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INTRODUCTION

The Yoga of Divine Emotions

“All glory to the one whose form is the essence of all divine emotions!” So begins the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* of Rūpa Gosvāmin. There is a common saying that emotions are the spice of life. Yet much of the religious literature of the world is deeply dubious of the value of emotions, suspicious of whether emotions are to be trusted at all in ultimate spiritual pursuits. This is certainly true of many of the ascetic teachings of India, wherein emotions are to be renounced as problematic forms of conditioned ignorance that lock one into personal and therefore illusory experience. For example, the great systematizer of classical yoga, Patañjali, defined yoga as the suppression of mental or emotional activity.¹ Here emotional agitation is considered to be an enemy threatening the achievement of the ultimate religious goal, defined as utter tranquillity. With this in mind, past scholars have often characterized the whole of the religious traditions of Hindu India as involving disciplined spiritual paths that aim to suppress the emotions. This view is limited, however, for besides the emotion-negating philosophies we find in India traditions that, while agreeing that emotions are problematic if left in their ordinary state, go on to maintain that under the right conditions they have the ability to be supremely useful in the spiritual life. Members of these traditions would argue that the emotions are far too powerful and potentially effective to be given up. Within the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* of Rūpa Gosvāmin we encounter a religious strategy entirely different from that of ascetic denial. Here emotions are recognized as being extremely valuable; they potentially comprise the glue that binds one in a loving relationship to God. Moreover, we will see the claim being made in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* that the core of all true emotions — love of God — is itself a manifestation of divinity. Accordingly, far from being eschewed, emotions are to be directed toward Kṛṣṇa and cultivated as an effective means of establishing a relationship with ultimate reality conceived as the supreme lover. Such a claim would, of course, involve a very sophisticated analysis and careful disciplining of the emotions. The result would be a yoga of divine emotions, the subject of this book.

The *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, translated within this text as “The Ocean of the Essence of Devotional Rasa,” consists of a detailed and systematic study of human emotions, conducted in terms of the classical aesthetic theory of India, wherein the

true object of emotions is God. This brings us to the deeply religious world of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism as envisioned by Rūpa Gosvāmin, wherein the primary aim is an experience of Rasa,² a term rich in meaning, but understood briefly as the culminating result of relishing a divine emotion. The *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* gave definitive form to a religio-aesthetic theory that has shaped many of the cultural productions of northern India from the sixteenth century on, and gave voice to a way of thinking about the religious life that has had a lasting influence into the present day.

The title *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* can be divided into three conceptual categories: *bhakti* — devotionalism, *rasāmṛta* — the essence of Rasa, and *sindhu* — the “ocean” that is this text. I will proceed to introduce the text by following this threefold division, discussing each of these categories in turn. I will first examine the particular kind of religion that is represented by this text. This will take us into the life and times of Rūpa Gosvāmin and the fascinating cultural world of Vraja Vaiṣṇavism. Next, I will examine the historical context of Indian rasa-theory, so important to an understanding of the contributions made by this text. Last, I will examine the structure and content of the text itself.

Bhakti: A New Kind of Religion Appears in Vraja

Although Kṛṣṇa devotionalism has had a long history in India, the kind of religion represented in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* has many new elements that arise in a unique historical moment. In many ways, the religion presented here is a full flowering of what Friedhelm Hardy calls “emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti.”³ This form of religion focuses exclusively on Kṛṣṇa as the supreme reality, and therefore might be distinguished from Vaiṣṇavism, if this latter term is used to indicate that Kṛṣṇa is an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu. This new form of religion is very much associated with the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, which introduces passionate emotionalism into the world of intellectual Kṛṣṇa bhakti, represented in such texts as the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Hardy contends that the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is the means by which the emotional religion of the southern Ālvārs became united with northern Vedānta philosophy and read through the authority of a Sanskrit *purāṇa* to influence the developments of emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti throughout India. The religion presented in the *aktirasāmṛtasindhu*, then, is one that represents Kṛṣṇa as the supreme reality and the focus for a passionate form of devotionalism. At least since the time of Chaitanya’s commentary on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in the thirteenth century, this text is to be understood as a presentation of the religious life as a relishing the Rasa emotional relationship with the Lord. What began in earlier ages in seminal

form, reached full culmination in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*. This text was composed at a time when emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti as expressed in the tenth canto of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* became the very center of far-reaching cultural activities in the north-central region that came to be known as Vraja, or sometimes simply Vṛndāvana (or Mathurā). The *Bhāgavata Māhātmya*, a later preface proclaiming the glory of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, gives its own account of the historical development of emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti (1.1.48-50). According to this text, bhakti was born in the south (Draviḍa), achieved maturity in Karnāṭaka, and grew old in parts of Mahārāṣṭra and Gujarāt. It was then mutilated by heretics and became weakened, but finally reaching Vṛndāvana, it was revived and took on a new beautiful and youthful form. However one evaluates the historical value of this narrative, it is clear that emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti had a complex history that most likely began in southern India and went on to assume a significant form in the Vṛndāvana area in the early sixteenth century. To better understand what was going on at this time, it will be necessary to examine briefly the life and times of Rūpa Gosvāmin.

Rūpa Gosvāmin and His Times

Little is known for certain about the early years of Rūpa Gosvāmin’s life.⁴ It seems almost certain, however, that he was born sometime between 1470 and 1490, the earlier date being more plausible.⁵ Rūpa belonged to a branch of a family of Karnāṭaka *brāhmaṇas* who were forced to leave the South because of conflicts over land within the family. The branch of the family that left Karnāṭaka eventually ended up in north-east India, in the region that is now Bengal. Rūpa was one of three sons; the eldest was Sanātana, acknowledged in many of Rūpa’s writings as his guru, and the youngest was Anupama, the father of Jīva Gosvāmin.⁶ Sanātana, Rūpa, and Jīva were to form the hub of what became a circle of prolific Gauḍīya theologians located in Vṛndāvana. Rūpa and his elder brother Sanātana received a classical Sanskrit education, most likely from Navya Nyāya logicians based in the Bengali cultural center of Navadvīpa. It is also recorded that the two brothers continued to have interaction with other Karnāṭaka *brāhmaṇas* who had settled in north-east India.⁷

As young men Sanātana and Rūpa took up residence at Rāmakeli near the capital city of Gauḍa, the seat of Muslim power represented by the Nawāb Husain Shāh. Since the two were widely known for their learned abilities they were recommended to the Shāh as promising assistants.⁸ Sanātana and Rūpa came to be employed and known respectively in the Muslim court as Sākar Mallik and Dabīr

Khās. The first of these names seems to have been the title for a high minister, and the second the title for a private secretary. Although they considered themselves to be impure because of their contact with the foreign Muslims,⁹ Sanātana and Rūpa maintained contact and involvement with the Vaiṣṇavas of Navadvīpa and invited a colony of Karmāṭaka *brāhmaṇas* to settle near Rāmakeli. The plays and poems Rūpa composed prior to meeting Caitanya, the great Bengali saint who was the inspirational source of the movement that came to be known as Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, attest to the fact that he was deeply interested in Kṛṣṇa stories and theology before he met this saint.

Despite the fact that the two brothers held high positions in the Muslim court, they were apparently unhappy with their situation and invited Caitanya to Rāmakeli in 1514 while the saint was attempting a journey to Vṛndāvana.¹⁰ This meeting transformed their lives, for after it they were determined to leave the service of the Nawāb and dedicate their lives to Vaiṣṇava scholarship. Rūpa left Rāmakeli secretly with his younger brother Anupama and joined Caitanya in Allahabad during the latter's return from Vṛndāvana. Here Caitanya instructed Rūpa in Kṛṣṇa devotionalism for a period of ten days.¹¹ Rūpa wanted to accompany Caitanya to Vārāṇasī, but recognizing him to be a very talented and learned man, Caitanya sent him instead to Vṛndāvana to restore its sacred sites and to write treatises to establish the theological foundation of Kṛṣṇa devotionalism. Sanātana was detained by the Nawāb of Gauḍa for a short time, but managed to escape and join Caitanya in Vārāṇasī. He stayed with Caitanya there for a period of two months and received instruction from the saint. Both brothers separately visited Caitanya later at his residence in Puri for a period of ten months (the youngest brother Anupama died accompanying Rūpa) and received further instruction from him. After these final meetings Rūpa returned to Vṛndāvana in 1516 and Sanātana in 1517 to settle there permanently and carry out the work Caitanya had assigned them. Each of the brothers established a temple image of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana; Sanātana established the worship of an image of Kṛṣṇa named Madanamohana, and Rūpa established the worship of Govindadeva. The exact dates of their deaths is unknown, but it is likely that Sanātana died sometime around 1555, and Rūpa around 1557.¹² After his death the tradition of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism which he helped to found increasingly viewed Rūpa as a saint and an exemplar of the type of devotional practice he established.¹³

Rūpa was a skilled and prolific writer in Sanskrit. Gauḍīya sources record between thirteen and seventeen works authored by him, including dramas based on the activities of Kṛṣṇa, dramaturgical treatises, and collections of devotional

poetry. His most important works by far, however, are the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* and its sequel, the *Ujjvalanīlamanī*. These two Sanskrit texts became very influential among learned groups of scholars in northern India, and much of their content found its way into Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's immensely popular Bengali text, the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, thus insuring a wide-ranging audience for the text among Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas living in Bengal.

Rūpa completed the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* in the vicinity of Vṛndāvana in the year 1541. At this time Vṛndāvana was emerging as one of the major centers of a cultural efflorescence that was beginning to take place in Vraja during the first half of the sixteenth century. This century opened during Sikandar Lodi's reign of the Delhi Sultanate. Although Sikandar Lodi is often pictured as a persecutor of Hindus, it was during his rule that a Hindu renaissance began to take place in Vraja, an area located between the imperial cities of Delhi and Agra. Alan Entwistle remarks: "Ironically, it was during the reign of Sikandar Lodi, a staunch oppressor of Hinduism, that propagators of the emotional variety of devotion to Krishna came in search of the sacred places of Vraja."¹⁴ Many histories of Vraja portray Sikandar Lodi as a destroyer of Hindu temples, but sources for this portrayal come from the Mughal period, and the Mughals had much at stake in representing the Lodis as unjust rulers. We will most likely never know what kind of ruler Sikandar really was, but the fact that it was during his reign that the new Hindu renaissance began must cause us to wonder whether something more complex was going on at this time. "In spite of Sikandar's reputation for bigotry," writes S. M. Ikram, "it seems fair to surmise that in the cultural sphere his period was one of active mutual interest among Hindus and Muslims for each other's learning, thus conducing to a rapprochement."¹⁵ The picture that emerges from these times is certainly one of a fluid society with increasingly improved networks of transportation and communication extending throughout the subcontinent. In a climate of competing bids for power among the Muslim rulers, Hindu kings became potential allies.

In the year 1525 a Turk by the name of Babar, who claimed to be a descendent of Genghis Khan and had ruled over Afghanistan from Kabul for over two decades, rode over the Khyber Pass and invaded India. Within a year he had defeated Ibrahim Lodi, the son of Sikandar and current ruler of Delhi, and established himself as the first Mughal emperor. Babar was succeeded by his son Humayun in 1530, but the latter was soon driven from power by Sher Shah, an Afghani who had risen to power in southern Bihar. Sher Shah further stabilized the region between Delhi and Agra, and built a new protected road through this area to better connect the imperial cities. Humayun regained control of Delhi in 1555, but was

succeeded by his eldest son Akbar after falling to his death in 1556. As the Afghanis and their new challengers the Mughals became embroiled in a struggle for power, political alliances were sought with the Hindu kings of Rajasthan. Akbar in particular forged strong relations with Hindu kings and employed high-ranking Hindu officers in his court as a way to achieve political stability. The result was an environment increasingly conducive to Hindu cultural developments in the heart of the Muslim empire.

Important religious leaders began pouring into the Vraja region in the early sixteenth century from all parts of India. Caitanya had sent a learned man named Lokanātha from Navadvīpa, Bengal to Vṛndāvana to restore its sites perhaps as early as 1509.¹⁶ He himself visited the Vraja area sometime around 1514. Rūpa and Sanātana were to arrive a couple of years later, and were soon joined by their nephew Jīva Gosvāmin, who was to produce both original works as well as important commentaries on the works of his uncle Rūpa. Three more important figures associated with the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava circles of Vṛndāvana soon followed to participate in the restoration of the sacred sites of Vraja and the production of new theological literature for the developing movement. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmin arrived from the famous Śrīraṅgam temple of the southern area of Tamilnadu; Raghunāthadāsa Gosvāmī arrived from Bengal following the death of Caitanya in 1530; and Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmin left Vārāṇasī to join this group, which became known as the "Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana."¹⁷ They were soon joined by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, a figure from the southern cultural capital of Madhurai,¹⁸ who perhaps more than anyone else was responsible for establishing the shrine sites of Vraja associated with the stories of Kṛṣṇa.¹⁹ An important later figure within the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava circles of Vraja of the seventeenth century was Viśvanātha Cakravartin.²⁰ Viśvanātha wrote original texts, but is perhaps better remembered for his important commentaries on the works of Rūpa Gosvāmin.

Other groups besides the Gauḍīyas were also actively involved in developing the region of Vraja as a new center of Kṛṣṇa worship; all of these seemed to have worked in an atmosphere of mutual influence. Vallabhācārya, a Tailang *brāhmaṇa* whose family came from what is now Andhra Pradesh, arrived in Vraja in the early years of the sixteenth century, and there began what was to become the Puṣṭi Mārga, one of the most popular of the Vaiṣṇava lineages (*sampradāya*) centered in Vraja. Rūpa Gosvāmin refers to Vallabha's teachings directly in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*.²¹ A local Vraja saint by the name of Hita Harivaṃśa established the Rādhāvallabha temple in Vṛndāvana in the year 1534, and composed passionate poems about the love affair of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that still inspire

members of a small but influential *sampradāya* known as the Rādhāvallabhīs. Another poet-saint who took up residence in Vṛndāvana at this time was Svāmī Haridāsa, who established the temple image of Kuñjabihārī or Banke Bihārī. Svāmī Haridāsa is said to have been the teacher of Tansen, the legendary musician of Akbar's court. Although the Vaiṣṇava saint Nimbark was most likely born in the thirteenth century, the *sampradāya* he founded also played an active role in the establishment of the new form of worship in Vraja that focused on the love affair of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Another key figure involved in the establishment of the new form of worship in Vraja was Mādhavendra Pūrī. It is not clear whether Mādhavendra Pūrī came from Bengal or from southern India;²² nonetheless all Vraja sources portray him as having a vital role in establishing the important Kṛṣṇa shrine on the top of Mount Govardhana.²³ The works of the creative leaders of the new religion centered in Vraja were then carried by others throughout northern India, thus insuring the lasting influence of the poetry, texts, and religious culture that were produced during the creative years of the early sixteenth century. For example, the works of Rūpa Gosvāmin were carried back to Bengal by such disciples as Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, and were incorporated into the widely popular *Caitanya Caritamṛta* of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, thereby creating a wide and long-lasting audience. The Vaiṣṇava culture that began in Vraja in the sixteenth century is still vitally alive, and Vṛndāvana continues to be a major center for temple and pilgrimage activities today.

