

Western Drama, Natya and Lila :
A Comparative Study.

*A Thesis Submitted to the University of Hyderabad for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in Discipline of Theatre Arts,
Sarojini Naidu School of Fine Arts, Performing Arts and Communication.*



B.Srinivas

Supervisor

Dr. A.Raghurama Raju

Co-Supervisor

Prof. Bhaskar Shewalkar

**University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad.**


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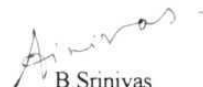
B Srinivas,
PhD Scholar,
Department of Theatre Arts,
Sarojini Naidu school for,
fine arts, performing arts and communication,
University of Hyderabad,
Hyderabad.

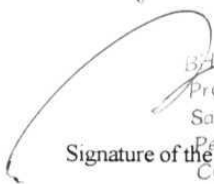
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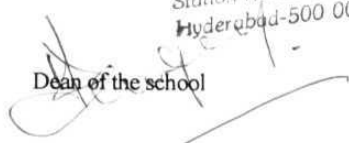
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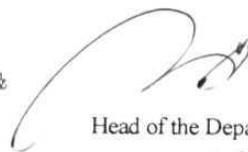

Signature of the Supervisor


B.Srinivas.
Redn.no. 91SNPT02


BHASKAR SHEWALKAR
Professor in Theatre Arts
Sarojini Naidu School of
Performing Arts, Fine Arts &
Communication
University of Hyderabad
'GOLDEN THRESHOLD'
Station Road, Nampally,
Hyderabad-500 001.


Dean of the school

DEAN
S.N. School of Performing Arts
Fine Arts & Communication
University of Hyderabad
Golden Threshold
HYDERABAD-500 001


BHASKAR SHEWALKAR
Professor in Theatre Arts
Sarojini Naidu School of
Performing Arts, Fine Arts &
Communication
University of Hyderabad
'GOLDEN THRESHOLD'
Station Road, Nampally,
Hyderabad-500 001.

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Preface.

Each new form of modern Western theatre has brought with it, a heavy load of philosophical discussion about human predicament. For example, an understanding of **Brecht's** Epic theatre strongly depends on the understanding of the philosophy of Marxism on which the idea of Epic theatre is built. This situation is more intense in the case of the Theatre of the Absurd. Because of its very name this form provokes people to wonder how there can be a theatre of something like Absurd. Unless the whole philosophical position behind this form is grasped, its concept itself does not make much sense. For example, Martin Esslin (1978) and J. Killinger (1981) explain the Theatre of the Absurd in terms of the philosophy of Existentialism. This situation in modern theatre made scholars look at even older classical forms of theatre from the point of view of their philosophical background. In this work, this approach of looking at a form of theatre from its philosophical background is being extended to classical Indian theatre. Though the form of traditional Indian theatre which has been taken up for focus here is *Ras Līlā* of Vrindavan, this work is an attempt to trace the philosophical background of the general Vedic type of Indian theatre called *Nāṭya* of which *Rās Līlā* makes a part.

Līlā, the Theatre of 'play' or the Theatre of 'playfulness' is like the Theatre of the Absurd in as much as it also makes people wonder, how there can be story, theatre of any **serious** discussion centered around things like 'playfulness.' Just as the understanding of the philosophy of Existentialism helps in understanding the Theatre of the Absurd, understanding of the philosophy of *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school helps in understanding the *Līlā* theatre. Though *Līlā* theatre is one of the widely discussed form of Indian theatre among international scholarship on Indian arts forms, its philosophical background, which is provided in this work, was not explicated earlier.

As the international theatre science discourse heavily draws from the theories of Western Drama, it is inevitable to use those categories to discuss any form of theatre as part of the international

theatre science discourse. In fact, this work attempts to plead for a caution against the **uncritical** application of these categories of Western Drama while talking about non-Western forms of theatre, in this case the traditional Indian theatre. This caution includes a caution against using the categories of Sanskrit poetics of traditional Indian theatre while talking about Western Drama also. This is the reason why this work places Western Drama for a comparison with the various forms of traditional Indian theatre and attempts to expose problems with the uncritical **cross-cultural** application of categories.

A word about sources. Except a few, **all** the sources cited are primary works. Most of them are original plays and articles of the playwrights and authors cited. References given are to the anthologies of plays and articles in which these plays or articles have been included in original. Some of them are English translations of other languages (French, German and so on), again **primary**. The few secondary sources resorted to could not be cited in their primary form due to difficulty in their availability.

It is in the fourth chapter of this dissertation that the *Līlā* performances and the associated activities of the participants in *Us* are discussed. But this description can be grasped between the lines only with a theoretical background provided in the third chapter. The *Gauḍiya Vaisnava* interpretation of *Līlā-s* discussed in this chapter presupposes the ideas of and the philosophy behind the *Nāṭya Śāstra* which is discussed in the second chapter. As the discussion in this dissertation is addressed to students of Western Drama in general, the appropriate beginning for the discussion of even the ideas in *Nāṭya Śāstra* should be with the ideas in Western Drama which is the focus **of the first** chapter. Thus, **chapters from** first to third provide the theoretical background for the understanding of *Līlā-s* by a student of Western Drama and *Nāṭya*, by gradually moving from Western Drama through *Nāṭya* and *Līlā*. The reality to be understood from this theoretical background, is pictured in the fourth chapter. The final chapter is concluding chapter, which sums up the discussion, and limitations and scope of the discussion.

I

Introduction.

The *Rās Līlā* theatre of Vrindavan (Vrindaban, Brindavan 90 K.M. southeast of Delhi) is one of the famous forms of traditional Indian theatre, which enacts episodes from the story of Hindu mythical God *Kṛṣṇa*. *Rās Līlā*-s have attracted the attention of scholars both such as Norvin Hein (1972), Vasant **Yamadagni** (1980), Shyamnarayan Pandey (1980), **Ramnarayan** Agrawal (1981), John.S. Hawley (1981& 1992), Varadapande (1982) and Prabhudayal **Mital** (1983), who have done several kinds of analysis about them.

The problem of research.

Presently, the following features of *Rās Līlā* performances are being taken up for study : (i) The performers perform and the audience watch the *Rās Līlā*-s over and over and again and again without showing a pinch of feeling of monotony or boredom. (ii) The *Rās Līlā* performers perform as 'playfully' and as involvedly as children do. (iii) In spite of absense of any extraordinary quality of acting talent, these performers succeed in transporting the audience into the realm of the content of their **performances**. (iv) The whole performance is, in fact, a collective participation by the audience-crowd, producers, directors and the actors. The demarcation between the performers and the audience is almost invisible as the audience converse directly with the directors and the performers on the stage and vice versa, apart from the audience moving on to the stage, participating in the stage **activities**. (v) Audience break into uncontrollable wailing with incessant **outpouring** of tears over the cheeks. At times they shout loudly with raised hands at the **appearance** of *Kṛṣṇa* and other characters, uttering their names.

These features **of** *Rās Līlā* theatre distinguish it from other kinds of theatre. Here, an attempt has

been made to get an insider's view of the participants of *Rās Līlā*-s, to comprehend these features.

It may be noted that the insiders do not like the use of the word Drama or *Nāṭaka* in reference to their theatre and prefer to call it as *Līlā*. For example, Fateh Krishna, the director of a leading troupe of *Līlā* performances, argues, as long as *Līlā* is considered as Drama or a *Nataka* one will not be able to understand it. Neither will one be able to do any research on *Līlā*. It can be seen that for *Svami Fateh Krishna*, the notion that Drama and *Nāṭaka* are just the English and Hindi words for any theatre and thus can be used to talk about *US* is wrong' (Fateh Krishna, Director of *Svami Fateh Krishna Ras Mandali*). Taking a cue from the words of *Svami Fateh Krishna*, it makes sense to look at (i) the Western theatre, beginning from Classical Greek Tragedy to the modern experimental plays; (ii) traditional Indian theatre, covering mostly the Sanskrit plays composed by poets like Kalidasa, Bhasa and so on; and (iii) *Ras Līlā*-s of Vrindavan, as different kinds of theatre, and to identify 'Drama,' 'Nataka' and 'Līlā' as three different categories covering three kinds of theatre, respectively. A careful scrutiny reveals that more appropriate word for traditional Indian theatre would be *Natya* rather than *Nāṭaka*. The word *Natya* in the most popular sense appears as a reference to traditional Indian Dance. But a knowledge of Sanskrit poetics, especially, of works like Bharata's *Natya Śāstra*, will help in understanding that the word *Natya* refers to the traditional Indian theatre which includes dance elements and has a Vedic cultural background. Though what Fateh Krishna expressed is the articulation of an insider and not the sophisticated analytical statement made by a researcher, it gives a hint that to be true to an insider's point of view and to get its complete understanding, *Līlā* must be viewed in contrast to 'Drama' and 'Natya.'

In fact, such an insider's view is well articulated in a theoretically elaborate form by scholars such as Rupa Goswami (1489 - 1564) in *Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* and *Ujjvala Nīlamanī* and Jiva Goswami (1503 - 1598) in his books *Sat Sandarbha* and so on. These authors and books belong to Gauḍīya Vaisnava tradition, a particular tradition among several traditions participating in *Līlā* (for example, Fateh Krishna belongs to *Nimbarka* tradition). Rupa Goswami and Jiva Goswami were the disciples of the

famous saint Chaitanya (1486-1523) and developed *Gaudiya Vaisnava* philosophy¹ based on his teachings. *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics of *Lilā* themes, which helps in understanding the *Rās Lilā* performances takes from where the *Nāṭya toś** ends, in the sense that it presupposes the knowledge of the *Nāṭya Śāstra* discourse from its readers and runs into polemics with it compelling a clear distinction between *Nāṭya* and *Lilā*. An uncritical application of the category of *Nāṭya* to the *Lilā* theatre of Vrindavan leads to confusion, because though *urn* shares the Vedic background of *Nāṭya*, it has its locale in the *bhakti* (spiritual devotion) culture (see Ch.3).

Looking at the *Nāṭya Śāstra* from the point of view of philosophy behind it reveals that there are several philosophical problems in the interpretations of this work. Traditional scholars who follow different schools of philosophy accepted or rejected a separate status for the aesthetic pleasure given by *Lilā* which is called *bhakti rasa*. Review of these polemics have been done by modern scholars such as VRaghavan (1975) by not delving into the different philosophical backgrounds of both *Nāṭya* and *Lilā*. But when the philosophical backgrounds of the different stances are taken into consideration each of these stances can be found to be correct from within the background on which the stance is based.

A new reading of *Nāṭya Śāstra* from the point of view of philosophy behind it also reveals that there are several philosophical problems in the English interpretations of poetics of the *Nāṭya Śāstra*. Scholars like R.L. Singal (1977) have viewed *Nāṭya* as just a kind of theatre like Drama. This is evidenced by their uncritical application of the elements of *Nāṭya* such as *vibhāva* and *sānta rasa*, among others, to Drama (see 2.6.3). Though the word Drama is often used to describe a play, a critical overview reveals its locale in the Western literature and Western culture. Hence it can not be uncritically applied to describe either plays like Kalidasa's *Abhijñāna Śākuntalam* or to *Lilā-ś*.

Similarly, instances of reading the elements of Drama into *Us* can also be noted in the English

interpretation of the themes of *Uli* which is the content of flb *Uli*-. An instance of uncritical application of the notions of Greek Drama to *Līlā*-s is found in Sudhir Kakar's (1981) psychoanalysis of *Līlā*-s (the pastimes of *Kṛṣṇa*, which are the content of *Rās Līlā*-s). Kakar applies psychoanalysis to infer the impact of descriptions of the activities of *Kṛṣṇa* on the readers/audience. He considers *Kṛṣṇa*'s dalliance with the cowherd damsels of Vrindavan (see 4.3.5.2.II) to be libidinous.¹ He further asserts that the activities of *Kṛṣṇa* propose utter 'freedom' and 'instinctual' exhilaration,¹ which, for him, is akin to the Dionysian element in Greek mythology (also associated with Greek Drama). He does not take into account the fact that within *Līlā*-s, there is textual evidence to show that the essential feature of the concept of Love in *Līlā*-s is its trans-erotic quality (see 3.5 & 4.3.5.2.II), while the Dionysian element found in Greek Drama is predominantly passionate. This example clearly illustrates the theoretical problems that can emerge from not taking into account the distinctions that exist in the worldviews inherent in the *Līlā* and Drama.

All this leads to see that as a conceptual category, *Līlā* needs to be distinguished from Drama on the one hand and from *Nāṭya* on the other. The categorization of theatre helps, not only to understand *UIS* from the insider's point of view, but also to be close to the truth of what *Uli* is. The present dissertation is an attempt to show how this justification is available in the theories of Drama, *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* and in the reality of the *US* tradition in Vrindavan. This distinct understanding of *urn vis-a-vis* *Nāṭya* and Drama answers the question about the distinctive features of *UIS* such as repeated performances of the same themes, total dissolution of performer-audience demarcation and intense emotional expressions and so on. It also helps to trace the sources of confusion which led to seeing 'instinctual' exhilaration¹ and so on, into *US* (see 4.3.5.3.II).

Previous scholarship.

The scholars mentioned above tried to give a picture of *US* in various different ways. The origin, the

performance structure, the literature, the contribution of poets, music and other aspects of *Rās* LAM have been discussed by Vasant Yamadagni (1980), Ramnarayan Agrawal (1981), Prabhudayal Mital (1983) and others. Norvin Hein in his book, *The m.mr-le plays of Mathura* (1972), has dealt with the different kinds of theatrical performances that take place around Mathura (which is the **district** in which Vrindavan is located) and translated the *Uddhava* *Us* which is one of the most prominent *Līlā*-s. John.S. Hawley translated four major *Līlā*-s: The Birth of Krishna (Ch.2), The theft of the flute (Ch.3), The Great Circle Dance (Ch.4), and The Coming of Akṛūr (Ch.5), with an introduction to each chapter in his excellent work At Play with Kṛṣṇa : Pilgrimage Dramas From Brindavan (1981). He also separately dealt with one of the most popular themes from the *Līlā* stories, *Kṛṣṇa* as the Butter Thief, in his book. *Krishna : The Butter Thief*. Varapande in his book The Krishna Theatre (1982), discussed *Rās Līlā* theatre, placing it under the broad category of theatre with *Kṛṣṇa* themes in different places in India. He also translated a *US* called *Sri Kēvat Līlā* (the pastime of boatman). All the scholars mentioned above, have attempted to take meticulous care in their translation, not to miss the delicate aspects of the worldview of *Līlā*-s.

David Haberman (1988), who observed that the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* poetics of the *Līlā* themes presupposes the knowledge of the poetics of *Nāṭya*, has done a penetrating analysis of *bhakti rasa* vis-a-vis *Nāṭya rasa* in his book Acting as a mode of salvation : Rāqānuqā Bhakti Sādhana. But as he limited his scope to the study of *bhakti* in *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* tradition, he has not dealt with the philosophical foundations of the poetics of *Nāṭya* and *Līlā*. Since the aim of the present work is to show the difference between traditional Indian theatre as known from the *Nāṭya Śāstra* and *UIS* theatre of Vrindavan, which is a product of *bhakti* traditions, this work analyses those foundations.

Though Agrawal and others have, to some extent, dealt with the topics like the emotional experience of the audience of *Līlā*, they have not elaborately discussed the nature of this experience and the reason behind such an intense experience. Many more questions such as the

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difference between the emotional experience of *Līe. Nāṭya* and Drama, the cultural background of those who participate in these *Līlā*-s, which makes such an experience possible, are left behind. This created the scope for the above mentioned intellectual journey from *Gaudiya Vaisṇava* poetics, through the poetics of *Nāṭya* (centered around *Nāṭya Sum*), to the theories of Drama. The forthcoming discussion is the end product of such a journey.

Methodology.

There are several ways in which *Drama*, *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* can be compared. Any comparison needs a common axis. The common axis of comparison that can be found suitable for the comparison of these forms is the (issue of) the presentation of the 'self' and its 'fulfilment.'

The word 'self' is popular in English literature on Indian philosophy as a translation to the word *ātman*, which is a metaphysical and spiritual notion. But, here, it is being used in the sense in which Irving Deer and Harriet A. Deer, in their book on Drama, *Selves : Drama in perspective* (1975), have used : the human personality/ human individual/ human subject. Interestingly, this notion of human subject has a clear elaboration in the philosophy of *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* too and along the way of this elaboration, has a conceptual link to the above mentioned idea of self (*ātman*) as a metaphysical and spiritual concept. This makes the notion of self, the best choice for the axis for the comparison of Drama, *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* being taken up here.

For the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of performance study and ethnography of the topic of the present research, a purely fieldwork based qualitative empirical method of data collection, observation and analysis has been adapted. The present study is done through a stay in Vrindavan for more than three hundred days spreading over a period of three years, closely examining the Vrindavan culture (popularly called as *brāj* culture) in general and the *Gaudiya Vaisṇava* culture in

particular, by participating in and observing the performances and noting their nuances and at the same time taking guidance from the great *Gauḍiṣya Vaisnava* guru (spiritual teacher) Haridas Shastriji and the modern *Gauḍiṣya Vaisnava* scholar Satyanarayanadas and several other scholars

The stay includes following the daily routine of the *Brāhṁasī-s* (the inhabitants of Vrindavan) and participating in the *Līlā-s* along with the traditional audience by becoming completely one among them. Nevertheless, this participant observation is optimally complemented by the non-schedule based interviews conducted with the performers, the organisers of the performances, patrons and the audience. The descriptive categories of *US* have been gathered emically from the participants of the *Līlā-s*. The texts of the *Līlā-s* are inevitably collected from the performance context.

End note :

Since Chaitanya took birth in Bengal which is also called *Gauḍya* region, his philosophy is called *Gauḍiṣya* (Bengal) *Vaisnava* philosophy.

Chapter 1.

Drama : A perennial search for self fulfilment.

1.1. Drama as a presentation of self.

The History of Drama, in the strict sense of the history of Western theatre, beginning from Greek times to the times of the Absurd theatre, has been reviewed by several scholars such as Sylvan **Barnet**, Morton **Berman** and William **Burto** (1972), Irving **Deer** and Harriet A. **Deer** (1975), James **Calderwood** and Harold **Toliver** (1969). Each of these scholars brought out the evolution of a particular aspect of the Western theatre (hereafter Drama) in this long history. But one theme, which needs to be elaborately traced through this history, is the one suggested by Irving **Deer** and Harriet **A. Deer**, in their book Selves : Drama in perspective (1975). The **Deers**, in this book, studied various forms of Drama from the point of view of 'the self.' The **Deers** use the word self to mean the human personality, the human object, the individual or in other words, human identity. After tracing this theme of the self in the history of Drama, the **Deers** have come up with a remarkable observation that the history of Drama presents the "individual's perennial search for self fulfilment" (1975 : vii). For the **Deers**, self fulfilment is self realization, i.e., the experience of one's idea of oneself. According to them, the playwrights create characters who seek an answer to the question 'Who am I?' This search of the self for an identity, may or may not lead to a clear self knowledge. But still the self, i.e., the character, attempts to fulfill (realize) its idea of itself. The **Deers** review Drama from this point of view and conclude that all Drama has, perennially, been is a presentation of the individual's 'search for self fulfilment.'

The review of the **Deers** indicates that they restricted their analysis to the study of only those plays, which fall under the genres of Tragedy and Tragicomedy, which have always been considered 'serious' Drama, in contrast to Comedy, which mostly presents **satires** and farces

and is treated as "tragedy's poor sister, an inferior, unserious and essentially trivial form" (Watson, 1983 : 81). Aristotle too, in his poetics, considers Tragedy as 'serious' while he feels that Comedy "imitates characters of a lower type" (1951 : 21).

According to ~~the Deers~~, though the theme of self and its fulfilment is common to all forms of Drama, different Dramatists have presented the individual's search for self fulfilment differently. In the preface to their book, the Deers **say** :

"Those playwrights who consider the self subordinate to the design of the universe tend to subordinate character to plot, as Sophocles does in Oedipus the King; while those who considered the self superior usually make character at least as important if not more important than plot, as **Ibsen** does in A Doll's House. Similarly, playwrights who see diminishing order in the universe generally create characters who, like the protagonist in Strindberg's Miss Julie, are in danger of losing their sense of themselves and their place in the world. Playwrights who see no immanent order in the universe or society - only an arbitrary one imposed by human beings - tend to write extremely subjective plays wherein the characters try to create order through their own imagination, as is demonstrated in **Giraudoux's** Madwoman of Chaillot..." (1975: vii).

As can be seen from the above words, for the Deers, what marks the presentation of each Dramatist is the **worldview** or a theory through which the Dramatist **tries** to analyse the self. This is indicated also when the Deers note that the answer to the question of 'Who am I?' sought by the Dramatists is "often factual, psychological, social, and even religious" (1975 : 1)

This notion of a '**search**' of course, reminds one of the investigative or exploring nature of science. In other words, Deers, here, can be seen to be talking about Drama in the model of science. This kind

of analogy of science to Drama is well established even earlier to Deers. For example, Arthur Millier says,

"....**Drama** is like other inventions of man in that it ought to help us to know more.....The ultimate justification of a genuine new **form**...is the new and heightened consciousness it creates and makes possible - a consciousness of causation in the light of known but hitherto inexplicable effects." (1957 : 53).

Miller considers that (like science) the '**end** of drama' is the creation of this '**higher consciousness**' of the determinism or causation which is often explained in terms of 'laws of nature' (Deer, et.al., 1975:2).

Miller uses the word 'teaching' in reference to this creation of '**higher consciousness**' (1957 :12-3). This '**creation** of higher consciousness' has been intended to give prescription, in both science and in drama, to cure or solve the human problems. The word teaching or instruction is used in reference to Drama even in this sense of prescription. Mercier(in Dukore, 1974 : **138**) and Johnson (in Dukore, 1974 : 408), using the word instruction, in reference to Drama in both the senses, say that Drama instructs in a pleasurable manner. Rapin, who uses the word instruction in the moral sense, agrees with this point and gives an analogy to show this. He says :

"In curing the maladies of men, [art] makes use of the same artifice that physicians have recourse to in the sickness of children : they mingle honey with the medicine to take off the bitterness....For no other end is [art] delightful than that it may be profitable." (in Dukore, **1974 : 265**).

The notions of '**self**', '**tragedy**', '**worldview**' and '**heightened consciousness**,' found in the above mentioned analysis of Deers and Miller, help to discuss the probe of self in various forms of Drama through the following four part structure : (i) the theory of '**nature**,' such as religious, psychological, sociological and so on; (ii) the notion of the self (which exists in '**nature**'); (iii) the diagnosis of the

predicament of the self or those qualities in the self which deny the self its fulfillment; and (iv) instruction. Taking a cue from the Deers, an attempt will be made here to use the four part structure to analyse different forms of serious Drama (Tragedy and Tragicomedy) from Greek to modern times. However, considering the richness and vastness of each of the forms under discussion, it is a difficult task to attempt a review of all of them elaborately. Hence a brief study will be made by providing a few examples from each of these forms.

1.2. Changing self in various forms of Drama.

1.2.1. Greek Theatre : Self under the control of gods.

The fact that the tragedies of Euripides, Sophocles, Aeschylus and others, written more than two millennia ago, are staged and discussed even now, demonstrates the universality of the tragic actions that were presented on the Greek stage. The Greek Tragedy presented nature as governed by the gods. There is a direct intervention of the gods in the action of the plays. They either appear in the play to decide the fate of the selves, as in the case of The Bacchae by Euripides, in which the god Dionysus makes the selves act in the fashion he wants them to and punishes them for rejecting him; or their intervention may be indirect as seen in Oedipus the King (Sophocles) where the fate destined by the gods is revealed by the **oracle** at Delphi.

The self (chief character) of Greek Tragedy is of noble birth. It is shown as possessing a tendency to act against the gods, a quality which is called *Hubris*. This may be seen in The Bacchae, cited above, in which the citizens of Thebes do not accept Dionysus when he appears there as a new god. The self is depicted as being in the pursuit of the passions such as sex, power and revenge, and in the process it is shown to be disturbing the natural order by acting against the commands of the gods. The self is shown to indulge in grotesque actions such as incest, parricide, fratricide and **infanticide**. Oedipus, for example, commits both incest and parricide in

the play Oedipus the King; the two sons of Oedipus kill each other in Antigone (Sophocles); possessed by a desire for revenge, Medea, in the play of the same name (Euripides), murders her own children; and Agave in The Bacchae (Euripides) dismembers her own son. Driven by the irresistible passions, the selves are often shown to be causing misfortune to themselves, sometimes to their family and sometimes even to the whole state. The Greek tragedy shows the hero falling down from his noble position and experiencing misery.

Upon experiencing this downfall, the self often comes to learn about its mistake and accepts the fate destined for it by the **gods**. An example of this can be found in Oedipus The King, where Oedipus says,

"And the man who called down these curses [of gods] on me was I myself, no one else" (Sophocles in Deer, et.al., 1975 ; 41).

This feature, in Greek Tragedy, of gaining of knowledge by the self about its mistake, is described by critics as *Anagnorisis* (Barnet, et.al., 1972 : 6-7) a word originally coined by Aristotle, which is often translated as recognition. This word had a simpler meaning for Aristotle. *Anagnorisis*, according to him meant,

"a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune" (1951 :41).

He gives the same example, given above, from Oedipus the King. Here, the meaning 'a change from ignorance to knowledge' is simple. Before the messenger informs about who Oedipus is, he was not aware that the king and queen of Corinth were not his real parents - this was his ignorance. After the messenger told him, he knew the reality - this is **knowledge**

Barnet and others, however, consider that the later critics gave a richer meaning to the concept of *Anagnorisis* and used it to describe the self's recognition of its own mistake (1972 ; 6-7). The

recognition of the self about its mistake is believed by the critics to bring about an elevation in its consciousness.

To depict the actions of the self in a well ordered world (governed by the gods), the Dramatists chose a well constructed plot. According to Aristotle, a good Tragedy must have "for its subject a single action, whole and complete, with a beginning, a middle and an end" (1951 : 34-5). This can be seen to be corresponding to a unity in the world governed by the gods. The Dramatists, for their work, mostly borrowed the themes from legends, though they often improvised them.

By thus presenting the tragedy of the selves in a well ordered world, the Greek Tragedy reveals the following law of nature : the **self** which **disturbs** the natural **order maintained by** the gods, **due** to its passions, falls down as the natural order reasserts itself. In fact, this law of nature has often been directly revealed, either through the words of the characters or the chorus. The chorus in Oedipus The King, for example, says,

'The man who goes his way
overbearing in word and deed,
Who fears no justice,
Honors no temples of the gods-
May an evil destiny seize him
And punish his ill - starred pride (Sophocles in Deer, **et al.**, 1975 : 42)."

As it is popularly known, Aristotle and others who followed him, have evolved a theory of the purpose of Tragedy in terms of the effect it creates on the audience. Before dealing with the effect of tragedy on the audience, Aristotle first points out that the chief character in the tragedy should **be an** important person, almost virtuous, because the downfall of an important person evokes pity in the audience. The hero experiences misfortune because he makes an **error** which

Aristotle calls *Hamertia* (1951 : 45-6). He gives the example of Oedipus whose mistake is the assumption that Polybus and Merope are his parents. When Oedipus hears that he is fated to murder his father and marry his mother, he runs away from his state. The play shows that the very attempt of escaping from the fate leads him towards it. He runs away from his foster parents and kills his real father (Laius) and performs incest with his mother (Jacosta). For Aristotle, the mistake (*Hamertia*) that the tragic hero commits is accidental and therefore worthy of sympathy from the audience.

Aristotle holds that through the imitation of the actions of the tragic character which are pitiful and terrible, the poet (Dramatist) evokes pity and fear in the audience effecting the purgation or *Kathahsis* (or *Catharsis*) of these emotions and which ultimately results in pleasure (Butcher in Aristotle, 1951 : 242-246).

In his discussion on Aristotle's theory of Tragedy, Pierre Comeille sees a moral element along with the *Cathartic* effect. Elaborating Aristotle's theory of *Catharsis*, he argues that when the audience watch the character suffering misfortune (which is undeserved), they pity him/her. This makes them fear a similar fate that may befall them, since they witness it happening to men similar to themselves on the stage. This according to him leads to a

" desire to avoid [the misfortune]; this desire to the wish to purge, to moderate, to rectify, even to eradicate in ourselves the emotion which, before our eyes, plunges persons that we pity into misfortune; for this ordinary but natural and indubitable reason : that to avoid the effect one must cut out the cause" (in Dukore, 1974 : 230).

In other words, according to Comeille's interpretation of theory of Aristotle, by revealing the laws of nature, Tragedy effects a desire for the eradication of passions that lead to the experience of misfortune.

1.2.2. Elizabethan Tragedy : Self as a victim of passions.

The next major phase in the history of theatre, the Elizabethan **period**, also has several remarkable tragedies, written by Dramatists such as Christopher Marlowe and Shakespeare.

The Elizabethan Tragedy too, like the Greek Tragedy, is the outcome of a religious **faith**. The world in Elizabethan Tragedy has a perfect order maintained by God (informed by Christianity). However, unlike Greek Tragedy, God does not appear directly in the play. The belief in His presence, as the one who controls the fate of the selves, is indicated through the speech of the characters in the play. For example, Lear in King Lear says,

"As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods;

They kill us for their sport." (IV.i)

The chief characters in Elizabethan Tragedy were of high rank, as in Greek Tragedy, because their fall "evokes deeper **woe and wonder than the snuffing** out of a non entity" (Barnet, et.al., 1972 : 198).

Like the Greek tragedies, the Elizabethan tragedies such as Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear and Othello by Shakespeare, show how the characters disturb the world around them due to the presence of some evil' (Watson, 1983 : 76) in their personality such as excessive ambition (Macbeth), jealousy (Othello), confusion (Hamlet) and lack of discrimination (Lear). The self seeks the gratification of the passions such as power (Macbeth), love or sex (Othello), love of other selves (Lear) and so on. As in Greek Tragedy, the indiscriminate search **of** the self for the satiation of these passions destroys not only itself, but also its relation with the other selves as well as the natural **order**.

Macbeth, for example, shows the chief character as disturbing the order in the state by desiring

power through the murder of Duncan. The play describes the natural order as being "troubled with man's **[Macbeth's] act**." (II. iv.5-6). It shows how Macbeth turned his castle, which was a Heaven's breath' (I.vi.5), into a hell' (II.iii. 2). Othello with his jealousy and Lear with his lack of discrimination are depicted as creating misfortune for themselves and for the ones they love. Similarly, Hamlet with his confused thinking fails to **cleanse** Denmark (a task assigned to him by the ghost of his father) and thus restore order in the state. He also destroys his relationship with his beloved Ophelia.

It may be noted that here too, as in the Greek Tragedy, the evil' in the self brings with it, downfall. Macbeth, for example, succeeds in gaining the power which he relentlessly pursued, but he does not enjoy this power and in stead, pays dearly with his life. Similarly, Lear also loses his life for wrongly trusting Regan and Goneril who cause his death.

As with the Greek Tragedy, the selves here, also recognise their faults in the end. Othello, for example, at the end of his life realizes that he "**loved** not wisely, but too well" (V.ii.348). Similarly, Lear (King Lear III.iv) confesses his former ignorance, which led him to reject Cordelia and take the empty words of Regan and Goneril seriously. This movement from ignorance to knowledge of their fault by the chief characters in the Elizabethan Tragedy is identified as **Anagnorisis** (recognition) by (the critics such as) **Barnet** and others (1972 : 7).

However, unlike in the case of Greek tragedy, the focus is not on the fate destined to the self by the God, but on the passions of the self itself. If the self in Greek tragedy enacted the fate destined by the gods, in the Elizabethan tragedy, the self was directly responsible for its fate. The fate of the self **is** determined by the evil¹ it possesses. J.L.Watson notes that though a conception of moral order can be seen in Shakespeare, it "depends less on the supernatural sanctions and backing than on **Nature**." (1983 :49). To give an example, if Oedipus is depicted as experiencing misfortune due to

the fate predicted by the oracle (which is destined by the gods), Macbeth is portrayed as **experiencing** the same fate due to the force of his desire.

Apart from this change in focus towards the '**evil**' present in the character, there is also a change in the plot construction. Auerbach, for example, observes the following difference in plot construction between Greek and Elizabethan Tragedies :

"[In Greek tragedy] The essence of [the hero's] personality is revealed and evolves exclusively within the particular tragic action; everything else omitted... [Whereas in Elizabethan **tragedy**]...**The** course of events on the stage is not rigidly restricted to the course of events of the tragic conflict but covers conversations, scenes, characters, which the action as such does not **necessarily** require" (1953 : 319).

Critics considered that like Greek Tragedy, in revealing the '**evil**,' Elizabethan Tragedy also has a moral purpose. John Dennis, for example, considers that, by showing the characters such as Macbeth getting destroyed "for his lawless ambition and cruelty," tragedy instructs the individuals to follow their moral duty. He observes that

" It was the business of tragedy to exhort men to piety and the worship of the gods, to persuade them to justice, to humility, and to fidelity, and to incline **them** to moderation and temperance. And 'tis for the omission of one of these duties that the persons of the modern tragedy [which includes Elizabethan Tragedy] are shown unfortunate in their **catastrophies**" (in Dukore, 1974 : 368).

