-vaimukhya-virodhitvāt tat-sāmmukhyam eva. Tac ca tad-upāsana-lakṣaṇam, yata eva taj-jñānam āvirbhavati. Prayojanam ca tad-anubhavaḥ. (Bhakti-sandarbha 1)*
- 82 *See Lutjeharms (2014) and Edelmann (2015).*
- 83 *See Mukundadāsa and Viśvanātha on Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.2.*
- 84 *Parama-sāmyam upaiti (Muṇḍaka 3.2.3, cited in Prīti-sandarbha 5, Govinda-bhāṣya 1.1.17).*
- 85 *Ghaṭānām ghaṭatvam iva sarveṣāṃ satām vastūnām pratīter nimittam itī kvacit sattā-svarūpatvena āmnāto'py asau bhagavān, [...] yayā sattām dadhāti dhārayati ca, sā sarva-deśa-kāla-dra-  
vyādi-prāpti-karī sandhinī. Tathā saṃvid-rūpo'pi yayā saṃvetti  
saṃvedayati ca, sā saṃvit. Tathā hlāda-rūpo'pi yayā saṃvid-*

- utkaṭa-rūpayā taṃ hlādaṃ saṃvetti saṃvedayati ca, sā hlādinīti  
vivecanīyam (*Bhagavat-sandarbha* 99).
- 86 *Bhagavad-vaimukhyenāvṛtam idaṃ tat-sāṃmukhyena tasmīn  
vinaṣṭe saty āvirbhavati* (*Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.26).
- 87 *Brahma-sūtras* 4.4.15–16.
- 88 *Tasmād īśān nūmittāt jīvasya purāṇī prajñā prasṛtā bhavatīty ar-  
thaḥ* (*Govinda-bhāṣya* 4.4.15, commenting on *Śvetāśvatara* 4.18).
- 89 *Yathā na kriyate jyotsnā mala-prakṣālanān maṇeḥ / doṣa-  
prahāṇāt na jñānam ātmanaḥ kriyate tathā* (*Govinda-bhāṣya*  
2.3.26, citing a *smṛti* text).
- 90 *Ādarśasya malābhāvād vaimalyaṃ kāśate yathā / jñānāgni-  
dagdha-heyasya sa hlādo hy ātmanas tathā / yathā heya-guṇa-  
dhvaṃśād avabodhādāyo guṇāḥ / prakāśante na janyante nityā  
evātmano hi te* (*Pṛīti-sandarbha* 5, citing the *Viṣṇu-dharma*). See  
also *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.26, where Baladeva cites very similar  
verses.
- 91 *Brahma-sūtras* 4.4.10–12.
- 92 *Yatra hi dvāitam īva bhavati tad itara itaraṃ jighrati, tad itara  
itaraṃ paśyati, [...] tad itara itaraṃ vijānāti. Yatra vā asya sar-  
vam ātmaivābhūt tat kena kaṃ jighret, tat kena kena paśyet, [...]  
tat kena kaṃ vijānyāt.* (*Bṛhad-āranyaka* 2.4.14; see *Govinda-  
bhāṣya* 4.4.12)
- 93 *Sa vā eṣa brahma-niṣṭha idaṃ śarīraṃ martyam atisṛjya brah-  
mābhisampadya brahmaṇā paśyati brahmaṇā śṛṇoti brahma-  
ṇaivedaṃ sarvam anubhavati iti madhyandināyana-śruteś ca*  
(*Govinda-bhāṣya* 4.4.12, citing the *Madhyandināyana-śruti*).
- 94 See *Govinda-bhāṣya* 2.3.32 & 38.
- 95 See *Govinda-bhāṣya* 3.4.12: *Nanu kāya-vān-mano-vyāpāra-rūpā  
bhaktiḥ. Tatra mānasasya dhyānasyānubhavatvaṃ bhavet. Kāya-  
vāg-vyāpāra-rūpasyārcana-japādes tattvaṃ katham iti ced, ucya-  
te—hlādinī-sāra-samaveta-saṃvid-rūpā bhaktiḥ.*
- 96 *Mokṣe tu teṣāṃ abhivṛtyaktirjāyate, yauvane puṃ-stri-bhāva-viśeṣa-  
vat* (*Sarva-saṃvādinī*, p. 101). Jīva then refers to *Brahma-sūtras*  
2.3.31: *puṃstvādīvat tv asya sato'bhivṛtyakti-yogāt.*
- 97 See *Paramātma-sandarbha* 40–43, and Jīva on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-  
sindhu* 1.2.248.
- 98 *Iyam akiñcanākhyā bhaktir eva jīvānaṃ svabhāvata ucitā.  
Svābhāvika-tad-āśrayā hi jīvāḥ* (*Bhakti-sandarbha* 178). See also



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