The picture that emerges during the first half of the sixteenth century is an explosion of lively and imaginative activity initiated by various scholars, poets, and saints, and focused on Kṛṣṇa as the fully manifest form of ultimate reality in the guise of a passionate Vraja cowherd. Rūpa himself tells us that this form of religion is a matter of serving the Lord of the Senses with all of one's own senses (BRS 1.1.12). This was a time of creative interaction between the leaders of Vraja who inspired and influenced one another. One of the major cultural products to be produced in this period of creative fermentation was the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, the only text of its kind to systematize the new religion of emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti in terms of aesthetic theory. Although the influence of devotional aesthetics is apparent in the writings of other saint-scholars,²⁴ Rūpa was the sole writer to create a systematic formulation of a uniquely Vaiṣṇava aesthetic. Although other Vraja writers did not necessarily borrow from him directly, and there are some important differences between their theories, Rūpa was the only one among them to produce an extensive analysis of *bhakti* as Rasa and work this out in the details of Bharata's rasa theory. Because of this it offers a unique opportunity to gain access to a fascinating development in the religious culture of northern India.

The Essence of Rasa: A Brief Discussion of Rasa Theory

Rūpa's ideas about Rasa are better understood when viewed in the context of larger discussions of this concept. Reflections on the nature and experience of rasa have had a long and fascinating history in India. The term rasa originally meant "sap," "juice," or "essence," and by extension "flavor," "taste," and "enjoyment." It was used in the early Upaniṣads to mean "essence," and is often associated with "joy" (*ānanda*). The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, for example, claims: "Verily he (*ātman*) is rasa. One becomes joyful only after obtaining rasa. . . . That rasa alone causes joy." (2.7).²⁵ Although later aestheticians easily read their meaning back into these early Upaniṣadic texts, the concept of rasa inherited by Rūpa came out of the specific context of aesthetics, particularly out of reflections on the nature of dramatic experience. Within this context the term rasa is best translated as "dramatic sentiment," or "aesthetic enjoyment." To better understand this usage we must turn to the discussion of rasa found in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of the legendary sage Bharata, the earliest of the dramatic texts.

The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is an elaborate and authoritative treatise on drama, and as such is the oldest text to mention rasa as a definable aesthetic principle. Although this text may contain portions that reach back into the second century B.C.E., it was most likely codified in its final form during the classical Gupta period around the fourth century C.E.²⁶ Edwin Gerow writes: "Taken as a whole, the sketch of *rasa* in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* suggests strongly that the *rasa* developed its first 'aesthetic' overtones in the context of the Sanskrit dramas of the classical period."²⁷ Rasa as an aesthetic principle, then, should first be understood as a distinctive feature of dramatic experience; that it was first formulated in the context of drama is a crucial factor in its definition. Consequently, any understanding of rasa theory must begin with an examination of its presentation in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

The West has generally followed Aristotle's notion that plot is the central organizing feature of drama. Bharata, however, articulated a theory wherein the evocation of rasa was to assume that position. The central challenge for the dramatist, therefore, was to determine how this "aesthetic enjoyment" could be evoked in the audience of a drama. Bharata's resulting project involved a detailed analysis of emotional experience to determine how various types of emotions could be reproduced on stage and evoked in the audience of a drama. This endeavor led him to a very sophisticated analysis of human emotions. Bharata began with the observation that the human being experiences a wide range of psychological states or emotions (*bhāvas*). He produced a list of forty-one possible emotions, but did not give all of them equal value.²⁸ Eight were marked as having a dominant or

lasting (*sthāyin*) effect on the human personality. These he called the *sthāyi-bhāvas*, which I have translated as "Foundational Emotions." Dominance or durability, in this case, seems to mean that these emotional states are so engrossing, and affect the person feeling them so greatly, that for the time being that person is aware of nothing else.²⁹ The remainder of the emotions presumably lack this characteristic. The eight Foundational Emotions listed by Bharata are love (*rati*), humor (*hāsa*), sorrow (*śoka*), anger (*krodha*), effort (*utsāha*), fear (*bhaya*), disgust (*jugupsā*), and astonishment (*vismaya*). Although these Foundational Emotions may be experienced by anyone, Bharata's particular task was to determine how they could be raised to a "relishable" state and thereby experienced in the dramatic context.

His solution was seemingly simple: If an emotion arises in a certain environment and produces certain responses and gestures in a human being, cannot a representation of that environment and an imitation of those responses and gestures reproduce the emotion in the sensitive and cultured viewer? Acting on this assumption, Bharata analyzed the emotions of everyday life in great detail. This analysis revealed to him that emotions are manifested by three components: the environmental conditions or causes (*kāraṇa*), the external responses or effects (*kārya*), and accompanying supportive emotions (*sahakārin*). Bharata then proceeded to define the specific characteristics of each of the components for each of the eight Foundational Emotions so that they could be imitated on stage and thus reproduce the desired emotion. When the environmental conditions, the external responses, and the accompanying emotional states are not part of ordinary life, but are components of artistic expression, they are technically renamed the *vibhāvas*, the *anubhāvas*, and the *vyabhicāri-bhāvas* respectively.³⁰ The proper combination of these components, Bharata maintained, would allow an emotion to be reproduced and "relished" as rasa. This leads to the famous *rasa-sūtra* found in the sixth chapter of Bharata's text: "Rasa is produced (*niṣpattiḥ*) from the combination of the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*."³¹

The *vibhāva* is generally explained as denoting that which makes the Foundational Emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*) capable of being sensed. For this reason I have translated it as the "Excitant" in my translation. In this sense it is said to be the primary "cause" (*kāraṇa*, *nimitta*, or *hetu*) of the aesthetic experience.³² Later writers recognize a twofold division of the Excitant: the *ālambana-vibhāva* (Substantial Excitant) and the *uddīpana-vibhāva* (Enhancing Excitant).³³ The Substantial Excitants consist of the actual characters of the play, and the Enhancing Excitants consist of the setting and props of the play, such as the garden, moon, clothing, and so forth.

Anubhāvas are said to be the vocal, physical, and mental gestures (*abhinaya*) by which the meaning is expressed and conveyed; they are the means by which the emotions are made to be felt.³⁴ For this reason I have translated the *anubhāvas* as “Indications.” The *vyabhicāri-bhāvas* are temporary accompanying accessory emotions that foster, support, and give fresh impetus to the Foundational Emotion. I have translated these as “Transitory Emotions.” Being thirty-three in number, they also account for the variety within a single Foundational Emotion, since each combines with the Foundational Emotion in its own unique way. Bharata introduces yet another category of emotions, the *sāttvika-bhāvas*, which are involuntary and uncontrollable physical responses produced from certain mental states.³⁵ These I have translated as “Responses.” Since examples include perspiration, goose bumps, and trembling, many later writers have considered them to be a type of Indication.

When combined with the proper combination of Excitants, Indications, and Transitory Emotions in the controlled environment of the theatre, the eight Foundational Emotions are somehow raised in the sympathetic spectator to a relishable state of aesthetic enjoyment and become the eight *rasas*: amorous (*śṛṅgāra*), humorous (*hāsyā*), compassionate (*karuṇā*), furious (*raudra*), heroic (*vīra*), dreadful (*bhayānaka*), abhorrent (*bībhatsa*), and wonderful (*adbhuta*). The terse nature of Bharata’s *rasa-sūtra* left many issues unresolved and therefore generated much debate among later writers concerned with aesthetic experience. Particular questions that remained were: What is the exact nature of the *rasa* experience? How is it experienced? What is the relationship between the *sthāyī-bhāva* or Foundational Emotion and *rasa*? Who can experience *rasa*? And how many *rasas* are there? Writers relevant to the context of the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* were interested in an additional question: What is the relationship between the aesthetic experience and the religious experience?

According to many historians of the concept of *rasa*, the theory of Abhinavagupta, a tenth-century Kashmiri, was accepted as authoritative by later writers on the subject. S. K. De, for example, identifies Abhinava’s position with the “orthodox” school of *rasa*.³⁶ Masson and Patwardhan assert: “There can be little doubt that Abhinava is the greatest name in Sanskrit literary criticism. For later writers on Sanskrit aesthetics there is no more important name than Abhinava.”³⁷ In fact, many scholars would have us believe that all later *rasa* theorists agree with Abhinava and accept his position without question.³⁸ This assertion would lead one to believe that Rūpa Gosvāmin’s *rasa* theory would follow in close agreement with that of Abhinava. Assuming that Abhinava’s *rasa* theory dominated Indian

aesthetics, Masson and Patwardhan write: “It seems to us that the whole of the Bengal Vaiṣṇava school of poetics (and not only poetics, but philosophy as well) was heavily influenced by the teachings of Abhinavagupta and the tradition he follows, though nobody writing on the Bengal school has noticed this fact or tried to follow its lead. It is true that the Gosvāmīs do not quote Abhinava directly, but we think his influence is quite clear.”³⁹ This assumption, however, obscures the fact that many aestheticians disagreed with Abhinava on a number of important issues. A close examination of other writers — particularly those who most likely had a strong influence on Rūpa — will reveal great differences with respect to Abhinava’s theory. Indeed, the claim certainly can be made that the *rasa* theory of Abhinavagupta was and remains widely known and highly influential.⁴⁰ Many aestheticians who disagreed with it still felt the need to contend with it in some fashion. For this reason it will be necessary to examine Abhinava’s theory and compare it with other theories available at the end of the fifteenth century when Rūpa received his education in Sanskrit to highlight the specific nature of Rūpa’s theory and its place in the cultural landscape of Indian aesthetics.

Abhinavagupta was born in Kashmir around the year 950.⁴¹ He was deeply involved in the world of Kashmir Śaivism, and was interested in the close connection between Tantric ritual and the aesthetic experience. To make sense of this it is necessary to examine how he understood the *rasa* experience. Abhinava defines *rasa* as the very soul of drama and of other forms of art, such as poetry. His views on *rasa* are well expressed in the following statement from his commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka* of his main predecessor Ānandavardhana:

(*Rasa*) belongs only to the suggestive function in poetry. It is never included under worldly dealings and is never even to be dreamed of as being revealed directly through words. No, quite the contrary, it is *rasa*, that is, it has a form which is capable of being relished (*rasanīya*) through the function of personal aesthetic relish, which is bliss (*ānanda*) that arises in the *sahṛdaya*’s delicate mind that has been colored by the appropriate latent impressions (*vāsanā*) that are deeply embedded from long before; appropriate that is, to the beautiful *vibhāvas* and *anubhāvas*, and beautiful, again, because of their appeal to the heart, and which are conveyed by means of words. That alone is *rasadhvani*, and that alone, in the strict sense of the word is the soul of poetry.⁴²

The picture of *rasa* that emerges from this quotation is that it is the result of relishing one’s own joy-filled consciousness that has been colored by previous emotional experiences. These previous experiences are present in the mind in the form of unconscious latent impressions called *vāsanās*. When one of these *vāsanās*

is raised to the level of consciousness in the dramatic environment by means of the *vibhāvas* and *anubhāvas*, it is relished as a *rasa*. Abhinava, therefore, interpreted Bharata's *sūtra* to mean that *rasa* comes from the force of one's response to something that already exists (as a lamp relishes an existing pot), and not to something produced. It is when the unconscious latent impressions are roused to consciousness in an aesthetic environment that the experience of *rasa* occurs.

The nature of a person's response is particularly important for Abhinava; to experience *rasa* one must be open and sympathetic. "Poetry," he tells us, "is like a woman in love and should be responded to with an equal love."⁴³ Abhinava maintains that one becomes receptive to a poem or drama by removing certain obstacles that restrict one's consciousness. The aesthetic experience for him is a very special experience of existing emotions; it consists of a tasting (*āsvāda*) devoid of any of these obstacles, and in this sense, is an undisturbed and unrestricted relish. Masson and Patwardhan comment: "All of Abhinava's efforts focus on one important need: to crack the hard shell of 'I' and allow to flow out the higher self which automatically identifies with everyone and everything around."⁴⁴ For Abhinava, then, the aesthetic experience of *rasa* is consciousness without any of the obstacles of individuality. It is a tranquil contemplation of impersonal emotions. The sensitive viewer responds sympathetically to a depicted situation, but not personally. The result of this is an experience which is unlike anything in ordinary life. Abhinava identifies it with the experience of wondrous astonishment (*camatkāra*), an experience which implies "the cessation of a world—the ordinary, historical world, the *samsāra*—and its sudden replacement by a new dimension of reality."⁴⁵

Because of the contemplative attitude this highly unusual experience requires, Abhinava insisted that *rasa* could only be experienced by members of an audience. He refused to grant the aesthetic experience to the actor, for the actor is too close, too technically involved, for Abhinava to permit him to have the experience of *rasa*. Instead, only the spectator is free enough to identify with the depicted situation and thereby experience *rasa*. Abhinava's own term for this identification with the depicted situation and emotions is *tan-mayī-bhāvanā*. For him, aesthetic experience is dependent upon this identification. It is by means of this and the "generalization" (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*) of emotions — that is, the way the time, space, and personal nature of ordinary emotions are transcended in art — that account for the unusual nature of aesthetic experience for Abhinava. Generalization of emotions is what allows emotions to be raised and experienced by means of the depicted scenes. No spectator has the exact same emotional experience as

the original characters, but has similar unconscious impressions or *vāsanās* from a shared background of experience. Therefore, the aesthetic experience according to Abhinava is not of a particular person for a particular person, but rather is a generalized experience of one's own *vāsanās*.

His representation of *rasa* as a generalized experience led him to maintain a sharp distinction between ordinary experience and the aesthetic experience of *rasa*.⁴⁶ For Abhinava, the Foundational Emotions or *sthāyī-bhāvas* are ordinary emotions. Ordinary emotions are enmeshed in very personal concerns, whereas *rasa* is by definition an experience that transcends the personal for the impersonal which is beyond limitations. The *sthāyī-bhāva* is the experience of the latent impressions, or *vāsanās*, roused to consciousness in the everyday world of personal concern; *rasa* is the experience of the *vāsanās* roused to consciousness in the controlled and impersonal environment of the theatre. The *sthāyī-bhāva* belongs to the world, while *rasa* belongs to art; and for Abhinava, never the twain shall meet. It is for this reason, Abhinava argues, that Bharata did not mention the *sthāyī-bhāva* in his *rasa-sūtra*.