1.2.3. Realism : Self governed by heredity and environment

The next **important** phase in Drama is Realism. If the Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy showed a belief in an orderly world controlled by the gods (God), the Realists such as Henrik

Ibsen, August Strindberg and Arthur Miller focused on a world which is controlled by the laws of nature discovered by science such as the laws of evolution and so on. The characters in Realism, were not noble heroes, but ordinary men. Realism claimed to be dealing **objectively** (Deer, et.al., 1975 : 266) with people in everyday life. The mode of presentation moved from verse (which is seen in Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy) to ordinary speech and great importance was given to create a setting that came closest to real life, in an attempt to appear 'natural.'

The **serious** plays in Realism too, were tragedies though the self is presented, in them, as the common man. Miller rejects the **argument** that it is only the tragic actions of noble heroes which are worth presenting on stage and says,

"... the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its higher sense as kings were" (in Dukore, 1974 : 894).

The self in Realism, at least as found in Ibsen's Realism, is a product of heredity and **environment**.¹ For this reason the fate of the self is determined by these same factors : heredity and environment, and is not governed by the gods as in Greek Tragedy. The causes of the tragic fate of the self did not lie within the self but outside : in the family and society.

Nora, in A Doll's House by **Ibsen**, for example, plays the role of a '**doll**' given to her by her father, husband and society. Though she tries very hard to preserve her marital relationship with her husband by playing a role that he wishes, she soon realizes that a relationship is impossible with a man who sees her just as a doll and not as '**human being**' (in Deer, 1975 : 219). This realization makes her feel that she is living with a '**strange man**' (in Deer, et al, 1975 : 219). When this realization dawns on her, she can no more live with a **stranger** and hence slams the door on him, as well as on her **strange self** as a doll. She enters into an unknown new reality to see everything, such as her **duties**, and '**religion**' (Ibsen in Deer, et al, 1975 : 217), which made her

to take on a particular role (of a doll), afresh, so as to acquire `self knowledge'.¹

The plays shows that self fulfilment is possible when the self and the society (here husband) transform completely so that their union becomes a "true marriage" (in Deer, **et.al.**, 1975 : 220). But the self in this play, possessed with the new realization about the **man-woman** relation, considers this as "the greatest miracle of **all**" (in Deer, et.al., 1975 : 220) and it no more believes in the miracles. Hence it sets out for the search for self fulfilment on its own.

Another play, which shows the self as experiencing misfortune due to the external factors, is the play Ghosts by **Ibsen**. In this play, Mrs. Alving sends her son Oswald away to Paris, in order to prevent him from inheriting any of his father's sinful (adulterous) life. Oswald goes there to experience the 'joy of life' (Ibsen, 1973 : 79), by living in a free society, where there is easy access to both sex and other sensual desires. But he already has, within him, the seeds of the destructive influence of his father in the form of the disease, syphilis. The play says that he was "worm-eaten from birth" (Ibsen, 1973 : 73) because "the sins of the father" had "visited the children" (Ibsen, 1973 : 74). The sin of the father **was to seek** the 'joy of life' through adultery (though secretly). Oswald suffers, both because of this tendency and the effect of this tendency which is syphilis. In this sense his tragedy is fatal. The play thus shows the self seeking the joy of life, an urge developed due to heredity as well as the due to environment in which it thrives, and thereby getting destroyed by this **search**. In this play **Regina** too goes out seeking the joy of life' and she too is likely to destroy herself (Ibsen, 1973 : 91). The self, in this play, is depicted as indulging in incest and in a great many things as a part of this urge for 'joy of life' without a sense of remorse, contrary to Greek Tragedy, where such an urge was considered punishable.

Thus, it may be noted that though, unlike in Greek Tragedy, the concept of gods as the dispenser of fate is no longer present, yet the concept of fate is preserved in notions such as heredity and

environment. The plots of Ibsen's plays were well made. In this way, the predicament of the modern man is strongly presented by Ibsen, so much so, that his themes take on the form of a different kind of tragic myths. Though Ibsen's plays seem to be dealing with specific day to day problems like corruption, women's rights and the destructive **inheritance** of syphilis from parents, in showing heredity and environment as determining factors of the fate of the self, Ibsen's mission was not just to bring contemporary problems to light, but, "to awaken the individuals to freedom and independence" (as quoted in Deer, **et.al.**, 1975 : 221-2); freedom and independence from the given situations to which the individuals in general are bound.' For example, Nora in A Doll's House can be seen as **bound** to the **situation/identity** of having to play a 'strange' role (a role not clear to herself). Thus, **Ibsen** in A Doll's House, by showing Nora slamming the door, intends to awaken individuals to the issue of freedom or independence from this bondage to situation.

Elaborating on this, by giving the example of A Doll's House, the Deers observe that in writing this play **Ibsen** was not particularly concerned with women's 'liberation'

"...but everyone's right to fulfilment ...**Ibsen** was concerned with a bigger issue - the permanent, universal problem everyone has in trying to find fulfilment" (Deer, et.al., 1975:220).

1.2.4. Expressionism : Self as a subjective entity governed by the psychological laws.

In the shift from Realism to **Expressionism**, can be seen a shift from the preoccupation with the depiction of the surface reality to the exploration of the depth dimension - into the realm of the psyche of the self. **Strindberg** and Miller, the Realists mentioned above (1.2.3), also occupy a prominent place in Expressionism. Apart from these, Eugene O'Neill is also an important Expressionist. In contrast to Realistic plays, which supposedly dealt with **the** objective reality,

Expressionistic plays were extremely subjective.

The self in Expressionism is presented predominantly as a psychological entity. According to the Deers, Expressionism presents the subjective experience of the selves which are "...caught in the nightmarish reality of a world fast losing its human **meaning**." (1975 : 267-8). The selves are seen no longer as having a fixed character. Living in an immoral world, the selves are seen becoming disintegrated. Discussing the Expressionistic play Miss Julie by Strindberg,² the Deers note that in his play,

"the world was fast becoming a place in which inherited absolute values and heirarchical schemes and structures no longer worked, leaving people without a function or the rules or conduct that allow them to develop an identity and a sense of **self**" (1975: 267).

Analysing the uniqueness of his characters as compared to the characters present in the earlier Drama, Strindberg (in the preface to his play Miss Julie) writes,

"Because they are modern characters, living in a period of transition more feverishly hysterical than its predecessor at least, I have drawn my figures vacillating, disintegrated, a blend of old and **new**" (in Deer, **et.al.**, 1975 : 258).

Miss Julie, in the play of the same name, develops an urge to escape from her previous chaotic and suffocating reality to a free world, outside of her home. Her **father's** valet, Jean, being as he is a man of the **street, symbolizes** freedom for her. Thus, she discerns in Jean, the possibility of the satisfaction of her urge. She equates her urge for freedom to the love for Jean, though, having her origins in nobility, she, fundamentally, has disrespect for a servant. But being guided by the urge for freedom coupled with the ignorance of his true nature (who sees her merely as a representative of success), she enters into sexual relation with a man whom she almost hates and

this finally leads to her destruction. Thus, if Ibsen shows the self as making a shift into a new reality, after slamming the door on a 'strange' reality, Strindberg shows that in its attempt to make a shift to a new reality without a proper understanding of that reality, the self becomes disintegrated and destroys itself.

As can be seen in the case of Miss Julie, the selves in Expressionism are filled with illusion and as a result of this, they move from one tragic situation to another. If the selves in the Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy knew the causes of their tragedy, the selves in Expressionism do not. Watson notes that the self in modern Drama, "makes love in blindness to that which destroys [it], and unlike Oedipus or Othello never come to see **the truth**" (Watson, 1983 : 128).

A good example of such a self can be seen in Arthur Miller's The Death of a Salesman. Miller, very effectively shows Willy destroying himself and his family, driven as he is, by an urge for success and power. Willy's hero is Ben, who "... walked into the jungle" (in Deer, et. al., 1975 : 361) when he was seventeen and when he walked out at twenty one, he was rich. Very soon Willy understands that the same type of successful heroes treated him like an orange, used him and threw him out like they "**throw** the peel away" (in Deer, et.al., 1975 : 378) when he no longer fitted in their power game.

And yet, it can be seen that Willy never becomes free from his fascination for success. This can be observed at the end where Willy plans to commit suicide so as to provide money for his son Biff. While doing this, Willy is contemplating the success of Biff. He does not realise that it is, in fact, his urge for success that had ruined his family relations. In order to externalize the mental struggle that goes on in Willy, where he constantly reverts to the past to explore the causes for his present predicament, Miller has introduced a plot in this play, which constantly moves between the past and the present.

The Freudian intervention, with his psychological discoveries, had a strong impact on Drama. The Expressionists such as O'Neill tried the application of the insights developed by Freud about the human psyche, in Drama. Following the psychoanalytic insights discovered by Freud, they even **experimented** with dream material to understand the dark forces of the psyche which guide the conscious life of the characters.

O'Neill, in his play Desire under the Elms, shows with great skill, the influence of the unconscious repressed incestuous desires on the conscious life of the selves. In this play Abbie, the step mother of Eben, seduces him into an incestuous relationship under the guise of mother's love. All she asks Eben is, to own up his incestuous desire for her, which he was repressing in the unconscious. She **says**:

" Hain't the sun strong an' hot? Ye kin feel it bum'n' into the earth -Nature- **makin'** **thin's grow**- bigger `n' bigger - burning inside ye - **makin'** ye want t' grow- into somethin' else - till ye're jined with it - an' it's **you'r'n** - but it owns ye, too - an' makes ye grow bigger - like a tree - like them **elums**. (She laughs again softly, holding his eyes. He takes a step toward her, compelled against his will). **Nature'll** beat ye, Eben. Ye might's well own up f it fust's **last**" (O'Neill, 1954 : 164).

If Oedipus plucked his eyes out for participating in an incestuous relationship, the modern characters, Abbie and Eben, are not guilty of this act at all (O'Neill, 1954 : 203). The play **shows** that desire for incest is a natural instinct in everyone. Commenting on this play, Joseph Krutch says,

" ...O'Neill is here interested less in New England as much than in an aspect of the eternal tragedy of man and his passions" (in O'Neill, 1954 : xvi).

The incestuous desires were thus shown as universal through this play.

Thus, like in Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, the problem with the self is that it is filled with dark and irrational forces inside, which guide its conscious life. These forces, compulsively lead the self to indulge in **heroism**, aggression, sadism, self destruction, sexuality, incest, adultery, revenge, blasphemy, murder - themes, which the psychoanalysts have explored. The actions are often violent, leading to the expression of very powerful emotions. Following Miller, it may be said that the purpose of the Expressionistic theatre, in the presentation of the self as being acted upon by dark forces of the mind, **is** to create a 'higher consciousness' in the audience about these forces.

1.2.5. Epic Theatre : Self as a social entity governed by social laws.

For **Brecht**, the world is not governed by a non-material God as in the classical Tragedy but by historical and social forces. The self in Brecht, is not a psychological entity as in **Expressionism**, but a historical and social one. Its fate too, thus, is governed by the historical and social conditions, of which it is a product. Terry Eagleton observes that Brecht, following Marxism, makes an attempt to present "the social relations of the character, and the historical conditions which makes him behave as he does" (1976 : 65). Unlike in Greek Tragedy, Elizabethan Tragedy and **Realism**, in Brechtian theatre, the self is not fixed but changes constantly as in Expressionism. But if Expressionism focuses on the subjective states of the self while giving less **prominence** to the changing social conditions (which effect the change in the personality), Brechtian theatre concentrates on the changing social conditions that change the self. In other words, the self has a particular nature being part of a particular society and it undergoes changes along with the society.

The self in **Brecht's** plays too possesses 'evil' (1.2.2). But the self takes to 'evil,' not because it is inherent, but because of circumstances. If in the Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, the

self causes chaos because of some tragic fallacy present in it, here, the social conditions make it participate in violence. The self would be better, if the conditions did not force it to be **evil**. This is illustrated by Brecht in The Good person of Szechwan where he shows how the good Shen Teh had to become ruthless Shui Ta for a living. Further, in Brecht, the influence of 'evil' in society on the self, is so overpowering that it can hardly escape its influence and take to morality. This idea is expressed by **Peachum** in The Three Penny Opera (2.ii.33) as he says,

"Let's practice goodness : who would disagree?

But sadly on this planet while we're waiting

The means are meagre and the morals low.

To get one's record straight would be elating

But our condition's such it can't be so" (1979 : 33).

Following the same line of historical and social determinism in Mother Courage and other plays, Brecht shows how the **material** conditions such as war, have the power to alienate the selves from themselves and also from others selves.

In order to create an awareness in the audience about the impact of the changing social conditions on the self, Brecht felt the necessity to change the existing forms of theatre, which have a neat plot construction, because, he felt that, such a design generated the impression that the reality is fixed. Brecht further argued that a strong emotional involvement which the earlier forms of Drama elicited from the audience made them take the happenings on stage as natural, unalterable truth. In order to change this passive involvement of the audience to an active one, he designed a **new** form called **Epic Theatre**. The 'Epic Theatre' was aimed at making the audience observe the action critically. In other words, it may be said that through this form Brecht wanted to disentangle the frozen relation between the audience and the performance.

In the **Epic Theatre**, Brecht introduced **Verfremdungseffekt** or Alienation effect to effect in the

audience a detachment that prevented the emotional involvement. He substituted the well knit plot, with a number of episodes that showed the **self's** reactions to **various** situations. Placards were hung on the stage, the audience was addressed directly, songs were used, and a narrator provided the sociohistorical outlook to the spectators to dislodge their familiar ways of perception. Brecht often felt the necessity to use different branches of science such as "Modern psychology, from psychoanalysis to **behaviourism**," and especially the "**findings** of sociology... economics and **history**" (Brecht in Dukore, 1974 : 853) to give a scientific perception of the self and its predicament to the audience.

Even though Brecht placed primary importance to reason over feelings, critics observe that many of the scenes in his plays like Mother Courage and Caucasian Chalk Circle are quite emotional.

Discussing the emotional impact created by Brecht's plays, James Redmond says,

"... how would audiences be emotionally distant from his Gruche, Kattrin, or **Shen Te**, when they have deeply cared for Antigone in a fixed mask, **for a** boy actor Ophelia, **for Phedra** in Racine's **Alexandres....**" (1980, xvii).

However, Eagleton observes that Brecht himself did not totally discard the idea of emotional response. He quotes Brecht's statement "One thinks feelings and one feels thoughtfully" (1976 : 67) to substantiate his point. Thus, in Brecht, feelings are evoked in the audience only to make them strongly identify the conditions that mould the self and alienate it from its setting.

Brecht holds that his purpose of inquiring into the predicament of the selves is "... not just to arouse moral objections to such circumstances [such as hunger, cold and oppression etc.]**but** to discover the means for their elimination" (in Dukore, 1974 : 854). This elimination of the problem in society was aimed by Brecht, through a revelation of the social laws of nature. According to Brecht, since the fate of the self is determined by the social conditions, the predicament of the self can

be solved only through a radical change in the society. By showing the problem in the society which causes the alienation of the self, Brechtian theatre motivates the audience into eradicating this problem. Brecht contends that when the audience observe the **sufferings** that his characters undergo on stage, they become aware of the cause of the suffering, and feel a strong necessity to change the social conditions prevalent in the outside world that cause such suffering (in Dukore, 1974:851).

1.2.6. Tragicomedy : Self as a dispassionate subject trapped in the involuntary processes of time.

The next important form of theatre that we find in the West is Tragicomedy. Tragicomedy has a different approach than Comedy in the delineation of the comic characters or the characters of 'lower types'(1.1). As the name suggests, Tragicomedy evolves from and takes the elements of both Tragedy and Comedy. Tragicomedy probes into the life of the selves who mix with the crowd and who pretend to be happy as is the case with Comedy, but at the same time they express their **lack of** a sense of identity, which is characteristic of Tragedy. This approach of Tragicomedy, to the life of the comic characters, probably, results from a sense of disbelief among the modern **playwrights**, who appear to question the idea that happiness can ever result in the lives of the characters (depicted in the comedy) who too, as noted by Cyrus Hoy, 'lack self knowledge' (Hoy in Bamet, **et.al.**, 1972 : 770). It may be noted that though there is a positive attitude towards the purpose of Comedy which is considered to be to identify the follies of the characters, make fun of **them**, and thus aim at amending the faults of the public (Rapin in Dukore, 1974 : 68), the happy ending in Comedy, however, is hardly been taken seriously by the critics and is considered less plausible' (Bamet, et.al., 1972 : 11).

Arthur Schopenhauer, for example, while accepting that the Comedy shows life to be thoroughly

good and especially always amusing, expresses his disapproval of happy ending in Comedy as he says,

"... certainly [the comedy] must hasten to drop the curtain at the moment of joy, so **that we may not** see what comes after..." (in **Dukore**, 1974:521-2).

A similar opinion is held by Thomas Hardy when he says,

"Tragedy is true guise, Comedy lies." (as quoted in **Barnet**, et.al, 1972 : 13).

Further, in **critics** like Hoy, there is a pessimistic tone about the nature of the happy ending in the Comedy. Discussing the difference between Tragedy and Comedy, Hoy observes that the lack of self knowledge in the case of the self in Tragedy brings about its **destruction**, while **the** self in the Comedy continues to live with its lack of self knowledge. Hoy holds such a fate of the self in the Comedy to be worse than death. He notes,

'This at least is true of the protagonists of the greatest comedy : plays that probe so deeply into the irony of human fate as to bring them close upon tragedy (in **Barnet**, **et.al.**, 1972:770).

He gives the examples of Jonson's Protagonist in Volpone, Shakespeare's Angelo in Measure for Measure, Moliere's Alceste in Le Misanthrope, and the Protagonists from Chekov's Unde Vanva and Pirandello's Henry IV to substantiate his observations.

It may be noted that what is common in the observation of Schopenhauer, Hoy and Hardy is a disapproval of the happy ending presented in the Comedy. Probably, the playwrights, who also held the opinion that such a happy ending is unrealistic, tried to explore what comes **after** the dose of curtains which fall after depicting the moment **of** joy in the life **of** the **characters** They tried to present that the happiness displayed by the comic characters is a '**lie**.' They showed **how** the fate of the comic characters, who continue to live with the lack of self knowledge, is dose to that of tragedy. This form came to be known as Tragicomedy.

However, the selves in this form neither experience great suffering caused by committing great

mistakes as in the Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, nor do they live happily in the company of others. In other words, in Tragicomedy, the selves are neither entirely tragic nor comic as portrayed in the genres of Tragedy and Comedy respectively. They often **experience** their anguish at the lack of self knowledge, a situation akin to tragedy. But unlike in Tragedy, here, this anguish is expressed in a comic fashion. In other respects, they behave like comic characters, making fun of everything or join the crowds easily, as in the case of Comedy, but unlike in Comedy, they clearly reveal their deprivation. For this reason, as **Barnet** and others observe (in their discussion of an example given by Pirandello in his essay **Umorismo**), the Tragicomedy evokes "**..our** laughter [which] is combined with **pity**" (1972 : 15). Tchecov, for example, shows his characters, sometimes, expressing a deep identity crisis due to lack of self knowledge. For example, **Charlotta** in his widely discussed play, The Cherry Orchard laments about her condition and says,

"Where **I** come from and who **I** am **I** don't know" (in Calderwood, **et.al.**, 1969:511).

But, after this profound questioning, she goes on to a rather trivial activity - that of eating a cucumber. The cause of her lack of seriousness is that she does not get any answer to the question of her identity, when she tries to search for one. She continues,

"I don't know Who my parents were - **perhaps** they weren't married - **I** don't know. . . . **I** don't know **anything**. (pause.) **I** do want to talk, but **I** haven't anybody at all" (in Calderwood, **et.al.**, 1969: 511).

Thus, it is the confusion about their origin and about their relation with the other selves that deprives the selves the self knowledge. As a result, they develop no particular attachment for a particular reality. This makes the selves shift their identities, as well as their setting, very easily.

In other words, like in Expressionism and in Brechtian theatre, the self is not fixed but changes along with the changing social conditions. But unlike in Expressionism and in Brechtian theatre, the self is dispassionate and changes very easily without much resistance, because, as mentioned above,

it does not have deep attachment for any particular reality. Tchechov depicts this in the same play discussed above. The Cherry Orchard shows **Mme. Ranevsky** losing her home, The Cherry Orchard, to which she is seemingly very much attached because it is intrinsically related to her past. But she doesn't show much resistance when it is sold, because, on the one hand, she realizes that times are changing **and on** the other hand, she already **has** an alternative life. In this way, in **Chechov's** plays, the selves sometimes are dissatisfied when their desires are not satiated. But they are also aware of the impossibility of such attainment as they realize that they inhabit a world where things are constantly changing. Hence they chose to move along with the **tide with** no fixed identity of their own, and in the words of Tchechov, they do nothing but "...eating, **drinking**, running after women or men, talking non - sense" (as quoted in Watson, 1983 : 135).

Senelick explains the phenomenon of flux in **Tchechov's** plays in terms of time. In Uncle Vanva he notes the "... motif of lives eroded by the steady passage of time" (1985 : 96). Speaking of The Cherry Orchard, Senelick observes that the play shows "...**human** beings trapped in the involuntary processes of time" (1985 : 125). Similarly, discussing a production of the Three Sisters, he says,

'The tone of the production was epic, showing the wind of history blowing through the characters' lives, their hopes shattered by the passage of time" (1985:140).

Though, in this way, Tchechov, depicts the determining factor of time in the lives of the selves, unlike the other Dramatists, Tchechov insists that he is not particularly interested in providing any instruction. According to him, the job of an artist is just to give a correct presentation of the problem, not its solution. He says,

"In my view it's not the **writers** job to solve such problems as god, pessimism and so on. The writer's job is only to show who, how, in what context, spoke or thought about god and pessimism. The artist must not be the judge of his character and of what they say : merely a dispassionate observer..." (as quoted in Watson, 1983 : 133).

While discussing his notion of instruction, noted earlier (1.1), Arthur Miller does not agree with the view that a Dramatist can be totally dispassionate without making any attempt to teach. Though not exactly in reference to Tchechov, he says,

"... there will never be a satisfactory way of explaining that no playwright can be praised for his high seriousness and at the same time be praised for not trying to teach; the very conception of a dramatic theme inevitably means that certain aspects of life are selected and others left out, and to imagine that a play can be written disinterestedly is to believe that one can make love **disinterestedly**" (1957 : 12-13)

The words like 'no playwright can be praised for his high seriousness and at the same time be praised for not trying to teach' remind Tchechov more than any other playwright. If Miller is really counter arguing Tchechov here, it is not certain how far either Miller or Tchehov is right. Because, probably when Tchechov says that he is not interested in presenting a solution to the problem, he means to say that he does not 'instruct' in a moral sense like Ibsen, **Brecht** and others and what Miller means by saying every dramatist 'teaches' is, as quoted **earlier** (1.1), **that** every Dramatist (including Tchechov) brings a 'higher consciousness.' Following Miller, it may be said that the fact that Tchechov presents the characters whose hopes are shattered by the passage of time, itself reveals that he teaches something : he brings to awareness time, as the determining factor of the fate of the self.

1.2.7 Theatre of the Absurd ; **Self** as an isolated subject divorced from its **setting**.

The last of the forms chosen for analysis, here, is the Theatre of the Absurd. Though this form of theatre is considered to be a kind within the genre called Tragicomedy, it has been **dealt**

separately, because of certain distinctive features it contains in comparison to the plays of Tchekhov and others playwrights writing in the genre of Tragicomedy. At the time of the Theatre of the Absurd, the creation of serious scripts in theatre multiplied enormously and the articulation of the predicament of the self at this stage found an amazingly variegated expression. This is commensurate with the diffusion of discourse developed by that stage.

The nature, in the Theatre of the Absurd, is absurd. It has no meaning, or rather, it can neither be understood in terms of a God nor through the application of the laws of science. The self has long rejected the religious worldview in search of an empirical meaning promised by the science so that it may conquer nature. But Eugene Ionesco shows in Exit the King that inspite of the invention of so many things such as the wheel barrow, telephone, telegraph and the aeroplane, the self can neither save itself nor the world, from disintegrating. Marie, in this play, tries to save Berenger (the king) from death and places her hope in science and technology. She says,

'The younger generation's expanding the universe ...Conquering new constellations"

but the king keeps saying,

"I'm dying... I'm dying" (1963 :67).

Thus, this play symbolizes the continued misfortune experienced by the self, in spite of science. In **fact**, the play shows that with the new tool called science now made available to the self, it only succeeds in creating more and more chaos in the world and causes further disintegration of **itself**

In other words, the acquisition of scientific knowledge did not free the self from the tendency to be destructive. Due to the destructive forces present in the self, all its actions result in the destruction of the world. As a result, the self in the Theatre of the Asburd lost hope in all ideals, whether scientific or religious. **Its** existence in the world became absurd, as, on the one hand, it rejected the religious ideals and lost the homeland and on the other hand, it lost hope of the land promised

by science, for, science too never gave it self knowledge. This left the self in an exile divorced from its **setting** Albert Camus describes the self in the absurd world, as follows :

"His is an irremediable exile, because he is deprived of memories of a lost homeland as much as he lacks the hope of a promised land to come. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, **truly** constitute the feeling of Absurdity" (as quoted in Esslin, **1973**: 5)

Like in Expressionism and in Tchecov, in the Theatre of the Absurd as well, the self has no proper sense of identity, because, like in those forms, neither can it look into the past nor into the present to develop an idea of itself in relation with other selves. Like Hamlet who becomes confused about his identity, because of his **mother's** relationship with his uncle, immediately after his **father's** death, here too, and to a greater degree, the self is totally confused when it **tries** to contemplate its origin. Jerry in Zoo story by Edward **Albee** expresses this confusion, when he describes his mother, by saying,

"...she [his mother] embarked on an adulterous tum of our southern states" (1961a: 24).

Similarly, the Cardinal in Tiny Alice (by Albee) may be sure about his spiritual '**Father**' in the Church, but when it comes to his physical father he is not so sure. In this play, Lawyer reveals this, as he says (to Cardinal),

"Considering your mother's vagaries, you were never certain **of your** true father... were you?" (1961b: 11).

Due to this loss of identity, the self manifests a desperate urge to communicate with other selves. But having lost hope of ever finding the long lasting relationships, it has, indeed, no one to communicate with. For example, Jerry in Zoo story has two empty frames. To Peter's inquiry as to

why they are empty, Jerry replies,

"I don't see why they need any explanation at all. **Isn't** it clear? I don't have pictures of anyone to put in them" (Albee, 1961a : 23)

Elsewhere in the same play, Jerry expresses a similar lack of hope in finding something' to communicate, with as he says,

"A person has to have some way of dealing with SOMETHING. If not with people ... if not with people... SOMETHING. With a bed, with a cockroach, with a **mirror**...no, that's too hard, that's one of the last steps. With a **cockroach**,... with **a..with a...carpet**, a roll of toilet **paper**...no, not that, **either...that's** a mirror, too; always check bleeding. You see **how**hard it is to find things?" (Albee, 1961a : 34)

This lack of a proper identity and failure to communicate with other selves, makes the self experience extreme isolation. Samuel Becket in Waiting for Godot presents this isolation, by depicting two tramps beside a withered tree. They wait for Godot, to change their condition, but he never comes. Commenting upon the conditions in this play Kenner (quoted by Javed Malick) notes "nothing synchronizes nor harmonizes" (as quoted in Becket **1989 : 10**) in the absurd world, as represented in this play.

If a lot of action is found in the plays of Expressionism, as the self there, is still, on a passionate search for the gratification of its urges, here, there is not much action. One of the significant features of Absurd plays is the presentation of certain characters as totally submerged in inaction. The most popular examples are the two tramps in Waiting for Godot Apparently, this inaction may be similar to that of Hamlet. But it may be seen that Hamlet is depicted to be intensely willing and ready for action. His inaction is depicted to be due to the hurdle of identity **crisis**, coming in the way of implementing his will and plans. But the tramps here, have a feeble will to act and they

resign themselves to inaction repeatedly.

Becket in his Waiting for Godot depicts this impotence of the self, in a symbolic manner Estragon, in this play, suggests hanging, losing all hope of finding a meaning in his life To this Vladimir says: **Hmm. It'd** give us an erection!

Estragon: [Highly excited]. An erection (Becket, 1989 : 47).

It may be noted that the word 'erection,' here, is symbolic of inspiration or potency for action. The selves in this play are talking of a physical erection, whereas (**considering** the fact that the Theatre of the Absurd uses a lot of symbolism), the word suggests an abstract feeling. The excitement over the possibility of an '**erection**' shows their desire for inspiration for action. But being divorced from their setting,' the tramps make no serious attempts for action. They wander aimlessly around a withered tree, waiting for the Godot, for there is "nothing to be done" (Becket 1989 : 39). In other words, they do not get any erection.'

Thus, if Brecht shows the self becoming alienated from itself and from otherselves due to social conditions, this form goes a step further and shows that alienation is all that is there in the world. And as a result of this extreme alienation, some of the selves in the Theatre of the Absurd are seen engaged in meaningless action. As Ionesco points out, since the self in this theatre is cut off from its "religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots" (which gave meaning and purpose for its actions), all its actions became "senseless, absurd, useless" (as quoted in Esslin, 1973 : 5).

There are some other selves who, due to their inability to experience relationship with each other in any other way, end up playing games. This is illustrated in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf. The play shows that the games played by Martha and Graham themselves have a crisis, after which, they no longer work and they decide to try new ones. But in the process of playing these

games they end up destroying each other. This attempt at playing games by the selves is depicted in a great number of **plays** Jean Genet, for example, in The Balcony, depicts selves playing illusory games. After showing this, Genet, **at** the end of the play, makes Madame Irma say the following to the spectators :

"...You must **now** go home, where everything - **you** can be quite **sure** - will be **far** less than here" (1957: 96).

Through this line, he indicates that all identities and relations in this absurd world are illusory. No relations last. The selves change their partners very easily. If the issue of adultery is seen becoming the cause of a lot of action in the previous forms of Drama, in this **form**, as exemplified in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, there is nothing strange about it to warrant any **serious** action as a response to it. Because, in the words of Graham in the same play, "Musical beds is the faculty sport..." (Albee, 1966 : 34) in the University (symbolizing the society),.

Cutting off from transcendental roots does not lead to the total absence of the notion of God in Absurd plays. Sometimes, as the **self** loses all hope of trying to find, on its own, a meaning in its existence, it looks to God to provide a meaning. A lot of plays in the Theatre **of the** Absurd, depict the self making a constant reference to God. But when it looks at the chaotic condition **of the** world, it sees God as a riddle which can never be solved and so, it ends up mocking at Him

This is well illustrated by Becket in the End Game. Nagg, in this play, tells a story, in which an Englishman gives a pair of trousers for **stitching** to a tailor, **who** never gives it on time. When he finally returns it, he leaves a few patches here and there. The customer gets angry and scolds him by saying that God made the world in six days, whereas the tailor is not capable of making a pair of trousers even in three months. To this the tailor replies,

"But my dear Sir, my dear Sir, look **-(disdainful gesture, disgusted)** - at the world - (pause)-and look (loving gesture, **proudly**) - **at my TROUSERS**" (Becket, 1958 :

21-2).

Becket, here, seems to say that self is unable to reconcile the notion of God representing perfection with the chaotic world around him. For this reason, as Becket depicts in his End Game, even though, like Marlowe's Faust, it seeks God in desperation, unlike Faust, the self does this with a total lack of faith and goes about its search awkwardly and in desperation, finally gives up. **Hamm**, in this play, says

"..Let us **pray to** God

[He tries awkwardly for some time and says **disgustedly**]:

"**The** bastard! He doesn't exist" (Becket, 1958 : 37-8).

Thus, if in the Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, the self considers God as someone **who** is to be revered, in the Theatre of the Absurd, the self sees God as someone to be ridiculed. As can be seen from the above example from End Game, there is a tendency to deliberately use such expressions which for religious Christian mind would be **damagingly** blasphemous. An instance, of such a tendency, can be observed in the following speech of Lawyer in Tiny Alice :

" When Christ told Peter - so legends tell - that he would found his church upon that rock, He must have had in mind an island in a sea of wine. How firm a foundation in the vintage years..." (1961b: 149).

Further, having lost faith in the existence of God and religion, the self does not see any reason to follow morality. If Realism and Expressionism show the self as easily losing the values, here, the self is shown as being totally bereft of values. In order to portray the selves who have lost all their moral values and humanness, Dramatists depicted the features of animals in **them**. Ionesco, for example, shows Jacques laying eggs in The Future is in eggs and people becoming' rhinoceroses in the play Rhinoceros. In Rhinoceros, he shows selves becoming thick skinned

indicating their lack of sensitivity to other selves and to the degenerating condition of the world. In the same vein, the Countess in The Mad Women of Chaillot by Giraudoux equates selves who have become power mongers and who would do anything for the sake of money, to animals. Describing such people, she says,

" Men are changing back into beasts. They know it. They no longer try to hide it....Just look at them snuffing their soup like pigs, tearing their meat like tigers, crunching their lettuce like crocodiles| A man doesn't take your hand nowadays. He gives you his paw" (in Deer, et.al., 1975 : 307).

