

## Selections from Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*<sup>1</sup>

Eastern Division, Third Wave, Verse 1

अथ भावः—

शुद्धसत्त्वविशेषात्मा प्रेमसूर्याशुसाम्यभाक् ।  
रुचिभिश्चित्तमासृण्यकृदसौ भाव उच्यते ॥ (१)

*atha bhāvaḥ –*

*śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā prema-sūryāśu-sāmya-bhāk.  
rucibhiś citta-māsrṇya-kṛd asau bhāva ucyaते.. (1)*

Now Bhāva:

1. Bhāva (as a type of devotion) is a special form of the pure and luminous quality,<sup>1</sup> and is like a beam of the sun of supreme love (*prema*);<sup>2</sup> its desirous rays soften the heart.<sup>3</sup>

1. Jīva explains that the special pure and luminous quality (*śuddhasattvaviśeṣātmā*) indicates that Bhāva is beyond all ordinary limitations and is an aspect of Kṛṣṇa's Hlādinī śakti, his "power of joy," which is the highest expression of his essential nature. He indicates that he has discussed this in detail in his *Bhāgavata Sandarbha* and in his *Vaiṣṇavatoṣaṇī*. In a relevant discussion, R. K. Sen writes that "at the core of Rasa-realization, there is the play and manifestation of śakti. It should clearly be recognized that Rasa enjoyment would be impossible without the activities of this cit-śakti." He goes on to say: "This cit-śakti is inseparable from the concept of viśuddha-sattva, an idea which dominated Indian thought for centuries." He then links these ideas to rasa theory in general and to Vaiṣṇavism in particular. "The philosophy of śakti or viśuddha-sattva thus underlies the prakṛti-parināmavāda of Bharata's Rasa analysis, or the Brahma-parināmavāda of Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha, and Nimbarka. The philosophy of śakti underlies all Rasa speculations." Sen goes as far as to suggest that whenever Vaiṣṇavas say that a *bhāva* or *rasa* is a manifestation of *śuddha-sattva*, they are really saying that it is an aspect of divinity. R. K. Sen, *Aesthetic Enjoyment* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1966), pp. 125, 128, and 135.
2. Bhāva is the Foundational Emotion (*sthāyi-bhāva*) of the Bhakti Rasa of supreme love (*prema*). As such, according to Rūpa's aesthetic theory, it is an underdeveloped form of the Rasa of supreme love (a sunbeam of the sun), awaiting to be brought to full manifestation by means of the aesthetic components of the Excitants (*vibhāvas*), Indications (*anubhāvas*), Responses (*sāttvikas*), and Transitory Emotions (*vyabhicāri-bhāvas*). This will be made clear in the following division. The goal of Sādhana Bhakti is to generate, or uncover, a particular form of this Foundational Emotion and nurture it to the full manifestation of the aesthetic experience of Bhakti Rasa. In his commentary on 1.1.11 Jīva introduced the distinction of action (*ceṣṭa*) and emotion (*bhāva*) as important dimensions of the highest devotion. He expands his discussion of this distinction here, relating the two dimensions by further dividing action into the causes of an emotion, which are the spiritual practices (*sādhana-rūpa*), and the effects of an emotion, which are the physical expressions of the Indications (*anubhāva-rūpa*). He also further divides the emotion: besides the central Foundational Emotion (*sthāyi-rūpa*), the term *bhāva* also includes the supportive Transitory Emotion (*sañcāri-rūpa*).
3. The Sanskrit word *ruçi* has important multiple meanings. It may also be rendered as "rays," "tastes," or "desires." I therefore translate it as "desirous rays" to indicate the multiple meanings and keep alive the sun metaphor. Desire for Kṛṣṇa softens the heart that is otherwise hardened by renunciation. Jīva enumerates three types of desire that soften the heart: a desire to attain Kṛṣṇa (*prāpti-abhilāṣa*), a desire for Kṛṣṇa's favor (*svakartṛkānukūlya-abhilāṣa*), and desire for Kṛṣṇa's friendship (*sauhārda-abhilāṣa*).

अथ प्रेमा—

सम्यङ्मसृणितस्वान्तो ममत्वातिशयाङ्कितः ।

भावः स एव सान्द्रात्मा बुधैः प्रेमा निगद्यते ॥ (१)

*atha premā –*

*samyāṅ-masṛṇita-svānto mamatvātiśayāṅkitah.*

*bhāvaḥ sa eva sāndrātmā budhaiḥ premā nigadyate.. (1)*

Now Prema:

1. When the Bhāva softens the heart completely and becomes very intense,<sup>1</sup> and when it is marked by a high degree of “myness,”<sup>2</sup> it is called Prema by the wise.

1. Prema is the entry point into Rasa, and this is what makes Rūpa’s theory different from other’s, such as Abhinavagupta’s. Whereas for Abhinavagupta the *sthāyi-bhāva* and the *rasa* are different in kind, for Rūpa they differ only in intensity. A *Rasa* is a concentrated or intensified form of a very special *sthāyi-bhāva*, which for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is love for Kṛṣṇa (*Kṛṣṇa-rati*). Rūpa identified an important aspect of the Bhāva to be its ability to soften the heart (1.3.1); here he identifies an important aspect of *Rasa* to be its ability to soften the heart completely. Again, the difference is only one of degree. Jīva comments that the primary definition of Prema is that it is an intensified or concentrated form of Bhāva.
2. Whereas the ordinary sense of “myness” (*mamatā*) is considered a great problem of egoism, when directed toward Kṛṣṇa it becomes a positive quality; it is an essential ingredient in a relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

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<sup>1</sup> Devanāgarī text, translation and notes from David L. Haberman, *The Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu of Rūpa Gosvāmin*. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. 2003.