Although Bharata included only eight *rasas* in his list in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, following several others before him Abhinavagupta added a ninth: the Tranquil (*śānta*) *Rasa*. There has been a great deal of scholarly debate about the status of the *śānta rasa* in Abhinava's theory, but clearly it is a *rasa* that is qualitatively different from the eight standard *rasas*. In fact, this is the argument Abhinava provides to explain why Bharata did not mention the *śānta rasa* along with the standard eight. The special place of the Tranquil *Rasa* in the thought of Abhinava can perhaps best be seen in his discussion of its *sthāyī-bhāva*. In his own commentary on Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Abhinava states that the *sthāyī-bhāva* of the *śānta rasa* is *śama* (quietude), and connects it with the knowledge of the truth or ultimate reality (*tattvajñāna*), or with the knowledge of the *ātman* (*ātmajñāna*).⁴⁷ Some scholars have argued that this is merely Abhinava's way of working a difficult *rasa* into Bharata's framework,⁴⁸ whereas others have argued that this discussion is Abhinava's way of indicating that since knowledge of the *ātman* is the *sthāyī-bhāva* of the *śānta rasa* this marks it as an absolutely unique *rasa* that belongs to a higher plane of religious tranquillity (*śānti* or *viśrānti*) into which all *rasas* ultimately resolve.⁴⁹ Also being debated here is whether Abhinava argued for all *rasas* finally being singular or not. Those who think all *rasas* resolve into a singular primary *śānta rasa* for Abhinava maintain that there exists a close relationship between his aesthetics and religion, whereas those who think that *śānta* fits awkwardly into Abhinava system as an analogy for *rasa* maintain that he keeps

aesthetics and religion more separate. Regardless, the *sānta rasa* is clearly unique for Abhinavagupta, and it is important to remember that its chief characteristic is the absence of all emotions.

Abhinava's understanding of the close relationship between aesthetic experience and religious experience seems to have been dependent on a slightly earlier Kashmiri writer, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka. It is very likely that Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka was the first to develop an explicit explanation of aesthetic experience in terms of the spectator's inward experience. He suggested that the aesthetic experience of *rasa* is similar — though not identical — to the tasting (*āsvāda*) of the supreme Brahman.⁵⁰ Masson and Patwardhan remark: "It may well be that Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka was the first person to make the famous comparison of yogic ecstasy and aesthetic experience."⁵¹ For him, drama has a special power that functions to suppress the thick layer of confusion occupying our consciousness.⁵² The effect of this power is the universalization or "generalization" (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*) of the emotional situation presented on stage. Generalization is here understood to mean the process of idealization by which the sensitive viewer passes from his troublous personal emotions to the serene contemplation of a dramatic sentiment.⁵³ This process occurs through an identification with the impersonal situation. Generalization is thus a special state of identification with the world of dramatic representation, which transcends any practical interest or egoistic concerns of the limited self. An ordinary emotion may be pleasurable or painful, but the experience of *rasa*, a shared emotional experience transcending personal attitude and concerns, is lifted above the pleasure and pain of personal ego into pure impersonal joy (*ānanda*). This happens, according to Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, because one is not concerned with how the depicted actions will personally affect one; an "artistic distance" is maintained between the spectator and the portrayed emotions. Aesthetic emotions can be intense, but are never personal. Thus the tears one might shed while watching a drama are never tears of pain, but of impersonal sentiment. For the duration of the aesthetic experience, the spectator steps out of ordinary time, space, and personal identity. Raniero Gnoli explains Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's notion this way:

During the aesthetic experience, the consciousness of the spectator is free from all practical desires. The spectacle is no longer felt in connexion with the empirical "I" of the spectator nor in connexion with any other particular individual: it has the power of abolishing the limited personality of the spectator, who regains, momentarily, his immaculate being not yet overshadowed by *māyā*.⁵⁴

It is in this sense that Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka saw a similarity between aesthetic experience and religious experience. Although the aesthetic experience is recog-

nized as being one of pure contemplation dissociated from all personal interests and resulting in composure (*viśrānti*), it is still marked by temporality and does not completely escape egoistic impulses, since it is dependent upon the unconscious impressions, the *vāsanās*, which consist of acquired personal experience. These ideas of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka had a deep influence on Abhinavagupta's views of *rasa*.

Abhinava's theory has been summarized in this way:

Reduced to its bare essential the theory is as follows: watching a play or reading a poem for the sensitive reader (*sahṛdaya*) entails a loss of the sense of present time and space. All worldly considerations for the time being cease. Since we are not indifferent (*taṭastha*) to what is taking place, our involvement must be of a purer variety than we normally experience. We are not directly and personally involved, so the usual medley of desires and anxieties dissolve. Our hearts respond sympathetically (*hṛdayasaṃvāda*) but not selfishly. Finally the response becomes total, all-engrossing, and we identify with the situation depicted (*tanmayībhavana*). The ego is transcended, and for the duration of the aesthetic experience, the normal waking "I" is suspended. Once this actually happens, we suddenly find that our responses are not like anything we have hitherto experienced, for now that all normal emotions are gone, now that the hard knot of "selfness" has been untied, we find ourselves in an unprecedented state of mental and emotional calm. The purity of our emotion and the intensity of it take us to a higher level of pleasure than we could know before — we experience sheer undifferentiated bliss (*ānandaikaghana*). . . . Inadvertantly, says Abhinavagupta, we have arrived at the same inner terrain as that occupied by the mystic, though our aim was very different than his.⁵⁵

The aesthetic experience of *rasa*, then, for Abhinava is similar to the mystic's experience (*brahmāsvāda*) in that both are uncommon and impersonal experiences in which the individual self is surpassed. Abhinava reserves his greatest praise of the dramatic experience for that moment when the spectators so deeply enter into the world of the play that they transcend their own limited selves and arrive at the unity shared by certain Vedāntic mystics. Moreover, both aesthetic and mystical experiences are brought about by the removal of obstacles, present time and space disappear for the duration of the experience, and one is totally immersed in an experience marked by bliss (*ānanda*).

Abhinava maintains, however, that there are important differences between the two types of experience. First, the aesthetic experience of ordinary drama is characterized by temporality; the experience ends when one leaves the theatre.

After the performance the members of the audience once again return to the world of their separate selves. Drama is also not expected to change one's life radically. Abhinava could not say the same for the mystic's experience. The mystic's experience of *mokṣa* is much more profound, is very likely to make a drastic change in one's life, and necessarily becomes a permanent feature of life. Yet, more important, the two experiences are distinguished by the fact that, while the experience of *mokṣa* is by definition beyond illusion, the aesthetic experience still partakes in illusion. While he contends that one is more free during an aesthetic experience of a drama than one is in the ordinary waking state dominated by egoism, he still identifies serious limitations within the *rasa* experience since it is dependent on the binding emotional contents of the individual unconscious, the *vāsanās*. Nevertheless, since the aesthetic experience of drama can lift us above ordinary limited consciousness—at least temporarily—Abhinavagupta holds that it can function as a pointer to that reality beyond illusion. "Art experience," comments Mysore Hiriyanna on Abhinava's perspective, "is well adapted to arouse our interest in the ideal state by giving us a foretaste of it, and thus serves as a powerful incentive to the pursuit of that state."⁵⁶

In order to judge both the influences on Rūpa and to determine where he stands on a number of important issues, it will be necessary to look at other views of *rasa* theory available to thinkers on this subject. It would be useful, therefore, to back up and trace other lines of development besides that of Abhinavagupta to see how they might have come down to Rūpa.

Our knowledge of writers commenting on Bharata's *rasa*-theory before Abhinavagupta is limited. In fact, almost all we know about many of them comes from the secondary representation of their theory found in Abhinava's own commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the *Abhinavabhāratī*.⁵⁷ The first of the theoreticians taken up in Abhinava's text is Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭā, a ninth century writer who addresses two of the questions raised above. Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭā maintains that "*rasa* is simply the *sthāyi-bhāva* that has been intensified (*upacita*) by means of the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, and *vyabhicāri*; if it is not intensified, it remains a *sthāyi-bhāva*."⁵⁸ That is, there is no fundamental difference between a *rasa* and a *sthāyi-bhāva*; the former is only an intensified form of the latter. Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭā goes on to say that *rasa* is "located in both the original character (*anukārya*), and also in the actor (*anukartā*) by virtue of the power of identification (*anusandhāna*)."⁵⁹ This is a position radically different than Abhinava's. It may well be representative of a school that is continuous and much older than the theory of Abhinavagupta and other Kashmiri writers. In fact, Abhinava identifies Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭā's position with

that of the "ancients," and goes on to say that it is in agreement with Daṇḍin, a seventh century southern Indian writer who stated that: "having reached it's highest point, (the *sthāyi-bhāva*) anger becomes the Furious *Rasa*." These passages seem to suggest that there was an early school that defined *rasa* as the intensification of the Foundational Emotion or *sthāyi-bhāva*. This seems to be a fair reading of Bharata's text, wherein he states "the *sthāyi-bhāvas* achieve the state of a *rasa* when combined with the different *bhāvas* (*vibhāvas*, etc.)."⁶⁰ Although Abhinavagupta himself greatly disagreed with the position of this school, it continued to be influential and was later given prominent expression by Bhoja. This school's views on *rasa* are also recorded in the *Agni Purāṇa*.⁶¹ Both Bhoja and the *Agni Purāṇa* seem to have been important sources for the aesthetic ideas of Rūpa Gosvāmin. Although Rūpa never quotes him directly, several scholars have suggested that Bhoja had a significant influence on Rūpa.⁶² Sivaprasad Bhattacharya, for example, concludes: "Indeed it is a fact that Bengal writers paid less heed to very many of the accepted views of the early Kashmiri poeticists on the poetics of *rasa* than to the contribution of Bhoja."⁶³ S. N. Ghosal Sastri writes: "In Rūpa Gosvāmin's Rhetorics, the direct influence of Bharata, Dhanañjaya, Śāradātanaya, Śiṅgabhūpāla, etc. is clearly marked; but his indebtedness to Bhojadeva's *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* is more prominent."⁶⁴ For this reason it will be important to have a basic understanding of Bhoja's *rasa* theory.

Bhoja was a king who ruled Malwa (Rajasthan) in the eleventh century.⁶⁵ He was a highly influential figure in the medieval world of Sanskrit aesthetics. Two of his works on this subject survive: his well-known *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭābharaṇa*, which draws heavily from Daṇḍin and has a striking resemblance to the *Alaṅkāra*-section of the *Agni Purāṇa*,⁶⁶ and the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa*,⁶⁷ which involves a close examination of the Amorous *śṛṅgāra rasa*, a *rasa* he singles out as uniquely important. The first of these works was widely read in northern India and was most likely known by the scholars of Navadvīpa, the teachers of Rūpa Gosvāmin. Many scholars seem to find in Bhoja a spokesman for an "older" school of interpretation that goes back at least as far as Daṇḍin and later finds expression in the *Agni Purāṇa*.⁶⁸

The aesthetic experience for Bhoja is both intense and personal; it has to do with the strong feelings generated for a particular person. Moreover, according to him any cultured individual (*rasika*) can experience *rasa*.⁶⁹ "The *Rasika* may be the spectator and the connoisseur, the poet, or the characters like Rāma in the story. Thus primarily sentient and cultured beings are the seat of *Rasa*. . . . The actor who acts the character of the story is also *Rasavān*."⁷⁰ Bhoja argues that one's position

with respect to the drama does not necessarily determine whether one is capable of experiencing rasa or not; rather the determining factor is the quality of one's inner nature. The ability to experience rasa depends upon the full bloom of one's emotional capacity. A mature emotional condition produces the power of empathy, the capability to get into the moods of others. This condition, however, is somewhat rare, for not everyone is capable of experiencing rasa. Like Abhinava, Bhoja holds that the aesthetic experience is dependent upon unconscious impressions, the *vāsanās*; however, the two differ greatly in their understanding of the *vāsanās*, for Bhoja maintains that the rasa experience is dependent upon special *vāsanās* that are due to the past performance of religious acts (*dharma-kārya*).⁷¹ Like Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa and Daṇḍin, Bhoja explains that rasa is the intensification of a *sthāyi-bhāva*.⁷² He interprets Bharata's *rasa-sūtra* to mean that when the *vibhāvas* and other aesthetic components combine with and act upon the *sthāyi-bhāva*, rasa is produced. A developmental relationship is therefore understood to exist between the *sthāyi-bhāva* and rasa. The similes Bhoja uses to explain the "production" (*niṣpatti*) of rasa from the *sthāyi-bhāvas* are the production of juice from sugarcane, oil from sesame, butter from curds, and fire from wood.⁷³ Thus, Bhoja regards the *sthāyi-bhāva* and rasa "as fundamentally the same, different only in their designations, discharging different functions in reality and actually as so many stages of evolution of the same pattern."⁷⁴ In the initial stage there is *sthāyi-bhāva*; in the state of culmination there is rasa.