However, the selves are not bothered about this change. Contrarily, they even take pleasure in their animal condition. Jean in Rhinoceros by Ionesco displays least surprise when Berenger tells him that one of his colleagues has changed into a rhinoceros. He replies,

"It obviously gave him great pleasure to turn into a rhinoceros. There's nothing extraordinary in that" (1960a : 66).

Very soon, he follows suit with pleasure and takes part in the destruction of the world.

In this way, the Theatre of the Absurd depicts playing only one game : that of breaking all the rules' to seek every pleasure. In its search for the attainment of its irrational desire, the self is shown threatening not only its relation with the other selves but the existence of the world itself. There is a threat that the world may collapse any moment, as a result of its destructive tendencies. There is every chance of globicide and extinction of the human race. Becket expresses this idea in the End Game. Hamm, in this play, says that by the time one closes his eyes and opens them up he may find an infinite emptiness' all around him with no one left to pity (Becket 1958 : 28-9).

There are other plays too which subscribe to this point of view. The Countess in The Mad Women of Chaillot laments as follows :

'There are people in the world who want to destroy everything. They have the fever of destruction. Even when they pretend that they're building, it is only in order to destroy. When they put up a new building, they quietly knock down two old ones. They build cities so that they can destroy the countryside. They destroy space with telephones and time with airplanes. Humanity is now dedicated to the task of universal destruction" (Giraudoux in Deer, *et al.*, 1975 : 307).

The protagonists of some of these plays are moved by a strong desire to change the condition around them. But they fail in this attempt, because they are confused and hence lack faith. For example, Berenger in Rhinoceros, discussed above, wants to save people from becoming rhinoceroses. But, he doesn't know how to communicate with them. He is confused about everything including the language that he speaks. In the end, he can not even understand his own speech (Ionesco, 1960a : 106).

Similarly, Berenger in the The Killer tries to convince the killer to stop destroying the city. But, as the killer starts arguing with him, Berenger becomes very weak in his **arguments** and shows utter loss of hope of the possibility of a beautiful city. He says,

"Listen, I'm going to make you a painful confession. Often, I have my doubts about everything **too**.. I doubt the point of living, the meaning of life, doubt my own values and every kind of rational **argument**" (1960b: 106).

Thus, this lack of faith in the selves leads to their inaction.

Like the Realists and the others who follow them, the Dramatists of the Absurd theatre too experimented with the form to best represent the world as absurd. Martin Esslin, a prominent critic of the Theatre of the Absurd, notes that in the Absurdist plays, all the characteristics of a good play such as cleverly constructed story, ' **subtlety** of characterization and motivation,' fully explained

theme,' and pointed dialogue' are found entirely lacking. In their place, the dramatists show the characters as unrecognizable who are almost mechanical puppets' The plots have neither a beginning nor an end¹ and the dialogue consists of incoherent babblings' (1973:3-4).

But though, apparently, Theatre of the Absurd seems to be a rejection of all seriousness, scholars have recognized this form of theatre to be the most genuine religious quest of this age. Esslin notes that "in expressing the tragic sense of loss of the disappearance of ultimate uncertainties," the Theatre of the Absurd becomes a "genuine religious quest of our age" (1973 : 351) in the sense that like the Greek and other religious forms of theatre, it too is concerned with "the ultimate realities of the human condition, the relatively fundamental problems of life and death, isolation and communication" (1973 : 353). But unlike these religious forms, this theatre expresses "the absence of any generally accepted system of values" (1973 : 353).

The purpose of the theatre of the Absurd has been analyzed differently by different scholars. On the one hand, Antonin Artaud, the playwright and the critic of the Theatre of the Absurd sees a purpose for this theatre. In his critical essay "No more Master pieces," he discusses the purpose of his theatre called the Theatre of Cruelty (which is identified by the critics as part of the form of the Theatre of the Absurd) and says that people in the modern world are mad, desperate and sick and the Theatre of Cruelty (the Absurd) has been created to teach, "We are not free. And the sky can still fall on our heads" (in Dukore, 1974 : 764). He adds that through such a theatre,

"...we will be capable of attaining awareness and a possession of certain dominant forces; of certain notions that control all others and...capable of recovering within ourselves those energies which ultimately create order and increase the value of life, or else we might as well abandon ourselves now, without protest, and recognize that we are no longer good for anything but disorder, famine, blood, war, and epidemics" (in Dukore, 1971 : 764).

It may be noted that unlike **Ibsen**, who clearly depicts the forces of heredity and **environment**, and Brecht, who equally clearly shows the social forces that control the fate of the self, Artaud does not clarify **what the 'dominant forces' are**, whose knowledge helps in **recovering within ourselves those energies which ultimately create order and increase the value of our life.**

On the other hand, Esslin (like Tchecov) holds that the Theatre of the Absurd is not "concerned with telling a story in order to communicate some moral or social lesson, as is the aim of **Brecht's** narrative, epic' theatre" (1973 : 354). But nevertheless, it may be said that it instructs in the sense of Miller, i.e., it creates the higher consciousness¹ of the causation of a different kind. As noted earlier, according to Ionesco, the Theatre of the Absurd shows that cut off from the "religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots" (which gave meaning and purpose to the existence), all the actions of the self became "senseless, absurd, useless" This sudden feeling of the non-existence of the transcendental reality is the cause of the predicament recognized here. This is the higher **consciousness' brought** out here.

1.3. Tragic nature of Drama explained in terms of the depiction of lack of fulfilment of the self.

From this brief study of the Drama in the West, based on the four part structure discussed earlier (1.1), it may be observed that each Dramatist presented the self and its predicament differently in accordance with his own perception of **self's** relation with the universe. The change in the perception of the self resulted in a change in the forms which revealed the respective **worldviews** of the dramatists during different periods in history (see table 1).

		Table 1.		
	Analysis	based on the four	Dart structure.	
Form of Drama	Theory of nature	Notion of self	Diagnosis for failure of self.	Instruction: (i) asking to do. (ii) to enlighten.
Classical Greek Tragedy	governed by gods	in the control of gods.	hubris and hamertia	(i) to eradicate the emotion [passion]. (ii) laws governed by gods
Elizabethan Tragedy-	perfect order maintained by God (inform ed by Christianity)	passionate entity	overpowered by passions.	(i) to incline to moderation. and temperance (ii) laws governed by God.
Realism.	governed by scientific laws in the form of heridity and environment.	product of heridity and environment.	victim of heridity and environment	(i) to seek right for self- fulfillment . (ii) laws of heridity and environment.
Expressions im.	governed by psychological laws.	guided by psychological forces.	victim of psychological forces	(i) not clear . (ii) psychological laws.
Epic Theatre.	Governed by social and historical laws.	product of social and historical forces.	victim of social and historical conditions	(i) eradication of social evil/problem . (ii) social and Historical laws.
Tragicomedy.	Governed by involuntary processes of time.	dispassionate and moving with the flux of time .	victim of involuntary processes of time	(i) clearly no. (ii) involuntary processes of time.
Theatre of the Absurd.	Uncomprehensibly absurd.	Stupefied and bewildered by the absurdity of nature.	cut off from transcendental roots.	(i) not clear. Some clearly no. (ii) non-existence of a transcendental reality.

The common feature of all these forms of Drama, namely the tragic nature, has been explained variously by various scholars such as Hoy, the Deers, Schopenhauer, Lawson and others. Self knowledge' (Deer, **et.al.**, 1975 : 3 and Hoy in **Bamet**, et.al., 1981 : 770) discussed in the earlier **section (1.1) is the key concept in the explanation of the tragic nature of both Deers and Hoy.** But the Deers identify three different levels of lack **of** self knowledge. In the words **of** the Deers,

"..**a** man's sense of his identity is deeply dependent not only on his knowledge of himself but on his perception of his relation ship to his society and to the universe" (1975:2).

In other words, the self knowledge is in the form of 0) who am **I**? (ii) who am **I** to the other selves? and (iii) who am **I** in nature? The tragedy experienced by the self in Drama, is shown by the Deers, to be rooted in the lack of self knowledge at all these three levels. For example, the Deers note that Oedipus is not sure whether he is governed by passion or by the reason. **Similarly, in A Doll's house.** Nora does not know her actual identity in relation to her family. Here, the Deers say that family is a metaphor for nature and the universe. Deers' analysis implies that she lacks self knowledge in terms of her relation to nature and the universe.

Apart from the concept of self knowledge' two other concepts, namely, '**conflicts**' and 'misfortune' used by Lawson and Schopenhauer respectively, are particularly helpful in understanding the tragic nature of the self in Drama. According to Lawson,

'The essential character of drama is social conflict in which the conscious will is exerted: persons are pitted against other persons, or individuals against groups, or groups against other groups, or individuals or groups against social or natural forces" (in Dukore, **1974 : 880-1**).

It may be noted that the conflicts mentioned above by Lawson can be basically classified into two kinds, namely, the self (individually or in groups) in conflict with others selves (either individuals or

groups) and the self (individually or in groups) in conflict with nature. The examples of these two kinds of conflict are abundant in Drama. Nora (in A Doll's House), who **experiences** conflict between what she expects her husband to be and what he actually is, can be seen as an example of a self that experiences conflict with another self. Similarly, Oedipus, who considers himself a saviour of Thebes, but who is condemned as its destroyer by nature (fate), is an example of the self that experiences conflict with nature.

The two kinds of conflicts, namely, conflict with other selves and conflict with nature correspond exactly to two of the three levels of self knowledge recognized by the Deers, namely, the lack of knowledge of self about its relation with others and the same with nature. The view of Lawson and the Deers put together, leads to an idea that lack of knowledge of one's relation with others causes one's conflict with others and the same with nature causes conflict with nature. The other level of lack of self knowledge mentioned by the Deers, namely the lack of knowledge of oneself, also can, on these lines, be expected to be causing a conflict, namely, conflict with oneself. In fact, the Deers talk about such a conflict with an illustration of Othello. They note that Othello sees the battle of two selves within **himself**: A

"Christian self that he has come to understand too late and a pagan self that has proved treacherous both to him and to Venice. In his final speech he tells the parable of a Christian slaying a **Turk - of one self destroying the other**" (1975:158).

Schopenhauer, who uses the other key concept for the explanation of the tragic nature in Drama, namely, misfortune, also does his analysis through a three fold structure. Giving examples from Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, he talks about the '**three** causes of misfortune': The misfortune (i) caused by **self's** own wickedness as in the case of Richard III, **Iago** in Othello, Shylock in the Merchant of Venice, Franz Moor (in The Robbers of Schiller), Phaedra in the play of same name by Euripides, Creon in Antigone; (ii) caused by '**blind fate**' as is the case in Oedipus

Rex and Romeo and Juliet; or(iii) caused by other selves (in Dukore, 1974 : 517). Though this conclusion arrived at by Schopenhauer is based on his study of Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, this may be seen to be applicable even to modern Tragedy and Tragicomedy. The characters such as Nora, Oswald, Julie, Jerry, Berenger and others, who have been discussed above, may also be seen as experiencing the threefold misfortune mentioned by Schopenhauer. However, as can be seen from the above discussion, the third kind of misfortune which the self experiences, i.e., the misery resulting from 'fate' is depicted differently by different dramatists depending upon their respective **worldviews**. If in Ibsen, 'fate' appears in the form of heredity and environment, in Brecht, it appears in the form of social conditions and so on.

Incidentally, **Schopenhauer's** three causes of misfortune are also related to the **same** three levels as those of self knowledge and conflicts discussed above: one's own self ("own wickedness"), other selves ("others"), and natural forces (in the form of '**blind fate**').

Apart from the concepts of self knowledge, conflicts and misfortunes mentioned above (see table 2), there is another notion through which the tragedy in Drama can be understood. It is the notion of the 'urges' of the self. A careful analysis of the discussion on different forms of Tragedy done in the earlier sections indicates that the action of the self presented in these forms of Drama, quite often, revolves around the '**urges**,' or more precisely, the instincts of sex and power. For example, ambition in Macbeth (1.2.2) revolves around the urge for power. Similarly, jealousy in Othello (1.2.2) and revenge in Medea (1.2.1) revolves around the urge for the opposite sex. From this point of view, even the issues of conflicts and misfortunes discussed above, can be seen to be centered around the urges for sex and power alone. In other words, the above analysis may be restated as - it is in the process of striving for sex and power that the characters experience conflicts and '**misfortunes**.' For example, Othello and Julie experience conflicts and misfortune as they strive for the opposite sex. Similarly, Macbeth experiences conflicts and misfortune as he strives

Table 2.Three theories of threefold tragic **nature** of Drama.

Theorist.	source of tragedy .	Threefold structure .	Example .
Deers	lack of self-knowledge	(i). knowledge of himself. (ii). knowledge of one's relation with society (iii). knowledge of one's relation with universe or nature.	Oedipus in Oedipus the King Nora in A Doll's House. Nora in A Doll's House.
Lawson.	conflicts.	(i). conflict with one self (ii). conflict with other selves. (iii). conflict with nature.	Othello in Othello. Nora in A Doll's House. Oedipus in Oedipus the King.
Schopenhauer	misfortunes	(i) caused by one's own wickedness . (ii) caused by others. (iii). caused by 'blind fate' or nature.	Creon in Antigone. Oswald in Ghosts. Oedipus in Oedipus the King

for power.

In fact, the analysis of the various forms of Drama reveals an urge in the self to get over these conflicts and misfortunes also. Based on the three kinds of conflict mentioned above, even the urge to get over the conflicts can be classified into three types, namely, conflict free identity, conflict free relation with others and conflict free relation with natural forces. The third one can also be called as an urge for natural order or moral order.

The examples for these three urges can be shown in Drama. The urge for a conflict free identity **is seen** in the case of Nora (1.2.3) who slams the **door** on her previous identity as a doll in order to become a true 'human being' (in Deer, et.al., 1975 : 217); a conflict free relation with the other selves, in the case of Nora again, who urges for a **'true marriage' with** her husband (1.2.3); and an urge for a conflict free relation with the natural forces' can be seen in the case of Oedipus (1.2.1). Oedipus' agony can, in fact, be seen as his agony **out** of his conflict with natural forces and all the attempts by him in the play are in the form of trying to overcome this conflict.

The urge to overcome misfortune can be seen in Oedipus, **who** tries to escape his misfortune, in the form of the killing of the father and marrying the mother, destined to him by the fate (Sophocles in Deer, et.al., 1975 : 40); in Nora who tries to avoid the misfortune in the form of the breaking up of her relation with her husband (Ibsen in Deer, et.al., 1975 : **Act 2**) and so on.

Thus, it can be seen that parallel to the perennial search for self fulfilment that the Deers identify, there is a perennial search for the fulfilment (in the sense of the attainment) of urges like the urge for sex and power, the urge for a conflict free identity, the urge for a conflict free relation with others, the urge for natural order and the urge to be freed from the threefold misfortune, by the self, through out the history of Drama.

Whether there is a relation between these two searches, namely, the search for the fulfilment of the knowledge of 'who am I?' and the search for the fulfilment of the urges, is not clear from the examples from the Drama reviewed here, i.e., whether (i) self realization leads to the fulfilment (in the sense of the attainment) of the urges or (ii) the search for self fulfilment is the search of the self for the fulfilment (in the sense of the attainment) of its urges, is not clear.

The tragedy in Drama can also be explained as an ultimate failure in the fulfilment of these urges. In the plays discussed above (1.2), it may be seen that either (a) the urge is not attained at all (for example, Oedipus [1.2.1] does not attain liberation from misfortune, Nora [1.2.3] does not attain a conflict free relationship, Harriet [1.2.2] and Berenger [1.2.7] the order, Willy [1.2.4], power or money); or (b) the fulfilment of the urge, especially in the case of sex and power is not ultimately retained (for example, Othello [1.2.2], though gets the hand of Desdemona, ultimately loses her and similarly Macbeth [1.2.2], though achieves power, it makes no sense, as he, later, dies in the hands of Macduff).

The causes for the failure in the fulfilment of the urges by the selves depicted in the various forms of Drama, can be understood, on the basis of the description in these plays, as follows: Othello fails in his urge for achievement of a relation with Desdemona because of his jealousy (1.2.2). Macbeth is unable to fulfill his urge for moral order since passion or ambition for power overpowers him (1.2.2). Similarly, Hamlet has a desire to establish moral order by 'setting' [things] right¹ in Denmark (ll.v. 190-198, 275-283). But his inaction which results from confusion prevents him from fulfilling this urge (1.2.2). The same is the case with Berenger in Rhinoceros and The Killer. Both the plays mentioned above show how Berenger has the urge for the natural order, but he fails in his attempts, because he is confused, his confusion, in turn, resulting from a lack of faith and so on (1.2.7). Similarly, in The Killer, Berenger's urge for moral order is subdued by his

ignorance, confusion and so on (1.2.7). **Similar** is the case with Nora (1.2.3) and others, whose urge for a conflict free identity and conflict free relation remains **unattained**, because of the presence of similar qualities.

From the above analysis, it may be seen that the self is depicted as being 'bound' to certain qualities such as ambition, illusion and confusion, identified above, as the causes for the **self**'s failure in getting over the **various** conflicts and misfortunes. **If**, in Greek tragedy, the self is depicted as bound' to **Hubris** or **Hamertia**, in Elizabethan **Tragedy** and **Expresssonism**, it is portrayed as being bound to the passions, in Chechov and the Theatre of the Absurd, **it** is (mostly) shown to be bound to insensitivity and inaction or meaningless action. Similar is the case with the self in other forms of Drama as well. In fact, Tragedy and Tragicomedy can be differentiated, to some extent, based on the depiction of the predominance of bondage of the self to passions and **inaction/insensitivity**, respectively, in these **forms**. Though the characters such as Macbeth, the tramps in Waiting for Godot, Berenger in Rhinoceros and The Killier, are often depicted as showing a strong urge to get liberated from these qualities to which they are bound, they can not do so, as they are overpowered by **them**.

In each form of Drama, the urges of the self, its striving for the fulfilment of the urges and its failure or ultimate loss of the fulfilment of the urges, is presented within the framework of certain laws of nature or forces of determinism (see table 1). Thus, each form of Drama instructs how a given set of forces of **determinism**, act upon a particular kind of self. Whereever the instruction is considered to be in the form of telling what to do, as is done by Pierre **Comeille** and John Dennis (1.2.1 and 1.2.2), it may be said that the play instructs the individuals to be liberated from the qualities to which the **self** is bound. When it is believed that the gods control the universe, as in Greek Drama, the liberation from passions which break the rules of these gods, can be seen to be the instruction suggested as a solution for the failure of the fulfilment of the urges by the self

(1.2.1). When it is believed that the causes for the failure are social in nature, as in Brechtian Drama, then the prescription can be seen to be the attainment of liberation from the social evil through social reform (1.2.5). In this way, different forms of Drama can be seen as inferring different kinds of liberation from different qualities as a prescription for the attainment of self fulfilment and the fulfilment of the urges.

1.4. Search for self fulfilment as essential for Drama.

The fact of all 'serious' Drama in the west remaining Tragedy, **can not** be inferred as an indication of viewing nature as tragic by the authors of these serious' plays. It can, **at the most**, be seen as a choice of these authors, and it can be safely be said that these authors rather chose to depict only those selves (probably among the selves observed by them) who 'lack self knowledge and fail in self fulfilment'(1.1) or in the language of bondage to qualities and fulfilment of the urges, only those selves which are bound to certain qualities coming in the way of their fulfilment of the urges. Drama's not presenting selves successful in self fulfilment can thus be seen to be **only** out of choice and need not be inferred as the non-recognition of the possibility of such **selves**

As mentioned above, many Dramatists like Ibsen, Miller, Brecht, Esslin and others provide justification for the presentation of (or, rather, choice of) tragic characters and find a positive element in such presentation (or choice). Eugene O'Neill says that,

"The noblest is eternally the most tragic. The people who succeed and do not push on to a greater failure are the spiritual middle **classers**. Their stopping at success is the proof of their compromising insignificance. How petty their dreams must have been| The man who pursues the mere attainable should be sentenced to get it - and keep it. Let him rest on his laurels and enthrone him in a **Morris** chair, in which laurels and **hero** may wither away together. Only through the unattainable does man

achieve a hope worth living and dying for - and so attain himself. He with the spiritual guerdon of a hope in hopelessness, is nearer to the stars and the rainbow's foot." (as quoted in **Bamet**, et.al., 1981 : 307).

If O'Neill justifies the presentation of failing self as a presentation of a heroic self which "pursues the unattainable," Miller looks at this choice as a method of exploration of the limits of forces of determinism, which cause the failure of a self. He connects this presentation of newer and newer types of failing self in later and later forms of Drama, which for him is a method to explore newer and newer laws of nature, to man's general enquiry **about** the laws **of determinism** and says,

'The history of man is a ceaseless process of overthrowing one determinism to make way for another more faithful to life's changing relationships' (1957 : 54).

For Miller, this process of overthrowing one determinism after another, is true for Drama too and this process has to be essentially ceaseless. Arthur Miller goes to the extent of saying that once a final answer is found in this search, Drama would cease. He says,

"Determinism, whether it is based on the iron necessities of economics or on psychoanalytic theory seen as a closed circle, is a contradiction to the idea of drama itself as drama has come down to us in its fullest developments. The idea of the hero, let alone the mere protagonist, is incompatible with a drama whose bounds are set in advance by the concept of an unbreakable trap. Nor is it merely that one wants arbitrarily to find a hero and a **victory**" (1957 : 54).

These words of Miller seem to be able to bring out the spirit behind the history of Drama being the individual's perennial search for self fulfilment."

End notes:

1. It may be noted that heredity and environment, as factors of determinism, are limited to only the realist plays of Ibsen, especially the plays of Ibsen discussed here. The other plays of Ibsen might have other such factors. The choice of plays of **Ibsen** is only for the convenience of general discussion of changing factors of determinism from one major form to the other form of Drama. The same is the idea behind the choice of only a few plays of other playwrights.

2. Miss Julie is generally treated as a Naturalistic (Realistic) play. But it may be noted that scholars like the Deers have noted in Miss Julie the depiction of subjective states of the self (the Deers, 1975 : 267-8), which is the characteristic of Expressionistic plays.

3. The discussion on Drama might not have been exhaustive, in the sense that some forms of Drama **might** have missed the attention. But, it goes without saying that exhaustive coverage of plays was not intended in this discussion. The analysis is based on the generalizations and theorizations already made by well known theorists of Drama and Dramatic critics like the Deers, Lawson, Schopenhauer, and Esslin among others, who based their generalizations only on some significant plays. Though there is a part of the analysis substantiated directly from the plays, sometimes not cited by these theorists, even these plays are selected only from among the most popular representatives **of** the most well known forms of Drama.

Chapter 2.

Natya as a theatre of self fulfilment : two kinds of *Natya* presenting two kinds of self fulfilment

2.1. The need to see *Natya* in the background of its worldview.

After analyzing the history of Western Drama from the point of view of self and self fulfilment this chapter shall take up the issues of self and self fulfilment with regard to the plays in Sanskrit literature.

Just as the Drama of the West plays in Sanskrit literature also have been thoroughly discussed from several different points of view in the past literature. As already mentioned in the introduction, in the English literature on Sanskrit plays, these plays have been referred to as **Drama**.¹ Indian writers in the regional languages and Sanskrit used words like '*drśya Kāvya*,' '*nataka*,' and '*nūpaka*' while referring to these plays. The poetics of these Sanskrit plays cover even *śravya Kāvya-s* (audible poems, i.e., poems meant to be read **out/recited** for the **audience**).¹ All these works of poetics trace the origin of their discussion to the *Natya Śāstra* (2nd.cen B.C), the author of which is referred to as Bharata. The *Natya Śāstra* refers to its subject matter, which, in the language of the later works of poetics is, *drśya Kāvya* (visible poem), as *Natya*. Thus, it can be seen that it is more appropriate to consider all these Sanskrit plays as scripts for a kind of theatre being referred to as *Natya* in the *Nāṭya Śāstra*.

Interestingly, Bharata also talks of *anukaranam* or imitation as the essential nature of *Natya* just as Aristotle recognizes **mimicism** as the essential nature of art (including Drama). For Bharata, *Natya* is '*lōkavrttānukaranam*' (*Natya Śāstra* I.112) - **imitation** of the way the World runs (*lōka* = world; *vrtta* - activity; *anukaranam* = imitation). Either based on similarities of this type, or simply on account of *Natya* being a theatre like Drama, scholars hastened to call Sanskrit theatre as **•Drama**' (for example,

Shastri, 1961 : 11, S.K.Dey as quoted in Singal, 1977 : 44, Singal, 1977 : 32, Raghavan, 1975 : 103, and Raghavan, 1975 : 52) (also see 2.6.3) and consider Bharata's discussion as a discussion on Sanskrit **Drama**.' But very rarely scholars like **Tarfekar (1975)** (who maintains the word '*Natya*' to some extent in his discussion on the *Nāṭya Śāstra*) have recognized the need to maintain the distinction of the word *Natya*. Strangely, even Tariekar slips into translating *Natya* as Drama in the course of his further writing. What has missed the attention and emphasis in most of the past English literature on the *Nāṭya Śāstra* is the bottom line : just as different forms of Western Drama are to be placed in the broader cultural framework of the respective times, Sanskrit plays and Bharata's discussion of classical Sanskrit theatre are to be placed in the cultural **mileau**, of which these works were products. The forthcoming analysis shall show the essentiality of this view of placing the forms of theatre in their respective cultural backgrounds, by showing the problems arising due to the absence of such a view.

Bharata, in his *Natya Śāstra*, very clearly emphasizes that *Natya* follows the Vedic worldview in its imitation of nature. He called his subject **matter as *Natya Vēda*** (*Natya Śāstra* 1.16),² Abhinavagupta, who wrote a commentary called *Abhinavabhāratī* on the *Natya Śāstra* (in Bharata, 1994 : 6) and other traditional authors of poetCS such as **Dhananjaya** (*Daśarūpakam* 1.4), Simhabhupala (*Rasāmava Sudhākara* 147-48) among others and the Sanskrit poets such as Kalidasa, who write within the Vedic framework of ideas, accept the view put forth by Bharata that *Natya* is a Vedic art. This can be further evidenced in the forthcoming discussion from time to time.

Recognizing such a basis of Vedic worldview in *Natya* helps arriving at an answer to problem of the most conspicuous differences between Drama and *Natya*, namely : all serious Drama is Tragedy, while mainstream *Natya* is a ***subhānta*** (happy ending) play; philosophies of different forms of Tragedy change from time to time, while the **philosophy** of *Natya* remains without changing.

One of the probable reasons for the absence of the analysis of Bharata's work from the point of view of

Vedic principles in the past literature may be that he does not overtly use such principles in his elucidation of *Natya*. The Vedic principles in his elucidation are indicated by certain usages and explanations found in his book. When analyzed in the light of these principles propounded directly and elaborately in certain works of Vedic literature like the *Bhagavat Gita* (hereafter *Gita*) and *Itihāsa-S* (legendary mythologies) like the *Mahabharata*, these usages and explanations can be seen to be perfectly fitting into the Vedic worldview elaborated in these works. Even the authors of Sanskrit plays (scripts for *Nāṭya*) were learned in Vedic literature and their works abundantly reflect such knowledge.

For example, in his introduction to *uttam Rama Caritam* of Bhavabhuti, M.R.Kale writes,

"Bhavabhuti had acquired thorough proficiency in the various branches of knowledge which then formed the usual curriculum of Brahmanic study. He gives proofs of his vast erudition in the course of his works. He had mastered the Vedic lore, the six systems of philosophy, **grammar**, rhetorics, &c. &c. His knowledge of the Yoga philosophy he displays in **Mal** - Madh. (Act V.) and in Mv (Act III.). That he was familiar with the literature of the Upanisads is shown by his references to the doctrine of **Vivarta** in more than one place in the Uttar (III.47; IV.15), by his description for the *Vairaja Lotos* (II.12) and by his allusion to the **Asura Lokas** (Act IV. p103)" (1982 : 16). (**Mal** Madh = *Mālatī Mādhava*, Mv = *Mahāvira Caritam* Uttar = *Uttam Rama Caritam*).

While discussing Kalidasa also, Kale says,

"......His works bear further testimony to his considerable acquaintance with the Vedas, the philosophy taught by the Upanishads, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Puranas, the systems of Sāṅkhya Yoga and *Vedānta* as propounded by Bādarāyana, Medicine, and the rudiments of Astronomy" (in Kalidasa, 1969 : 11).

Similar comments are often found made about the different authors of Sanskrit **plays**

Thus, it can be seen that the sources of Vedic **worldview** can safely be used to talk about the **worldview** underlying both the Nāṭya Śāstra and the **Sanskrit** plays. With this understanding the usages and explanations from the *Gita* and other sources will be cited from time to time in the forthcoming discussions.

2.2. The story of the origin of Nāṭya Śāstra as a key to its worldview.

2.2.1 Self in Nāṭya under the control of its own actions.

One of the most important Vedic principles in *Natya* is the law of *karma*. Varadapande, a modern scholar, in his book Religion and theatre, recognizing the significance of the law of *karma* says,

'The law of *Karma* - *Karma Siddhānta* - has deeply influenced Indian **playwrights**. On more than one occasion Bharata clearly states that the *karma* of people is the basic theme of the drama [sic]. It narrates actions of men [*narāṇam karmasanshrayam*], it depicts his various acts [*karmāṇi vividhāni cha*]. 'I have created this science of dramaturgy taking into consideration the *karma* of the people, their deeds and their emotions,' says Bharata. It is no wonder that the entire course of Indian drama [sic] [Sanskrit] was governed by the law of *Karma*. The plots of the classical Indian plays are governed by the tenets of this all-pervading religion - philosophical **theory**' (1983 : 3).

Abhinavagupta **summarizes** the law of *karma* depicted in *Natya* as *śubhakārinaha subham phalam*; *aśubhakārinaha aśubham phalam* : Those who perform **auspicious** actions get auspicious results, and those **who** perform inauspicious actions get inauspicious results' (in Bharata, 1994 : 33). According to him the auspicious actions are the actions based on moral order in tune with the laws of nature and inauspicious actions are the actions which are against the laws of nature. He reveals this idea as he elaborates the law of *karma*. He says, actions following *dharma* bring auspiciousness (*subham*) and hence happiness (*sukham*) and actions against *dharma* result in inauspiciousness (*aśubham*) and hence

unhappiness (*duhkham*) (in Bharata, 1994 : 33). The term *dharma* is commonly understood to be representing morality. But the broader, in fact, fundamental and etymological meaning of the word *dharma* is natural law or natural order. The *Mahabharata* (XII.109.11) gives the definition of *dharma* as *dharanat dharma iti āhuhuldharmēna vidhrtaha prajāha* - *dharma* is called by that name because it sustains the individuals. In this sense *dharma* means the natural order that sustains the selves who follow this order. Often, the word *dharma* in Vedic literature is interpreted as the duty ordained to human being in the *Vēda-s* and the *smṛti-s* (codes of conduct) in accordance with the *Vēda-s*. But it should be noted that the idea, here, is that the *Vēda-s* are revelations of natural order. Hence, following the *Vēda-s* is to follow the order which sustains nature. Thus, the law of *karma*, according to Abhinavagupta, is that actions in consonance with the nature sustaining laws revealed in the *Vēda-s* breed happiness and those against such laws, unhappiness.

In fact, Abhinavagupta notes this principle while commenting upon a story in Bharata's *Natya Śāstra*. This story is one of the most crucial and key portions of the *Natya Śāstra* where the Vedic basis of the *Natya Śāstra* is clearly articulated. Not taking note of the true significance of this portion is one of the reasons for the non-recognition of the distinction of *Natya* as opposed to Drama, by the scholars mentioned above. Most of these scholars took this story to be merely a story of origin of *Natya* and considered the purpose of the story to be to attribute the Vedic sanctity through the means of a divine origin to *Natya*.

P.S.R. Appa Rao and P.Sri Rama Shastri, while recognizing this motive in the modern authors on *Natya Śāstra*, say,

" The divine nature of *Natya Śāstra* has been interpreted by them as only a means of providing a respectable social status to actors, musicians and dancers since they were at one time relegated to a very low order of society" (1967 : 14).

But this story serves lot more serious purposes than such a simplistic one. This story, in fact,

articulates in a narrative **form**, the nature and purpose of *Natya*, apart from many other crucial issues of *Natya* going to be discussed in the forthcoming sections of this **work** (2.5, 2.6.1 & 2.8). This significance is recognized by the authors of poetics like Abhinava, who look at this story as meant to reveal the **principle of karma** incorporated in *Natya*.