Another important element of Bhoja's theory is his insistence that all rasas are really one. For him, the Amorous Rasa *śṛṅgāra* is the essential and unified rasa that underlies all experiences of pleasure. Love, therefore, is the very foundation of all aesthetic enjoyment. The other rasas are not ultimately different than *śṛṅgāra*, but rather are varieties of the one rasa of love or *śṛṅgāra*. Subsequently, Bhoja's theory represents both the singularity and multiplicity of rasa.⁷⁵ This means that love or *rati* is the foundation of all *bhāvas*; when they become intensified in contact with the *vibhāvas* and other aesthetic components, they become transformed into rasa, some variety of Amorous Love. Significantly, this is precisely the position expressed in the *Agni Purāṇa*, a text that most likely achieved its final form in Bengal in the twelfth century, and a text certainly known and quoted by Rūpa Gosvāmin.⁷⁶

We are now ready to compare what appears to be two different schools of rasa theory operative in India. Delmonico calls one the "northern school" and identifies Abhinavagupta as its chief spokesman, and the other the "southern school" and identifies Bhoja as its chief spokesman. De agrees with this in many ways, calling

Abhinavagupta's school the "orthodox," and Bhoja's school "non-orthodox," although he recognizes that the latter is probably older. I myself have come to think of the two schools as the *yogī's* school and the *bhogī's* school; but regardless of designation, two schools of thought can be identified that are clearly diametrically opposed on many major issues, and it will be important to understand that on many issues Rūpa falls within the school identified with Bhoja.⁷⁷

The rasa experience for Abhinavagupta might be characterized as a special contemplation of an impersonal emotion. The experience involves a temporary loss of individual identity and a generalized experience of an emotion raised to consciousness by the drama. The rasa experience for Bhoja is an intensely personal and emotional experience in which self-identity is heightened as one identifies with the very personal situation of the actor. For Abhinava, rasa involves the absence of personal emotion, whereas for Bhoja it involves the intensification of emotion. Abhinava holds that it is a generalized experience of no particular person, while Bhoja maintains that it is the result of an identification with a particular person. For Abhinava detachment and distancing are the foundation of the rasa experience; for Bhoja attachment and identification are the foundation of the rasa experience. Abhinava insists that rasa is only possible for members of the audience; Bhoja argues that although it is primarily the experience of the original characters it can be experienced by anyone who has the proper *vāsanā* and can identify with the original characters. The *vāsanās* on which the aesthetic experience depends are common to all according to Abhinava, whereas the *vāsanā* on which the authentic aesthetic experience depends according to Bhoja is uncommon and generated through religious activity. Rasa for Abhinava is manifested in a manner that marks it off radically from the *sthāyi-bhāva*, whereas for Bhoja rasa is the transformation of the *sthāyi-bhāva* wherein the latter becomes intensified and culminates in a state of maturity. The preeminent rasa for Abhinava is *sānta*, an experience of utter tranquillity wherein one has transcended ordinary emotional experience, whereas the preeminent rasa for Bhoja is *śṛṅgāra*, the very pinnacle of intense emotional experience. Thus we see a great difference between these two positions; this will be important to keep in mind as we proceed to examine the specific nature of Rūpa Gosvāmin's own rasa theory.

Bhakti as Rasa Prior to Rūpa

Rūpa was certainly not the first to treat *bhakti* as rasa, although I think it could safely be said that he was the first to analyze the notion in a detailed and systematic manner. A rather orthodox position on the question of whether *bhakti* could be rasa

or not was stated by Mammaṭa in his *Kāvya prakāśa*, a late eleventh century text that many claim to be the single most influential text on rasa theory.⁷⁸ Mammaṭa insists that love (*rati*) for a god is only a *bhāva*, not a rasa.⁷⁹ Such writers seem to follow Bharata on this point. Other writers, however, such as Abhinavagupta, included bhakti in discussions about *śānta rasa*.⁸⁰ Bhakti for Abhinava, however, is not a separate rasa, but rather is classified as an emotion conducive to the tranquil state of *śānta rasa*. The real pioneer in presenting bhakti as a distinctive rasa seems to have been Vopadeva, a thirteenth century Marathi writer.⁸¹ In a work entitled the *Muktāphala*, Vopadeva outlines what is most likely the first comprehensive interpretation of bhakti as rasa. In the eleventh chapter of this work, he establishes that there are nine types of devotees, each associated with one of the nine rasas (Bharata's eight, plus *śānta*). He also accepts the standard list of nine *sthāyi-bhāvas*. Detailed analysis is not provided; instead, Vopadeva simply illustrates each of the nine types of devotional rasas and concomitant devotees with illustrations from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

The work begun by Vopadeva was furthered by Hemādri, a contemporary who wrote a commentary on the *Muktāphala* entitled the *Kaivalyadīpikā*. In this text Hemādri maintains that a rasa is an intensified *bhāva*, and defines a devotee as one who experiences *bhakti-rasa*.⁸² Although the treatment is not extensive, Hemādri applied the various components of Bharata's *rasa-sūtra* to Vaiṣṇava bhakti.⁸³ Emotions directed toward Viṣṇu are declared to be the means of attaining him. Such emotions become the *sthāyi-bhāvas* of *bhakti-rasa*; here too the standard list of the *sthāyi-bhāvas* of the nine rasas is accepted. Viṣṇu and his devotees are listed as the Substantial Excitants (*ālambana vibhāvas*) of *bhakti-rasa*, and things related to Viṣṇu, such as his deeds, are the Enhancing Excitants (*uddīpana vibhāvas*). The traditional *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicāri-bhāvas* — understood here as applying to the devotees of Viṣṇu — complete his treatment. Although the presentation of *bhakti-rasa* by Hemādri is not nearly as detailed as that of Rūpa, his work must have been of seminal importance for the latter, who clearly knew of the *Kaivalyadīpikā*.⁸⁴

One other figure that precedes Rūpa and seems to have some influence on him is Lakṣmīdhara,⁸⁵ author of the *Nāmakaumadī*, who was most likely a Tēlaṅga *brāhmaṇa* living in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Lakṣmīdhara viewed bhakti as the mental state (*bhāva*) of the mind spontaneously focused on the Lord. He designated this pleasurable mental state love or *rati*, thus setting precedent for the identification of the *sthāyi-bhāva* of bhakti-rasa as *bhagavad-rati*.⁸⁶ It is clear, then, that Rūpa Gosvāmin inherited the seeds of a long history of discussion of bhakti as rasa. The notions he inherited, however, were far from being fully

developed; it remained for him to bring this discussion to fruition in light of the recent developments occurring in Vraja in the early sixteenth century.

The Ocean: Structure and Content of the Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu

The *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* is conceived of as an ocean of Rasa, and its overall aim is the articulation of a systematic aesthetics of loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa. In keeping with the oceanic image, the text is divided into four directional divisions (*vibhāgas*); each of these quadrants is further subdivided into chapters called waves (*laharīs*).⁸⁷ The first and Eastern Quadrant contains an explanation of the general characteristics of devotion (*bhakti*) as defined by Rūpa. Moving clockwise, the Southern Quadrant lays out devotional Rasa in successive chapters in terms of the primary aesthetic components established by Bharata in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*: the Excitants (*vibhāvas*), Indications (*anubhāvas*), Responses (*sātvikas*), Transitory Emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāvas*), and the Foundational Emotions (*sthāyi-bhāvas*). The Western Quadrant outlines the major features of five primary devotional Rasas: the Peaceful (*śānta*), Respectful (*prīta*), Companionable (*preyas*), Parentally Affectionate (*vatsala*), and Amorous (*madhura*). The final and Northern Quadrant presents the major features of seven secondary devotional Rasas: the Humorous (*hāsyā*), Wonderful (*adbhuta*), Heroic (*vīra*), Compassionate (*karuṇa*), Furious (*raudra*), Dreadful (*bhayānaka*), and Abhorrent (*bībhatsa*); this division ends with a discussion of the compatibility and incompatibility of Rasas, and the semblances of Rasas, or defective Rasas.

The format of presentation in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* reveals the scholastic influence of the new logic known as Navya Nyāya — marked by a great concern for careful definitions and elaborate classifications — that was prevalent during the time of Rūpa's education. In a manner very typical of the Vṛndāvana Gosvāmins, Rūpa supports his definitions and statements with quotations drawn from a wide range of texts. This not only suggests that scripture (*śabda*) is the most important source of authoritative knowledge (*pramāṇa*) for Rūpa,⁸⁸ but also that he was well-educated in both Sanskrit aesthetics and Vaiṣṇava philosophy. His analysis and theoretical statements about Rasa are supported with quotations from previous works on aesthetics, such as Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Viśvanātha Kavirāja's *Sāhitya Darpaṇa*, and Siṃhabhūpāla's *Rasa Sudhākara*. His presentation of the various components of each type of Rasa is often illustrated with quotations from Vaiṣṇava scriptures, such as the *Padma*, *Skanda*, and *Nārada Purāṇas*, but especially from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. In fact, in many ways the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* can be read as a commentary on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, at least from an aesthetic perspective. The

Bhāgavata holds a particularly eminent position in the school of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, for whereas other Vedāntic schools produced commentaries on the *Vedānta Sūtra*, the Gauḍīyas consider the *Bhāgavata* as Vyāsa's own commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtra*. Accordingly, the *Bhāgavata* is the single most authoritative text for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Verses without attribution appear among the many verses used in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* to illustrate some point. These are most likely poetic compositions by Rūpa himself, considering the fact that he draws quotations from six of his own titled poetic and dramatic texts.⁸⁹ I must admit that in the early stages of my translation work, I viewed the many illustrations as cumbersome obstacles impeding the progress of Rūpa's central argument. However, as time went on, I soon realized the multi-faceted importance of the illustrative verses. Not only do they establish the authority of Rūpa's arguments, but perhaps more importantly they give the reader a poetic *darśana* (vision) of some aspect of Kṛṣṇa's play (*līlā*) as a way of directly understanding some particularly delightful variety in that divine activity. In this regard, the text can be viewed as a vast ocean of "verbal icons"⁹⁰ of the multiple forms of Kṛṣṇa and his *līlā*.

Three Sanskrit commentaries have been written on the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, although only two of these are widely accepted in orthodox circles. The first was written by Jīva Gosvāmin, the younger nephew of Rūpa and Sanātana. Because of his philosophical training and standing in the community, Jīva's commentary is considered to be the most authoritative, and all later commentaries follow it. The next commentary was written by Viśvanātha Cakravartin, an influential resident of Vṛndāvana in the latter half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century.⁹¹ He spent his life producing important Sanskrit commentaries as well as original works in Sanskrit. Viśvanātha was recognized as one of the greatest authorities of his day among the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community, and became known particularly as an interpreter of the works of Rūpa Gosvāmin.⁹² The third commentary was written by Mukundadāsa Gosvāmin, a lesser-known figure of the seventeenth century. Because of the weight of the first two commentaries and because the commentary of Mukundadāsa is rarely printed in published editions of the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, I have referred only to the first two in my own interpretive notes.

Rūpa's exploration of the ocean of devotional aesthetics begins with a definition of devotion or *bhakti* in the first chapter of the Eastern Quadrant, entitled "The General Characteristics of Devotion." After praising his gurus, the saint Caitanya and his elder brother Sanātana, Rūpa defines *bhakti* as "dedicated service

to Kṛṣṇa that is rendered pleasantly, is devoid of desire for anything else, and is unobstructed by intellectual knowledge (*jñāna*) or purposeful action (*karma*)" (1.1.11). This means that the true object of all devotion is Kṛṣṇa, understood as the highest reality. Rūpa follows the theology of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in assuming that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme non-dual reality and the very source of all *avatāras*.⁹³ Devotion itself is defined as "dedicated service," which involves both emotional attitudes (*bhāva*) and physical actions (*ceṣṭā*). It is "service with the senses to the Lord of the Senses" (1.1.12). The devotion that Rūpa marks as the highest and most worthy of emulation is a means of focusing the mind and other senses on Kṛṣṇa through pleasant feelings, thus avoiding the negative emotional examples found in Vaiṣṇava scripture, such as Kāṁsa, who focused his mind on Kṛṣṇa with fear, and Śiśupāla, who focused his mind on Kṛṣṇa with hatred. The highest devotion is to be purely selfless, desiring nothing other than loving service itself. Specifically, this means avoiding the seduction of both worldly pleasures (*bhukti*) and spiritual liberation (*mukti*), which would result in either a selfish love or a state of absolute union wherein love becomes impossible. Rūpa identifies and explains six special qualities of *bhakti*: it destroys difficulties, bestows auspiciousness, trivializes *mokṣa*, is very difficult to attain, consists of a special concentrated joy, and attracts Śrī Kṛṣṇa (1.1.17ff).

Rūpa's understanding of *rasa* differs greatly from those of other theoreticians who preceded him. Whereas previous writers normally restricted the *rasa* experience to the limited space of the theatre, he extends it to all of life. *Rasa* is now not understood to be simply a temporary aesthetic experience, but rather as the culminating core of a genuine human life. For Rūpa there is only one true *Rasa*, *bhakti-rasa*, which constitutes the highest religious experience. This one true *Rasa* is to be distinguished from the ordinary (*laukika*) *rasas* of classical theory, for it is understood to be extraordinary (*alaukika*), even an aspect of divinity. The divinity of *bhakti-rasa* is expressed with the terms *śuddha sattva* ("pure and luminous quality," 1.3.1) and *mahāśakti* ("great power," 2.5.92). The first of these terms indicates the extraordinary nature of devotional *Rasa*, for the pure and luminous quality of *śuddha sattva* is by definition beyond the ordinary qualities that make up the ordinary world (*tamas, rajas, sattva*). The second term indicates that it participates in that aspect of divinity known as *śakti*. Rūpa's nephew, Jīva Gosvāmin, identifies both of these terms with the joyful power (*hlādinī-śakti*) of Kṛṣṇa, which he marks as the highest dimension and essential nature (*svarūpa*) of divinity on the basis of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.⁹⁴

The special nature of devotional *Rasa* for Rūpa, however, can best be seen by closely examining his understanding of its Foundational Emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*);

furthermore, an understanding of the uniqueness of this Foundational Emotion is the key to understanding Rūpa's entire system. Rūpa states: "The Foundational Emotion here is declared to be that love (*rati*) which takes Śrī Kṛṣṇa as its object (*viṣaya*)" (2.5.2). As was already mentioned, the classical *rasa* theory passed down from Bharata recognized eight Foundational Emotions; a ninth was added later. Although Rūpa will proceed to introduce variety into love, it is clear that bhakti-rasa has a single and very special Foundational Emotion. For him, then, all genuine *Rasa* is based on some form of love, or more specifically, some form of love for Kṛṣṇa. This is a significant point of departure from previous bhakti theoreticians, such as Vopadeva, who recognized the traditional nine Foundational Emotions, although in many ways Rūpa is in agreement with the viewpoint of Bhoja, who reduced all *rasas* to one (called either *śṛṅgāra* or *prema*).

Rūpa writes: "Bhāva is a special form of the pure and luminous quality, and is like a beam of the sun of supreme love (*prema*)" (1.3.1). Here the word "*bhāva*" means the Foundational Emotion of love, as is made explicit in 1.3.13. The word *prema*, which I have translated as "supreme love," refers to the higher stages of love, which in effect are bhakti-rasa. It is clear from a reading of 1.4.1 that *prema* or supreme love is an intensified form of love, *bhāva* or *rati*. Again, Rūpa is in agreement with Bhoja, who viewed *rasa* as an intensified form of the Foundational Emotion, and opposed to Abhinavagupta, who viewed the Foundational Emotions and *rasa* as being ultimately different. For Rūpa, *bhāva* is the first stage of *prema*; stated the other way around, *prema* is merely the intensified or fully manifest form of *bhāva*. Once the *bhāva* is present, *Rasa* is sure to follow under the right conditions. Thus the importance of the presence of the *bhāva* or Foundational Emotion. Since Rūpa places so much emphasis on the Foundational Emotion, a major concern of his was to determine how it becomes present. He writes: "This loving emotion (*bhāva*) is born in two ways: either from diligent dedication to spiritual practices (*sādhana*), or for the very fortunate, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa or His devotees. The first, however, is more common; the second is rare" (1.3.6). This being the case, and considering the immense importance Rūpa placed in the *sthāyī-bhāva*, he gives great attention to *sādhana*, a subject taken up in the lengthy second chapter of the first division of this text.

Rūpa divides *Sādhana Bhakti* into two types: *Vaidhī* and *Rāgānugā*. *Vaidhī Bhakti Sādhana* is said to be a form of practice that is motivated by the injunctions of scripture (1.2.6), whereas *Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* is a form of practice that is motivated by a desire to follow one of Kṛṣṇa's close companions (1.2.270). Rūpa enumerates sixty-four practices of *Vaidhī*, supporting each with illustrations

drawn from Vaiṣṇava scriptures. He declares the last five practices to be particularly powerful (1.2.238). These consist of lovingly serving an image of Kṛṣṇa, reading the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, associating with devotees of Kṛṣṇa, singing the names of Kṛṣṇa, and living in the region of *Vraja*. *Vaidhī* appears to be a preliminary stage of practice, which culminates in the desire to identify with the emotional state of one of Kṛṣṇa's close companions. Once this desire has blossomed, one is ready for *Rāgānugā Sādhana*.⁹⁵

Rāgānugā Sādhana is defined as a form of devotion that imitates⁹⁶ (*anusṛtā*) the devotion of the various residents of *Vraja* (1.2.270). The residents of *Vraja* are considered to be perfected beings, and as such function as paradigms for ideal devotion. Their devotion is called *Rāgātmikā Bhakti*, which is defined as a passionate absorption in the beloved (1.2.272). Rūpa typically singles out the amorous relationship for special attention, and so therefore divides *Rāgātmikā Bhakti* into two types: Amorous (*kāmarūpa*) and Relational (*sambandharūpa*, 1.2.273). Following this twofold division, *Rāgānugā* is also divided into two types: Imitation of Amorous Bhakti (*kāmānugā*) and Imitation of Relational Bhakti (*sambandhānugā*, 1.2.290). The models for the first are the *gopīs* of *Vraja*; the models for the second are the friends and relatives of Kṛṣṇa. The desire for attaining the emotional state (*bhāva*) of one of the residents of *Vraja* is the sign of eligibility for this type of spiritual practice (1.2.291). The practice itself, which has a long developmental history, is best indicated by two verses in the text (1.2.294-95). Rūpa advises the *Rāgānugā* practitioner to dwell continually in *Vraja* (mentally if not physically), and remain absorbed in the stories of Kṛṣṇa and his intimate companions. In this way, the practitioner comes to know intimately the script of Kṛṣṇa's divine play (*līlā*). The next move is to take an active role in that script by performing services (*sevā*) which imitate the residents of *Vraja* with both the practitioner's body (*sādhaka-rūpa*) and perfected body (*siddha-rūpa*).

A great deal could be said about these terse instructional remarks, but briefly this practice begins with initiation by a qualified guru, who has the ability to discern the identity of an individual's character in the ultimate reality of Kṛṣṇa's divine play or *līlā*. According to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas everyone has a spiritual double, called the "perfected body," that defines one's true identity. Use of the term perfected body (*siddha-rūpa*) had a previous history among the *Nātha* and *Haṭha* yogīs, who employed the term to refer to the body that had become perfected through techniques of yoga and had achieved a deathless state.⁹⁷ In the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition, however, the perfected body refers to both a meditative body and one's eternal form. *Jīva Gosvāmin* glosses the term as "an internal body

suitable for one's desired services for Kṛṣṇa" (*antaś-cintitābhiṣṭa-tat-sevopayogideha*). The perfected body is revealed to the practitioner by a guru who has mastered a meditative technique known as *lilā-smaraṇa*. This practice involves visualizing in great detail particular dramatic scenes of Vraja. The culmination of this practice is a direct vision (*sākṣāt-darśana*) of Kṛṣṇa and his *lilā*.⁹⁸ As a master of this meditative technique, the guru can discern the practitioner's true identity, whereas the practitioner employs this technique as a way of entering into the ultimate world of Kṛṣṇa's *lilā*. It is then with the meditative body of the *siddha-rūpa*—typically defined as a *gopī*—that much of the service to Kṛṣṇa is performed by the practitioner of Rāgānugā Sādhana. After the death of the current body, one takes up eternal residence in the perfected body.

Although the perfected body is of greater importance for the higher acts of service, acts of service performed with the "practitioner's body" are also held to be important and efficacious. In his commentary on 1.2.295 Jīva glosses the practitioner's body (*sādhaka-rūpa*) as the "body as it presently is" (*yathāsthita-deha*). Although heated debates arose regarding the nature of the proper employment of the practitioner's body,⁹⁹ the orthodox position is that the acts of service with the practitioner's body involve the standard acts of devotion, such as praising (*kīrtana*) Kṛṣṇa and worshipping him through images.¹⁰⁰ In fact, the commentator Viśvanātha Cakravartin was to argue in his commentary on 1.2.295 that the two types of bodies are to imitate two different types of models. One is to imitate the lovers of Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī, and other *gopīs* with the perfected body; and one is to imitate Śrī Rūpa, Sanātana, and the other Vṛndāvana Gosvāmins with the practitioner's body. Regardless of the particular interpretation, all agree that the purpose of the Rāgānugā Sādhana is the generation of a *bhāva*, specifically a love for Kṛṣṇa as exemplified by the residents of Vraja, the very Foundational Emotion of the ultimate devotional Rasa.

The goal of the religious practices outlined in this text is to become a vessel (*āśraya*) of loving joy. One may do this by imitating the original models of pure devotion, the *gopīs* and other residents of Vraja, as mentioned above. But a single cryptic line in Rūpa's text led to another fascinating development called Mañjarī Sādhana.¹⁰¹ Toward the end of his general section on the Foundational Emotion (2.5.128), Rūpa writes: "If the love for a friend is the same as or less than the love for Kṛṣṇa, then it is a Transitory Emotion; but if this love grows to the point where it exceeds the love for Kṛṣṇa, then it is called "Emotional Rapture" (*bhāvollāsa*). This verse refers specifically to three different types of *sakhīs*, or girlfriends of Rādhā: those who are devoted to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa equally, those who are more

devoted to Kṛṣṇa, and those who are more devoted to Rādhā. The latter type come to be known as *mañjarīs*; these are the personal companions and servants of Rādhā. As Rādhā rose in importance in Gauḍīya theology, Mañjarī Sādhana assumed a preeminent position. Since Rādhā is defined as the most profound emotional vessel (*āśraya*) possible, a new strategy developed whereby the goal was not to be a direct vessel of love for Kṛṣṇa, but rather to identify completely with Rādhā's emotions, thereby experiencing her ultimate emotional state of *mahābhāva*. In his commentary on this verse Jīva Gosvāmin makes it clear that in this case Rādhā shifts from being the vessel or *āśraya* of the emotion to being the object or *viśaya* of the emotion; and in effect the love of the *mañjarī* for Rādhā (*bhāvollāsa*) amounts to a new type of Foundational Emotion, since it overrides the love of Kṛṣṇa.

One of the major religious contributions of Rūpa's text is a sustained critique of mokṣa, understood here to be the Advaitin goal of unity or absolute identity with Brahman. Although this critique is assumed throughout the text, it is taken up most directly in the second chapter of the first quadrant in the context of a discussion regarding eligibility for the higher devotional life of bhakti (1.2.22-57). Those eligible for bhakti simply reject the quest for mokṣa as being ultimate. Most particularly it is *sāyujya mukti*, often glossed as complete union (*ekatva*), that is marked as most problematic, for achieving this state would end all possibility of relationship with Kṛṣṇa, and it is only in relationship that one can taste the bliss of bhakti-rasa.¹⁰² The bhakti theologians in pursuit of divine love are fond of saying that they desire to taste sugar, not become sugar. Rūpa quotes a verse from the mouth of Hanumān to make this point: "I do not desire mokṣa, which cuts one's connection with the world and destroys the relationship expressed as: 'You are the Lord and I am the servant'" (1.2.49). As an aesthetic experience, the bliss of bhakti is dependent upon some differentiation between the experiencing subject and the experienced object. In classical aesthetic terminology, this means that there has to be a split between the *āśraya* (here the lover or devotee) and the *viśaya* (here the beloved, Kṛṣṇa) for love to occur. The highest reality, then, for the Vaiṣṇavas is not the unqualified absolute Brahman of the Advaitins, but rather the infinitely qualified Bhagavān. Consequently, the result is the detailed study of Kṛṣṇa's qualities we find in 2.1.17-271. Although from a philosophical perspective Kṛṣṇa is not different (*abheda*) from his close companions, from the aesthetic perspective a difference (*bheda*) is necessary. Thus one arrives at the philosophical position of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, "inconceivable difference in nondifference" (*acintya-bhedābheda*). This is commonly expressed in a popular poster form throughout Vraja called *ek prāṇa, do deha*, "one essence, two bodies," in which Rādhā and

Kṛṣṇa's bodies are so intertwined that it is difficult to distinguish the boundaries separating the two. Although ultimate reality is recognized as being non-dual, for the purpose enjoying its own dialectical dynamic of love (*prema*) it splits into the duality of the lover (*āśraya*) and beloved (*viṣaya*). It is very important to remember, however, that according to the theology expressed in Rūpa's text all three of these interrelated aspects — beloved, lover, and love — are divine.

Rūpa introduces the reader to his particular application of the technical terminology of the classical aesthetic theory to the religious context of emotional Kṛṣṇa bhakti in the Southern Quadrant. In 2.1.12-13 he gives a brief introductory definition of four of the five aesthetic components, which he then expands in subsequent chapters.¹⁰³ The Excitants (*vibhāvas*) are defined as the "causes of love, such as Kṛṣṇa, his devotees, and the sound of his flute." The Excitant is divided into two aspects in Rūpa's system: the Substantial Excitant (*ālambana-vibhāva*) and the Enhancing Excitant (*uddīpana-vibhāva*).¹⁰⁴ The Substantial Excitant is further divided into the "object" (*viṣaya*) of love and the "vessel" (*āśraya*) of the emotion (2.1.16). This is specifically what Rūpa means in the statement just quoted. Kṛṣṇa is declared to be the object of love, and his devotees are declared to be the vessels of love, the two aspects of the Substantial Excitant. That is, Kṛṣṇa is here understood to be both the agent who arouses love as well as the focus for the ensuing love. His devotees are those who experience the joy of that love. The sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute is identified as an example of an Enhancing Excitant. The Enhancing Excitants serve to promote further the love inspired by the Substantial Excitant of Kṛṣṇa himself. These include such things as Kṛṣṇa's actions and ornaments (2.1.301). The Substantial and Enhancing Excitants are explored in detail in the first chapter of the Southern Quadrant. Since the most important dimension of the Excitant is Kṛṣṇa himself, the greater portion of this chapter is devoted to a presentation of the qualities of Kṛṣṇa (2.1.17-271). In effect, this chapter is tantamount to a detailed theological treatise on Kṛṣṇa. Besides the fact that he is the supreme lover, some key tenets are that he is not simply a single incarnation (*avatāra*), but rather the very source of all incarnations (2.1.202), that he is a concentrated form of Being (*sat*), Consciousness (*cit*), and Bliss (*ānanda*) (2.1.187), that he encompasses the entire universe (2.1.199), and that he is most fully manifest in Vraja (2.1.223).

Rūpa defines the Indications (*anubhāvas*) as the resulting physical expressions of love enacted by Kṛṣṇa's devotees (2.1.12-13). He gives the example of smiling, but clearly intends it to serve as a reference to the longer list of general external reactions explored in the second chapter of the Southern Quadrant. He

defines the Responses (*sāttvikas*) as eight devotional reactions such as stupefaction. These are involuntary bodily reactions that are caused by certain mental states. A person can reproduce one of the Indications without necessarily experiencing an inner emotion, but the Responses cannot be produced unless one is imbued with a true emotional state (2.3.1). Besides stupefaction, the Responses include perspiration, goose bumps, broken voice, trembling, change of color, tears, and loss of consciousness (2.3.16). The Transitory Emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāvas*) are defined as assisting emotions, such as indifference. Thirty-three such emotions are examined in the fourth chapter of this division. Rūpa explains that the Transitory Emotions accompany the Foundational Emotion of love, thereby enhancing it and introducing the element of variety (2.4.1-2). In this way the thirty-three Transitory Emotions account for the different forms that love takes, even within a single Rasa. Parental Affection, for example, may be either happy or alarming, depending upon which Transitory Emotion accompanies it.

The Foundational Emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*) is not mentioned in 2.1.12-13, since it is the core emotion upon which the other components act to raise it to the intense level of a Rasa. Rūpa states: "Love for Kṛṣṇa is the Foundational Emotion that becomes the Rasa of devotion. It is raised by means of the Excitants, Indications, Responses, and Transitory Emotions to a relishable state in the heart of devotees engaged in such actions as listening to the stories of the Lord" (2.1.5). He explains that the Foundational Emotion is one which dominates all other emotions, just as a king dominates all other people (2.5.1).¹⁰⁵ And in the next verse he declares that the Foundational Emotion of all true Rasas is that love (*rati*) which takes Kṛṣṇa as its object (*viṣaya*). Although Rūpa will go on to discuss the various types of Rasa, it is important to understand that for him all Rasas are rooted in the single Foundational Emotion of love for Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-rati*).

Rūpa has a keen awareness of the great differences found among the various kinds of devotees. In fact, he claims that the type of love experienced is dependent upon the type of "vessel" (*pātra* or *āśraya*) experiencing it; thus he is able to develop a system that simultaneously recognizes the oneness and multiplicity of love. He writes: "The particular form that love takes is determined by the specific nature of the individual experiencing it, just as a reflected image of the sun is determined by the nature of the jewel through which it is being reflected" (2.5.7). Though love is one, it is experienced as many because of the different types of people experiencing it. Concomitantly, the form in which Kṛṣṇa appears is determined by the perceptual disposition of the devotee; this means that divinity is also simultaneously one and multiple. This allows Rūpa to develop what

amounts to a typology of religious experience. Though he has declared devotional Rasa to be one, a typology of religious experience (or *bhāvas* to use his Sanskrit term) enables him to correlate his theory to the previous theories which recognize a number of Rasas, while at the same time maintaining that all Rasas are rooted in the same Foundational Emotion of love for Kṛṣṇa.