2.2.2. The story brings out the basis of law of actions of *Nāṭya*

According to the Hindu mythology time is cyclical and runs in the form of infinite cycles of cycles. Each cycle is divided into four *yuga-s*, namely, *krta yuga*, *treta yuga*, *dvāpara yuga* and *kali yuga*. In the beginning, i.e., in *krta yuga* there is perfect order, peace and happiness as all people of that era follow *dharma* (the laws of nature revealed in the *Vēda-s*) perfectly. In each of the succeeding *yuga-s* people become increasingly immoral and do not follow their duty (*dharma*) as prescribed in the *Vēda-s*. The Hindu mythology holds that *dharma* stands on four legs (*pāda-s*) in *krta yuga*, on three legs in *treta yuga*, on two legs in *dvāpara yuga* and on one leg in *kali yuga* which is the present age. That is to say that the people's adherence to *dharma* in each of the *yuga-s* is hundred percent seventy five percent fifty percent and twenty five percent respectively (*pada* also means a quarter).

The story under discussion occurred during the *treta yuga* when people acquired base emotions like lust, greed, jealousy and anger as they did not follow *dharma* (the moral order **prescribed** in the *Vēda-s*). Due to this they lead a life which was a mixture of both '**happiness** and **unhappiness**' (*sukhṭa duhkṭā*) (*Natya Śāstra* 1.9). (Abhinava, while commenting on this phrase, says that here the emphasis is on unhappiness). The rulers of the world (*īkapāla-s*) headed by *Indra* (whose duty is to look after the welfare of the world) were worried about this. They wanted a means by which people could be made to follow the *Vēda-s*. So they went to *Brahma* (the mythical god from the *Purāṇa-s* who is believed to be incharge of the creation of the world. He is said to have revealed the four *Vēda-s*, namely *Rik veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Vēda* and *Atharva Veda* at the beginning of the creation) and requested for a fifth *Vēda* (*Natya*

Śāstra I.12),³ one which is *kṛīḍanīyakam*, playable, i.e., entertaining and which could both be seen (*dṛśyam*) and also be heard (*śṛavyam*) (*Nāṭya Śāstra* I.11). Upon the request of the *lōkapāṇīya-s* (rulers of the world), *Brahma* decided to create *Natya* (theatre - which is both 'seen' and 'heard')

Brahma created *Natya* by taking various elements from the *Vēda-s*, such as speech (*paṭhya*) from the *Rk Veda*, song (*gīta*) from *Sāma Veda*, histrionic expression (*abhinaya*) from the *Yajur Vēda* and *rasa-s* from the *Atharva Veda* (*Nāṭya Śāstra* I.17).⁴ After creating the *Natya*, *Brahma* handed it to *Bharata* with a request to compose *Natya* on the basis of his teachings. *Bharata* composed and produced a play called *Asura Parajaya* (the defeat of the demons) which depicts the defeat of the demons (*asura-s*) in the hands of the gods (*dēva-s*). The *asura-s* became angry at this depiction of their defeat in the hands of *dēva-s* in *Natya*. They tried to disrupt the performance with their magical power. When they were questioned by *Brahma* on the reason for their anger, they replied that they were angry because *Natya* was favouring the gods and was created to belittle them (*Nāṭya Śāstra* I.103-104).

In order to pacify the *asura-s*, *Brahma* revealed to them the nature and purpose of *Natya*. He said that it imitates the actions and emotions of all kinds of people. According to him, *Natya* portrays auspicious [*śubham*] as well as the inauspicious [*aśubham*] fate that befalls the gods and the demons' (*Nāṭya Śāstra* I.106).

Commenting on this story *Abhinava* holds that *Natya* is not interested in depicting particular characters of particular times but depicts the general workings of nature. He insists that when the demons perform auspicious activities, their attainment of auspicious results will be shown in *Nāṭya* (in *Bharata*, 1994 : 33-4). In other words, in *Natya*, the actions and not the actor that matter.

To show that *Bharata* meant that *Nāṭya's* purpose is to depict the laws of nature, *Abhinava* cites as an evidence the word *itihāsa* used by *Bharata* to describe *Natya* (*Nāṭya Śāstra* I.15). The word *itihāsa* means past happening (*iti* = this way, *hā* + *asa* = said to have happened). But there is another sense in

which the word *itihasa* is used. The *Itihāsa-s* (legendary mythologies) along with the *Puranas* (mythologies)⁵ are believed to be those **stories** which reveal the same laws of nature as revealed by the *Vedas*, but through narrative form. For example, the *Mahabharata* is called *Itihasa* and *Bhagavata Purana* and others are *Purāna-s*. The *Mahabharata* shows that *Pandavas* who followed *dharma*, attained the kingdom and *Kauravas* who did not follow *dharma*, were ruined (see Appendix 4). The law of actions revealed in the *Vedas* is thus exemplified in the *itihasa* called *Mahabharata*. According to Abhinava, it is in this sense that Bharata calls *Natya* as an *itihasa* (in Bharata, 1994 : 12). Since the story of creation of *Natya* begins with the description of *trētā yuga* as, atleast according to Abhinava, predominating in unhappiness due to not following *dharma* (moral order), it may be concluded that *Natya* is being considered to be giving happiness by motivating the individuals to follow *dharma*.

It may be noted that within the two parts of the law of *karma*, namely, the 'bad results' for bad 'actions' (actions which are not in compliance with the laws of **nature**) and 'good results' for good (nature - bound) actions,' the first one appears to be similar to the principle in Greek Tragedy that the self not complying with the rule of gods gets punished. But there is a difference. In Greek Tragedy, gods are directly mentioned, where as in *Natya*, it is the laws (*dharma*) which are given **prominence** and the gods governing them do not directly come into picture. In spite of this similarity in the depiction of punishment for **non-compliance** between *Natya* and Greek Tragedy, *Natya* maintains its distinction on account of the depiction of rewards for compliance, which is conspicuously absent in the Greek Tragedy. This is what makes the mainstream *Natya* as seriously happy ending. This difference is rooted in the structures of principle characters in the Greek Tragedy and *Natya*. In the Greek Tragedy, the character who receives punishment for non-compliance is the principle character. Whereas, in *Natya*, both the complying and **non-complying** characters are principle characters. But the complying one is the protagonist and the other, antagonist. Such a structure makes the play to be a story of the reward for compliance and thus a happy ending one, though it contains the punishment for the non-compliance also.

In fact, in maintaining that self is governed by certain laws determining the happiness and unhappiness of **self**, even the other forms of Drama are similar to *Natya*. But in Drama, a perennial probe into what these laws are, resulted in the depiction of newer and newer laws. Whereas in *Natya*, no such probe is evident on account of the ultimate laws of nature being considered to be once for all revealed in the *Vēda-s*. As seen in the articulations of dramatists like Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller quoted earlier (1.4), from the point of view of Drama, such a probe is thrilling and desirable. Whereas, from the point of **view of** *Natya*, such a probe is unnecessary and redundant

2.3. *Nāṭya* as a pleasurable revelation of Vedic worldview.

What *Natya* then does, what the *Vēda-s* do not, is to translate the Vedic revelation of laws of nature into artistic, narrative, **pleasurably** performative form. It is in this sense of revelation of Vedic laws, as mentioned earlier (2.2.2), that Bharata, as pointed out by Abhinava, calls *Natya* as *Itihāsa*.

As noted in the first chapter (1.1), scholars like Arthur Miller used the word '**teaching**' in this sense of '**revelation** of laws of nature.' The existence, in Drama, of the other kind of instruction, namely, instructing to do or not to do has always been controversial. For example, Aristotle himself does not talk about any such instruction from Greek Tragedy, whereas, certain commentators on Aristotle like **Comeille** have talked of the existence of such an instruction in Greek Tragedy (1.2.1). Again, during modern times, Tchechov clearly declared that he does not want to ask people to do or not to do this or that through his plays (1.2.6). Even Esslin has noted that the playwrights of the Absurd theatre also do not instruct in this sense (1.2.7). **In this context, it** may be noted that such **a** controversy about *Natya*, i.e., whether *Natya* teaches do's and don't's or not has never been there. It has always been taken for granted that one of the main purposes of *Natya* is to instruct people to do and not to do certain things. This is one of the fundamental facts about *Natya* that is conveyed through the story discussed

above. In this story, the predicament of the human being (belonging to the mythological period or state of human affairs called *trētā yuga*) has been discussed. It is mentioned in this story that *Nāṭya* was created to provide the solution of compliance with laws of nature for this predicament.

Bharata clearly says,

' *Natya* teaches the path of duty/morality [*dharma*] for those who are engaged in it; modes to seek love for those who are in its **persuit**, abstinence for those who are decadent, self control for those who are **desciplined**. It instills courage for those who are courageous, gives knowledge to those who are ignorant and it furthers the knowledge of the knowledgeable....' (*Natya Śāstra* I.109-10). Thus, *Natya* becomes an instrument in instructing everyone through the use of emotions (*bhāva-s*) and actions (*kriya-s*) (*Natya Śāstra* Unnumbered verse between I.113 and I.114).

From the above words of Bharata, it may be seen that in the poetics of *Natya*, teaching the path of duty/ morality itself involves teaching knowledge to the ignorant and **furthering** the knowledge of the knowledgeable. Thus, here, the two senses of the word 'instruction' mentioned above (1.1) merge into one.

Almost all the later authors of poetics of *Natya/Kavya* also considered teaching do's and don'ts as one of the fundamental features of *Natya*. However, according to the authors of poetics, the way *Kāvya/Nāṭya* gives instruction is much different from the way the *Vēda-s* and the *Purāṇa-s* do the same. *Vidyanatha*, in his *Pratāpa Rudriyam*, delineates this difference. According to him, the *Vēda-s* and the *Purāṇa-s* give the attainment of what is welfare (*hita prāpti*), i.e., happiness and frees one from the non-welfare (*ahita nyr̥tti*), i.e., misery. The same is given by *Kāvya/Nāṭya*. There is a difference though. The duty to be performed (*kartavya vidhi*) is given by poetry in a pleasant way (1970 : 3). *Vidyanatha* gives the analogy of a king, a friend and a beloved to show the difference between the instructions provided by the *Vēda-s*, the

Purāṇa-s and *Kavya/Nāṭya* respectively. If the *Vedas* give instructions like a king (*prabhu*), the *Puranas* do SO like a friend (*suhr̥t*), *Kavya/Nāṭya* gives instructions like a beloved (*kanta*) (*Pratapa Rudriyam* I.8).

Kumaraswamy, in his commentary on *Pratapa Rudriyam* of Vidyanatha, says that by thus instructing, the *Vēda-s*, the *Puranas* (and the *Itihāsa-s*) and *Nāṭya* generate action through *vidhi-s* (do's) and inaction through *nīśēdha-s* (don'ts) in their audience (1970 : 5). Kumaraswamy, developing the analogy given by Vidyanatha, interprets 'kinglike' as 'by mere word' (*vāṅmātrēṇa*), i.e., just through an oral order like a king (*prabhu*); 'friendly' as 'through providing examples' like a friend (*SUM*), i.e., by praising the actions of the good and condemning those of bad (in Vidyanatha, 1970 : 4). Elaborating upon the idea that *Kāvya/Nāṭya* instructs the moral order like a beloved (*kanta*), Kumaraswamy says, just as a lady who uses her charms to reveal her heart to her beloved, and thus makes him do what she wants and makes him reject what she doesn't like, poetry uses the literary devices such as figures of speech, to instruct do's and don'ts according to the *Vedas*, to its audience. Hence *Kavya/Nāṭya* is called *kāntā sammita* (beloved like). In other words, the instruction of *Kavya/Nāṭya* is similar to that of beloved, in that it is, like the latter, suggestive, curious and action motivating (in Vidyanatha, 1970 : 5).

Quite often, *Nāṭya* takes its plots from the *Itihāsa-s* and the *Puranas*. Bharata recognizes this in his *Nāṭya Śāstra* (unnumbered verse between I.119 and I.120). It can be seen that the playwrights too mostly depended on the *Purāṇa-s* and the *Itihāsa-s* for a selection of their themes. For example, the plots of the plays of Bhasa (who is considered to have lived before Bharata around 4th cen. B.C) such as *Dūta Vākya*, *Madhyama Vyāyōga* are taken from the *Mahabharata* and Of *Pratimā Natakam* from the *Ramayana*. Similarly, the plots of Bhavabhuti's plays such as *Mahavira Caritam* and *Uttara Rama Caritam* are taken from the *Ramayana*, and of Kalidasa's plays such as *Abhijñāna Śākuntalam* from the *Mahabharata*. Using the above mentioned analysis, it can be said that *Nāṭya*, as recognized by Vidyanatha and Kumaraswamy, converts the 'friendly' suggestion of *itihāsa*s and *Puranas* into a 'belovedly' suggestion.

Another significant similarity between *Natya* and Greek Tragedy is the conception of a well ordered **world**. Correspondingly, both *Natya* and Greek Tragedy have the manifestation of this conception in the form of a well made plot. The authors of poetics of *Natya*, in fact, give a special significance to the discussion of the issue of plot and deal meticulously with the various intricacies of it, like the stages of (the **protagonist's**) actions (*kāryāvasthā-s*), stages of goal attainment (*artha prkṛti-s*), junctures (*sandhi-s*) and sub-junctures (*sandhyarīra-s*) and so on. It may be noted, here, that the later forms of Drama, where the well ordered **concept of the world gradually** collapsed, **also** have corresponding collapse of the concept of a well ordered plot. This confirms that the structures of the plots in these forms of Drama and their corresponding visions of the world are mutually related. However, even this principle, especially in the case of *Natya*, has got to do with *Natya* being the narrative form presentation of a **worldview**.

2.4. Self in *Nāṭya* categorized into three kinds.

It has been discussed in the last chapter that Tragedy depicts the selves such as Oedipus (1.2.1), King Lear and Macbeth (1.2.2), who are bound to passions whose fulfilment they seek irrespective of their knowledge of the laws of nature and **experience** a reversal of situation. **Interestingly**, the *Gita* which is the elucidation of the Vedic worldview (underlying *Natya*, as mentioned above in 2.1) uses the word *rajas* in reference to the quality of being driven by sensuous desires (XIV.7) and more interestingly, adds that result of actions of a self governed by such a quality is 'like nectar in the beginning but in the end it is like poison' (XVIII.38).

Natya too presents the characters who are driven by the quality of *rajas*. The famous examples of such characters are: *Ravana* in *Mahāvīra Caritam* by **Bhavabhūti** who is depicted to be a mighty and scholarly king, but who out of arrogance and passion for women, abducts a woman and is killed by her husband; and *Duryōdhana* in *Vēṇīsamhāram* by Bhattanarayana, who is a valiant prince, who out of possessiveness for the kingdom denies his cousins their share in it and gets killed by them. It may be noted that like

in Greek Tragedy and Elizabethan Tragedy, in *Natya* too, such characters experience a reversal of situation. However, if the word *rajas* is used to describe the passionate nature of **the** chief characters of Drama, it may be said that if in Drama the selves who possess the quality of *rajas* appear only as the chief characters, in *Natya* they appear not only as chief characters but also as the **antagonists**

In the last chapter, it has been discussed that there are some other type of characters such as Willy in The Death of a Sales Man (1.2.4), and many of the characters in Theatre of the Absurd like the two tramps in Waiting for Godot and Berenger in Rhinoceros (1.2.7), who are totally confused about their identity and hence are bound to inaction, and are always suffering from stupefaction, confusion, delusion and **aimlessness**. In reference to such qualities, the *Gita* uses the word *tamas* (XIV.8) and interestingly notes that the result of actions in *tamas* is delusion from the beginning to the end (XVIII.39). Characters such as *Kumbhakarna* etc., found in the Ramayana, which is quite often a source of *Natya*, are good examples for such characters predominant in *tamas*. (Strangely, for some **intriguing** reason, most of the Sanskrit plays seem to be consciously, either avoiding the presentation of such characters, or refine these characters, when they present **them**. The nature of **tamasic** descriptions of these characters are found in the conversations of others referring to these characters, in some of the Sanskrit plays SUCH as *Mahāvira Caritam* [Act V]).

Thus, it can be seen that like Drama, *Natya* too shows that the selves who are bound to passion and inaction fail in the attainment of their goals. **But**, as mentioned in the last section, apart from depicting those selves who fail in the attainment of their goals, *Natya* presents even those characters who attain their goals by following the laws of nature. In the Vedic **worldview**, it is considered that only individuals with *sattva* succeed in attaining their goals by following the laws of nature. The *Gita* (XIV 6), while describing *sattva*, says that the self with *sattva* possesses knowledge and happiness. Since the *Gita* talks about knowledge in the sense of knowledge as revealed in the *Vēda-s*, and as the *Vēda-s* are considered to be revealing the laws of nature and the knowledge of the self, it can be inferred that *Gita*,

here, talks about the knowledge of the laws of nature and the knowledge of the self. Happiness mentioned in the *Sita*, can similarly be inferred to be the happiness **experienced** through the attainment **Of goals**. *Duśyanta* in *Abhijñāna Śākuntalam* by Kalidasa and *Rama* in *Uttara Rama Āṇṇam* and *Mahāvīra Āṇṇam* by Bhavabhūti, who are depicted to be constantly verifying their behaviour from the point of whether it is in conformity with the laws of nature as revealed in the *Vēda-s* or not, are examples of the characters who are driven by the quality of *sattva*.

In fact, Kalidasa defined *Nāṭya* as that which presents the characters who possess the three modes mentioned above. Using these concepts of *rajas*, *tamas* and *sattva*, Kalidasa, in his play *Mālavikāgnimitram* (I.4), says that *Nāṭya* gives aesthetic pleasure (*rasa*) by (imitating) the combination of mental states in the three *guṇa-s* (modes). Varadapande agrees with the fact that here, by the **three guṇa-s**, Kalidasa means *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. He says,

"When in his play *Mālavikāgnimitram* Kalidasa says that the drama [sic] depicts the human nature based on three fundamental qualities [*traiḥ guṇyōdbhava lōkacartam*], he is **clearly referring** to the principles of *raja*, **tama** and *satva* ..." (1983: 3).

Expressing the same idea, but using the expression **world** for the plane of existence of the selves driven by each of the three modes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, Bharata says that *Nāṭya* is the imitation of the nature Of all these three worlds - *trai lōkasyāsyā sarvasyā nāṭyam bhāvānukīrtanam* (*Nāṭya Śāstra* I.107). Avoidance and refinement of characters, from the *Itihāsa-s* and *Puranas*, who are driven by *tamas* is intriguing, especially for this reason; neither poets like Kalidasa, nor authors of poetics like Bharata stipulate any prohibition of such presentation of characters driven by *tamas*.

Now, it may be seen that among the characters of these three types, it is the characters with *sattva* that become the protagonists who comply with *dharma* and get rewarded. In the poetics of *Nāṭya*, the chief protagonist of a play is called *nayaka*, meaning the one who leads (action). (This word *nayaka* is

translated as hero in the English literature on *Natya* probably based on the similarity of the two concepts). Usually all the other protagonists work for him. The audience of *Natya* primarily sympathize with the *nayaka*.

Bharata (*Nāṭya Śāstra* Ch.24), Dhananjaya (*Daśarūpakam* Ch.2) and Vidyanatha (*Pratapa Rudriyam*, *nayaka prakaraṇam*) among others discussed the qualifications of a *nayaka*. These authors of poetics classified *nāyaka-s* into four types. They are : (i) *dhīra udātta* (composed and sublime); (ii) *dhīra udhdhata* (composed and aggressive); (iii) *dhīra lalita* (composed and delicate); and (iv) *dhīra Santa* (composed and detached). The word *dhīra* (composed) means composed or balanced in mind. This composure or balance of mind is considered to be a feature of *sattva* (*Gita* XVIII.26)

Some of these authors of poetics discussed some general qualities of a *nayaka*. For example, Vidyanatha in his *Pratāpa Rudriyam* (I.11-25) holds that the *nayaka* (of a *subhānta* play) should have the qualities of (a) *mahākūlīnata* - birth in a great lineage; (b) *aujvalyam* - literally an aura, but Vidyanatha uses this word to mean a pleasing personality; (c) *mahabnagyam* - great wealth; (d) *audāryam* - generosity; (e) *tāṣṣvinata* - shining (with fame); (f) *vaidaghdhyam* - burning (with dedication for duty); (g) *dhārmikatvam* - religiosity, (h) *mahamahitvam* - divine greatness; and (i) *pāṇḍityam* - erudition. All these qualities are seen as centered around *dharma* by Kumaraswamy (in Vidyanatha, 1970 : 9-11).

Thus, being a story of a character with *sattva* *guna*, *Natya* is bound to be a happy ending one.⁴ However, it should be noted here, that the concept of a happy ending as visualized by *Natya* is much different from the concept of Comedy in the West. As discussed in the first chapter (1.1 & 1.2.6), in the West the Comedy for the most part is satire and farce and, as mentioned there, the happy ending that it portrays, according to **Barnet and** others, is **mostly** the result of chance and therefore is less **plausible** (1972 : 11). The happy ending is not based on the eligibility of the characters. As quoted from Hoy in the last chapter (1.2.6), the characters in the Comedy of the West too, like the tragic characters, lack

self knowledge which makes the Comedy not much different from Tragedy. Further, **Barnet** and others hold that, the characters of comedy,

"...obey **society's** laws..not due to superior virtue, to the **triumph of reason** over will, to self discipline : rather, their obedience is due to a lower vision, or to timidity, and indeed sometimes to a **fear** of what resides in their own breasts" (1972 : 7).

Even in *Natya* there are certain types of happy ending plays like *prahasana-s* (*Natya Śāstra* XVIII. 101-106) which are similar to the satires and farces of Drama. But these kinds of plays are considered to be of lighter vein in **comparison** to mainstream Sanskrit plays whose happy ending nature is serious. The mainstream Sanskrit plays, as found in their analysis in Sanskrit poetics, reflected in the above mentioned qualities of a *nayaka*, show the characters who possess (self) knowledge and are virtuous. Due to their virtue these characters follow the laws of nature and attain happiness. It is in this sense that the auspicious ending (*śubhānta*) in *Natya* is different from the happy ending in the Comedy of the West.

Another point of focus in the distinction between *Natya* and Drama with regard to this issue of a hero is the successful end of the *nayaka* (hero) in *Natya* and tragic end of the same in Drama. For Miller, as shown earlier (1.4),

" The idea of the hero, let alone the mere **protagonist**, is incompatible with a drama whose bounds are set in advance by the concept of an unbreakable trap" (1957:54).

Further, for him the depiction of a successful hero is the end of Drama, because, as mentioned in the same context, it stops the search for newer causes of **determinism**. Whereas in *Natya*, depiction of a successful *nayaka* (hero) is the thing that *Natya* should do, because *Natya* should instruct the audience about the positive results of the compliance with the laws of nature (revealed once for all in the *Vēda-s*) and provide models for the behaviour with such a compliance. Making this observation, **Vishwanatha**, in his *Sāhitya Darpana*, says that by depicting *Rama's* success, *Kavya* (including *Natya*)

instructs the audience to **follow dharma**. By showing *Ravana's* defeat at the hands **of Rama**, *Kavya* warns the audience to desist from similar behaviour. Thus, it makes the audience understand that happiness is possible when one follows the path *of dharma*, like *Rama* does, in obedience to his father's word and when one abstains from activities such as the desire for another man's wife, which is the mistake committed by *Ravana* (1992 : 9)(see Appendix 2).

2.5. Self fulfilment perceived in terms of innate urges.

2.5.1. Self fulfilment as the fulfilment of moral order, sex and power.

In the last chapter, **in** has been noted that Drama depicts selves who seek the fulfilment of their urges such as sex (relation with the opposite sex) **and/or** power (which also includes accumulation of wealth). For example, as noted earlier, Macbeth seeks power (12.2), while Othello and many other heroes of Drama seek sex (1.2.2). Interestingly, even in *Natya*, these basic urges seem to be the most significant among those pursued by the principle characters. For example, *udayana*, in *Ratnāvalī* by Harshadeva, is depicted as seeking both sex and power through the marriage with the *nāyika* (heroine) *Ratnavaii*, as well as the attainment of the **kingdom**. Similarly, *Duryōdhana* and *Bhīma*, in **Bhattachanarayana's** *Vēṇisamhāram*, are depicted as seeking power through the possession of the kingdom. It may be noted that the elements such as revenge and murder, which, as mentioned in the last chapter, are found in Drama (1.2) are found here also. In the case of Drama, the fact of these elements being centered around sex and power was not well recognized and was to be specially brought out in the analysis in the last chapter of this work. **In** the case **of** *Natya*, the endeavour of the chief characters being centered around sex and power is more **conspicuously** visible and has been well recognized by different authors of poetics. The two above mentioned basic urges of self, namely, the urge for sex and the urge for power have been given the name *kāma* (sex) and *artha* (power, literally wealth) in the Vedic **worldview** which is reflected in *Natya*. **In** Vedic **worldview**, these urges are considered to be innate for all human individuals and are categorized under *puruṣārtha-s* (*puruṣa* =

organism, here, human self. *artha* = urge). Though *kama* refers to desire for sensuous pleasure, in general, it refers to sexual urge, in particular. Vatsayana's *Kāmasūtra*, which defines *kāma* as pleasure obtained by self when the (five) senses dwell in the (five) sense objects (II.11), notes that *kama* refers to sexual pleasure in particular (II.12). It should also be noted that the most popular use of the word also is in reference to sex only. In the same way, though *artha* refers to wealth in the form of money, gold, land, cattle and so on, literally, the use of the word in the poetics of *Natya* shows that quite often, it is used in reference to the Sanskrit plays in which the theme is the attainment of kingdom by kings and princes. This makes the meaning of '*artha*' in these poetics as power.

In fact, 'auspiciousness' and 'happiness' mentioned earlier to be the rewards for compliance with *dharma* (laws of nature) by Abhinava (2.2.1), are very often defined in terms of attaining *artha* and *kama* only. The *Mahabharata* (XVIII.5.62), which, as mentioned above, is one of the sources of the Vedic worldview, expresses this view as it says that 'from *dharma* come *artha* and *kama* (*dharmaṃ arthasca kāmasca*). Following the laws of actions discussed earlier (2.2.1), this statement is also interpreted in the Vedic worldview as saying that *artha* (wealth) and *kāma* (sex) can be attained only by complying with the *dharma* (laws of nature). Interestingly, even the compliance with *dharma* (laws of nature), in the Vedic worldview, is also considered to be innately urged by the human being. This is why *dharma* is also recognized as one of the *puruṣārtha*s (urges of self) along with *artha* and *kama* mentioned above.

But it should be noted that according to the Vedic worldview and as seen in *Natya*, it is only the selves such as *Rāma*, having the quality of *sattva* (2.4) who manifest their urge for *dharma* (moral order in tune with the laws of nature), have/acquire the knowledge of *dharma* and follow it. It has been seen that in Drama too characters such as Macbeth, Hamlet, Berenger and others reveal their urge for natural order (1.3). But they can not fulfill this urge because it is submerged under the force of their passions and confusion (1.3). This can also be seen in *Natya*. The urge for moral order in the selves having the quality of *rajas*, such as *Ravana* and *Duryōdhana*, is suppressed by passions. (Similarly, the

urge for moral order in selves having the quality of *tamas*, such as *Kumbhakarna*, found in the sources of *natya* like the *Pāmāyana*, is totally submerged under qualities such as delusion, stupor and so on). As a result, these selves seek *artha* and *kama* without following *dharma* and fail in the attainment of these urges. Further, they experience misery and death which come about as a result of the performance of actions which disturb nature since they are done without following *dharma*. As mentioned above (2.2.1), Abhinava sees the misery resulting from **noncompliance** with the *dharma* (laws of nature) as part of the law of actions.

The most interesting and significant aspect of this innate urges model of human self is that the self and self knowledge incorporate in themselves the urges sought to be fulfilled and the modes of personality leading to either success or failure in the fulfilment of these urges. In other words, the existence of a self with 'knowledge' presupposes that (i) it is a *sattva* self, (ii) it knows its urges for sex and power, (iii) it knows its urge for *dharma* (natural order); (iv) it has the potential to fulfill sex and power through compliance with *dharma* (natural order); and (v) it succeeds in fulfilling its urges for sex, power and natural order. Thus, self fulfilment in the form of realizing its identity implies fulfilment of the urges by the self in the case of a *sattva* self. In the same way, failure in the fulfilment of urges like **sex**, power and order is both the cause and effect of lack of self knowledge. Thus, in this model, the link between self fulfilment in the **Deers'** sense and the fulfilment of the urges by self becomes clear unlike in the case of Drama where, as mentioned in the first chapter (1.3), this **link** has not been discussed.

As mentioned in the earlier section, the *nayaka*, the chief protagonist of *Natya*, is a character with *sattva*. Now, it can be said that this *nayaka* is a character, who seeks to fulfill his urges for sex and power, simultaneously fulfilling his urge **for dharma** (natural order), which means that he seeks to fulfill **sex** and power in compliance with *dharma* (order). In the same way, now, it can be said that the characters who, as mentioned in the earlier section, are presented as antagonists (i.e., characters with *rajas* and *tamas*), are those characters whose urge **for dharma** (order) is subdued under either passion or **ignorance/inertia**

2.5.2. Liberation : the fourth urge of the self.

Though the Sanskrit plays present the characters having *sattva* as experiencing happiness in the form of the attainment of *Tnarga*, what ought to be kept in mind, here, is the fact that according to the Vedic worldview, no self is entirely driven by only one of these modes. Each human personality has and is driven by all the three modes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which are mixed together. When the personality of a particular self is said to be driven by a particular mode, it only means, though the personality of that particular self is made up of all the three modes, it is predominated by that particular mode.⁹

The idea that the modes are always mixed in the personality implies that according to the Vedic worldview, though the selves which are predominated by *sattva* experience self fulfilment in the form of the attainment of *artha* and *kama* (and consequently happiness), they are not totally free from the experience of misery. This is because though they are predominated by *sattva*, their personality also possesses *rajas* and *tamas* which cause their misery. For this reason, their experience of self fulfilment is also mixed with misery.

It may be noted here that like Drama which shows the selves having an urge to become free from the misfortunes, the Vedic worldview also recognizes the fact that even the urge to get out of these miseries is innate in all selves. This is called the urge for *mōksa* (liberation) and is categorized as one of the *purusārtha-s* along with *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* mentioned above. But for the selves which are predominantly in the modes of *rajas* and *tamas* even this urge is unfulfilled due to the domination of passions and lethargy respectively. A situation similar to this has also been observed in Drama (1.3) where characters like Oedipus, Macbeth and Nora express their urge to be free from the misfortunes, but it is not fulfilled as their personality is predominated by ignorance and confusion.

According to the Vedic worldview, even the predominance of *sattva* in self is only a necessary but not sufficient condition to fulfill *moksa* (liberation). Overcoming all the three modes including *sattva* is described to be essential for *moksa* (*Gita* XIV.20). The individual who follows *dharma* experiences a predominance of happiness since there is a predominance of *sattva* in him (see the definition of *sattva* above). But this does **not** liberate the self totally from the miseries. In other words, attaining *artha* and *kama* within the norms of *dharma* can not in itself ensure *moksa*. *Moksa* is attained by **self** when it acts according to *dharma* but when it does not desire even the happiness which results from such actions. **The *Gita*** elaborates this rejection (of happiness) as rejection of sense pleasure (III.19)

The concept of liberation obviously presupposes a concept of bondage. The Vedic literature on liberation gives a special significance to this concept of bondage, and all human personality in this literature is discussed in terms of bondage. For example, **self** is considered to be bound by nature' (*prakṛti*) -including human nature- (*prakṛti*) and thus in turn to the three modes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which are born out of this nature (*Gita* XIV.5) and in turn to happiness (*Gita* XIV.6), passions (*Gita* XIV.7) and inertia (*Gita* XIV.8) and so on, which are the qualities of the three modes. It may be remembered that in plays like A Doll's House, being helplessly bound to something becomes a significant imagery. **In fact**, as mentioned in the first chapter (1.3), many of the characters in Drama can be shown to be strongly holding this feeling of a helpless bondage to something and a powerful urge to get out of this bondage.

Here lies another significant distinction of the Vedic worldview reflected in *Natya*. There are a considerably big number of Sanskrit plays such as Bhartrhari Nirvāḍam of Harihara Nayaka (see Appendix 1) and Prabodha Candrodāyam of Krishnamishra (see Appendix 2), in which the chief protagonist is depicted to be consciously striving to get over this bondage and in some cases succeeding in that endeavour. Vedic literature clearly discusses the possibility of such a liberation from bondage for self.

The latter (*uttara*) section of the *Vēda-s* dealing with this issue is called *Jnana Kānda* (the section of knowledge. *Jnana*= knowledge, *Kānda* = section) in contrast to the former (*pūrva*) section called *Karma Kānda* (the section of actions or rituals. *Karma* = action) which deals with the urges for *dharmā*, *artha* and *kāma* only (Vasudev Shastri Abhayankar in Apadeva, 1972 : 2). This section is also called *vedānta* (the essence of the *Vēda-s*) and *Upaniṣad-s* are considered to be meant to reveal this section of the Vedic knowledge. The *Brahma sūtra-s*, a book of aphorisms attributed to Vyasa is considered to be a summarization of the laws of nature revealed in the *Upaniṣad-s*. The *Gīta* is considered to be the conversational form presentation of this knowledge in which *Kṛṣṇa* instructs *Arjuna* in this knowledge and its relation to the *Karma Kānda*. In a prayer often appearing as a prelude to this book, *Kṛṣṇa*, who instructs *Arjuna*, is described as a cowherd boy who milked the cows of *Upaniṣad-s* and *Arjuna* as the calf who drank the milk (Bhaktivedanta Swami, 1989: 33). The *Upaniṣad-s*, the *Brahma Sūtra-s* and the *Gīta* are considered to be the *prasthāna traya*, the three major sources (of *Vedānta*).