Rūpa divides the Rasas into Primary Rasas and Secondary Rasas. The Primary Rasas are five in number and are understood to be direct forms of *rati*, or “love” for Kṛṣṇa. The Secondary Rasas are seven in number, and correspond to the remaining rasas of the classical theory. The ninth rasa of classical theory, the Peaceful Rasa of *śānta*, is included as the first of the Primary Rasas by being defined as a particular type of love. What distinguishes a Primary Rasa from a Secondary Rasa is that the former are based on a Foundational Emotion that is “self-supporting,” whereas the Secondary Rasas are based on Foundational Emotions that are supported by a Primary Foundational Emotion.¹⁰⁶ In all cases, the Primary Foundational Emotion is a form of love (*rati*), defined as “a special form of the pure and luminous quality” (2.5.3), the very same terminology used to define a true *bhāva* in 1.3.1. On their own, the Secondary Foundational Emotions lack this essential quality, but come to share in it through association with a Primary form of love. Once again, we observe the centrality of love or *rati* in Rūpa’s system. In effect, then, the five Primary Rasas are simply variant forms of what is called the *śṛṅgāra rasa* in the classical theory, since this is the rasa based on the Foundational Emotion of *rati*. Rūpa employs the terminology of all the aesthetic components to lay out his twelvefold schema of Rasa. He does this in a generic way in the Southern Quadrant, devoting five respective chapters to a general discussion of the Excitants, Indications, Responses, Transitory Emotions, and Foundational Emotions. Having laid this foundation, he proceeds to a detailed analysis of the five forms of Primary Rasa in the Western Quadrant, and of the seven Secondary Rasas in the final Northern Quadrant.

The five forms of Primary Rasa — Peaceful, Respectful, Companionable, Parentally Affectionate, and Amorous — are presented in a hierarchical manner by Rūpa, with the last clearly being the highest. He devotes a sequel to the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, the *Ujvalanīlamanī*, entirely to this Rasa. The criterion of hierarchical judgment employed is the intensity of emotional connectedness (*sambandha*), expressed in terms of several related concepts. One of these has to do with a particular understanding of the sense of “myness” (*mamatā*), which signals personal attachment. Although this term is frequently assumed to have negative connotations in philosophical literature concerned with achieving abso-

lute unity with Brahman, Rūpa uses it in a very positive fashion to indicate an important ingredient of a strong relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy rejects the realization of absolute unity with Brahman in favor of an intimate relationship with Brahman as the infinitely qualified Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. This requires personal attachment, which depends upon a sense of ownership and individuality.¹⁰⁷ This is what is being expressed by the positive use of the term “myness.” Rūpa employs this term to define the Foundational Emotion of the Peaceful Rasa: “Generally, Peaceful Love arises in tranquil people who comprehend Kṛṣṇa as the highest Self (*paramātmā*) but are without even a trace of the sense of “myness” (2.5.18). Accordingly, he places the Peaceful Rasa (*śānta*) on the bottom of his hierarchical list of the Primary Rasas, for the others involve increasing amounts of this sense of myness (2.5.22), and the Amorous Rasa identifies most intensely with this sentiment. It is also worth noting that the term *kāma* (“desire” or “passion”) is often marked with a high degree of negativity, whereas in Rūpa’s text it is used to denote the perfected state of the highest lovers of Kṛṣṇa, the gopīs (1.2.273, and 283-84). Understanding the passionate nature of the divine emotions explored here will better prepare the reader for an understanding of the presence and positive use of such emotions as agitation, anger, and jealousy.

Another related term that has a negative connotation in the ascetic schools which aim for absolute unity is *abhimāna*. In certain contexts this term is often translated as “pride,” but can also be translated more neutrally as a “sense of individuality.” Although it is almost always an obstacle to be overcome in schools that aim toward the absolute unity of *mokṣa*, here where relationship is being sought it is considered to be something of great value. Rūpa uses the term to indicate a key aspect of any close relationship with Kṛṣṇa. He defines Relational Bhakti, for example, as that which involves an identification (*abhimāna*) of oneself as one of Kṛṣṇa’s relatives (1.2.228). Jīva Gosvāmin extends the use of this term to define the precise nature of each unique relationship with Kṛṣṇa that is at the heart of the Primary Rasas. One who experiences Parental Affection, for example, is one who has an identity of oneself as Kṛṣṇa’s elder (*gurutva-abhimāna*).¹⁰⁸ The Peaceful Rasa is also rated the lowest among the Primary Rasas since it lacks a particular identity (3.1.32), and therefore is not associated with a particular kind of relationship with Kṛṣṇa (2.5.21), whereas the others emotions — especially Amorousness — involve high degrees of both these.

Rūpa employs a pair of terms to express yet another concept that allows him to delineate the hierarchical relationship of the Rasas. While discussing the

relationship of servitude within the Respectful Rasa, for example, he remarks that the servants are predominantly aware of Kṛṣṇa's majesty (3.2.16). The Sanskrit term here being translated as "majesty" is *prabhutā*. This term is synonymous with another term Rūpa uses to express the same concept, namely, *aiśvarya*. Both of these terms are in contrast to another, *mādhurya*, which means "sweetness."¹⁰⁹ These are important theological terms for Gauḍīya theologians, expressing two very different perspectives by which the Lord is viewed. The majestically powerful form of the Lord inspires awe and fear, and causes the devotee to draw back in an attitude of respect, whereas the sweet form of the Lord attracts the devotee and inspires intimacy. Arjuna's encounter with Kṛṣṇa in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is frequently used to express this theological distinction. Kṛṣṇa reveals his majestic form (*aiśvarya-rūpa*) to Arjuna, who draws back with fright, and the close affection Arjuna feels for Kṛṣṇa leaves him immediately. When Kṛṣṇa returns to his gentle human form (*saumya-mānuṣa-rūpa*) Arjuna is once again able to relate to him as an intimate. Perception of the majestic form is therefore an inhibiting factor in developing a close relationship with Kṛṣṇa, whereas perception of the sweet form is a factor that nurtures this development. Therefore, the Primary Rasas are ranked according to the absence and presence of these two factors. The servants of Kṛṣṇa operate within a perspective largely informed by the majesty (*aiśvarya*) of the Lord, whereas his lovers operate within a perspective colored by sweetness (*mādhurya*).

The particular typology of religious experience Rūpa presents in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* utilizes all the aesthetic components of the classical tradition. The chief elements of this, however, are the varying object (*viśaya*), shifting vessels (*āśraya*), and the resulting different religious experiences (*bhāvas*). Rūpa begins his presentation and analysis of the Primary Rasas with an examination of the Peaceful Rasa (*śānta-bhakti-rasa*). The particular form (*viśaya-ālabhana-vibhāva*) in which Kṛṣṇa is encountered in the Peaceful Rasa is one appropriate to yogic meditation, the four-armed Viṣṇu (3.1.7-8) which is described as being appropriate for yogic meditation in texts such as the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.¹¹⁰ The vessels of this Rasa are the peaceful (*śānta*) devotees, defined as those who have achieved tranquillity and then go on to experience a love for Kṛṣṇa. Examples given are the four mind-born ascetic sons of Brahmā: Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana, and Sanat Kumāra (3.1.12). Enhancing Excitants include listening to the principal Upaniṣads and residing in isolated places (3.1.18-19).

Rūpa represents the resulting emotional experience (*bhāva*) as being somewhat similar to the joy of the yogis (3.1.5). Jīva glosses the joy of the yogis as an

experience of the unqualified Absolute Reality (*nirviśeṣa-brahman*). However, the object of the yogis' quest is said to be the Self (*ātman*), whereas the object (*viśaya*) of this Rasa is the Lord (*īśa*). This is what makes the Peaceful Rasa a devotional Rasa for Rūpa; it is still a form of love (*rati*) directed toward Kṛṣṇa. Rūpa identifies the Foundational Emotion of this Rasa as Peaceful Love (*śānti-rati*, 3.1.35). The classical understanding of the Peaceful rasa is that it is the absence of all emotions; it is the still ocean in which all waves of passion have been eliminated. This, however, would not be a true Rasa according to Rūpa, who defines the experience of Rasa as involving some type of love (3.1.4 and 46). All of his illustrations (3.1.36-45) involve a tranquil yogī who moves beyond the realization of the undifferentiated Brahman and the meditative state of objectless consciousness to an encounter with some form of Kṛṣṇa as the object of an astonishing love. A cornerstone of Vaiṣṇava philosophy is the tenet that the Lord (Bhagavān or Puruṣottama) represents a higher form of reality than that which is encountered as the undifferentiated Brahman.¹¹¹ The peaceful devotees may reside in a calm ocean, but finally it must be an ocean stirred up to some degree by the surges of love which indicate an awareness of divine form. And the more motion in the ocean, the more intense the waves of emotions, the higher it is ranked on the hierarchical scale. Rūpa, therefore, declares the joy of the yogis to be limited or incomplete, whereas that joy related to the Lord is unlimited or complete (3.1.5). The Peaceful Rasa is also placed lowest on the hierarchical scale because it involves only an encounter with the essential form (*svarūpa*) of the Lord, and is not connected in any way with his charming *līlās* or divine play (3.1.6).

Moving up the hierarchical ladder, the next type of religious experience, or devotional Rasa, is the Respectful Rasa (*prīta-bhakti-rasa*).¹¹² This Rasa is divided into two subtypes: Politely Respectful and Relationally Respectful. In the first, Kṛṣṇa (as the *viśaya-ālabhana-vibhāva*) appears as the awesome master and highest object of worship (3.2.11-15) and the devotees (as the *āśraya-ālabhana-vibhāva*) take the forms of his servants (3.2.6; four types are presented in 3.2.18-56). It may be of interest to note that the gods, such as Brahmā, Śiva, and Indra are included in this latter category (3.2.19). In the second, Kṛṣṇa appears as a superior and protective elder (3.2.148) and the devotees take on the forms of his sons and other younger relatives (3.2.149). Kṛṣṇa's son Pradyumna is singled out as best among this type of "vessel" or devotee (3.2.152). Dust from the feet of Kṛṣṇa is listed as an Enhancing Excitant of the first type, whereas his affectionate smile is listed as an example of an Enhancing Excitant for the second. Adhering scrupulously to one's assigned task (the example given is fanning Kṛṣṇa) is an Indication

of the Politely Respectful Rasa, and occupying a seat lower than Kṛṣṇa's is an Indication of the Relationally Respectful Rasa. All the remaining aesthetic components are likewise employed to nurture the particular Foundational Emotion of this Rasa to a "relishable" level. The resulting religio-emotional experience is connected with a relationship in which Kṛṣṇa as the supreme Lord is encountered as the worshiper's own caretaker (3.2.167-68). Since the intensity of this type of relationship is compromised by a differential in power, it is surpassed by the following types.

The third type of devotional Rasa is that of Companionship (*preyo-bhakti-rasa*, also known as *sākhyā* or *maitrī-maya rasa*). Here Kṛṣṇa appears as the devotee's friend, and the devotee assumes the position of Kṛṣṇa's friend, equal to Kṛṣṇa in form, dress, and qualities (3.3.8). The devotees who experience this Rasa are completely unrestrained and enjoy confident familiarity with Kṛṣṇa. Here we begin to see the positive effects of the increasing presence of the "sweetness" (*mādhurya*) and "myness" (*mamatā*) perspectives referred to above, and the concomitant fading of the "majestic" (*aiśvarya*) perspective that was dominant in the previous Rasa. The friends are divided between those found in the city of Dvārakā and those found in the higher realm of Vraja. Arjuna is named as the best of the friends of the city (3.3.13). The higher group of Kṛṣṇa's friends in Vraja are further divided into four types: The "allies" are slightly older than Kṛṣṇa, and therefore possess some parental affection for him; Kṛṣṇa's elder brother Balarāma is a chief exemplar of this type of friend (3.3.25). The "assistants" are slightly younger than Kṛṣṇa, and therefore possess some respect for him; Devaprastha is the chief exemplar here (3.3.33). The "dear friends" are the same age as Kṛṣṇa, and are therefore his equals; Kṛṣṇa's good friend Śrīdāma is singled out as the best of this category of friend (3.3.40). The highest type of friends are the "dear playful friends," since they are Kṛṣṇa's confidants in his secret matters of love affairs. Subala and Ujjvala are mentioned as the best of this type (3.3.45). The Indications of this Rasa include such sports as wrestling, playing with balls, gambling, carrying one another on the shoulders, and play-fighting with sticks, as well as other activities such as sitting and sleeping with Kṛṣṇa on his bed, telling him entertaining jokes, playing in ponds, and dancing and singing with him (3.3.86-88). The unique feature of this Rasa is its Foundational Emotion of "love called 'friendship' (*sākhyā*) which exists between two persons of approximately equal status; it consists of confident familiarity and lacks any sense of awesome respect" (3.3.105). Because of the more equal power relationship, intimate friendship is possible, making this Rasa much more intense than the previous two. It is also this feature

that distinguishes the Rasa of Companionship from both the Respectful Rasa and the Rasa of Parental Affection. Rūpa writes: "Since there is the sweetness of identical emotional states in both Kṛṣṇa and his friends in the Rasa of Companionship, it produces a special sense of wonder in the mind. In the Rasas of Respectfulness and Parental Affection, however, the emotional states of Kṛṣṇa and his devotees are different and unequal. For this reason, connoisseurs whose hearts are filled with friendship recognize a special quality in the Rasa of Companionship that makes it unique among the Rasas" (3.3.134-36).

The second most intense Rasa according to Rūpa is the Rasa of Parental Affection (*vatsala-bhakti-rasa*). Here Kṛṣṇa (as the *viśaya*) appears as a child in need of nurturing protection and the devotee (as the *āśraya*) assumes the position of an elder who cares for young Kṛṣṇa. These are opposite to the conditions of the Respectful Rasa. Moreover, Rūpa states that since Kṛṣṇa is here the recipient of kindness and protection, his majestic power is not manifest (3.4.5). Again, the absence of any sense of Kṛṣṇa's majestic power and the presence of a sense of his sweetness is the measure of the intensity and value of a Rasa. Kṛṣṇa's foster parents Yaśodā and Nanda are ranked the highest among this type of devotee (3.4.10-16). The Enhancing Excitants are the sweet, charming, and mischievous ways of the child Kṛṣṇa. The Indications include such acts on the part of Kṛṣṇa's parents as smelling his head and giving him baths. A ninth and unique Response is added to the standard list of eight Responses for women in this Rasa: the flowing of breast milk (3.3.45). The Foundational Emotion of this Rasa is defined as Parental Affection (*vātsalya*), which "consists of a love that is devoid of deferential respect and belongs to one who shows kindness to Kṛṣṇa as a needy recipient of kindness" (3.4.52). This Rasa too has a unique feature: it will not diminish when not reciprocated (3.4.79). When mutual friendship is not returned it disappears, whereas there is no expectation of mutual friendship from a tiny baby. Rūpa, therefore, recognizes a unique strength in this kind of love.

The most supreme devotional Rasa and the highest type of religious experience possible is the Amorous Rasa (*madhura-bhakti-rasa*). Since he has written another book devoted entirely to this single Rasa, the *Ujjvalanīlamanī*, Rūpa spends little time illustrating it here. Nonetheless, it is clearly the highest Rasa for him and he presents it in the familiar terms of the classical rasa theory. The erotically charming Kṛṣṇa represented in the *Gītagovinda* is the object (*viśaya*) of this Rasa (3.5.5), and the gopīs of Vraja are its vessels (*āśrayas*, 3.5.6). The most exalted of all the women — of all vessels or devotees for that matter — is Rādhā, daughter of Vṛṣabhānu (3.5.7). The Enhancing Excitants are exemplified by the

sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute, and the Indications include such acts as smiles and sidelong glances. The Foundational Emotion of Amorous Love (*madhurā-rati*) is explored in terms of the various states of union and separation (3.5.24-35). The distinctive feature of this Rasa is that it is not diminished by any circumstances (3.5.21). It is clear from his previous statements that this Rasa encompasses the strengths of all the other forms of love, making it the Rasa *par excellence*.

In summary, Rūpa has created a typology of religious experience that ranks the various types of possible ultimate relationships in terms of intimacy with the divine and intensity of emotion. Within this typology Rūpa is able to place both the Peaceful (*śānta*) experience of the ascetic yoga traditions, which often define the ultimate state as the absence of all emotions, and the Amorous (*śṛṅgāra*) experience of passionate devotion, which seeks to utilize the power of all emotions to establish a solid connection with the divine as beloved. These two impulses represent polar tensions that have defined and enlivened much creative debate within Hindu philosophy, and Rūpa's presentation provides yet another important way of viewing their relationship.¹¹³

This typology is not rigid, however, for Rūpa recognizes that the Primary Rasas are frequently combined in various characters encountered in Vaiṣṇava scripture (3.4.80-84). In fact, to further nuance this typology, Rūpa maintains that from time to time one of the five previously described types of devotees experiences one of the seven Secondary Rasas (4.1.5). Discussion of the seven Secondary Rasas comprises the final quadrant of the text, and a chapter is devoted to each. Again, the decisive factor is some form of love (*rati*) for Kṛṣṇa. For example, a devotee may experience humor (*hāsa*), but for this to be part of the experience of devotional Rasa it has to be a form of humorous love toward Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, within Rūpa's system the Foundational Emotion of the Humorous Rasa is Humorous Love (*hāsa-rati*, 4.1.6). Likewise, the traditional Foundational Emotion of amazement (*vismaya*) becomes Amazed Love (*vismaya-rati*, 4.2.1). In a similar manner, Rūpa works into his system the remaining rasas of the classical theory. Rūpa makes it very clear, however, that Kṛṣṇa can never be the "object" (*viṣaya*) for disgust (*jugupsā*, 2.5.41); Disgusted Love (*jugupsā-rati*) is associated with ascetics and usually takes the body as its object (4.7.1 and 8). The Secondary Rasas serve to enhance the central love and give it variety, much like the Transitory Emotions.

The *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* ends with a discussion of the compatibility and incompatibility of the various Rasas, and a brief presentation of false semblances of Rasas. When compatible Rasas interact, the result is an enhancement of the

dominant Rasa (4.8.16), whereas when incompatible Rasas combine there is a diminishment of the dominant Rasa, just as when salt is added to a sweet drink (4.8.53). Humor, for example, enhances the Amorous Rasa (4.8.7), whereas a mixture of the Amorous Rasa and the Rasa of Parental Affection is highly damaging (4.8.60). A Semblance of a Rasa (*rasābhāsa*) is defined as a defective Rasa. Three types of defects are defined and illustrated: an Uparasa has a defective Foundational Emotion, Excitant, or Indication (4.9.3), an Anurasa has no connection with Kṛṣṇa (4.9.33), and an Aparasa is located in some enemy of Kṛṣṇa (4.9.38). In all three cases, there is no true Rasa.

It is now time to summarize precisely how Rūpa represents the experience of Rasa. In the beginning of the Southern Quadrant he states: "Love for Kṛṣṇa is the Foundational Emotion that becomes the Rasa of devotion (*bhakti-rasa*). It is raised by means of the Excitants, Indications, Responses, and Transitory Emotions to a relishable state in the heart of devotees engaged in such actions as listening to stories about the Lord" (2.1.5). It is clear here that although Rasa becomes varied according to the capacities of its recipients, it is fundamentally one. The single Foundational Emotion of love for Kṛṣṇa is taken to be the unifying core of all true Rasas, resulting in the simultaneously unified and multiple *bhakti rasa* or Rasa of devotion. Moreover, the Foundational Emotion and Rasa are not fundamentally different for Rūpa as they are, for example, for Abhinavagupta. In the previous verse Rūpa remarks that the Foundational Emotion of love (*rati*) becomes Rasa when it is developed (*paripoṣa*) by the various aesthetic components just listed. His view on this subject is, therefore, much closer to that of Bhoja. The key element in Rūpa's entire system is the Foundational Emotion of love for Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-rati*). Far from being based on ordinary *vāsanās*, as it is for most other theoreticians of rasa such as Abhinavagupta, here the Foundational Emotion is understood to be a very special manifestation of divine power. Once it has been established, all else follows. Rūpa makes it clear that this divine love is of such a nature that it naturally proceeds to the level of Rasa with only the slightest exposure to the aesthetic components defined in the terms laid out in this book (2.5.106). It is also of importance to note in the verse quoted above that the location of Rasa for Rūpa is the devotee.¹¹⁴ This includes both the original characters, such as Rādhā and Yaśodā, and the contemporary practitioner. The question of whether one is an original character, an actor, or a member of the audience is irrelevant according to Rūpa; the real issue is whether or not one's heart is imbued with the *bhāva* of love. Here again, Rūpa's position is much closer to Bhoja's than to Abhinavagupta's.

Rūpa has something even more radical to say, however, in comparison with the classical rasa theory of Bharata. In his section on the Foundational Emotion,

Rūpa asserts: "This charming love makes Kṛṣṇa and related factors into an Excitant and other related aesthetic components, and then expands itself by means of these very components" (2.5.94). What he is saying here is that the Foundational Emotion of love makes objects into Excitants, or opportunities to experience love in intense ways. "Ordinary" objects then become occasions for the expression or experience of love. An ordinary cloud, for example, may evoke the experience of love, but it is the Bhāva or Foundational Emotion which makes the cloud into an object of love that determines the experience. This may be illustrated with an everyday example. Say one person is madly in love with another, but for some reason is separated from the beloved. If the beloved happened to leave a jacket behind, the sight of that jacket will be an occasion to experience the pangs of love. The jacket itself is not the foundational cause of the love, however, but is rather an object that evokes a preexisting love. Another person may very well walk past the jacket and experience nothing whatsoever, viewing it simply as an old piece of clothing. Again, the *bhāva* is the determining factor, and this is what makes Rūpa's system quite different from Bharata's, wherein the dramatic objects function as Excitants to create a particular feeling. For Rūpa love is and remains foundational, or to repeat (and reverse) the common adage: "Love is God." Once it has sprouted in the heart it expands and expresses itself by means of various aesthetic components. In this regard, Rūpa writes: "This process is just like the ocean which, having filled clouds with its own water, increases itself by means of this very rain water" (2.5.95). Besides suggesting the identity of love and Kṛṣṇa, this verse indicates more about the expanding nature of love; once established, it goes on increasing its own delight through its joyful play with various components, now seen as part of itself. This is the eternal play of love as understood by Rūpa and other Gauḍīya theologians.

A grasp of Rūpa's views on the Foundational Emotion of love also helps us understand his great concern for spiritual practice (*sādhana*), for the main purpose of such practice is the generation of a *bhāva*, the love for Kṛṣṇa. He says, "Diligent dedication to spiritual practices brings about desire (*ruci*) for Hari, then produces attachment (*āsakti*) for Him, and then causes the birth of love (*ratī*) for Him" (1.3.8). Once this divine emotion of love has been generated, through its own playful nature it goes on and on to higher levels of intensity and enjoyment. This is the experience of Rasa. Rūpa uses the word *prema*, which I have translated as "supreme love," as representative of the higher states emotional experience. In the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* he identifies the higher stages of *prema* or supreme love as *sneha* (tenderness) and *rāga* (passion) (e.g., 3.2.78). In the *Ujjvalanīlmaṇi*,

however, he gives the more detailed list of the expansions of love as: *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *pranaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, and finally *bhāva* (UN 14.60). The last of these, however, is not to be confused with the *bhāva* that is the Foundational Emotion. Here the word *bhāva* means *mahābhāva* ("great emotion"). This is the ultimate experience of love and the culmination of true Rasa, which is associated with Rādhā, the most profound "vessel" of divine emotion.

The ultimate experience, then, for Rūpa is one continual and expansive religio-aesthetic experience of love. This involves playful interaction between the dynamically interconnected lover, beloved, and love itself. Once love has been established in the purified heart, the entire world becomes a divine stage and an occasion for experiencing blissful love for Kṛṣṇa, who in fact (according to Gauḍīya theology) is not different from the world — not, at least, from the world seen with a clear mind and a soft heart characterized by the state of pure luminosity (*śuddha-sattva*).

NOTES

1. The second of Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtras* reads *yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodha*.
2. I use the capitalized form of "Rasa" to refer specifically to Rūpa Gosvāmin's concept, and the non capitalized form of "rasa" to refer to the concept associated with the aesthetic theory concerned with ordinary drama. Obviously the boundary between these is not always clear; however, it is my hope that this distinction will help reduce misunderstanding.
3. Friedhelm Hardy, *Viraha-Bhakti: The Early History of Kṛṣṇa Devotion in South India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 6-10.
4. Gauḍīya sources for the life story of Rūpa Gosvāmin include the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the *Laghuvaiṣṇava Toṣanī* of Jiva Gosvāmin, and the *Bhaktiratnākara* of Narahari Cakravartin. A good Bengali account of Rūpa's life can be found in Nareśacandra Jānā, *Ṛmdāvaner Chaya Gosvāmi* (Calcutta: Kalikātā Viśvavidyālaya, 1970), pp. 83-147. A fairly solid account in English is available in S. K. De *Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement in Bengal* (Calcutta: Firma KLM Private Ltd., 1962). A good account in Hindi is available in Prabhudayāl Mital, *Braj ke Dharma-Sampradāyo kā Itihās* (Delhi: National Publishing House, 1968), pp. 311-314.
5. Jānā, pp. 19-21. See also the fine discussion of the dating of Rūpa's life by Neal Delmonico, "Sacred Rapture: A Study of the Religious Aesthetic of Rūpa Gosvāmin" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1990), pp. 279-80.
6. These are the names given to the three brothers later by Caitanya. Anupama's original name is recorded as Vallabha, but information is uncertain about the original names of Sanātana and Rūpa. Mital and others have stated that their names were Amara and Santoṣa respectively. See Mital, p. 311.

7. See Narahari Cakravartin, *Bhaktiratnākara*. Edited by Navīnakṛṣṇadāsa Vidyālaṃkāra (Calcutta: Gauḍīya Mission, 1960), pp. 28-29.
8. Some Gauḍīya sources claim that Sanātana and Rūpa were forced into the service of the Shāh. See *ibid.*, p. 28.
9. Some scholars have suggested that the two brothers had actually converted to Islam, but there is little evidence to support this claim. For a detailed discussion of this issue see Jānā, pp. 27-39.
10. A sense of his discontent may be gleaned from this verse Rūpa is reported to have sent his brother Sanātana after leaving his post in the Muslim court:
Where, alas, is Ayodhyā, the kingdom of Rāma now? Its glories have disappeared. And where is the famous Mathurā of Kṛṣṇa? It also is devoid of its former splendor. Think of the fleeting nature of things and settle your course.
[Quoted in Dinesh Chandra Sen, *Chaitanya and His Age* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1924), p. 220.]
11. This is recorded in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's *Caitanya Caritamṛta* 2.19, especially 104 ff.
12. A recent document translated by Irfan Habib, however, suggests that Rūpa may have been alive yet in 1566. See "A Documentary History of the Gosāins (Gosvāmīs) of the Caitanya Sect at Vṛndāvana," in *Govindadeva: A Dialogue in Stone*, ed. by Margaret H. Case (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 1996), p. 156.
13. In fact, Rūpa came to be identified by later practitioners of his Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana as an eternal character in Kṛṣṇa's līlā, most specifically as Rūpa Mañjarī, the chief assistant of the important sakhī Lalitā. See my *Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 90-91, 107, and 113-14.
14. Alan Entwistle, *Braj: Center of Krishna Pilgrimage* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1987), p. 136.
15. S.M. Ikram, *Muslim Civilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 78.
16. Mītal, *Braj ke Dharma-Sampradāyo kā Itihās*, p. 305.
17. For a detailed history of this group, see Jānā's *Vṛndāvaner Chaya Gosvāmī*, or De's *Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement in Bengal*, pp. 111-65.
18. Madhurai is called the southern Mathurā in many texts, suggesting a significant connection between this important cultural center of the south and the region of Vraja in the north. See, for example, *Bhāgavata Purāna* 10.79.15. More research needs to be conducted on this subject.
19. See Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, *Vraja Bhakti Vilāsa*, edited by Krishnadas Baba (Kusum Sarovar: Krishnadas Baba, 1960). Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa is discussed in my *Journey Through the Twelve Forests* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 55-63.
20. For a discussion of the life and works of Viśvanātha, see Haridāsa Dāsa, *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna* (Navadvīpa: Haribol Kuṅṅir, 1957), 3: 1370.