From the point of view of the concept of self, this discussion on the concept of 'freedom of self from bondage' becomes extremely interesting because the literature on *vedānta* conceives a state of self free from bondage to 'nature' or three *guṇa-s* and their respective qualities. Vedic literature uses the word *ātman* for such a self, the reflexive and the third person form of the first person pronoun *āham* (=I) and thus, obviously, this can be best translated as self in English. In fact, it is in this sense, that the word self is more popular in English translations of Vedic literature. This concept of self (hereafter Self with capital S') provides a wonderful convenience in linking the concept of 'Drama,' and those plays of *Nāṭya* dealing with the thriving by the self to overcome the bondage. For, this concept of self leads to yet another kind of self knowledge, namely, the identification by self, of its state of freedom from the bondage to 'nature,' the three modes born out of it, and their respective qualities. The *Gīta* describes this self, i.e., Self as different from self which consists of the five senses, their seekings, mind, the sixth sense, and its seekings, all of which are posted in 'nature.' Thus, self fulfilment or the fulfilment of the knowledge of self as Self consists in keeping away from or rejecting the urges of all the six

senses including the five senses and the mind. Fulfilment or realization of this self knowledge can be seen to be nothing but the fulfilment of the urge to be liberated from the miseries (born out of bondage to modes or sense pleasures). Thus, here again, self fulfilment in the **Deers' sense** can be seen to be almost non-different from the fulfilment of one of the four innate urges by the self, namely, the urge to be **liberated**. It may be noted that no depiction of such a **bondage-free** state of self is found in Drama.

From the point of view of the **Vēdānta**, this state of self as Self is the most fundamental state of self and fulfilment of the self knowledge **of the self** as its being Self leaves no further necessity **for** any search for self fulfilment and thus is a total or perfect or complete and everlasting self fulfilment (*Gītā* VI.22). Though, in terms of the fulfilment of urges, this is the fulfilment of only one of the four urges, this is considered to be total fulfilment on account of its leaving no scope for further search for the fulfilment of any other urge whereas, the fulfilment **of dharma, artha and kama**, is partial fulfilment in the sense that it is the fulfilment of only three of the four urges. It is incomplete and hence partial on account of its leaving the need for the fulfilment of another urge, namely the urge for liberation.

The Sanskrit plays like *Bhartrhari Nivēdam*, and *Prabōdha Candrōdayam*, depicting the endeavour **of** self towards the fulfilment of its identity of Self can, in fact, be recognized to be forming a totally different sub genre of *Natya* altogether, in comparison to the plays discussed earlier, in which all the plots are the stories of endeavours of self to fulfill the urges for sex **and/or** power within the norms **of dharma**. In the poetics of *Nāṭya*, a word *trivarga* is used referring to the group of the urges for *dharma* (order), *artha* (power) and *kama* (sex) (for example, the *Agni Purāṇa* [as quoted in **Vishwanatha**, 1992 : 11], and **Dhananjaya** *Daśarūpakam* I.16). Using this word, it may be said that *Natya* can be categorized into *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Mōksa*. Though it is obvious that the word *Natya* without further qualifications refers to *Natya* in general, it has been used in reference to *Natya* for *Trivarga* only in the past few sections in this chapter because, the authors, discussed therein, did not take into account the distinction, **as is being**

done here. From now onwards, the word *Natya* without further qualifications refers to both *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Moksa* and whenever one of the categories among *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Mōksa* is referred, the word is used with further qualifications such as 'for *Trivarga*' and 'for *Mōksa*'.

In fact, this categorization can be seen to have its correspondance with and basis in the division of Vedic lore into *Karma Kanda* (which deals with *Trivarga*) and *Jnana Kanda* (which deals with *moksa*) itself. Vedic literature belonging to these two sections discusses the laws of nature (as revealed in the *Vēda-s*) from two different perspectives. If *Karma Kanda* identifies the happiness or misery, or in other words, success or failure in attaining sex and/or power as caused by compliance or non-compliance with *dharma*, *Jñāna Kanda* identifies the cause of happiness or misery as the presence or absence of self knowledge in the form of the identity of self as Self and thus the presence or absence of the fulfilment or realization of this self knowledge.

As mentioned earlier (2.3), the depiction of laws of nature in *Natya* is considered to be an alternative version to the same in the *Vēda-s*, and is considered to be meant for teaching people do's and don'ts. Vishwanatha, discussing this teaching aspect in terms of the *puruṣārtha-s* says that by depicting the success of Rama, *Kavya* instructs the audience to follow *dharma* to attain *artha* and *kāma* (1992 : 9). Obviously, Vishwanatha is talking here, about *Natya* for *Trivarga*.

In a similar vein, it may also be said that plays like *Bhartrhari Nivēdam* and *Prabōdha Candrōdayam* falling under *Natya* for *Moksa* teach to seek self knowledge in the form of self as Self. Though there is no evidence for the critical awareness of the authors of poetics about the distinction between the *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Moksa*, many of these authors have included *moksa* in the list of urges whose attainment is depicted in and thus instructed by *Natya*. For example, the author of the *Agri Purāna* (as quoted in Vishwanatha, 1992 :11), Dhananjaya (*Daśanūpakam* l.16) and his commentator Dhanika talk of *Trivarga* as the goal of *Natya* while Bhamaha (*Kāvyaalankāra* l.2) and Vishvanatha (*Sahitya Darpana* l.2) say

that *Natya* gives *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mōksa* (*caturvarga* - the group of four goals). Thus, it may be seen that the recognition of *Natya* for *Trivarga* as an alternative version of *Karma Kanda* section of *Vēda-s* and *Natya* for *Mōksa* as that of *Jñāna Kanda* of the same, can be seen to be having its basis in the poetics of *Natyakavya*.

2.6. Implications of sett analysis of *Nāṭya* for *rasa* theory.

2.6.1. *Santa* as a *rasa* related to the fulfilment of self's urge for liberation.

Another significant implication of this division of *Natya* into the categories of *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Mōksa* can be seen to be for the issue of *rasa*, one of the pivotal issues in the theory of *Nāṭya*. This is one of the areas where, as mentioned earlier, the insufficient consideration for the worldview underlying *Natya* has led to problems. As mentioned earlier, this has also led to the problem of wrong application of *rasa* to the plays of Drama. Before going to the discussion of these problems, it is pertinent to know certain basic notions of the concept of *rasa*.

Rasa literally means juice or sap. Bharata uses this word to refer to the aesthetic experience of the audience. Different poetics of *Natyakavya* described or defined *rasa* in different ways. The common idea of all these definitions is that *rasa* is the intense, sublime, blissful experience of an emotion (*bhava*) by a sympathetic audience (*sahridaya* = sympathetic hearted, *samajika* = member of a gathering) of a (*dr̥śya* = visible/*śravya* = audible) *Kavya* (poem).

Though Bharata does not define *rasa*, he enunciates that *rasa* is derived by the combination of a consistent emotion with other complementary emotions, physical movements, involuntary responses, characters and objects. The consistent emotion is called *sthāyī bhāva*. The characters and objects carry or intensify the relish and are called *vibhāva-s* (locative and provocative objects). The physical movements of the character/performer are called *anubhāva-s* (expressives). The involuntary

responses of the character/performer are called *sattvika bhava-s* (existential emotions). The transitory emotions are called *vyabhicari bhava-s* (divergent emotions) or *sancari bhava-s* (inconsistent emotions). Bharata's doctrine of *rasa* was *vibhāva anubhava vyabhicari bhava samyōgāt rasanisapattiḥ* : 'when *vibhava, anubhava* and *vyabhicārībhāva-s* combine (with *sthāyī bhāva*) *rasa* is effected' (Bharata, 1994 : 271).

All the available discourse by the authors of poetics of *Natya* is only an elaboration of this doctrine of Bharata on the subject. Almost all these authors observe that these components of *rasa* are nothing but the theatrical parallels (imitations) to the components of expression of emotions by individual in their everyday life. For example, Mammata says that when the elements of the day to day experience such as *karana* (causes), *karya* (effect) and *sahakārī-s* (supportive emotions) are represented in *Natya* they become *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyabhicari bhāva-s* (1995 : 89). Sriramachandrudu in his commentary on Mammata elaborates this idea as follows. The individuals in their association with others experience many emotions (*bhāva-s*). For example, a person may experience the emotion of love (*rati*) when he sees his beloved. The beloved becomes the cause (*karana*) for this emotion. The environment such as a beautiful setting, the presence of the moon and so on, add to enhance this emotion. As soon as the emotion is evoked in the person he reacts by making certain physical movements and other kinds of expressions. Since these expressions are born out of the emotion they are called effects (*kārya-s*). The individual also experiences certain transitory emotions which gives the appearance of the changes in the original emotion of *rati*. These are called supportive emotions (*sahakārī-s*) (1995 : 90).

The same actions and emotions, when imitated in *Natya* take on different names. For example, the emotion of love (*rati*) mentioned above, when experienced by the character in *Natya* is called *sthāyī bhāva* (consistent emotion). The beloved who is the cause of the manifestation of the emotion in the person (*karana*), in the parlance of *Natya* is called *vibhava* (locative object). The effects experienced by the person (*kārya-s*) in *Natya* art called *anubhāva-s* (expressives). The supportive emotions (*sahakari-s*) are called *vyabhicari bhāva-s* (divergent emotion) in *Natya*. The difference between the day to day

experience of emotions and the theatrical experience of them is that, all the emotions irrespective of their form in day to day life become positively enjoyable in their **theatrical form**, i.e., even those emotions like sorrow (*śoka*), terror (*bhaya*), and disgust (*jugupsa*) that are not desirable experiences otherwise become enjoyable **when** experienced in theatre. The authors of the poetics of *Nāṭya* observe that this enjoyability is because of the lack of existence of the ownership relations between the audience and the emotions, unlike in day to day life where such a relation exists between the individual and his emotions (Kulkarni, 1986 : 36).

Theoretically, all the numerous emotions of the individuals in their day to day life may occur in the theatrical **form**. It is probably to cite the fundamental elements of all these emotions that Bharata lists forty nine emotions. Significantly, only eight of them are stable emotions (*sthayi bhāva-s*) and are capable of being experienced as rasa-s. The eight *sthayi bhāva-s* are *rati* (eros), *hāsa* (humour), *śōka* (pathos), *krōdha* (anger), *utsaha* (enthusiasm), *bhaya* (terror) *jugupsa* (morbidity) and *vismaya* (wonder) (*Nāṭya Śāstra* VI.17). Corresponding to these eight *sthayi bhāva-s* Bharata lists eight *rasa-s*. They are *śṛṅgāra rasa* (the *rasa* of eros), *hasya rasa* (the *rasa* of humor), *karuna rasa* (the *rasa* of pathos), *raudra rasa* (the *rasa* of anger), *vira rasa* (The *rasa* of enthusiasm), *bhayanaka rasa* (The *rasa* of terror), *bibhatsa rasa* (The *rasa* of morbidity) and *adbhuta rasa* (the *rasa* of wonder) (*Nāṭya Śāstra* VI.15).

Whether only these eight *rasa-s* or more are possible became controversial. Apart from the eight *rasa-s* mentioned by Bharata, some authors of poetics accepted some other *rasa-s*. The prominent among these is *śānta* *rasa* (the *rasa* of tranquillity)⁰ (see Raghavan, 1975 : Ch VI, for a discussion on the other 'new' *rasa-s*). With the inclusion of *śānta* *rasa*, the number of *rasa-s* became nine and it is this number which is popular as the number of *rasa-s* and the word *nava rasa-s* (nine *rasa-s*) thus became a standard phrase and part of the day to day speech in all the Indian languages. Common students of poetics take this number as the standard number of *rasa-s* undoubtingly and always include *śānta* as one of the nine *rasa-s*.

But a critical review of the poetics of *Natyakavya* reveals that the addition of *santa* to the list of *rasa*-s mentioned by Bharata remained controversial for a very long time. It is this controversy which is the issue of concern here.

In fact, *santa* had been referred to as the *Navama rasa* (ninth *rasa*) (Mammata, 1995 : 133) probably to highlight its later addition to Bharata's original list. Udbhata is considered to be the first one who proposed *santa* as a *rasa* (Bhatta, 1996 : 88) for which emotion of *nivēda* (aversion to sensual gratification) is generally considered as the *sthayi bhava*. Anandavardhana and Abhinava among others, also accepted *santa* as a *rasa* (Raghavan, 1975 : 15-6).

But Dhananjaya, Dhanika and some others mentioned by Dhanika in his commentary of *Daśarūpakam* of Dhananjaya argue against according the status of *rasa* to *santa* (1993 : 226-230). Anandavardhana and Abhinava rejected such arguments and argued in favour of *rasa* status to *santa*.

One of the most prominent arguments by the critics against giving a status of *rasa* to *santa* is that, Bharata did not consider *santa* to be a *rasa* which is proved by the fact that he did not mention it in his list of eight *rasa*-s (Dhanika in Dhananjaya, 1993 : 227). Abhinava rejects the argument that Bharata did not consider *santa* to be a *rasa*. In his arguments in favour of *santa* *rasa*, Abhinava does a marvelous analysis of the *sthayi bhāva*-s of different *rasa*-s in terms of the *puruṣārtha*-s. This analysis is significant for the present study in view of its help in analyzing the concept of *rasa* from the view of self and its fulfilment. Here, Abhinava says that the *sthayi bhava rati* (which gives the experience of *śṛṅgāra* *rasa*) leads to *kāma* *puruṣārtha*, *krōdha* (which gives the experience of *raudra* *rasa*) leads to *artha* *puruṣārtha*, *utsaha* (which gives the experience of *vim* *rasa*) leads to all the *puruṣārtha*-s, *nivēda* (which gives the experience of *santa* *rasa*) leads to *mōkṣa* *puruṣārtha* and so on (in Bharata, 1994 : 280). He argues that just as the *bhāva*-s such as *rati* related to the *puruṣārtha*-s such as *kama*, when depicted on the stage, provide *rasa*-s

related to these *puruṣārtha*-s such as *śṛṅgāra*, the *bhāva*-s related to *mokṣa puruṣārtha* also, when presented on stage, can give a *rasa* that could be termed as *santa rasa*. This emotion of *mōkṣa puruṣārtha* is considered to be *nivēda* (aversion for sensual desires) resulting from *tattva jñāna* (knowledge of self as Self) (in Bharata, 1994 : 328-9). Then Abhinava brings the mention of the word *nivēda* by Bharata as the first word in his list of *sancārī bhāva*-s as an evidence for Bharata's accepting *santa rasa*. He argues that among the two meanings of the word *mrveda*, one, a temporary aversion for life resulting from frustration with poverty and so on, and; two, a permanent aversion for sense pleasure resulting from the knowledge of self as Self, only the first one can be a *sancari bhava* but the second is a *sthayi bhava* and Bharata might have kept both the meanings in mind and might have considered *mrveda* as the last of the *sthayī bhāva*-s and first of the *sancari bhāva*-s. Otherwise, a sage like Bharata believing in the principle of auspiciousness can not be expected to put an inauspicious thing such as a sad and mundane aversion for life at the beginning of a list (in Bharata, 1994 : 329).

Based on this *puruṣārtha* analysis, Abhinava cites Bharata's (*Natya Śāstra* XXVII.58) mentioning that *Natya* gives *mokṣa* to those who are unattached (to sense gratification) (in Bharata, 1994 : 334) as another evidence in support of his argument that Bharata accepted *santa rasa*. Even *sama* (tranquility/equanimity) mentioned by Bharata (*Natya Śāstra* I.108), which according to Abhinava is recognized as *sthayi bhava of śānta* by some, is one of the qualities of a *mōkṣa* seeking or *mōkṣa* attained personality according to the *Gīta* (V.29 & II.70 -71)." (See Raghavan, 1975 : Ch. IV, for other *sthayi*-s of *śānta rasa*).

Based on the division of *Natya* as *Natya for Trivarga* and *Natya for Mokṣa*, established in the earlier sections and the *puruṣārtha* analysis of *rasa* by Abhinava, it can now be seen that, the *rasa*-s mentioned by Bharata as a group and the *santa rasa* as different from that group, belong to these two different categories of *Natya* respectively (see table 4). This categorization of *rasa*-s based on the categorization of *Natya* probably helps in understanding the positions for and against *santa* as a *rasa* better. In other words, those who are opposed to a status of *rasa* to *śānta* might, in fact, have done so due to their

inability to recognize the distinction between the two categories and *śānta*'s domain in *Nāṭya* for *Mōkṣa* or might have rejected a possibility of a *Nāṭya* for *Mokṣa* itself.

Discussing the issue of **non-inclusion** of *santa rasa* in Bharata's list of *rasa*-s, G.H.Tarlekar, a modern scholar, approaches this issue differently and holds :

"The absence of *śānta* *rasa* plays would be a possible explanation of its **non-inclusion** in the number of *Rasas* given by Bharata" (1975 : 60).

This does not appear to be a satisfactory answer. In fact, one can not come to the conclusion, on the basis of any internal evidence in the *Nāṭya Śāstra*, that even the other *rasa*-s recognized by Bharata were arrived at based on the plays that were already available. For that matter, it is not the methodology of the *Nāṭya Śāstra* to base the discussion on the actual plays available. Hence to put forward any **argument** about the *Nāṭya Śāstra* through that methodology does not match with the approach of the book. It can not easily be assumed that plays falling within the framework of the **pusuit** of *mokṣa* were not produced before the *Nāṭya Śāstra* because the concepts like *mokṣa* were already available in scriptures like the *Upaniṣad*-s and other sources by that time. This can clearly be evidenced from the mention of terms like *mōkṣa* and *sama* by Bharata.

Moreover, a clear answer to the question of the **non-inclusion** of *santa rasa* can be found within the methodology of the book. It has been shown in the earlier sections (2.2.1 & 2.5.1) that the story from Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra*, discussed in those sections, makes it clear that *Nāṭya* was meant to instruct people in the achievement of *Trivarga*, by depicting the successful attainment of *Trivarga* by the chief protagonist self. Hence it is logical not to include *santa rasa* which is related to *mokṣa*, the fourth *puruṣārtha*, in this book dealing primarily with only the first three *puruṣārtha*-s.

Critics like V.Raghavan cite the story in the *Nāṭya Śāstra* in which, as mentioned above (2.2.2), it is said that the gods wanted *Brahma* to create something entertaining which is both visual as well as audible

- *kriḍāṇīyakam icchamō drśyam sravyam ca yadbhavēt* (*Natya Śāstra* 1.11) and pointing out the words like *kriḍāṇīyakam* argue that Bharata intended entertainment as the purpose of *Natya* and this is the reason for his **non-inclusion** of *śānta rasa* in his list of *rasa-s*. Quoting the above verse from Bharata (*Natya Śāstra* 1.11), Raghavan says,

"this criticism of *Santa* is pertinent to some extent in regard to drama [sic] generally which is for pleasure and which deals with worldly things. Drama arose as an **entertainment**" (Raghavan, 1975 : 21).

But, it may be noted that the structure of the story unequivocally compels one to understand that the purpose of the gods in asking for a *kriḍāṇīyakam* was, in fact, a consequence of their failure to transform the fallen individuals (of *trētā yuga*) through the employment of other means (2.2.2). Thus, the story clearly shows the transformation of fallen individuals as the purpose and something *kriḍāṇīyakam* as only a means to achieve that purpose.

Moreover, the above quoted words of Raghavan, indicate that he is looking at the word *kriḍāṇīyakam* merely as meaning 'entertaining.' But this word read with the word *rasa* shows that this word here means *rasa* giving. Thus, this word can not be deduced as something opposite of *śānta rasa*, because there is a possibility of *śānta rasa* being included in the *rasa-s* given by *Natya*. The only way in which it can be concluded that *śānta rasa* was not meant to be included among these *rasa-s*, is by taking into consideration the inference from the above mentioned story of origin of *Natya* that Bharata's *Natya* was concerned with *Trivarga*.

Thus, it may be said that since Bharata considered *Natya* as **primarily** concerned with *Trivarga*, he mentioned only those eight *rasa-s* which correspond to *Trivarga*. The evidence cited by Abhinava to show that Bharata accepted the possibility of *śānta rasa* and Bharata's not including *śānta* in the list of *rasa-s* read together show that, for Bharata, *mōkṣa* and *śānta rasa* are not as important as *Trivarga* and eight *rasa-s* are. It may be seen that, Abhinava was aware of this position of Bharata, as he says that

(for Bharata), "...Santa is after all *apradhāna*, not the leading motif [*of Nāṭya*]" (as quoted in Raghavan, 1975:21-2).

Thus, in conclusion, it may be said that the eight *rasa-s* mentioned by Bharata and *śānta* *rasa* are experienced in plays with two different kinds of depiction of self fulfilment. The eight *rasa-s* listed by Bharata are experienced by the audience watching the plays in which the fulfilment of *Trivarga* is depicted as self fulfilment and *śānta* *rasa* is experienced by the audience watching the plays in which the fulfilment of *mōksa* is depicted as self fulfilment"

2.6.2. Presentability of the fulfilment of self's urge for liberation.

Dhananjaya and Dhanika reject *śānta* *rasa* on the ground that the imitation of *santa* does not go with *Nāṭya* which basically deals with a lot of action in the form of dance, music and dialogue. Commenting on Dhananjaya, who rejects (the possibility of the imitation of the often considered *sthāyī bhāva* of *santa* *rasa* called) *sama* (tranquillity) in *Natya* (*Daśarūpakam* IV.35), Dhanika says that acting (*abhinaya*), which is the soul of *Natya* and *śama*, which is in the form of devolution of all activities do not go together (in Dhananjaya, 1993 : 227-8). Hence according to him *śānta* *rasa* can not be accepted.

Arguing against this, Jagannatha in his work *Rasagāṅgādhara* says, in fact, the actor need not experience *śama* (tranquillity) in reality to be able to imitate *śama*. *Bhaya* (tenor), *krōdha* (fury) etc., are not experienced, in reality, by an actor imitating these emotions, which is established by the fact that killing, binding and so on, do not, in reality, result from the actions of these actors, but appear to be resulting only on account of the trained skills of actor. The same is applicable to the issue of the imitation of *śama* (1988 : 36-7).

Jagannatha cites an argument by some' against *śānta* *rasa* that song and music which are essential for

a *Nṣṭya* performance are an obstruction for the experience of *santa rasa*, because it involves aversion for sense pleasure (such as the one given by song and music). He then answers this question, simply by saying that since the audience of the *ianta rasa* plays, **who** have aversion for sense pleasure (*viṣaya vaimukhyāṭmanaha*), are able to experience *santa rasa* in spite of the song and music, song and music need not be considered as an obstruction for the experience of *santa rasa*. He also argues that if aversion to song and music is to be viewed as an essential part of the general aversion to worldly activities, then the **experience** of the individuals whose aversion is intensified through activities such as listening to narrative performances of mythologies, spiritual get-togethers, spiritual discourses and pilgrimages and so on, stand as counter examples for this **arguement** (1988 : 36-7). Thus, Jagannatha indicates that the song and music of a *ianta rasa* play (composed in a way suitable for the **experience of *santa rasa***) are something like these activities, which are, while being worldly activities, not obstructions for the pursuit of aversion of sense gratification.

The *Puranas*, hearing of which is mentioned by Jagannatha as an example above, have many narratives which **describe** characters who (seek *moksa* and) exhibit their aversion for **wordly** enjoyment. **It** is a tradition even today among the **sainty** people in **India** to discuss these narratives and deliver discourses on **them**, which are attended by those who seek *moksa* and wish to attain sense gratification. This is born of a belief that by listening to the stories of those who have rejected sense enjoyment and by following their precepts, individuals can develop aversion for **wordly** pleasures. Jagannatha's arguement suggests that the activities mentioned above are not hurdles in real life for the experience of *nirvāda* (aversion) or *sama* (tranquillity), but on the other hand they enhance these feelings.

In fact, a *Nāṭya* performance itself can be considered as an activity similar to the narrative performances of **the *Purāna-s*** and spiritual discourses, performed **for** the experience of *ianta rasa*, when the theme of the performances is chosen from the *Puranas*. For example, when Anandavardhana

considers the *Mahābhārata* and **Ksemendra** considers the *Rāmāyana* as the *santa rasa* stories (Raghavan, 1975 : 35), they must be keeping in mind either a narrative performance or a *Natya* performance of these stories for the purpose of giving the experience of *santa rasa*. Even a contemporary scholar Raghavan, agrees with the possibility of the experience of *santa rasa* in the case of themes from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, when he states that the themes of *Rama* and *Kṛṣṇa* (which are narrated in the above mentioned sources) give the experience of *santa rasa* (1975 : 47). But it may be noted that the heroes of these stories must have *Sama* for these stories to give the experience of *santa rasa*. It can be seen that Anandavardhana, Raghavan and so on, do not consider *sama* of the heroes of the stories as a contradiction with the 'action' (to perform activities) found in these stories.

The **argument** that action is possible in the narratives with the *nayaka* (hero) or the chief protagonist having *sama* (tranquility) or *nirvāḍa* (aversion to sensual pleasures), seems to be easily acceptable in the light of the Vedic worldview presented by the *Gita*. The central spirit of the *Gita*'s instruction is that to think of inaction in the name of endeavour to liberation is mere hypocrisy (*mithyacara*) (III.6) and the only way a person can endeavour towards liberation is to act without attachment (without attraction - *raga* or aversion - *dveṣa*) (II.64). In fact, the *Gita* is presented as a discourse by *Kṛṣṇa* to *Arjuna* instructing him to fight in the battle without attachment. In other words, if there is an *Arjuna* really fighting in the battle with such a detachment and his story is taken as the theme for a *Natya*, obviously, the central emotion of such a *Natya* would be *sama/nirvāḍa* only and then obviously, such a *Natya* would provide the experience of *santa rasa*. But if the same theme is presented with an *Arjuna* as a *nayaka* (hero), with attachment to his kingdom (*artha puruṣārtha*), such a *Natya* automatically falls within the category of *Natya* for *Tṛvarga* and would provide *vira rasa* (the *rasa* of enthusiasm) which is one of the eight *rasa-s*. In the same way, it can also be seen that some of the stories cited as examples for *Natya* for *Tṛvarga* earlier in this chapter (2.3 & 2.4), if presented with the *nayaka* (hero) as a detached person, they would turn out to be *Natya* for *Mokṣa*. That is, the principle established in the previous section, namely, the kind of *rasa* depends on the kind of self fulfilment depicted in the play, holds good for the two different treatments of the same

story, one as *Natya* for *Trivarga* and the other as *Natya* for *Mōksa* also.

At more than one place, the *Gita* explains why and how a *jñāni* (person with the knowledge/experience of self as Self) acts and should act. One of the reasons mentioned there and which is relevant here, is that the *jñāni* acts for *lōka sangraha* : to provide examples of right action to the world (III.20 & III.25). The *nayaka* in *Natya* for *moksa* not only provides examples of right action to the other characters in the play but does it for the audience as well. Interestingly, *Arjuna* asks *Kṛṣṇa* how a person with perfect detachment, a person with a settled consciousness (*sthita prajñā*) walks, sits and talks (as if he is trying to picture such a person) (II.54). *Kṛṣṇa* gives a detailed picture of such a person which helps almost as a guidebook for the presentation of a *nayaka* (hero) of a *Natya* for *Mōksa* providing *santa rasa*, just as the qualifications of hero mentioned by Bharata and other authors of the poetics of *Natya* (2.4) help present a *Natya* for *Trivarga* providing eight *rasas*. This list has many kinds of action included in it. This picture clearly establishes that action is very much possible in a play which depicts liberation as self fulfilment and such a play gives the experience of *śānta rasa* to the audience.

2.6.3. Essentiality of depiction of successful self fulfilment for *rasa*.

Not taking into consideration, the principle of control of the depiction of kind of self fulfilment over the kind of *rasa* by some scholars, has led to another problem, namely, that of using the word *rasa* alongside the word Drama as a translation for *Natya* and citing examples for *rasa* from Drama.

For example, translating '*rasa-s*' and '*alankara-s*' as '*sentiments*' and '*embellishments*,' Surendramath Shastri quotes Mammata as defining the '*nataka* (one of the ten forms of *Natya*) as a full drama..... which contains divers sentiments and embellishments' (1961 : 11). In some other context the same author says,

" Bharata defines representation as that art of an actor by means of which he re-creates

the sentiments [rasa] inherent in the original situation forming the theme of the drama under enactment" (1961 : 1).

And even the English definitions of rasa such as the one given by S.K.Dey reads as follows :

"...Rasa is a state of relish in the reader....which is brought about when the principal or permanent mood (*sthāyibhāva*) is brought into a relishable condition through the three elements, the *vibhāva*, the *anubhāva* and the *vyabhicāribhāva* in the drama" (as quoted in Singal, 1977:44).

In fact, there has been a tendency to translate *dṛśya* Kavya as Drama and *śṛavya* Kavya as poetry. For example, R.L.Singal says,

"It is therefore essential to bear in mind that although Bharata originally expounded the theory of *rasa* in relation to Drama, it gradually came to embrace the whole of poetry" (Singal, 1977:32).

V.Raghavan who has taken care to keep the word *ātman* untranslated into English may be seen not to be taking a similar care with regard to the word *Natya* when he says,

"... Rasa is the manifestation of the light of Atman itself when the obscuring element falls away. Poetry and drama remove the bars and Atman manifests itself (1975 : 103).

Raghavan's indifference to the distinction between the words *Natya* and Drama becomes more explicit when he says,

"*Singabhūpāla* recognizes only eight Rasa-s in drama..." (1975 : 52).

All these different usages of the word Drama with reference to *Natya* may easily be explained away as mere problems arising from a less careful translation. But the more serious cascading effects of such lack of care may be seen in the writings where examples from Western Drama for the concepts of *Natya* are cited. For example, Singal, in his discussion on *rasa*, gives examples of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*-s, and *vyabhicārī bhāva*-s, from Western Drama and says that their combination with *sthāyī bhava* gives rise to the experience of *rasa*. Surprisingly, most of these examples are from tragedies such

as Hamlet Othello and Oedipus the King, which in **no way show** the hero attaining self fulfilment.

Elsewhere, Singal quotes a scene from Hamlet, as an example of *santa rasa*. He cites this, with the following words:

"Mortified by the treacherous murder of his father and the perfidy of his mother, Hamlet **cries** out in despair.

Howweary, stale, flat and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world| (Hamlet, I.ii).

Commenting on this speech, Singal says,

"Is it not a fact that these words of Harriet are infectious? They generate first a mood of despair, and then one of *nirvāda*, giving complete poise and equanimity to the tormented soul of man" (1977 : 63).

What Singal appears to suggest by the above statement is that this scene from Hamlet generates *nirvāda* (aversion for sensual pleasures - which is the *sthāyī bhāva for śānta rasa*) in the audience and then gives poise and equanimity, which is the **experience** of *śānta rasa*. In fact, he goes on to the extent of saying that providing *santa rasa* is the essential feature of a successful Tragedy. He says,

"If Catharsis is the function of tragedy, *santa* is its fruit. It is another name for spiritual peace.....a tragedy which does not produce in its spectators the sentiment of *śānta*, and does not bring spiritual repose, fails as a **work** of art (1977 : 63-4).

It has been discussed above (2.5.1) that the *rasa* theory is intrinsically related to the notion of *puruṣārtha-s*, i.e., each *rasa* is controlled by the depiction of fulfilment of one of the **four puruṣārtha-s**. As has been noted earlier (1.3), the failure in the fulfilment of self and the fulfilment of urges is the consistent feature of all **serious** Drama. In that light, it can be seen that Hamlet fails to attain all the four urges. Since he fails in his duty (of avenging his **father's** death) given by his father's ghost, he fails to reestablish the natural order. In the language of *Nāṭya*, he fails to attain *dharma puruṣārtha*. In

spite of being a prince, he does not attain his kingdom either. In the language of *Natya*, he does not attain *artha purusārtha*. He loses Ophelia, his love, and hence, in the language of *Natya*, does not attain *kāma purusārtha*. Finally, he is not freed from the misery and hence he fails to attain *moksa purusārtha*.

Another problem with the above analysis of Singal is his pointing out that the scene mentioned above generates *nirvāda* (aversion) - the *sthayi bhāva* of *śānta rasa*- in the audience. According to the poetics of *Natya* this **is** possible only when the character himself experiences an awakening of *nirvāda*. As discussed above, according to Abhinavagupta, **the** *nirvāda*, which gives the experience of *Santa rasa*, suggests a state of permanent aversion to sense gratification which arises in individuals who seek *moksa*. **Hamlet's** aversion does not come from his search for *moksa*, but comes from the dejection that results from a perception of sexual and power politics that surround him. Singal himself notes this when he says that the causes of **Hamlet's** despair are the treacherous murder of his father and the perfidy of his mother.