21. See 1.2.269 and 1.2.309.
22. Puṣṭi Mārgīya sources claim that he was a Tailang *brāhmaṇa* from Andhra Pradesh. See the *Śrī Nāthajī ki Prākāṭya Vārtā*. Friedhelm Hardy argues for a connection with the south. See "Mādhavendra Purī: A Link Between Bengal Vaiṣṇavism and South Indian Bhakti," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 1 (1974): 23-41.
23. See my article, "Śrī Nāthajī: The Itinerant Lord of Mount Govardhana," *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies* 3, no. 3 (summer 1995), pp. 6-10.
24. For example, Vallabha's *Subhōdini* is filled with uses of and references to the rasa theory and its vital components such as the *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, and *vyabhicārī-bhāva*.
25. *raso vai saḥ. rasam hyevāyam labdhvānandī bhavati. . . eṣa hyevānandayāti.*
26. For discussion of the dating of the *Nāṭya Śāstra* see Jan Gonda, gen. ed., *A History of Indian Literature*, 10 vols. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1973), vol. 5: *Indian Poetics*, by Edwin Gerow, p. 245.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 245-46.
28. This list includes eight *sthāyi-bhāvas* and thirty-three *vyabhicārī-bhāvas*. See *Nāṭya Śāstra* 7.6. The text I translate from is *Nāṭya Śāstram of Bharatamuni*, with the commentary of Abhinavagupta, 2 vol., edited with Sanskrit and Hindi commentaries by Madhusudan Shastri (Varanasi: Banaras Hindu University, 1971). If the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* are added the list becomes forty-nine, but many later writers consider the *sāttvika-bhāvas* to be types of *anubhāvas*.
29. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* (NŚ) says that the *sthāyi-bhāva* is greatest among the *bhāvas*, just as a king is greatest among people and the guru is greatest among the disciples (7.8).
30. A good discussion of these components of dramatic experience is found in S. K. De, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, (Calcutta: K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960). vol. 2. I have translated these terms respectively as the Excitants, Indications, and Transitory Emotions.
31. NŚ 6.32. Although Bharata does not mention the *sthāyi-bhavas* in this sūtra, in a statement that follows soon after the sūtra he states that the *sthāyi-bhavas* attain the state of rasa (*rasatva*) in combination with the various *bhāvas*. (*tathā nānābhāvopagatā api sthāyino bhāvā rasatvam āpnuvanti*)
32. NŚ 7.4.
33. See, for example, *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* 3.29 and *Agni Purāṇa* 339.36. The second is the cited source for this twofold division of the *vibhāva* for Rūpa. See BRS 2.1.15.
34. NŚ 7.5.
35. NŚ 7.93.
36. This is a common claim that he makes, for example, in his *History of Sanskrit Poetics*.
37. J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture* (Poona: Deccan College, 1970), p. 3.
38. Abhinavagupta seems to occupy the position in many Western representations of rasa theory that Śankara occupies in many Western representations of Indian philosophy.

39. Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, p. 4. See Mark Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), pp. 25-26, for suggestions that the Vaiṣṇavas of Kashmir may have had a significant influence on Kashmir Saivism.
40. A work like G. K. Bhat, *Rasa Theory* (Baroda: University of Baroda, 1984), for example, culminates in the theory of Abhinavagupta, clearly suggesting that this is the very pinnacle of rasa theory.
41. See K. C. Pandey, *Abhinavagupta: An Historical and Philosophical Study* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1963) for a study of the life and work of Abhinavagupta.
42. This is a translation of a passage from Abhinava's *Locana*. It has been cited and translated by Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa and Abhinavagupta's Philosophy of Aesthetics* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1969), pp. 50-51. I have taken the liberty of eliminating some of the Sanskrit terms included in parentheses.
43. Masson and Patwardhan, *Aesthetic Rapture*, p. 18.
44. Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, p. 89.
45. Raniero Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1968), p. xlvi; see also p. 59. This book contains the Sanskrit text and translation of Abhinavagupta's commentary on Bharata's rasa-sūtra.
46. *Abhinavabhāratī*. See Gnoli, p. 78.
47. See Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, pp. 130-31.
48. See Edwin Gerow and Ashok Aklujkar, "On Śānta Rasa in Sanskrit Poetics," in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 11, no. 1 (January-March 1972): 80-87.
49. This is the main argument of Masson and Patwardhan in their study *Śāntarasa*. This argument is supported by V. Raghavan in *The Number of Rasa-s* (Madras: Adhar Library and Research Centre, 1967).
50. Gnoli, 48.
51. *Śāntarasa*, p. 21.
52. See the representation of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's view in the *Abhinavabhāratī*, Gnoli, p. 45. (Shastri's edition, p. 643.)
53. See S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics as a Study of Aesthetics*, with notes by Edwin Gerow (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 21.
54. Gnoli, p. xxi.
55. Masson and Patwardhan, *Śāntarasa*, pp. vii-viii.
56. Mysore Hiriyanna, *Art Experience* (Mysore: Kavyalaya Publishers, 1954), p. 28.
57. I translate from the *Abhinavabhāratī* included in the *Nāṭya Śāstra* edited by Madhusudan Shastri. Relevant portions of the Sanskrit text have been reproduced and translated into English by Raniero Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*.

58. My translation of *Abhinavabhāratī*, Ibid., p. 623.
59. Ibid., p. 623.
60. *rathā nānābhāvopagatā api sthāyino bhāvā rasatvam āpnvanti* (NŚ 6.32).
61. *Agni Purāṇa* 339.4 states: "the (*sthāyi-bhāva*) love becomes fully developed from contact with the Transitory Emotions and other aesthetic components, and is called the Amorous Rasa." (*ratiḥ sā ca pariṣaṃ upeyuṣi vyabhicāryādi-sāmānyāt śṛṅgāra iti gīyate.*) The source for my reading is *Agnipurāṇa*, ed. by Ācārya Baldeva Upādhyāya (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1966), p. 492.
62. See, for example, Sivaprasad Bhattacharya, "Bhoja's Rasa-Ideology and Its Influence on Bengal Rasa-Śāstra," *Journal of the Oriental Institute* (University of Baroda) 13, no. 2 (December 1963), p. 106-19. See also the excellent Ph.D. dissertation of Delmonico, "Sacred Rapture: A Study of the Religious Aesthetic of Rūpa Gosvāmin."
63. Bhattacharya, p. 119. This is also a major point made by Delmonico.
64. S. N. Ghosal Sastri, *Rasacandrikā and Studies in Divine Aesthetics* (Shantiniketan: Visva-bharati, 1974), p. 42.
65. For a brief sketch of the life and works of Bhoja, see S. K. De, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, vol. 1, pp. 133-40.
66. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 137, and vol. 2, pp. 201 & 207. De comments: "The school of opinion represented in Poetics by the *alaṅkāra*-portion of the *Agni-purāṇa* apparently follows a tradition which departs in many respects from the orthodox systems, and which we find developed by Bhoja in his own way in his *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharāṇa* (vol. 2, pp. 201-02).
67. A major study of this work has been completed by V. Raghavan. See his *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*, rev. 3rd ed. (Madras: Punarvasu, 1978).
68. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 97. Rasa and the various *bhāvas* are treated in chapter 339 of the *Agni Purāṇa*. De also remarks that "although the *Agni-purāṇa* recognizes nine Rasas, adding *śānta* to the orthodox eight, it extols and gives prominence to *śṛṅgāra*: a trait which is unique and which is found fully developed in Bhoja who accepts no other Rasa than *śṛṅgāra* in his *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* and gives almost exclusive attention to this important Rasa in his *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharāṇa* (vol. 2, p. 202).
69. Though like Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa before him, Bhoja tends to privilege the original character as the best location of Rasa.
70. Raghavan, p. 423.
71. Ibid., p. 423-24, especially the Sanskrit text cited on p. 424.
72. Raghavan concurs: "To Bhoja, Rasa, as ordinarily understood, means what it meant to Daṇḍin and Lollaṭa, the Prakṛṣa (enhancement) of the Sthāyi-bhāva." Ibid., p. 423.
73. Ibid., p. 475.
74. Bhattacharya, "Bhoja's Rasa-Ideology and Its Influence on Bengal Rasa-Śāstra," p. 107.

75. Delmonico makes this important point, p. 124. The *Agni Purāṇa* says exactly the same thing. See 339.4-5.
76. See chapter 339, especially verse 1-5. See Suresh Mohan Bhattacharya, *The Alaṅkāra-Section of the Agni-Purāṇa* (Calcutta: Firma KLM Private Ltd., 1976), pp. 127-28, and p. 135 for a discussion of the dating and location of the composition of this text. Commenting on the similarity of Bhoja and the *alaṅkāra* section of the *Agni Purāṇa*, S. K. De writes: "It is not suggested that Bhoja is directly copying from the *Agni-purāṇa* or the *Purāṇa* copying directly from Bhoja; it is quite possible that they exploit in common an unknown source. But there is hardly any doubt that they follow a common tradition which is different in many respects from that of the Kashmirian writers." *Sanskrit Poetics*, Vol. 2, p. 207. Some scholars have suggested that the *Agni Purāṇa* borrowed from Bhoja, whereas others have argued that Bhoja borrowed from the *Agni Purāṇa* (See Bhattacharya, *The Alaṅkāra-Section of the Agni-Purāṇa*, pp. 120-27 for a discussion of this issue). Regardless, this debate further highlights the close relationship between the aesthetic theories expressed by Bhoja, and the *Agni Purāṇa*. Rūpa quotes the *Agni Purāṇa* in BRS 2.1.15.
77. Much of the comparison that follows is dependent upon Delmonico, *Sacred Rapture*, pp. 141-42.
78. See, for example, Gerow, *Indian Poetics*, pp. 271-72.
79. *ratidevādiviṣayā . . . bhāvaḥ proktaḥ. Kāvya-prakāśa* 4.35. See R. C. Dwivedi, *The Poetic Light : Kāvya-prakāśa of Mammata* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977), Sanskrit text, p. 90, English translation, p. 91.
80. *Abhinavabhāratī*, Śānta-prakarāṇa. See Masson and Patwardhan, *Śānta Rasa*, p. 139.
81. Some earlier scholars had suggested that Vopadeva was the author of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, though this now seems to be a wildly erroneous claim. See J. N. Farquhar, *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1920), pp. 231, 234. The *Muktā-phala* was published with the commentary of Hemādri in the Calcutta Oriental Series, Isvara Chandra Sastri and Haridasa Vidyabagisa, eds. (Calcutta: Badiya Nath Dutt, 1920), no. 5.
82. Commentary on *Muktāphala* 11.1. *Ibid.*, p. 164.
83. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
84. See *Ujjvalanīlamanī* 15.151.
85. Rūpa refers to Lakṣmīdhara's *Nāmakaumudī* in BRS 3.2.2.
86. Delmonico makes this point, p. 182.
87. The numbering system I use to identify verses follows this format: the first number refers to one of the four quadrants, the second number refers to the chapter, and the third number refers to the individual verse. Thus, 2.4.32, for example, refers to the thirty-second verse in the second wave of the Southern Quadrant.
88. For a discussion of *śabda* as the chief *pramāṇa* in Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, see S. K. De, *Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement*, pp. 226-27.

89. These include the *Dāna-keli-kaumudī*, *Haṁsa-dūta*, *Lalita-mādhava*, *Padyāvalī*, *Uddhava-saṁdeśa*, and *Vidagdha-mādhava*.
90. This is a term coined by Kenneth Bryant. He defines it in Chapter III of *Poems to the Child-God* (Berkeley: University of California, 1978).
91. See above, note 20.
92. Local tradition in Vṛndāvana has it that Viśvanātha was a reincarnation of Rūpa Gosvāmin.
93. *Kṛṣṇa tu bhagavān svayam*. Bh. P. 1.3.28.
94. See his commentary on 1.3.1 and 2.5.92.
95. An interest in Rāgānugā Sādhana first drew me to the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*. For a detailed discussion of this *sādhana*, see my *Acting as a Way of Salvation*.
96. I want to be very clear about my use of the term "imitation," since this may easily be misunderstood. The term imitation has two connotations for the English speaker. First, the term is used to refer to something that is a false copy or counterfeit. The second use of the term, commonly employed by sociologists and psychologists, refers to the performance of an act that involves the copying of patterns of behavior and thought of other individuals as a means to enter their world. I use the term imitation only in this latter sense. Donna Wulff has used "conforming (oneself) to" to refer to the same thing. [*Drama as a Mode of Religious Realization: The Vidagdhamādhava of Rūpa Gosvāmin* (Chico, Calif: Scholars Press, 1984), p. 32] This translation is also acceptable, especially considering the history of the term *conformatio* by Christian monastic theologians, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, who were concerned with articulating the "imitation of Christ." Imitation is an equally acceptable translation, however, if we keep in mind that it is not "mere imitation," but an imitation that includes a particular intention: the realization of the emotional state (*bhāva*) of the one being imitated. Sincere imitation (*sādhana*) eventually gives way to becoming (*bhāva*). The historian of religions Mircea Eliade also uses the term imitation in this positive sense. For him, it is the "imitation" of a religious paradigm that guarantees the authenticity of an act. See, for example, his *Sacred and Profane* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959).
97. See Shashibhushan Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta: Firma KLM, 1946), pp. 219, 228, and 254-55.
98. Jīva Gosvāmin discusses this in some detail in his *Bhakti Sandarbha*, 278, pp. 475-76.
99. There were and continue to be some men who interpret Rūpa's instruction to mean that the imitation of the *gopīs* is to be done with the physical body, and therefore dress the physical body as a woman. For more on this practice and resulting controversy, see my *Acting as a Way of Salvation*, Chapter 6.
100. This, for example, is the position of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who writes in the *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*: "The *sādhana* is of two kinds: external and internal. The external is performing listening (*śrāvana*), praising (*kīrtana*), and so forth, with the *sādhaka-deha*. The internal is meditatively performing service to Kṛṣṇa in Vraja night and day in the mind with one's own *siddha-deha*" (2.22.156-57).

101. For more on Mañjarī Sādhana, see my *Acting as a Way of Salvation*, pp. 108-14.
102. See, for example, the commentaries on 1.2.28 and 55.
103. The definition of the aesthetic components is repeated in 2.5.85-86.
104. These terms do not appear in Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra*, however, they were certainly in common usage in Rūpa's time. To support his use of them he quotes the *Agni Purāṇa*, 339.36. See BRS 2.1.15. This twofold division of the *vibhāva* is also defined in the *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* of Viśvanātha Kavirāja, 3.29.
105. This image is most likely drawn from the *Nāṭya Śāstra* 7.7.
106. See 2.5.3-5; and 2.5.39 and 42.
107. Once again we observe a point of similarity between the theories of Rūpa and Bhoja.
108. See Jīva's commentary on 2.5.33. See also his commentary on 2.5.27 and 30 for use of this term in defining the relationship in Respect and Friendship respectively.
109. The majestic *aiśvarya* and the sweet *mādhurya* perspectives correlate roughly with Rudolf Otto's *mysterium tremendum* and *mysterium fascinans*. See Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, translated by John Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1923), pp. 12-24 and 31-40.
110. See, for example, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 2.2.8-14.
111. See, for example, *Bhagavad-gītā* 15.16-18.
112. This rasa is also called *dāsyā-bhakti-rasa*.
113. Many years ago Louis Dumont suggested that "the secret of Hinduism may be found in the dialogue between the renouncer and the man-in-the-world" ("World Renunciation in Indian Religions," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 4 [1960]: 37-38). While this controversy is of course known in other contexts, what is noteworthy in Hindu treatments of this polarity is that advocates of each generally try to incorporate (and subordinate), rather than exclude or outright reject, the other.
114. Rūpa makes this even more clear in 2.5.107-08.

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