In fact, in the *śānta rasa* plays, the fulfilment of the urge for liberation (*moksa*) has been understood to be the fulfilment of self as Self. But Hamlet, **who** shares the feature of lack of 'self knowledge' identified as the feature of all the tragic heroes by Hoy (in **Barnet, 1972** : 770), can not be expected to have the self fulfilment of that kind. Just like the other tragic heroes already mentioned (2.4), Hamlet also experiences a reversal of situation due to passion and confusion, which are the qualities of *rajas* and *tamas* and hence fails in self fulfilment and fulfilment of the urges.

This analysis leads to the conclusion that when viewed from the point of view of poetics of *Natya*, the story of Hamlet can not give the experience of any *rasa*, leave alone *Santa*. This reasoning can be applied to other examples given by Singal like Oedipus Rex and Othello, and to Drama in general.

Poetics of *Natya* discusses the situations where there is an apparent scope for *rasa*, because of the

presence of elements like characters, objects, emotions and expressions (2.6.1), but where no real *rasa* is possible and gives the name *rasabhasa* (illusion or false appearance of *rasa*) to these situations. The instances such as *as araga* (one sided love), *anēkarāga* (love for many), cited as instances of *rasābhāsa* in the poetics of *Nāṭya*, can also be seen in Dramas such as Hamlet and Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf (by Edward Albee). Even these instances can be understood in terms of self fulfilment, because the *puruṣārtha* of *kāma* is not fulfilled either because of one sidedness of love or because of indiscriminate seeking of love. From the theory of *Nāṭya*, even though all the ingredients required for the creation of *rasa* are apparently present in such plays, they do not give rise to *rasa*. It can thus be concluded that it is inappropriate to cite examples for *rasa* from Western Drama, because in the language of *Nāṭya*, the experience given by Drama can not be termed as *rasa*. It is the recognition of problems of this kind which is aimed at, in the recognition of *Nāṭya* and Drama as two different categories, in this work.

In fact, as articulated by Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller, lack of self fulfilment is intentionally maintained as a desirable quality in Drama (1 4) To put the position of Miller in terms of *rasa*, it can be said that according to him, a *rasa* giving play, ceases to be a Drama.

Extending the principle of control of *rasa* by depiction of kind of self fulfilment to Drama, it can now be said that if the depiction of the fulfilment of *Trivarga* leads to eight *rasa-s*, *mōkṣa* to *santa rasa*, depiction of lack of self fulfilment leads to *rasabhasa*.

2.7.Essentiality of adherence to norms for the success of Nāṭya.

2.7.1. Essentiality of adherence to norms for the creators of Nāṭya.

Obviously, just as every play can not give *rasa*, not just everyone can create, direct, produce, act or sympathetically enjoy *Nāṭya*. Interestingly, the poetics of *Nāṭya* takes care to underline this point, by

especially discussing the essential features of all its participants at all these levels, in order, for them, to be able to be part of *Natya*, as it is discussed in the *Natya Śāstra*. In other words, the *Natya Śāstra* and other books on poetics of *Natya* take care to discuss the cultural **assumptions** underlying concepts like *rasa*.

The poetics of *Natya* disagree with the philosophy that the personal character or conduct of a poet, director or actor has no bearing on their creation, direction and action, and consistently emphasize that only a person with a high moral standards according to *dharma* (moral order as revealed in the *Vēda-s*), can create, direct and act in *Natya*. For example, taking the case of a poet, Bharata says that the poet should create his play by following the *Vēda-s* (*Veda*), world (*lōka*) and his spiritual experience (*adhyatma*). The word *adhyatma* (spiritual experience), here, is significant, because spiritual experience is believed, in the Vedic **worldview**, to be possible, only for a person with high moral standards. In their references to authors like Bhasa and Kalidasa, the authors of poetics, often compared them to **Valmiki** and Vyasa (Bhatta, 1996 : 3). The legend according to which Valmiki was originally a ruthless hunter, later due to the influence of counsel from great sages, 'bums' his past culture, through *tapas* (penance) and ultimately becomes a *ṛṣi* (sage); once, on watching a hunter shooting a male bird at mating, breaks into grief, which finds pronouncement in a metrical verse; later composes the great epic *Ramayana*, indicates the expression of this belief in the form of a legend. Even the consideration of Vyasa, the (supposed) author of the epic *Mahabharata* and the *Purāna-s* such as the *Bhāgavata Purāna*¹³ to be a great sage, is in accordance with this principle.

Authors of poetics of *Natya*, even go to the extent of saying that one who is not a *ṛṣi* (sage) can not be a poet - *na arsihi kurutē kāvyam* (as quoted in Appa Rao, 1959 : 22). The word *ṛṣi* means the one who can **See** beyond space and time. In this sense, the above statement is sometimes worded as *kavayaha krānta darsinaha* : poets are those who See beyond space and time' (as quoted in Appa Rao, 1959 : 22). It has been said (2.3) that *Kāvya-s/Nāṭya-s* and the *līhāsa-s* and the *Puranas*, from which *Kāvya-s/Nāṭya-s*

draw their plots, are only alternative versions of the *Vēda-s* as revelations and instructions of laws of nature, which are believed to be not bound by space and time (meaning they are universal and eternal laws). A poet is equated with a sage, because just as a sage recreates the Vedic revelations in the form of the *Itihāsa-s* and the *Purāṇa-s*, the poet recreates the same from the *Itihāsa-s* and the *Purāṇa-s* in the form of *Kāvya-s*/*Nāṭya-s*. The word *ṛṣi*, throughout Vedic literature, refers to extreme standards of morality in the day to day life. Equating a poet with a *ṛṣi* has even the implication of moral standards of this level.

In fact, according to Bharata, the quality of the sages, who maintain extreme levels of morality rejecting the pleasure in sense gratification, must be possessed by all those who are involved in the creation of a *Nāṭya*. He presents this idea in the form of the words of *Indra* (the king of gods) in the story about the origin of *Natya* (2.2.2), where, *Indra*, when asked by *Brahma* to produce *Natya* based on his guidelines, says that gods like himself are not eligible to produce *Natya*. According to Abhinava, *Indra* was keeping in mind, sensual nature of gods as the reason, for their **ineligibility**. *Indra* goes on to say that only those who are conversant with the secrets of the *Vēda-s* (*Vēda guhyajñāna*), saintly (*ṛṣayaḥ*) and who are perfectly engaged in observing the vows (*samśritavratāḥ*), have the ability to receive (*grahana śakti*), the ability to retain (*dhāraṇa śakti*) and the ability to reproduce (*prayōga śakti*) and thus are eligible to produce *Natya* (*Nāṭya Śāstra* 1.23). *Brahma* accepts *Indra's* words and gives it to sage Bharata and his **disciples** to produce *Natya*. This story can be seen to be suggesting that only persons with the qualities of sages are eligible to perform *Natya*, if the intended results from it, according to *Natya Sastra* are to be achieved.

The message that the creators of *Natya* should not make use of it for their selfish interest, in stead should use it for *dharma* (moral order), is conveyed through another story by Bharata (*Natya Sastra* Ch. XXXVI), where a negative incentive or a punishment for violating the moral norms too is depicted.

The story goes that the disciples of Bharata (**Bharata-s**), who, in the beginning, performed plays based on the rules of Bharata, later became intoxicated with their art gradually and began producing farces (*prahasana-s*) in which they made fun of everyone in the world. They used cruel and inauspicious incidents (*Natya Śāstra* XXXVI.32-34). The sages (who are considered as the custodians of Vedic moral order) could not tolerate the misuse of the *Natya* (which, as mentioned in section 2.2.2, is meant to protect Vedic moral order) and cursed the Bharata-s, to become outcasts, stripped of the right to perform Vedic rituals (*yañīa-s*). They were cursed to become professional actors who would have a low rank in society, living on the patronage of the public - through a sale of their talent (*Natya Śāstra* XXXVI. 35-40). The gods (whose responsibility, as mentioned in section 2.2.2, is to maintain the moral order in the world) were worried that *Natya* would be lost due to this curse. They, therefore, intervened and appealed to the sages for the protection of *Natya*. The sages made a pronouncement that *Natya* would not suffer (*Natya Śāstra* XXXVI.41-43) but the rest of the curse (the falling down of the Bharata-s into a lower rank) will, however, function.”

In the light of the philosophy of *Natya*, discussed in the earlier sections (2.2-5), the message of the above story can be inferred as follows. The story gives the picture of the norms that are expected of the creators of *Natya*. These norms are : (i) the performers should not get fascinated by their own art, to the extent that the moral purpose takes the back seat and mere entertainment cheap popularity and quick fame become more **important**, reducing the seriousness of the play; (ii) they should not be so sadistic as to make fun of anyone; and (iii) they should not be so cynical as to use cruel and inauspicious incidents. As discussed above (2.4-5), they must **show** the models of successful selves, who attain their self fulfilment in the form of the fulfilment of the urges, to be emulated (2.4) and models of failure of **self** fulfilment to warn against **the don'ts**.

It may also be observed that even the curse emphasizes norms, through the description of consequence of violation of the norms. For example, when it is said that the performers who are after

quick fame and cheap entertainment and so on become professional actors, who live on the patronage of the **public** through sale of **their** talent, the message is more towards the norm that actors should not make their art a saleable commodity.

Thus, if the philosophy of this story is to be followed, those contemporary performers of traditional Indian theatre, who do not maintain any etiquette of sacrality, who are known to perform in an **inebriated** condition, who are seen going for a puff in the wings even while they perform the role of a sage, and who perform for money, are all to be considered either prone to or affected by the curse of the sages. In other words, though certain performances contain all the elements of *Nāṭya*, such as taking the themes from the *Itihāsa-s* and the *Puranas*, depicting the laws of nature in tune with the Vedic moral order, depicting and instructing the *puruṣārtha-s*, they can not be treated as *Nṣṭya* if there is a violation of norms by their creators.

In the theory of Drama, the personality of the director, producer and performer and norms of a morally 'right' personality for the director, producer and performer is seldom discussed. Whereever these issues are discussed, the philosophy of **non-requirement** of morality for the producer of a play is frequently articulated in the theory of Drama. The best example for this attitude may be seen when even Carl. G. Jung, who is generally considered to be a religious and moralist intellectual, says,

"...the creative force [of the artist] can drain the human impulses to such a degree that the personal ego must develop all sorts of bad qualities - **ruthlessness**, selfishness, and vanity and even every kind of vice, in order to maintain the spark of life and to keep itself from being wholly bereft.....actively offending against the moral code **or the law** (in Lodge, 1971 : **186**).

As is well known, Jean Genet is known for his depiction of cruelty, sexuality, **criminality** and so on. He is considered to be "among the most **extraordinary**" poets in French literature (1973 : 167) by Martin

Esslin, in spite of his being a criminal and sodomite (Killinger, 1971 : 34). Jean Paul Sartre goes to the extent of calling him saint **in** his book on Genet called Saint Genet, and **says**,

"By infecting us with his evil, Genet delivers himself from it. Each of his books is a cathartic crisis of possession, a **psychodrama**;.....with each book this possessed man becomes a little more the master of the demon that possessed him. Ten years of literature are equivalent to a psychoanalytic cure (as quoted in Esslin, 1973 : 170).

In both the cases, it may be observed that there is an **attempt** to justify the immorality of the playwright. If Jung does it by explaining it as an inevitable consequence **of** the **drain[ing]** of the human impulses' ... by the creative force of the **artist**,' Sartre does it by conjecturing a theory of catharsis'(purgation) to the playwright.

Thus, the attitude towards the morality of the creator of a play or a theatrical performance is another point where the philosophies of Drama and *Natya* stand apart.

2.7.2. Essentiality of adherence to norms for the presentation of *Nāṭya*.

Another norm with regard to **the** attitude of the creators and participants of *Natya* towards the performance of *Natya* is indicated through Bharata mentioning in the first chapter, that *Natya* can not commence without performing a *yajña* (a fire oblation ritual in which materials are obliterated in the fire as an offering to the gods). To facilitate the performance of a *yajña* before the commencement **of** *Natya*, Bharata proposes the worship of the gods, in his story about the origin of *Natya*. According to this story, *Brahma* presents the gods as in charge of the theatrical stage. Bharata describes *Brahma* as saying,

'the moon god [*Candra*] will protect the site of the performance [*mandapa*]; the protective gods of the world [*loka pāla-s*], the directions; wind gods, the four corners of the site, the green room will be **guarded** by the *Mitra*, the interior by *Varuna* [the **water** god]. ... the

musical instruments will be guarded by the clouds, the pillars by the Vama-s Indra will protect the *nayaka* [hero], *Sarasvati* [the goddess of learning] the *nayika* [heroine]. *Omkāra* will protect the *Vidūsaka* [the jester] and the rest of the characters will be protected by *hara*' (*Nāṭya Śāstra* 1.84-86 & 1.97).

All the gods who guard the theatre, are to be *adhīdēvata-s* (guardian deities) and they are to be worshipped by the performers, before the play began. Since the worship is performed on the stage (*raṅga*) at the Outset (*pūrva*), this ritual is called by Bharata (*Nāṭya Śāstra* V.7) as *pūrvaraṅga vidhi* (pre-presentational norm)¹⁵ and the process of performing it is explained, in detail, in the fifth chapter of the *Nāṭya Śāstra*.

It can be observed that most of the Sanskrit plays begin with a statement called *nāṇḁi ante* (literally, at the end Of *nāṇḁi*. *Nāṇḁi* = benedictory verse) or *nāṇḁi ante tataha praviṣati sūtradhāraha* : The *Sūtradhāra* (the director. Literally, one who holds the strings) appears at the end of *nāṇḁi*. Before the beginning of the play, the playwright speaks the glory of the gods in a verse called *nāṇḁi*." Though, according to Bharata, *nāṇḁi* is only a part of the *pūrvaraṅga vidhi*, its presence in Sanskrit plays is an evidence of the fact that the Sanskrit playwrights followed the rule of performing the *purvaranga vidhi* or a pre-presentational norm.¹⁷

Though, apparently, this norm of *pūrvaraṅga* prescribed by Bharata, appears merely to be ordaining only a ritual atmosphere, as a prelude to the theatrical performance, a closer analysis of the role of *Nāṭya* in the process of self fulfilment reveals that this *pūrvaraṅga* ritual (or *nāṇḁi*) is not a ritual performed for ritual's sake but symbolizes the nature of *Nāṭya* as being a *yajna*. Interestingly, Kalidasa, in fact speaks of *Nāṭya* as a *yajña* for the eye - *cākṣusa kratu* (*Mālavikāgnimitram* 1.4). Whatever Kalidasa might have meant by this statement, the use of the analogy of *yajña* to talk about *Nāṭya* can be realized to have a serious substance and significance. It is not uncommon in Vedic literature to use the word *yajna* in reference to various activities having the spirit of *yajña*. For example, in the fourth chapter of the *Gita* (IV.25-29),

oblation of the five senses in the fire of self control, **five** sense objects in the fire of senses, sense activities in the activities of *prana* (the stream of vitality), offering charity....' and so on are all **described** as *yajna-s*. In a similar vein, *Natya* can be called as a *yajna*. If it can be established that it is an activity performed with the **spirit** of a *yajna*.

The spirit of *yajna* is well articulated in Vedic literature. As mentioned earlier in this chapter (2.5.2), the *Vāda-s* are divided into two sections, namely, the former (*ipurva*) section (*Kanda*), also known as the *Karma Kanda* (section of rituals/actions) and the latter (*uttara*) section (*Kanda*), also known as the *Jhana Kanda* (section of **knowledge/liberation**). There are two *darsana-s* (schools of Indian Philosophy), which are the exegeses of the *Vedas*. One of them, known as *purva mimamsa*, exemplifies the former section of the *Vāda-s* and considers performance of *yajna* and other rituals as the most important activities for a person following the *Vedas*. **Jaimini**, who composed the Vedic exegesis of this school, into a comprehensive and adequate set of Aphorisms, calls his discussion as *dharma jijnāsa* -zeal to know about *dharma* (*Mimamsa Sūtras* 1.1.1). That is, an enquiry into *dharma* - the duty in tune with the laws of nature, as revealed in the *Vedas*. This *dharma* is to perform *yajna* (for the gods) and other activities prescribed in the *Vedas* (Apadeva, 1972 : 4). *Yajna* is performed (i) for **the** healthy sustenance of the universe (*pausṭika/nitya*); (ii) in order to pacify the disorders in nature (*śāntika/naimittika*); or (iii) to acquire specific gains from nature (*kāmya*). In other words, the performance of *yajna* is to get gains from nature according to the laws of nature (*dharma*). Nature is administered by the *devatas* (gods) such as *Agni* (fire god), *Varuna* (water god), *Indra*, and *Mitra*, for a healthy sustenance. In *yajna*, *dravyas* (materials) are offered to these *devatas*, by oblation of the *dravyas* in fire and chanting specific hymns from the *Vedas*. Thus, *yajna* is defined as a sacrifice of materials for the sake of the gods - *dēvatōddēśēna dravya tyāgaha* (Vasudev Shastri Abhayankar in Apadeva, 1972 : 5). *Dravyas* (materials) thus offered reach the *devatas* through the medium of fire (*agni mukhāvai devaha*). The *devatas*, being pleased (with the offerings, grant **benefits** according to specific rules to the performer of the *yajna*. In the *Gita* (III.12), it is said that being pleased with the oblations offered by the human beings, the gods provide them the

desired objects (which fall into *artha* and *kama*). By thus pleasing each other, the individuals and the gods attain utmost happiness.

The *Gita* (III.12) further informs that one who tries to seek self fulfilment (in the form of the fulfilment of the two *puruṣārtha-s*, *artha* and *kama*), without acknowledging the gods, is a thief. The spirit of this statement is that using materials for fulfilment of one's own desires without following the administration of these materials through the collective laws of nature, is to deny the materials to others and thus means (to take part in) the violation of laws of collective nature sustenance. For this reason, any attempt made for the fulfilment of one's desires without performing *yajna* is considered by the *Gita* (III.13) as sinful (*pāpaha*). On the other hand, only one who eats (enjoys) the remnants of *yajna* is liberated from all sins - *yajñāsastāsīnaya śantō mucyantē sarva kībhīṣaiḥ* (*Gita* III.13). Here, the spirit of this principle is that one who eats the remnants of *yajna* is eating that which is gifted to him by the gods without any disturbance to the collective administration of nature by these gods, and thus he is not disturbing nature. He therefore gains happiness. Thus, *dharma* ordained to be followed for the successful fulfilment of the urges by the self, may now be seen to be described as (a result of) *yajna*.

So, if the *Natya Śāstra* is considered to be *Vāda-like*, it is natural that *Natya* be performed like a *yajna*. Since theatre is one of the actions performed by the human being, this action must also be performed as a *yajna* by following the *Karma Kanda*. Just as it would be the *dharma* of the human beings to perform actions for their fulfilment of *Trivarga* by worshipping the gods, the theatre should also be performed for the attainment of *Tmarga*. It may be noted, here, that the *dēvata-s* mentioned above in the description of the *purvaranga* rituals are the same gods like *Agni*, *Indra* among others and hence *Natya* becomes symbolically a *dravya* that is offered to these *dēvata-s*. Since the performance of *yajna* is considered *dharma* according to the *vāda-s*, by performing theatre as a *yajna*, the participants are expected to attain *artha* and *kama*. In fact, Bharata (*Natya Śāstra* XXXVII.26-27) himself says that those who hear and watch *Natya* attentively, act in it and produce it, will all get Vedic knowledge and the same fruits (the

attainment of *puruṣārtha-s*) that one gets by the performance of a *yajna* and **charity** (which are prescribed as one's duty in the *Vedas* for the attainment of the urges - *puruṣārtha-s*).

Apart from giving *Tnvarga*, *Natya* can be viewed as giving the **fourth** *puruṣārtha*, **namely**, liberation also. As mentioned in 2.6.2, *Natya* can be seen as one of the devotional rituals like the *Purāna* recital and congregational chanting (*bhajan*) ritual, which are performed by those who seek liberation. As mentioned there, a story specially meant for this purpose or same stories otherwise **choosen** for *Natya* for *Tnvarga*, but presented with the depiction of self as Self, can be chosen. Correspondingly, the *purvaranga* ritual and the attitude in performing it, may also be similar to devotional activities like *bhajan*, which are performed for *moksa* (see 3.3).

It may be noted that the statements of **Dhananjaya**, Dhanika, Vishwanatha and others quoted earlier (2.5.2), in which *Tnvarga* or *dharma*, *artha* and *kama*, and *moksa* are mentioned as being given by, or as a result of, the performance of *Natya*, were earlier interpreted as statements about instruction and the same can now be understood in terms of the direct fruits of the performance of *Natya* as **a** *yajña* also.

An interesting parallel **between Greek** Drama and *Natya* is worth mentioning here. Greek tragedies too were performed in a ritual atmosphere with a ritual prelude. Here too, offerings were made to the gods. But the difference is that in these rituals, the revenge taking and punishing aspect of gods was worshipped. For example, the god Dionysius, who was worshipped during the Dionysian festival as part of which three tragedies and a satire were performed, is **described** as a powerful, revenge taking god who would not hesitate to destroy the whole of the society for violating his position as god (see for example, The Bacchae of Euripides and a discussion on it in **4.3.5.2.II**). Corresponding to this notion of the gods, Greek Tragedy portrayed gods who showered miseries on the hero of the tragedy for rejecting their command. Contrastingly, in the ritual prelude to *Natya*, the benevolent and rewarding aspect of the gods is emphasized and correspondingly in *Natya*, the *nayaka* (hero) of *Natya* receives

happiness for following the laws governed by the gods.

2.7.3. Essentiality of adherence of norms for the audience.

The issues of whom a play targets, for whom it is meant and so on, are not found to be specially discussed in the **premodern** theory of Drama. Contrastingly, in the poetics of *Natya*, this issue has always been one of the important issues. From the time of **Anandavardhana** and Abhinava, who, while arguing against proposals that *rasa* is the **experience** of the character and/or the performer, proposed that *rasa* is the experience of the audience," this importance for the issue of audience gained greater prominence in the poetics of *Nāṭya/Kāvya*. But, in **fact**, significance given to this issue can be traced right from Bharata who deals with this issue in his *Natya Śāstra* at quite a few places. For example, at one place, Bharata himself describes an ideal audience as the one who identifies himself/herself (with the protagonist of the play) so much that the audience feels happy when the protagonist is happy, pathos when the protagonist is pathetic, angry when angry, afraid when **afraid...**' (*Nāṭya Śāstra* XXV11.61-2).

These words not only establish significance given, from Bharata's time, in the theory of *Nāṭya/Kāvya*, to the issue of audience, but also bring out an important norm stipulated by Bharata, for the audience to **get** the experience of *rasa*. Probably, this identification (with *sattva* predominated personality) is considered to be causing *rasa* evocation in the audience in the poetics of *Natya*. According to Vishwanatha (and earlier to him Bhatta Nayaka [as quoted in **Mammata**, 1995 : 97]), it is the *sattva*, which is involved in the experience of *rasa*. Discussing the nature of the experience of *rasa*, **Vishvanatha** says that when the mind of the reader (or spectator) loses its touch with the objective world by the non-phenomenal emotional appeal of *Kāvya* (poetry - which includes *Natya*), the mode of *sattva* predominates over the mode of *rajas* and mode of *tamas* and it gives the experience of *rasa* to the audience (*Sāhitya Darpaṇa* III.3). Alternatively, it may also be explained that emotional identification with the *sattva* predominated personality leads to

the evocation of *sattva* in the audience. Thus, according to the poetics of *Nāṭya*, emotional identification of the audience (with the *sattva* predominated personality) can be seen to be essential for the experience of *rasa*.

Another place is the story of origin discussed earlier (2.2.2) and the discussion of the issue of audience is another aspect of significance of this story. By showing the dissatisfaction of the *asura-s* with the performance of the story of The defeat of demons (*asurā-s*), and the consequent instruction by *Brahma* to them, the various possibilities of audience-response and the expectations of the poetics of *Nāṭya* in this regard, have been brought out in the *Nāṭya Śāstra*. The dissatisfaction of the *asura-s* was grounded in the view of the *asura* audience towards the characters in the play, not just as characters but as members of their community. *Brahma* instructs them to overcome such prejudices based on community etc., and look at the story from a sublime plane (of selves, self fulfilment, laws of nature and so on). Carrying the same spirit, Abhinava also opines that the audience of *Nāṭya* should be value free (*vigata ragadvesaha*) and reflect the performance in the clean mirror of their heart (in Bharata, 1994: 15). Here, *raga* and *dvēṣa* mean personal likes and dislikes. Thus, Bharata and following him Abhinava, enjoin the audience of *Nāṭya* to overcome their personal likes and dislikes based on non-*dharma* based reasons such as caste, family, appearance, wealth, and nativity, and sympathize or apathize with the different characters based only on their actions in accordance with or against *dharma*. As may be noted from the earlier section (2.4), only a *sattva* predominated personality can perceive the laws of nature (*dharma*) and for the *rajas* predominated personality, the passions come in the way of such a perception. From this point of view, the response of the *asura-s* may be seen to be indicating a *rajas* predominated personality. Thus, according to Bharata and Abhinava, an unprejudiced and sublime outlook is essential to receive the instruction from *Nāṭya*.

Experience of *rasa* and receiving instructions seem to be emotional and intellectual features of audience response respectively, needing an emotional feature, namely, emotional identification and an

intellectual feature, namely, unprejudiced and sublime outlook, as essential. Neither of these can be the cause or effect of the other. Both these are simultaneous and it may be said that they are the features of the same mode of personality, namely, *sattva*. That is, happiness and knowledge which are **described** as features of *sattva* (*Gīta* XIV.6) (2.4), can be seen to be taking the form of *rasa* experience and *dharma* awareness during the participation in *Natya* as audience.

Though the above principle makes it easy for *sattva* predominated personality to experience *rasa* and receive instruction from *Natya*, it does not exclude the *rajas* predominated and *tamas* predominated personalities from those who are entitled to be audience of *Natya*. Even the latter, if watch *Nāṭya* with emotional identification and with unprejudiced outlook can experience *rasa* and receive instruction, since as mentioned earlier (2.4), *sattva* exists even in such personalities, though predominated by *rajas* and *tamas*, and this *sattva* is evoked when they watch *Natya* according to the above two norms. This is, probably, the intention behind Bharata depicting *asura-s* also as the audience of the performance of the story of *Asurā Parājaya* and depicting *Brahma* as explaining that when rightly received the performance need not irritate *asurā-s* (2.2.2).

A similar discussion about the expected essential features of the audience for *Natya* for *Mōkṣa* is not found in any book of poetics of *Natya* separately. But following the above **arguments**, it may be inferred that a similar emotional identification with the protagonist and an unprejudiced and sublime outlook results in the evocation of a **modes-free** state (self as Self state) which is involved in the experience of *śānta* *rasa*, which, as mentioned above, is described by Abhinava, as the experience related to *mōkṣa puruṣārtha* (2.6.1).

2.8. Partial fulfilment as a gradual process for total fulfilment.

The connection between *Natya* discussed in this chapter and *Līlā*, the subject matter of the next

chapter is rooted in and is connected to the relation between *Natya* for *Tnvarga* and *Natya* for *Mōksa*, the two kinds within *Natya*. Hence it is necessary to analyze this relation here.

Apparently, the instruction given by *Natya* for *Tnvarga* and *Natya* for *Mōksa* may look to be mutually contradictory because *Natya* for *Tnvarga* instructs the path for the successful fulfilment of the urges for *artha* and *Kama*, whereas, *Natya* for *Mōksa* instructs the rejection of such urges. But *vedanta* provides a model visualize no such contradiction

As discussed earlier (2.5.2 & 2.6.2), according to the *vedanta*, seeking *moksa* can go with following the path of *dharma* which helps the successful fulfilment of *artha* and *kama*, but contains in rejecting *artha* and *kāma*. On the other hand, from the words of *Karma Kanda* (*Tnvarga* instructing section of *Vēda-s*) also, it may be seen that it is not in contradiction with *moksa* instruction (found in the *Vedanta*).

It may be seen that the statements given in *Karma Kanda* like *yajñi svaragakāmaḥ* - one who desires heaven (*svarga*) should perform a *yajna*; *jyōtiṣaṭōmēna svargakāmō yajñeta* - one who desires *svarga* should perform a *yajna* called *jyōtiṣaṭōma* (as quoted in Apadeva, 1972 : 53); *udbhīdā yajñeta pasukamaha* - one who desires (wealth in the form of) animals should perform a *yajña* by the name of *udbhīt* (as quoted in Apadeva, 1972 : 52), do not ask one to desire heaven or animals. They only suggest that the person desiring heaven or animals, must attain them through performance of the prescribed sacrifices. Thus, the purpose of the *Karma Kanda* is not to ask individuals to seek *artha* and *kama*, but to propose *dharma* to those individuals who seek *artha* and *kama*. In other words, it says that if one wants to attain *artha* and *kama*, then one must perform the prescribed rituals and this is the way to attain the goals. This shows that the *Karma Kanda* basically aims at engaging the individuals in the moral order (*dharma*) by showing a way to attain the goals of *artha* and *kama* so that they may not disturb the natural order and may not, as a result, experience misery by seeking these two goals indiscriminately. Thus, the *Karma Kānda* does not contradict the idea of rejection of desires for *artha* and *kama*, and more over it leaves

scope for such a rejection. It is true that it does not even ask the individual to reject *artha* and *kama*.

The *vedanta* recognizes this tendency of the *Karma Kanda* and formulates that the *Vēda-s* instruct *Trivarga* through the *Karma Kanda* for those individuals who, by their personality, are attached to sensual desires. Such individuals, can not reject *artha* and *kama*, which they fail to fulfill for not following *dharma*. Recognizing the reality that human world consists of such personalities, and taking a Vedantic position, the *Gīta* says,

Persons with uncritical outlook, who are interested only in the letter of the [former section of the] *Vēda-s*, who reject every thing else than Vedic rituals, who are desirous and consider heaven alone to be important, such people utter pleasingly decorated words [of the *Vēda-s*] which are means to worldly pleasures.....' (II.42-3).

According to the *vedanta*, the *Karma Kanda* instructs such individuals in *dharma* for two reasons. One is that by following the path of *dharma* such individuals attain *artha* and *kama* successfully for themselves and do not create disorder for the world. Secondly, by following the path of *dharma*, they will be able to reach a *sattva* predominated phase where there is a scope for the rejection of *artha* and *kāma* and thus for *mōksa*. In other words, fulfilment of *Trivarga*, which is a partial fulfilment according to the *vedanta* can lead to or leaves scope for the fulfilment of *moksa*, which is the total fulfilment according to it

Now, the message of Bharata, in the story of origin quoted earlier (2.2.2), that *Natya* is meant primarily to transform those individuals who were not following the path of *dharma* into those who follow it, can be seen to be in line with this principle that individuals who, by personality, are attached to sense desires must first be shown the path of *dharma*. That this leaves scope for seeking *moksa* also, can be seen to have been recognized by Bharata, when he says that *Natya* gives *moksa* for the detached. Thus, the above understanding of the relation between the *Karma Kānda* and the *Jnana Kānda* helps us in understanding Bharata's position vis-à-vis *dharma* and *moksa*, in perspective. In terms of self

fulfilment, this position translates as 'partial **self** fulfilment instructed in *Natya* for *Trivarga* for those who are attached to sense gratification, gradually leads to the total self fulfilment depicted in *Nāṭya* for *Mōkṣa*.'

2.9. Conclusion.

Thus, the discussion in this chapter shows how the application of the concepts of self and self fulfilment, available in the Vedic literature, articulating the **worldview** of *Natya*, to the plays in Sanskrit literature, helps in understanding the roots of the differences between *Natya* and Drama (see table 3) and to distinguish between the two **categories of** *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Mōkṣa* within the broad category **of** *Natya* (see table 4). In this process, it also shows how, this application also helps in resolving the problems of *rasa* concept, as applied to different kinds of Sanskrit plays. **How** this application helps in understanding *Līlāvis-a-vis* *Natya* and Drama shall be discussed in the next chapter.

Table 3.

Comparison between Drama and Nāṭya .	
Western Drama	Nāṭya
1. Issue: Self	
Tragic (failing).	Both successful (Rāma) and failing (<i>Ravana</i>).
2. Issue : Self's qualities.	
; Passionate in Tragedy (Oedipus) Insensitive and ignorant in Tragicomedy (Berenger).	Protagonist - passionate and confirming to the laws of nature (Bhīma in Vēṇīsamhāram)
3. Issue: Structure of presentation of the self.	
Only (tragic) hero presented.	Both successful (<i>Rama</i>)) as well as failing (<i>Ravana</i>) self presented.
4. Issue : Self knowledge.	
Absent. (Oedipus)	Present for protagonist (<i>Rama</i>)). Absent for antagonist (<i>Ravana</i>).
5. Issue : Self fulfilment.	
Absent (Oedipus).	Present for the protagonist. Absent for antagonist.
6. Issue : Purpose of presenting self.	
Some (Tchechov) to instruct the forces of determinism. Others (Brecht) moral instruction also.	To instruct the forces of determinism as well as for emulation
7. Issue : Laws of nature.	
Explored newly in each form	Considered to be once for all revealed.

MIX

8. Structure of presentation of the laws of nature.	
Only consequences of pushing against and of being ignorant of laws of nature are depicted.	Consequences of both conformity and non-conformity of the laws of laws of nature are presented.
9. Attitude towards happy ending.	
Happy ending not taken seriously.	Happy ending is serious.
10. Attitude towards failure in self fulfilment	
Failure in self fulfilment is serious and the only theme.	Failure in self fulfilment is considered to be serious but only a part of the theme.
11. Personality of the participants.	
Morality not essential.	Morality essential.

Table 4**Comparision between *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga* and *Nāṭya* for *Mōkṣa*.**

<i>Nāṭya</i> for <i>Trivarga</i>	<i>Nāṭya</i> for <i>Mōkṣa</i> .
1. Issue : Self in terms of <i>guṇa</i> -s	
Self bound by three <i>guṇa</i> -s	The self (Self) free from three <i>guṇa</i> -s.
2. Issue : Self in terms of urges	
Self as seeking sex (<i>Kāma</i>), power (<i>Artha</i>) and order (<i>Dharma</i>)	The self (Self) as seeking liberation (<i>Mōkṣa</i>) from miseries.
3. Issue : Experience of the self.	
Predominance of happiness.	Happiness totally free from miseries.
4. Issue : Section of <i>Vēda</i> -s	
<i>Karma Kāṇḍa</i> .	<i>Jñāna Kāṇḍa</i> (<i>Vēdānta</i>).
5. Issue : Sources of plot.	
<i>Itihāsa</i> -s and <i>Purāṇa</i> -s.	<i>Itihāsa</i> -s and <i>Purāṇa</i> -s.
6. Issue : <i>rasa</i> .	
Eight <i>rasa</i> -s listed by Bharata.	<i>śānta rasa</i> .
7. Issue : Purpose of presentation of self.	
Models for emulation.	Models for emulation.
8. Issue : Attitude towards the performance.	
<i>yajña</i>	One of the practices for liberation.
9. Issue : Laws of nature (cause of happiness or misery).	
Compliance or non-compliance with <i>dharma</i> .	Presence or absence of self knowledge in the form of self as Self.

End notes :

1. These poetic works were meant to be recited in a rhythmic manner in temples, courts of kings and in scholarly congregations to be appreciated through hearing by the targeted audience. Hence the name *śravya Kavya* (audible poem)

2. While traditional Sanskrit authors of poetics believe in this origin of *Natya*, modern scholars differ in their opinions about it. For different theories of the origin of *Natya*, see Tarlekar (1975 : 1-16).

3. The word *pañcama Veda* (fifth Veda) is found used in reference to *Mahabharata* and different *Maha Purāṇa*-s in the prefaces of the respective books. This word is interpreted, here, to be referring to the process of classification of the corpus of *Vēda*-s by 'Vyasa.' It is said, here, that Vyasa after classifying the corpus of *Vedas* into four branches, namely, *Rk*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva*, compiled all the miscellaneous information, which was left out as a reminder, into *Mahābhārata* and the *Puranas*. It is in this sense that these works are the fifth category of classification of the corpus of *Vedas* itself. Here, in the case of *Natya Śāstra*, the word is probably being used to indicate that the book serves the same purpose as the *Vedas*, in the sense that it reveals the same laws of nature as *Vedas* do. It may be noted that *Natya Śāstra* (1.4), while discussing the origin of *Natya*, mentions that the sages who approached Bharata to inquire about *Natya*, referred to it as *veda sammīta*, i.e., *Vēda*-like or serving the same purpose as the *Vedas*.

4. *Rk Vēda* is known as the *Vēda* of adoring expressions (*Rk* = adoration); *Yajur Vēda* as the *Vēda* of ritual practice; *Sāma Vēda* as the *Vēda* of music and; *Atharva veda* as the *Veda* of magic/alchemy. *Natya Śāstra* also mentions various other aspects of *Natya* borrowed by *Brahma* and Bharata from the *Vēda*-s and *Upavēda*-s (subsidiary *Vēda*-s).

5. Though the English word mythology is **used** to refer to several different (books of) stories like *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavata Purana*, and *Mārkaṇḍeya Purana*, Conventionally, in Sanskrit, *Mahabharata* is specifically referred to as *itihasa* (closest word in English being legend), *Ramayana* as a *Kavya* (epic poem) and the Other books like *Bhagavata*, and *Matsya Purana* as (*Maha*) *Purāṇa-s*, closest English word being (great) mythologies.

6. Later to Bharata, *Nāṭya* gradually came to be regarded as *dṛśya Kāvya* (visible poem) and the poetics of *Nāṭya* became part of a larger poetics of poem in general, which included, apart from poetics of *dṛśya Kāvya* (visible poem), poetics of *śravya Kavya* (audible poem) also.

7. The selection of plots from *Itihāsa-s* and *Puranas* is not a strict principle. There are several exceptions to this rule. For example, Bhasa in *Svapna Vasavadatta* and *Pratijñā Yaugandharāyaṇam* chooses his plots from folktales (Baladeva Upadhyaya in Bhasa, : 103, 112) and Kalidasa in chooses an independent theme. But nevertheless, the depiction of *dharma* and teaching of do's and don'ts according to that remained to be the foundations of these works too.

8. However, there are two exceptions. Bhasa's plays *Urubhaṅga* and *Kaṁabhāra* do not have happy ending. But they cannot be equated with the Tragedy discussed in the last chapter. Discussing these plays, Tariekar says,

"The Indian conception of drama avoided tragedy and aimed at repose. Even in the tragic themes of the two plays of Bhasa, namely, *Urubhaṅga* and *Kaṁabhāra*, the ideal of a warrior, i.e., the obtainment of heaven if killed in the course of fighting, is aimed at. In the *Urubhaṅga*, death of Duryodhana is presented which leads him to heaven. In the *Kaṁabhāra*, the hero Kama is led to his last fight, in which, we know, he is to meet his death, befitting a noble warrior. Hence such plays also do not produce that perturbation

of the mind which is effected by the Greek **Tragedy**" (Tarlekar, 1975 : 53).

9. This is indicated in *Gita* (14.10) where it says that the modes (in the human personality) always vie for supremacy.

10. The *śānta* rasa being discussed here, is based on the authors of poetics, who subscribe to the Vedic **worldview**. Raghavan mentions that Buddhists and Jains also developed poetics, in which, they accepted *Santa* as a *rasa* (1975:24).

11. The words *śānta* and *santi* (used in the verses quoted from *Gita* here) are derived from the root *śam* which **is also** the root **of** *sama*.

12. Raghavan (1975 : 40-46) lists more than forty plays **under** *Santa* *rasa* plays.

13. In fact, all these works are dated variously by modern **scholars**.

14. This part of the pronouncement is made use of, by some people, as an explanation for the lower status to actors in contemporary **society**.

15. **Vishwanatha** defines it as that activity which is performed prior (*pūrva*) to the actual play to avert any unforeseen hurdles **for** the stage (1992 :172).

16. The word *nāndi* **comes** from the Sanskrit root '*nand*' which means to give happiness. Appa Rao mentions the different opinions given by different scholars on the meaning of *nāndi*. According to him, some say that *nāndi* is so called so because it pleases the gods, while some others hold that it is called so because it pleases the audience or the senses (1959 : 184). Vishvanatha

defines *nāndī* as that which invokes the blessings of the gods (*dēva-s*), Brahmins (*dvīa-s*) and the King (*nṛpa*), by praising them (1992 : 173).

17. In most of the Sanskrit plays, however, blessing is not sought from the gods but from *Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa* or *Śiva*, who are all considered, by the playwrights, as the Absolute who supervises the administration of the gods discussed above. The concept of the Absolute will be discussed in the next chapter (3.2-5).

18. However, there are some other opinions too. If *Bhoja* holds that *rasa* is located in character, the actor as well as the audience, Vishwanatha says that it is located in the latter two (Haberman, 1988 : 24)

Chapter 3.

Līlā as a theatre of 'playful' self.

3.1. *Līlā* as *Nāṭya* for *Bhakti*.

The last chapter has created a background to understand various kinds of traditional Indian theatre from the point of view of the concept of self and self fulfilment as articulated in the Vedic literature. In this chapter, the discussion shall be extended to the *Līlā-s*.

Līlā, especially *Rās Līlā*, the focus of present research, as already mentioned in the introduction, is the name of the theatre performed in Vrindavan. The *Ras Līlā* performances have seldom been distinguished from the performances of other forms of traditional Indian theatre either by ancient or modern scholars. *Rasak*, *Natya Rasak* and *Hallīśaka*, which are ancient Indian theatrical forms close to *Ras Līlā-s* and which have been considered to be the older forms of the present day *Rās Līlā-s* (for example, Hein, 1972 : 276), have been considered to be *uparūpaka-s*, i.e., minor plays of *Natya* by Abhinava, Kohala (Appa Rao, 1959 : 534 -5), Dhanika, Sharadatanaya and Vishwanatha (Yamadagni, 1980 : 14). Modern authors like Vasant Yamadagni (1980), Syamnarayan Pandey (1980), Ramnarayan Agrawal (1981), and Prabhudayal Mital (1983), who did a deep and intricate analysis of *Ras Līlā-s*, also bring the general principles of the *Natya Śāstra* to be applied to *Līlā-s* and do not adequately distinguish *Līlā-s* from the other kinds of *Natya*. Some of the modern scholars have even read the principles of Drama into the stories of *Līlā-s* (see, for example, forthcoming 4.3.5.2.II).

The analysis of theatre from the point of view of self and self fulfilment which, as has been seen, is helpful in understanding the distinction between Drama and *Natya* and also between *Natya* for *Tnvarga* and the plays which were discussed under *Natya* for *Mōksa* within *Natya*, can be seen to be not only helpful but even compelling to recognize *Ras Līlā* theatre as a category of its own

within *Natya*, a category clearly distinct from both *NṢṭya* for *Trivarga* and the category which was referred to as *Natya* for *Mōksa* (both referred to as *Natya* at the beginning of this thesis). Such analysis obviously helps in understanding the problem with the reading of principles of Drama into *Līlā-s* also.

On a superficial observation, *Ras Līlā-s* appear to be like any other plays of *Natya* on account of features such as borrowing of themes from the *Itihāsa-s* and the *Purāṇa-s* (2.3), being a *śubhānta* (auspicious ending) play, occurrence of rituals as part of performances (2.72), and the use of dance and music (2.6.3). One conspicuous distinction of *Līlā-s* from *Natya* is the themes being of *Bhakti* (devotion) in *Ras Līlā-s*. Distinction of *Ras Līlā-s* to this extent has been recognized by almost all the modern authors writing on the *Rās Līlā-s* (for example, Yamadagni, 1980, Pandey, 1980, Agrawal, 1981, and Mital, 1983). But the distinction seems to be much more intricate than mere prevalence of *Bhakti*. This becomes dear by analysing *Ras Līlā-s* from the point of view of self and self fulfilment, taking the help of the theoretical literature relevant to this issue

The issue of *Bhakti*, within the two sections of the *Vēda-s*, namely, the *Karma Kārda* and the *Jñāna Kārda*, mentioned in the last chapter (2.5.2 & 2.8), belongs to the *Jñāna Kārda*, which as mentioned in the last chapter, is also known as *Vēdānta*. There are several schools of *Vēdānta* which give central place to *Bhakti* and these are specially recognized as schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta*. The literature on *Bhakti vedānta* is the relevant place where an explanation of *Ras Līlā-s* in terms of self and self fulfilment can be looked. Here, the analysis of *Ras Līlā-s* is being done with the help of books on *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school of *Bhakti Vēdānta* which seems to be the most elaborate among those relevant to the issue (like *Vallabha*, *Nimbārka*, *Rādhā Vallabha* and other traditions).

3.2. Self fulfilment in terms of the Absolute, the organiser of laws of nature.

Gaudiya Vaisnava school, along with the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta*, shares several assumptions commonly with all the schools of *Vēdānta*, though differs along with the other schools of *Bhakti Vedanta*, with the non-*Bhakti* schools in some details of these assumptions. All these schools of *Vēdānta*, as mentioned earlier (2.5.2 & 2.8), propose total liberation from misery and a self fulfilment of self as Self, basing their discussion on the *Upaniṣad-s*, the *Gīta* and the *Brahma Sūtra-s* which are Considered as the *prasthana traya* (the three sources Of *Vedanta*) as mentioned earlier (2.5.2 & 2.8).

As such, one of the concepts common for all the schools of *Vēdānta* is the concept of *atman*, the Self discussed in the last chapter (2.5.2). A word *jīva* is used in reference to self in contrast with the word *ātman* used in reference to the self as Self in the literature on *Vedanta*. Consideration of the Self as the ultimate reality of self and consideration of fulfilment of self as Self as the total and complete self fulfilment which can assure the liberation of self from misery, mentioned earlier (2.5.2), is common to all these schools of *Vedanta*.

According to Vedic worldview, which all schools of *vedanta* share, it is part of nature that a self continues to exist even after its physical death (*Gīta* II.13). The laws of nature, namely, rewards for compliance with *dharma* and punishment for non-compliance (22.2) work beyond such a physical death. That is, as long as a self is bound to nature, the three *guṇa-s* and their respective qualities (2.5.2), it is bound to receive the rewards and punishment according to the laws of nature even beyond such a physical death, i.e., during the next birth (*Gīta* XIII.22). A *sattva* predominated personality because of its conformity with *dharma*, after its death, takes birth again to receive the rewards for its compliance with *dharma* and the *rajas* predominated and *tamas* predominated personalities take birth again to receive the punishment for the

non-compliance (2.4). But a self **which** transcends the three modes, i.e., attains self fulfilment in the form of self as Self or attains the urge for liberation (from bondage to nature) (2.5.2) does not take **birth** again (*Gita XIV.20 & II.51*). Because self as Self, which as mentioned earlier (2.5.2), is not bound by nature, the three modes and their respective qualities, as such, is not bound to the cycle of birth and death **also** (*Gita XIII.2-3*). Thus, **self fulfilment in the form of self as Self** can also be viewed as liberation **from the cycle** of birth and death (*Gita II.51*).

All **the** schools of *Vēdānta* commonly explain self and self fulfilment in another way too. This explanation is in terms of the relation of the self **with** nature through another key concept called the Absolute who is referred to as *Bramhan* in the *Upanisad-s* and **also** as *Paramātma* and *Bhagavan* in the *Purāna-s*. One of the **prominent** definitions of *Bramhan* (*Bramhan*, *bramh* - bulge, evolve, manifest) in the *Upanisad-s* is that it is that which is all pervading (*vibhu*) (*Katha Upanisad* I.2.22 & II.1.4), **impenshable** (*aksaram*) (*Katha Upanisad* I.2.16) and **unique** (*advitīyam*) (*Chāndōgya Upanisad* VI.2.1) source of everything that is. As already mentioned (2.7.2), **the** *Karma Kānda* deals with the relation of self with nature as a give and take relation with the gods who administer the nature through the laws of nature. The *Jñāna Kānda* or *Vēdānta*, in all its schools, conceives of the Absolute as (i) the one who presides over the administration of the gods, i.e., the one who rewards and punishes the **seives** for their compliance and **non-compliance** with *dharma* respectively through the gods (*Gita* XIII.24); (ii) the one who is the ultimate and actual beneficiary who receives, through gods, the oblations offered in the *yajña* (2.7.2) (*Gita* V.29 & IX.24); and (iii) the actual benefactor who gives the fruits of *yajna* to the individuals through gods (*Gita* VII.22). This Absolute, like the self as Self (2.5.2), is not bound to nature (*Gita* XIII.15 & XIII.22), the three modes and hence their respective qualities (2.4). The individuals who are not aware of this Absolute direct their *yajna* towards the gods (*Gita* IX.23-24) and think that the gods are giving them the fruits of *yajña*. Those selves who have this awareness of the Absolute and thus of their ultimate relation with the Absolute, direct their actions such as *yajna*, towards

MX

the Absolute (*Gita* X.8). Such actions make the self **attain** the Absolute (*Gita* IX.25) or 'the features of the Absolute' (*Gita* IV. 10 & III.19), i.e., the features of not being bound to the nature, to the modes and their respective qualities (2.5.2). Since, as mentioned earlier (2.5.2), these features are also the features of self as Self, attaining the features of the Absolute is the same as attaining self fulfilment of **self** as Self which, as mentioned above, leads to a liberation from the cycle of birth and death. This attainment of the nature of the Absolute is quite often (**metaphorically**) referred to as attaining the Absolute. In essence, the knowledge of **self's** actual ultimate relation with the Absolute and actions with such awareness lead to self fulfilment in the form of self as Self.

It may be seen that the laws of nature discussed in the last chapter (2.2.2 & 2.5.2) can be restated in terms of the **self's** relation with the Absolute as follows. The self which acts with the self knowledge in the form of the knowledge of its actual relation with the Absolute attains self fulfilment in the form of **self** as Self or liberation from the **birth-death** cycle, whereas, the self which acts without such a **self** knowledge gets bound to the three modes and gets rewarded or punished according to compliance or **non-compliance** with *dharma*.

3.3 Various relations of self with the Absolute and the corresponding paths of self fulfilment

It is in explaining the detailed meaning of the concept of '**attaining** the Absolute' or **attaining** the features of the **Absolute**' by the self that these different schools of *vedanta* basically differ. Based on the approach to this issue, these schools of *Vēdānta* may broadly be divided into two kinds. (i) *Advaita Vēda* (the philosophy of Non-dualism or Monism) propounded by Shankaracharya and (ii) *Bhakti Vēdānta*, under which come the different schools like *Vīśiṣṭadvaita Vēda* (the philosophy of Qualified Monism) propounded by Ramanujacharya, *Dvaita vada* (the

philosophy of Dualism) propounded by Madhvacharya, and *Acintya Bhēdābhēda Vāda* (the philosophy of Inconceivable difference and oneness) which is also known as *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school, propounded by Jiva Goswami.

The relation of self with the Absolute (the ultimate organizer of nature), for the *Advaita* school, is that self as Self is **non-different** from the Absolute (Dharmaraja Adhvarindra, 1993 : 326, 372 & 380). The **non-difference** of the self as Self with the Absolute is derived from the general Vedantic principle that the Absolute is unique and hence there can not be a second entity with its features (*Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* VI.2.1). The main feature of this self as Self non-different from the Absolute is attributelessness (Dharmaraja Adhvarindra, 1993 : 372). Thus, for this school, 'attaining' the Absolute by the self is nothing but the self fulfilment of self as Self because self as Self is non-different from the Absolute (Dharmaraja Adhvarindra, 1993 : 384). Developing the self knowledge in the form of the knowledge (awareness) of the **non-difference** with the Absolute through 'knowing' (directly experiencing), is considered to be the process for the attainment of self fulfilment in this school (Dharmaraja Adhvarindra, 1993: 384). This path is called the path of *Jñāna* (the path of knowledge) and since the self knowledge aimed to be attained through this path is also referred to as *Jnana*, *Jnana*' becomes both the path and goal of this school.

The relation of the self with the Absolute (the ultimate organizer of nature) for the *Bhakti* schools is that self as Self is an associate of the Absolute. Thus, for these schools, the 'attaining the Absolute' by the self is nothing but the attainment of the self fulfilment of self as Self in association with the Absolute. The Absolute, though unique has attributes and a divine form according to them. (Incidentally, most of the *Bhakti* schools are Vaishnavaites in the sense that they consider the puranic God *Viṣṇu/Nārāyaṇa* as this divine form). The self as Self, though is similar - in as much as being not bound to nature, *guṇa-s* and its qualities (2.4 & 2.5.2)- to the Absolute, is not the same as the Absolute. Thus, 'attaining the features of the Absolute' means

attaining those features which are common to both the Absolute and the self as Self, and not becoming the Absolute Himself Working towards the **experiencing** the self knowledge in the form of the closest association of the self as Self with the Absolute, through practicing devotion (associational activities) towards the Absolute, is the process for self fulfilment in these schools. This self fulfilment and the path are both called *Bhakti* (the path of devotion) (see Tapasyananda, 1990, for a **brief** summary of the lives and philosophies of the propounders of these schools).

However, concepts of *Jñāna* (knowledge) and *Bhakti* (devotion) are among the concepts common for all the schools of *Vēdānta* and are discussed in sources like the *Gīta* common to all these schools. But, the schools differ in the interpretation of these concepts and their relative priority as processes of self fulfilment. For example, generally in *Advaita Vēdānta*, *Bhakti* is given a lesser position than *Jnana* and often *Bhakti* is considered to be an instrument for *Jnana*. Dharmarajadhvarindra, while explaining the process of *Bhakti* in *Advaita vedanta*, quotes from Amalananda Saraswati who, in his **commentary** called *kaipatanū* on the *Brahma Sūtra-s*, argues that those who can not concentrate on the **attributeless** (*Nirguna*) *Bramhan*, meditate on the divine form of *Bramhan* (*Saguna Bramhan*) which manifests for the sake of the meditation for these meditators. Since the origin of *Saguna Bramhan* is *Nrguna Bramhan* itself, the ultimate realization of even such a person is in the form of realizing the **non-difference** with the formless *Bramhan* (1993 : 399). However, there are many saints and scholars belonging to the *Advaita* school, such as Madhusudana Saraswati who give a significant place to *Bhakti* as a process for self fulfilment. Often, text thirty one from *Vivēka Cudamani* (a book attributed to Shankaracharya) which reads as among the instruments of liberation, *Bhakti* is the greatest,' is cited to show the significance given in *Advaita vedanta* to *Bhakti*. However, the next line of the same verse defines *Bhakti* as '*sva svarūpānusandhānam bhaktirityabhiyātē* : '(working towards) the realization of one's own actual form as (self as) Self (**non-different** from the Absolute) is called *Bhakti*.' (The interpretation of *Jñāna* and

Table 5.

Comparison between different schools of Vēdānta.**I. Common aspects.**

1. Consider *Brahma Sūtra-s*, *Upaniṣad-s* and *Bhagavat Gīta* as the sources of knowledge.
2. Distinction between self and Self important. True nature of self is considered to be Self.
3. Reality perceived in terms of the Absolute.
4. Self knowledge perceived in terms of self's relation with the Absolute.
5. Liberation from miseries conceived in terms of liberation from nature, modes and respective qualities.
6. Belief in the cycle of birth and death, cycle caused by bondage to *guṇa-s* and urges. The self as Self
7. Liberation perceived in terms of self's relation with Absolute.
8. Incorporation of laws of nature of *Karma Kāṇḍa* as a special case.

II. Differences.

<i>Advaita Vēdānta.</i>	<i>Bhakti Vēdānta.</i>
1. Issue : Self's relation with the Absolute.	
Non-difference.	Difference.
2. Issue : Nature of the Absolute.	
Formless/Attributeless.	With divine form and attributes.
3. Issue : Self-fulfilment.	
Attainment of non-difference (between self and the Absolute).	Attainment of association (of self as Self as with the Absolute).
4. Issue : Path of self-fulfilment.	
Knowledge (<i>Jñāna</i>).	Devotion (<i>Bhakti</i>).

the relative significance given to *Jnana* in the *Bhakti* schools is beyond the scope of this work).

The consequences of dividing *vedanta* into these two kinds (see table 5) in poetics have resulted in the interpretation of *santa rasa* as the ultimate by the Advaitic poetics and proposition of *Bhakti* as a *rasa* different from the eight *rasa-s* of Bharata and *santa rasa*, in the poetics of *till* as articulated by Rupa Goswami and Jiva Goswami, the theorists of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school.

3.4. *Santa rasa* described in terms of the experience of Self fulfilment

The above analysis of different schools of *vedanta* helps in analysing the principle mentioned in the last chapter (2.6.1), namely, the kind of *rasa* given by *Natya* depends on the kind of self fulfilment depicted in *Natya*, further. There, it was mentioned that *śānta rasa* is the *rasa* given by the *Natya* in which the self fulfilment depicted is the fulfilment of self as Self (just as the eight *rasa-s* mentioned by Bharata are the *rasa-s* given by the *Natya* in which the self fulfilment depicted is the fulfilment of self as *tmarga* seeking) and these plays (giving *śānta rasa*) were categorized under *Nāṭya* for *Mōkṣa* (just as the plays giving eight *rasa-s* were categorized under *Natya* for *tmarga*). Incidentally, almost all the plays which are considered to be giving *santa rasa*, i.e., the plays discussed under *Natya* for *Mokṣa*, depict self fulfilment from an Advaitic perspective, i.e., the fulfilment or endeavour for the fulfilment of self as Self non-different from the Absolute.

As seen earlier in this chapter (3.3), the ultimate goal of the self for *Advaita vedanta* is the self fulfilment with certain specific features such as self fulfilment in the form of self as Self non-different from the formless Absolute (*brahmādvaita*) which is also referred to as the knowledge' (*tattva*) - '*Jñāna*.' Thus, the plays which were earlier discussed under *Natya* for *Mōkṣa* are to be more precisely called as *Natya* for *Jnana*. (It goes without saying that there can be other kinds of plays which could be discussed under *Natya* for *Mokṣa*, but are to be more

precisely referred on the basis of the specific details of the ultimate goal in the **worldview** underlying those plays). These plays reveal the laws of nature from an Advaitic perspective, namely, the self which acts with the self knowledge of self as Self **non-different** from *Bramhan* ultimately realizes the same and the self which acts without this knowledge gets rewards and punishments for the compliance and non-compliance with *dharma*.

In this perspective, the fulfilment of the self knowledge of self as Self leads to total liberation from miseries, where as lack of such self knowledge, though gives rewards for compliance with *dharma* (along with punishments for **non-compliance**) does not liberate the **self** from miseries. It may be noted that this perspective is not in contradiction with the laws of nature of *Natya Trivarga*, but, in fact, incorporates those laws into itself as a special case. More over, almost all the authors of poetics who justified the possibility of *santa rasa* also take an Advaitic position with regard to **self** fulfilment.

Abhinava, the foremost and the most eloquent proponent of *śānta rasa*, is a follower of a metaphysical school called Kashmir **Shavism**. But he shares the view of self being **non-different** from the Absolute with *Advaita Vēdānta* (Vora in Kulkarni, 1986 : 67). Influence of *Advaita Vēdānta* on Abhinavagupta has been well recognized by many modern scholars who quote several passages from Abhinava to substantiate this point. (For example, Arjunwadkar in Kulkarni, 1986 : 56 and Vora in Kulkarni, 1986 : 67-68). As one of the evidences for the influences of *Advaita Vēdānta*, Vora cites Abhinava's passages equating *rasasvada* (the experience of *rasa*) with *bramhāsvāda* (the experience of *Bramhan*) (in Kulkarni, 1986 : 68).

In fact, Hariharanayaka, the author of *Bhartrhan Nivēdam*, a *santa rasa* play with an Advaitic theme, uses the phrase *bramhādvaita sukhātmakam* i.e., in the form of the happiness of (resulting from experiencing) the **non-difference** from *Bramhan* (the Absolute), in reference to the experience of

śānta rasa and adds that like *brahmādvaita sukha*, the experience of *santa rasa* is also a permanent experience (as quoted in Bhatta, 1996 : 90). This is a significant proposition in the poetics of *santa rasa* resulting from the influence of *Advaita Vēdānta* on it, because in contrast to the general *rasa* theory, where the theatrical experience of *rasa* is fundamentally distinguished from the day to day experience of emotions, here, the *rasa* is not being differentiated from the spiritual experience of the self's **non-difference** from *Bramhan* in its state as **Self** which is, in fact, a day to day experience for the selves who have self knowledge of self as Self. It may be noted that the differentiation between day to day life and **theatrical** experiences in *Natya* for *Trivarga* is because of the former being phenomenal and the latter transcendental, and the non-differentiation between the same in *Natya* for *Jnana* is because of both being transcendental. In the case of the eight *rasa-s* that belong to *Natya* for *Trivarga*, the day-to-day experience of emotions itself when depicted and thus experienced in a theatre become different from that **day-to-day** experience. Whereas, in the case of *śānta*, as seen from the Advaitic point of view, the experience of emotion depicted is the same as the experience in the theatre.

The influence of Advaitic *Vēdānta* resulted in viewing even the eight *rasa-s* other than *santa rasa* also measured up against the happiness resulting from the experience of non-difference with the Absolute. Vishwanatha describes the experience of the eight *rasa-s* as *brahmāśvāda saḥōdara* - **a cognate** of the experience of (non-difference from) *Bramhan* (1992 : 48). The word *saḥōdara* (literally sharing womb, here, congnate) deserves special attention here. On the one hand, it refers to similarity between the experience of eight *rasa-s* and the experience of *brahmāśvāda* - the relish of (the realization of self's **non-difference** from) *Bramhan*. But at the same time, the word is a careful choice to distinguish from the words like *sukhātmakam* used by Hariharanayaka, chosen to highlight the differences between *brahmāśvāda* and the experience of eight *rasa-s*. These differences, as may be noted from the discussions in the last sections (2.6 & 3.3) are (i) if the experience of the eight *rasa-s* is characterized by a predominance of *sattva* and a subduing of

rajas and *tamas* (2.7.3), the experience of *Bramhan*, which is otherwise known as *Jnana*, is characterized by total transcendence of the three modes (2.5.2) and (ii) if the experience of eight *rasa-s* is characterized by a predominance of happiness (2.6.3 & 2.3), the experience of *Bramhan* is a total happiness free from miseries (2.4).

Another point of difference is in the temporary nature of the experience of the eight *rasa-s* noted by Mammata (1995 : 99 - 100) and the permanent nature of the experience of *Bramhan* described by *Advaita Vedanta* (Shankaracharya, 1995 : 131,80). These differences can be applied to distinguish between the experience of *sānta rasa* given by *Natya* for *Jñāna* from the experience of eight *rasa-s* given by *Natya* for *Tnvarga* also. To put it otherwise, it can be stated that the above analysis of *Vēdānta* into Advaitic and *Bhakti Vēdānta* schools helps in identifying the distinction of *Natya* for *Jnana* (in comparison to the *Natya* for *Tnvarga*), more precisely, as its depiction of self fulfilment of self as Self non-different from the Absolute.

3.5 Self fulfilment in *rasa* language : *Līlā-s* as schematic, variegated and wide Choice Of *rasa-s*.

3.5.1. *Līlā-s* as the theatrical depictions of 'playful' Self.

It is such an analysis of *vedanta* into schools which helps in realizing the plays of *Uli* as a category different from the Drama, *Natya* for *Tnvarga* and even *Natya* for *Jnana*, and helps in locating its place as belonging to the *Bhakti Vēdānta* schools. As mentioned earlier (3.1), the *Līlā-s*, the subject matter of the present work, are being analysed from the point of view of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, one of the schools of *Bhakti Vedanta*.

Though the word *Uli* is used to refer to several different kinds of devotional theatre prevalent in North India, here the word is being used to refer to the devotional theatre of Vrindavan. The

Līlā-s of Vrindavan, though include several different types of *Līlā-s* like *Rāmāyaṇa Līlā*, *Mahābhārata Līlā* (named after the source of the plots), and *Bhaktā Līlā* (the *Līlā* based on the lives of the saints of Vrindavan and the devotees such as *Dhruva* and *Prahalāda* discussed in the *Purāṇa-s*),² the focus of the present work are *Rās Līlā-s*, which are the theatrical enactments of the stories of *Kṛṣṇa* and His devotees, chosen mainly from the tenth Book of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and from various other sources like the *Bṛamha Vairata Purāṇa*, writings of medieval devotional poets associated with Vrindavan such as Surdas, **Paramanandadas**, **Hita** Harivams and Swam Haridas.

Gaudiya Vaisnava school is based on the teachings of Chaitanya, the sixteenth century saint mentioned earlier (Intro), who is famous for spreading devotion through his *sankīrtan* (congregational chanting of the holy names) movement. The biographies available on him describe the depths of ecstasy into which he would plunge at the mere mention of the name of *Kṛṣṇa*. He exerted his influence over thousands of people of his time (which continues even today) with his extreme devotion to *Kṛṣṇa*. (plates 1-3). His contemporaries longed for and treasured his association and participated joyously in his devotional movement through song and dance.

Caitanya Caitāmrta, the most well known biography on Chaitanya explains His devotion as follows :

" When the Lord [Chaitanya here] saw the bluish neck of the peacocks, His remembrance of *Kṛṣṇa* immediately awakened, and He fell to the ground in ecstatic love" (*Mādhya Līlā* XVII.218)." He went to Kesi - tīrtha [which is even now identified in Vrindavan as a spot on the banks of the Yamuna], and when He saw the place where the rasa dance [The dance which *Kṛṣṇa* is supposed to have performed with cowherd damsels, i.e., *gopi-s* as an incarnation, going to be discussed in 4.3.4 & **4.3.5.2.11**]. Chaitanya is reported to have identified the place where *Kṛṣṇa* performed



P - 1

1-3. Paintings depicting Chaitanya's ecstasies (Introduction, 3.5.1& 3.9).

1. **Chaitanya** (in yellow robes and with aura around the head) leading an ecstatic **street.sankirtan** (congregational chanting of the holy names). The other saints with aura are his intimate associates Nityananda, Advaita, Gadadhara and **Srivasa**. Note residents of the street coming to join the team (**left**)



P - 2

2 Chaitanya used to trek into streets in his ecstatic *sankirtan* mood and his associates used to follow him lost in ecstasy.



P-3

3 Chaitanya (in the center) used to dance in ecstasy and faint whenever he went for the *darshan* (audience) of the deities of *Jagannatha* (the figure on the top) at *Puri, Orissa*, while his associates accompanied him.

Source : International Society for *Krishna* Consciousness, Vrindavan.

this dance in Vrindavan] had taken place, He immediately lost consciousness due to ecstatic love. When the Lord regained His senses, He began to roll on the ground. He would sometimes laugh, cry, dance and fall down. He would also chant very loudly" (*Madhya Līlā* XVIII. 72-73).

Else where it says,

" The Lord's body was restless, and tears, trembling and jubilation were manifest. He said very loudly, '**Chant** Kṛṣṇa! Chant Kṛṣṇa!' (*Madhya Līlā* XVII.205).

Discussing Chaitanya's emotions, David Kinsley says,

"His behaviour indicates he hovered somewhere between the ordinary world and the transcendental world of Kṛṣṇa....**To** use a **familiar** phrase, Caitanya behaved as though he were in but not of the world....The slightest stimulus could trigger within him a flood of emotions and release him from the confines of his immediate surroundings, or transform his immediate surroundings into transcendental realities. On the transcendental plane his devotional sentiments were consummated. When he entered that **"other"** realm his devotion found complete fulfilment. His intense devotion that came to be paradigmatic for the cult is **directly** associated with his ability to enter this transcendental plane almost at will" (1979:209-11).

It is this Chaitanya's spiritual experience and its articulation that has been elaborated in the form of Gaudiya Vaisnava school by **Rupa** Goswami (hereafter Rupa) in his *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* and *Ujjvala Nilamāni* and Jiva Goswami (hereafter Jiva) in his *Sat Sandarbha*. Jiva, who explained the philosophy Of Gaudiya Vaisnava **school** in his *Sat Sandarbha*, **considers** the *prasthāna traysa*, i.e., the *upāsāda-s*, the *Brahma Sūtra-s* and the *Gita* as the source of his discussion, like the other schools

of *vedanta* (2.5 & 2.8) do, but following Chaitanya, he holds the *Bhagavata Purna* (one of the eighteen *Purāṇa-s* attributed to Vyāsa) (2.2.2) as the essence of the *Vedas* and thus as the natural commentary on the *Brahma Sūtra-s* (*Tattva Sandarbha*, section 19). Based on this consideration, he and the other proponents of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school constantly refer to the *Bhagavata Purana* for authority. This methodology of the scholars of *Gaudiya vaisnava* school creates an interesting situation because while discussing the poetics of the *Bhagavata Purana*, the book that is being analyzed itself becomes the source of authority for the validity of the analysis. Jiva, however, adapts the method of constantly establishing the agreement between the *Bhagavata Purana* and the *prasthanaya trayā*, to avoid any impression of circularity in his method. This agreement is conceived by viewing the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* as a narrative form elaboration of discursive form of the Aphorisms of the *Brahma Sūtra-s*, just as the *Puranas* and the *Itihāsa-s* are considered as the narrative form elaboration of the *Vedas* in general (2.2.2 & 2.3).

In other words, the narrative form elaboration found in the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* is considered to be pertaining only to the *Vēdānta*, i.e., *Jnana Kārda* section of *Vedas*. Of course, this view of the *Bhagavata Purana* by the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school includes the consideration of the *Bhagavata Purana* to be an elaboration of *Bhakti* point of view of *Vedanta*, especially, the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* point of view. Thus, *Līlā-s*, from such a point of view, can be viewed as theatrical form presentation of *Vedanta*, especially, *Bhakti* schools of *Vedanta*, and obviously, for *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, of the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school of *Vedanta*, just as *Natya* for *Trivarga* is a theatrical presentation of the *Karma Kārda* point of view of *Vēda-s* and *Natya* for *Jnana*, that of the *Advaita* school of *Vedanta* (2.4.2, 2.6.1 & 2.8).

Though either Rupa or Jiva did not directly discuss the poetics of *Līlā* performances of Vrindavan, their analysis of the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* runs in the form of poetics of the *Bhagavata Purāṇa*. The *Bhagavata Purana* being the major source of *Līlā-s*, this analysis can be useful as the

poetics of *Līlā-s*. In fact, **Rupa** and Jiva themselves suggest such a treatment when (i) Rupa, in his *Nāṭaka Candrika*, adheres to **Bharata's** analysis of the elements of plot as they are, only examples being given from his own play *Lalitā Madhava* (containing the story of *Kṛṣṇa*); and (ii) in *Pṛiti Sandarbha* (section 111), Jiva applies the principles of his analysis of the *Bhagavata Purana* to the poetics of *dṛśya Kāvya* (visible poem, i.e., theatre). The validity of this treatment is further proved in the forthcoming sections of this work. With this understanding the phrase poetics of *Līlā* will be used in the forthcoming discussion to refer to the poetics of the *Bhagavata Purana*.

The Genesis of *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school is traced to a conversation between **Chaitanya** and Sanātana **Goswami** (hereafter Sanātana), a desciple of Chaitanya. This conversation is described in *Chaitanya Cantanṛta* by Krishnadas **Kaviraja**. In this work, Sanātana, on meeting Chaitanya, asks **Who** am I? Why do I experience the threefold miseries? (*Madhya Līlā* XX.102). In his reply to Sanātana, using the word 'Kṛṣṇa' of the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* (see 3.5.3) in reference to the Absolute, Chaitanya says, (i) the **self's** actual/original identity is being *Kṛṣṇa's* eternal **servant** - *jīvēśvarūpa hōya kṛṣṇēra nityadas* (*Madhya Līlā* XX.108); and (ii) forgetting (this relationship **with**) *Kṛṣṇa* **is the cause of miseries** (*Madhya Līlā* XX.117).

It may be interesting to note that the above conversation begins exactly with the same question - 'Who am I?', mentioned by the Deers (1.1) as a question raised by the self through out the history of Drama. It may also be remembered that according to the Deers, self knowledge is the answer to this question and self fulfilment is experiencing that answer in reality. Thus, the above conversation may be seen to be presenting knowledge of being an eternal servant **of Kṛṣṇa** - the **Absolute**, as **self** knowledge and the failure in the fulfilment of this knowledge as the cause of miseries.

It may also be remembered that the number three used in connection with the miseries in

the above conversation is coincidentally the same as the number used in connection with misfortunes by Schopenhauer (1.3). It was shown in the first chapter (1.3) that the conflict presented in Drama also can be identified to be of three in number. As far as the above conversation is concerned, the use of the phrase 'threefold miseries' is part of the general usage of the phrase 'tāpatraya,' three burnings, i.e., three miseries (for example, see the *Bhagavata Purana* 1.1.1 and *Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya Līlā XXII.13*) to refer to *ādhyātmika klēśa-s*, *ādhibhautika klēśa-s*, and *ādhidaiṁika klēśa-s*.³ Whether these threefold miseries are related or similar to the threefold conflicts and/or threefold misfortunes discussed in the first chapter (1.3), or not, is beyond the scope of the present discussion. But what is common between the conflicts, misfortunes and miseries is their being related to failure in self fulfilment and to the search for self knowledge either as causes or consequences.

Apparently, Chaitanya's answer seems to be just the same as the general theory of *Bhakti vedānta* mentioned earlier (3.3). But further elaboration of each of the words in this answer like *das*, *Kṛṣṇa*, and *nitya*, bring out the distinction of Chaitanya's school, with regard to the self and its fulfilment, in comparison to the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta*. The word *das* refers, according to this elaboration, to a specific kind of relation of self with the Absolute. One of the major and conspicuous distinctions of *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* theory in comparison to the other schools of *Bhakti vedānta* is with regard to this relation.

Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava school conceives a simultaneous difference and non-difference of the self as Self from the Absolute. This conception is based on the consideration of selves as Selves as parts of the Absolute. Thus, self as Self is non-different from the Absolute, because it is a part of the same whole called the Absolute. But, it is also different from the Absolute, because its self knowledge is that of self as Self different from the Absolute. In this sense, the selves as Selves are considered to be separated parts (*vibhinna aṅga-s*) of the Absolute (*Paramāṭma Sandarbha*,

section 8). Intellectually, this simultaneous difference and non-difference of the selves as Selves from *Kṛṣṇa* is inconceivable. At best, it can be explained through an analogy. Jīva, in his commentary on *Paramātmā Sandarbha* called *śarva samvādinī* (1984 : 29), quotes the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II.1.20), which gives the following analogy to illustrate the relation between the Absolute and the selves as Selves. This *Upaniṣad* compares the selves as Selves with the sparks of a fire. The sparks of fire belong to fire (here the Absolute) and are yet different from fire. In this sense, they are one and different from the source, i.e., fire. Similarly, the selves as Selves too are simultaneously one and different from *Kṛṣṇa*. This intellectually inconceivable relationship of simultaneous oneness and difference' between the selves as Selves and *Kṛṣṇa* is called by Jīva, in his *śarva samvādinī*, as *acintya bhēdābhēda* (1984 : 293 & 298). Thus, it may be noted that the *das* relation between the self as Self and *Bhagavan*, mentioned earlier, read with this description of the relation between the two, leads to the idea that *das* relation is, in fact, a (separated) part whole relation. (The other *Bhakti* schools have their respective notions of relations between the self and the Absolute, discussion of which is beyond the scope of this thesis).

Another significant distinction of *Gaudiya Vaisṇava* school in comparison to the other schools of *Bhakti Vedānta*, with regard to the relation between the self and the Absolute, is based on its recognition of the formless aspect of the Absolute as simultaneously existing along with the divine form aspect of the Absolute. The schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* such as *Dvaita* and *Vaiṣṭādvaita*, summarily reject the validity of the formless aspect of the Absolute and consider the Absolute as possessing a divine form and a divine form alone. *Gaudiya Vaisṇava* understanding, in this regard, differs even from the *Advaita Vēdānta* perspective, because *Advaita vedānta* recognizes only the formless aspect of the Absolute as its ultimate existence. Contrarily, giving the same name *Brahman*, given by *Advaita Vedānta*, to the formless aspect of the Absolute (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, sections 2, 3, 81 & 89), and referring to the formful or the divine form understanding of the Absolute as *Bhagavān* (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 2, 3, 81 & 89), the *Gaudiya Vaisṇava* school

considers the Absolute as simultaneously existing as *Bramhan* and *Bhagavan* also. In fact, the Absolute is considered to be simultaneously, along with these two forms, existing in a third form, namely, *Paramatma* which is the name given to the aspect of the Absolute as the organizer of (laws of nature of) the universe (*Paramatma Sandarbha*, section 1).

The mode/state transcendental to the three modes namely, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, described as the mode/state of self as Self in the last chapter (2.5.2) and that of the Absolute in this chapter (3.3), is referred to as *iuddha sattva* or *śuddha sattva* (pure *sattva*) in Gaudiya Vaisnava school (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 75), borrowing the word *śuddha sattva* from sources like *Padma Purana* (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, sections 72 & 78) and this is considered to be the feature common to *Bramhan*, *Paramatma* and *Bhagavan* aspects of the Absolute. This mode is called pure mode of *sattva*, because unlike the *sattva*, discussed earlier as one of the mode in the personality of the self, this *sattva* is free from *rajas* and *tamas*. In other words, the (*ś*)*uddha sattva* which is the nature of *Bramhan*, *Paramatma* and *Bhagavan* aspects of the Absolute, is different from and transcendental to the three modes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (*Paramatma Sandarbha*, section 98).

Since *Advaita Vēdānta* focuses on the formless aspect and the Gaudiya vaisnava school on the *Bhagavan* aspect, the discussion here, on the interaction between *Advaita vedanta* and *Gauḍīya vaisnava school*, is centered around these two aspects.

The (*ś*)*uddha sattva* state exists without attributes or activities in the *Bramhan* aspect whereas, in the *Bhagavan* aspect, it exists as aggregate of all possible auspicious attributes (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 2) and in a form of love which is different from the *kāma puruṣārtha* mentioned earlier (2.5), and which is sublimely above and different from the earthly desires. This transcendental loveful nature of *Bhagavan* is what is described as *Mis 'playfulness,'* in the sense that *Bhagavan* is devoid of any purpose or motive (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 47) other than the

expression of transcendental love. The selves as Selves related to *Bhagavan* are considered to be sharing this transcendental love in the form of 'playful' activities (*Paramatma Sandarbha*, section 47 and *Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 79) with Him which means that these activities are performed by the selves as Selves without any expectation or purpose of fulfilling mundane desires or the otherworldly desires (*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, section 23). It may be noted that the conception of *Bhagavan* implies and is implied by a self knowledge in the form of self as Self in a transcendental loving relation with the divine form, just as the conception of *Bramhan* aspect of the Absolute, as conceived in *Advaita vsdanta*, implies and is implied by a self knowledge in the form of self as Self non-different from *Bramhan*. The word *dās* used in Chaitanya's answer to Sanatoria, in fact, refers to this self knowledge in the form of self as Self in transcendental loving relation with *Bhagavan*. Though *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school seems to be sharing certain commonness with *Advaita Vēdānta* in recognizing the formless *Bramhan* aspect, its place among the *Bhakti* schools of *Vēdānta* lies in its consideration of the *Bhagavan* (the divine form) aspect as primary and the *Bramhan* and *Bhagavan* as two different manifestations of it (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, sections 2, 82 & 89). In other words, if as mentioned earlier (3.3), in *Advaita Vēdānta*, the divine form of the Absolute (given the name *Bhagavan* in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school) is seen as a manifestation of formless aspect of the Absolute (given the name *Bramhan* in both *Gaudiya vaisnava* school and in *Advaita Vedanta*), manifest in this form for the meditators who can not meditate on the formless *Bramhan*, which is the ultimate Reality, in *Gaudiya vaisnava* school, *Bhagavan* is viewed from a different perspective and is considered to be the ultimate Reality, the source of *Bramhan* and hence primary.

Based on this primacy, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school considers that those who consider the *Bramhan* aspect of the Absolute as the ultimate and consider the divine form aspect as a manifestation of the *Bramhan* aspect- obviously referring to the *Advaita* Vedantins, naming them as the followers Of *Jnana* (*Bhakti Sandarbha*, section 215), are, in fact, talking about *Bhagavan* only, but perceive only His formless manifestation. As a consequence of this view about the *Advaita*

Vedantic perspective of the Absolute, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school considers that the **self** with the self knowledge based on *Advaita Vēdānta* does not, in fact, attain **non-difference** from *Bramhan* aspect of the *Bhagavan*, but attains only the formlessness (*Bhakti Sandarbha*, section 215), which is a feature of *Bhagavan* in His manifestation as *Bramhan*, since self as **Self** is, in fact, only a separated part of that formless *Bramhan* (just as it is only a separated part of *Bhagavan* aspect also). Because of this attainment of formlessness, such selves do not attain the **sharing** of transcendental loving relation with the *Bhagavan* aspect of *Bhagavan*.

Thus, another difference between *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school and most of the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* can be seen to be lying in the recognition and non-recognition, respectively, of the validity of a formless aspect of *Bhagavan*.

Though transcendental loving relation is common in both the *Gaudiya vaisnava* school and other *Bhakti* schools, in the interpretation of *das*, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school gives an extraordinarily great significance to the concept of transcendental love, gives it the name *priti* and considers it to be a fifth *purusartha*, different from the **four puruṣārtha-s** *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *mōksa* mentioned earlier (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 1). It may be noted that this consideration provides scope for self fulfilment of the self knowledge (in the **form** of transcendental loving associate of *Bhagavan*) being the same as the fulfilment for the urge (of *priti*), in the same way as in the case of the concepts of *Natyā tor Tnvarga* and *Natyā for Jñāna* (2.5). Here, it should be noted that while most of the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* treat the attainment of the ultimate self fulfilment in the form of self as **Self** in a transcendental loving relation with the Absolute, which exists only in a divine form, as the meaning of *moksa purusartha*, *Gaudiya vaisnava* school uses the word in a general sense of the urge for liberation from **miseries**, from the cycle of birth and death, from the three modes and its qualities, which is the cause and effect of self fulfilment in the form of self as **Self** (in any one of the forms conceived by the different schools of *Vēdānta*) and thus includes the

ultimate urge of an *Advaita* practitioner under this (*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, sections 1 & 3).

The urge for *pṛīti* is distinguished from the urge for *mōksa* by *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, on account of the emphasis on the ultimate attainment of the transcendental love, to the extent of not caring for the attainment or no attainment of liberation from miseries, from modes, from their qualities, from the cycle of birth and death and so on. Of course, in fact, *Gaudiya vaisnava* school recognizes that the attainment of transcendental love automatically implies liberation of this kind, since *pṛīti* is made up of (*viśuddha sattva* (supra). As already mentioned (3.3), this self fulfilment and the path of performing activities leading towards such self fulfilment is called *Bhakti* and the selves following such a path and those who attain such a self fulfilment are called *bhakta-s* in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, just like in any *Bhakti* schools of *Vēdānta*. In other words, the *dās* relation mentioned by Chaitanya in his answer to Sanātana, is called *Bhakti* and the selves having or striving towards this relation are called *bhakta-s*.

The content of *Līlā-s* is the depiction of *bhakta-s* and their *Bhakti*, chosen from various sources like the *Bhagavata Purāṇa*, other *Puranas* and *Itihāsa-s*, and other sources such as the poetic works of the devotional saints mentioned above (supra). Followers of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school look at such depictions as narrative form presentations of the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school of *Vēdānta*.

In these sources of *Līlā-s*, all the stories are depicted to be happenings on earth. The happenings are usually in the form of the activities of *bhakta-s* in association with the Absolute who is depicted in these stories to have been 'born' on earth in human and non-human earthly being forms. For example, in the story of *Prahāda-Narasimha*, described in the *Bhagavata Purnā* (Book VII) and other *Purāṇa-s*, *Prahāda* is the *bhakta* and the Absolute is depicted to be 'born' breaking out of a pillar in the form of a man-lion called *Narasimha*. In *Ramayana*, there are several *bhakta* characters like *Hanumān* and *Lakṣmana*, and the Absolute is depicted to be 'born' in the form of a prince, the eldest

SON Of king *Dasaratha* of *Ayōdhya*. In *Bhāgavata Purana* (Book X), there are numerous *bhakta* characters including the entire population of the cowherd hamlet called *VrndaSvana*, where the Absolute was found 'born' in (in fact, 'born' at a different place and brought to) the house of the head of the hamlet called *Nanda*. It is in this birth that the Absolute is called *Kṛṣṇa*, and here He is depicted to have spent His childhood as a cowherd boy, going after the cows to graze them, and playing with His mother *Yasōdā*, father *Nanda*, cowherd boyfriends (*gōpa-s*) and girlfriends (*gōpī-s*), doing mischief, killing demons and so on.

The Other schools Of *Bhakti Vedanta* like *Dvaita* and *Vīśiṣṭādvaita* give the name *Nārāyaṇa/Viṣṇu* to the Absolute taking 'birth' on earth, as exemplified above. They consider that He resides in an upper¹ world called *vaikuntha* and these schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* consider His taking 'birth' on earth as His *avatara* (*ava-tara* = to descend; *avatara* = descending), i.e., descendance on earth. (see Corcoran, 1995 : 30-52, for a discussion on the views of various *Sāṃpradāya-s* of Vrindavan on the understanding of *Kṛṣṇa* as an *avatara* of *Viṣṇu* or *Narayana*). These schools consider that by performing their associational activities with a transcendental loving relation with the Absolute in his respective *avatāra* forms, the *bhakta-s* get liberated and attain (company or feature Of) *Narayana/Viṣṇu* in *Vaikuntha*.

Gaudiya Vaisnava school, like the other schools of *Bhakti vedanta* considers the 'upper' world where the Absolute resides as *Vaikuntha* only, but considers that the Absolute manifests in unlimitedly multitudinous forms in a corresponding unlimited multitudinous forms/planes of *Vaikuntha*. The forms (like *Narasimha*, *Rama* and *Kṛṣṇa*) are considered to be existing (as *Narasimha*, *Rama* and *Kṛṣṇa*) eternally only in different forms/planes of *Vaikuntha* corresponding to their respective forms "before taking birth" on earth (*Caṭanya Cartamṛta*, *Madhya Līlā* XX.264 and *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, sections 26 & 29).

This idea that the Absolute exists in various forms such as *Rama*, *Narasimha* and *Kṛṣṇa* in the various forms of *Vaikuntha*, leads *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school not only to reject the idea that all these forms are the phenomenal manifestations of a single form called *Narayana* (*Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, section 29 & 153), i.e., the *avatāra-s* of *Narayana*, but also makes it propose a different idea of *avatara* itself. *Avatara* of the forms of *Bhagavan* (such as *Rama*), according to *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, is the "descending down" of the same form of the Absolute (such as *Rama*) from His abode *Vaikuntha*, into the phenomenal realm (*Caitanya Caritamṛta*, *Madhya Līlā* XX.264, *Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, sections 28 & 153, and *Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.2.1 and the commentary of Baladeva Vidyabhusana on this verse).

But this taking 'birth on earth' or *avatara* (descending down) is explained by *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school in a different way than the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta*. Here comes a significant notion of *Gaudiya vaisnava* school called *śakti* (energy) of *Bhagavan* which is used to explain the connection between the 'upper' world *vaikuntha* and the phenomenal world. What is called as the 'upper' world is considered to be the *antaranga śakti* ("internal energy") of *Bhagavan* (*Paramatma Sandarbha*, section 47) and is characterized by (*vi*)*suddha* *sattva* (*Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 72), a state beyond the three modes, and the phenomenal realm including the earth is considered to be His *bahīrangā śakti* ("external energy") (*Paramatma Sandarbha*, section 99) and as mentioned earlier (2.5 .2), is considered to be characterized by the three modes. According to this concept, the concept of *Vaikuntha* as an 'upper' world need not necessarily be taken as being spatially upper. The all pervading nature of the Absolute, mentioned earlier, is explained by Conceiving an all pervading nature of *Vaikuntha* in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school (*Caitanya Caritamṛta*, *Mi Līlā*, 1.5.15 and *Bhagavat Sandarbha*, section 72). Thus, for *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, *Vaikuntha* IS here' also just as it is everywhere. In other words, both the internal energy which is beyond the three modes and the external energy which is characterized by the three modes exist spatially at the same place. Or, to be more precise, the same spatial location in its state as

characterized by the three modes is considered to be the external energy and in its state as characterized by *(v)suddha sattva* (the state beyond the three modes) is considered to be the internal energy of *Bhagavan*. It should be noted that these two realms (*vaikuntha* and the phenomenal realm), which are the internal and the external energies of *Bhagavan*, are corresponding to and hence as real as the two states characterized by *(v)suddha sattva* and the three modes respectively. As mentioned through out the past discussion, these features of the Absolute are corresponding to and hence imply and are implied by two kinds of self knowledge, namely, self as Self beyond the three modes and self characterized by the three modes. In other words, self knowledge in the form of self as Self beyond the three modes leads to the experience of the internal energy of *Bhagavan* or *Vaikuntha* and the self knowledge in the form of self characterized by three modes leads to the experience of the phenomenal world. Thus, all selves in their self as Self beyond the three modes identity are always in a transcendental associated relation with *Bhagavan* (of course in His internal energy, i.e., *Vaikuntha*). This fact of a transcendental **associational** relation (of self as Self) being an eternal reality, is interpreted to be what is being referred to as *mtya* in the **answer** by Chaitanya to Sanatana. *Gaudiya vaisnava* school considers that it is the state of being beyond the three modes of nature, which is considered to be the feature of *Vaikuntha*, as mentioned earlier, which is being perceived or metaphorically described as 'upper.' Thus, the "descending **down**" of different forms of *Bhagavan* from the 'upper world' to the 'lower world' is interpreted **as the** manifestation of these forms of *Bhagavan* in His internal energy, into His external energy. This manifesting is explained **just as a 'play' (pastime)** of *Bhagavan* in the sense that it is part of the 'playful' nature characteristic of *Bhagavan* to manifest in this way.

Just as the forms of the Absolute like *Narasimha*, *Rama* and *Krsna* are considered to be existing in the same form even in *Vaikuntha*, and are considered to be manifest in the phenomenal world and are perceived to be **descending down'** or **taking birth'** on earth, even the respective

bhakta-s of these forms are also considered to be existing in the same form and to be performing the same associational activities even in the internal energy (*Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, sections 136 & 15) and these forms and their activities are considered to be manifest in the phenomenal world and are perceived to be **born** on earth' and 'happening on earth' as part of the *avatara* (descending down') of the *Bhagavan*. These associational activities involving the *Bhagavān* and His *bhakta-s* are called *Līlā-s* (plays'), and in their manifestations in the internal energy, they are given the name *apṛakata Līlā-s*, meaning unmanifest *Līlā-s*, since for the self with self knowledge in the form of self **characterized** by the three modes, the internal energy and hence the *Līlā-s* as part of it, can not be 'Seen' (*Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, section 153); they in their manifestation in their phenomenal world are given the name *prakata Līlā-s* (*Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, section 153), since they can be 'Seen' by even these selves.

But there is an apparent difference between the *apṛakata Līlā-s* and *prakata Līlā-s*. *Apṛakata Līlā-s*, when manifest in the *prakata form*, not only manifest as they are but also manifest in the form of an additional kind *tīfUu-%*, in which the manifestation of *Bhagavan* kills demons. Articulating this consideration, Bhaktivinode Thakur classifies *prakata Līlā-s* into two kinds, namely, *nitya* (eternal) *Līlā-s* and *naimittika* (purposive) *Līlā-s*. He places demon killing *Līlā-s* under *naimittika Līlā-s* and considers the other *Līlā-s* as the direct manifestation of the *Līlā-s* of *apṛakata Līlā*, which exist only in the *nitya* form (1985 : 405). The demon killing activities of the *prakata Līlā* can be seen to be the manifestation of the principle that self knowledge of the self devoid of its actual identity suffers from miseries. Probably, because of the absence of the selves with self knowledge devoid of the actual identity in the *apṛakata Līlā-s*, demons are said to be absent in *apṛakata Līlā-s*.

Thus, though the recognition of the divine form (*Bhagavan* form) of the Absolute as primary stands as a common factor between Gaudiya *Vaiṣṇava* school and the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* mentioned above, this conception of *Bhagavan* and His abode *Vaikuntha* in terms of (i)

multiple forms; (ii) internal and external energies; and (iii) manifest and unmanifest activities (plays') marks another major point of distinction between them, with regard to the understanding about the *dās* relation mentioned above, in the answer of Chaitanya to Sanātana. If the above mentioned schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta*, like *Viśistādvaita* consider the various kinds of *das* relations found between different *bhakta-s* like *Prahlāda*, *Hanumān*, *gopa-s* and *gōpī-s* and the respective forms of *Bhagavan* like *Narasimha*, *Rama* and *Kṛṣṇa* as various kinds of devotional relations of the selves as Selves with *Nārāyaṇa/Viṣṇu* residing in *Vaikunṭha*, *Gauḍiya* Vaisnava school understands these various kinds of devotional relations as the manifest forms of the unmanifest transcendental associational relations manifest in the external energy from the various forms/planes of internal energy where these selves as Selves, forms of *Bhagavān* and their assoational relations exist in the same form as they are manifest

It is with this perspective that the various stories performed in *Līlā-s* from various sources like the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavata Purana* are viewed by the followers of *Gauḍiya* Vaisnava school. In Drama and *Natya* for *Trivarga*, the content (in other words, the object of imitation) is the mundane activities of human beings on earth. In Greek Tragedy and *Natya* for *Trivarga* these activities on earth are viewed as governed by the laws of nature according to which the gods in the upper worlds administer human activities (1.2.1 & 2.2.1). (As shown in 1.2.3, 1.2.4 and 1.2.5 respectively, in later Drama these laws were interpreted through other kinds of determinism such as the hereditary, the psychological, and the historical and the social). The perception towards what is enacted on the stage in *Līlā* performances has a significant distinction in this regard. As mentioned above, the content of *Līlā* performances are stories in which the activities of the Absolute and His devotees on earth are described and these stories, according to *Gauḍiya* Vaisnava school, are only manifestations of the activities of the Absolute and the selves as Selves in the *antarangā śakti* (*Vaikunṭha*) into the *bahiranga śakti* (phenomenal world). In other words, what is being enacted in *us* performances is the upper world as manifest on earth. It is

in this sense that *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school looks at *Līlā* as theatrical representation of *Gauḍiya Vaisnava* worldview.

3.5.2. *Bhakti* rasa, the experience of Self fulfilment.

What is interesting for a student of theatre in the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* outlook towards *Līlā* is, apart from treating *Līlā* performances as the theatrical (playform) representation of the earthly manifestation of the 'playful' activities of self as Self and *Bhagavān* in the 'upper world' (3.5.1), these activities in the 'upper world' themselves are talked in a theatrical (play) language in this philosophy. It may be noted that if theoreticians of *śānta* rasa used the language of *vedānta* to talk about a theatrical experience, in calling *śānta* rasa experience *brahmādvaita sukhātmaka* and the experience of eight *rasa-s* as *brahmānanda sahōdara* (3.4), *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school does the other way round of this, by using the language of theatrical aesthetics to talk about the ideas of *vedānta*, i.e., the transcendental loving associational activities ('plays') involving self as Self and *Bhagavan*. This can be seen in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school's use of words like *rasa*, *vibhava*, *sthayi bhava*, *vyabhicārībhāva* (2.6.1), in reference to *Bhagavan*, selves as Selves, the objects and experiences considered to be constituting the 'upper world' (*Vaikuṇṭha*).

The *Gaudiya Vaisnava* description of *Vedānta* in this language is that the selves as Selves experience various *rasa-s* as a result of their transcendental loving relation with *Bhagavan*. Since this transcendental loving relation is termed as *Bhakti*, as mentioned earlier (3.5.1), these *rasa-s* are called *Bhakti rasa-s*. For the *Bhakti* rasa experience of the selves as Selves, *Bhagavan* is *alambana vibhāva* (locative object). In other words, experience of *Bhakti* rasa of the selves as Selves implies and is implied by a self fulfilment of *das* self knowledge. Even *Bhagavan* experiences *Bhakti* rasa, because of His transcendental loving associational activities with the selves as Selves. But His *Bhakti* rasa experience is **multiform**. For each of His *Bhakti* rasa experience, a **self** of Self becomes

āiambana vibhāva. Here, the *Bhakti rasa* experience of neither *Bhagavan* nor the selves as Selves is that of an audience. This is something like the experience of eros, by both the participants of a loving pair, in the company of each other in day to day life. The eros experiencing partner is experiencing it because of the other partner. It is in this sense that the other part becomes *kāraṇa* (cause) of the eros experience of the experiencing partner. The resulting physical responses in the experiencing partner are called *kārya-s* (effects). It may be remembered that (*aiambana*) *vibhāva* and *anubhāva-s* are the theatrical parallels for the concepts of cause and effect as real life entities. Thus, the vocabulary of *aiambana vibhāva* being used for the cause' of *Bhakti rasa* experience, in the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* language mode) of *Vādānta*, is similar to what is happening in poetics. Both in the theatrical language and *Gaudiya Vaisnava rasa* language model Of *Vaikuntha*, *aiambana vibhava* is different from the *kāraṇa* of day to day life, because of its being transcendental (*alaukika*). Since the *Priti* (transcendental love) experience, which is being called the *Bhakti rasa* experience of *Bhagavan* and the selves as Selves, though transcendental to eros (3.5.1), has an eros like situation, on account of being an experience shared by both the partners, both the partners in *Priti* (trancendental loving) experience are also being termed as mutually *aiambana vibhāva-s*.

It was mentioned earlier that *Gaudiya vaisnava* school considers self knowledge, in the form of self as Self, to be varied in correspondence with and in an implies - implied by relation with the various forms Of *Bhagavan* like *Narasimha*, *Rama* and *Kṛṣṇa*. The above mentioned mutual *aiambana vibhava* situation and mutual *Bhakti rasa* experience for *Bhagavan* and selves as Selves applies to all these kinds of self knowledge, In fact, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school analyzes the self knowledge further and considers that each of the self knowledges involving a form of *Bhagavan* like *Narasimha*, *Rama* and *Kṛṣṇa*, is again of various kinds. This is because of the variety in the self knowledge in the form of self as Self characterized by the transcendental loving relation of self as Self with each of these forms of *Bhagavan*. This relation is one of the various kinds of relations, like servants relation with a master, mother's relation with son and a friend's relation with a friend. Each of these kinds

of self knowledge implies a kind of *Pṛiti* in the form of servantly, motherly and friendly, experienced by self as Self. Reciprocally, it also implies kinds of *Pṛiti* like masterly, sonly and friendly, experienced by the respective forms of *Bhagavan*. Parallel to the concept *sthāyi bhāva* (consistent emotion) of *rasa* found in the poetics of *Nāṭya* (2.6.1), the same word *sthāyi bhāva* is used in the *Gauḍiyya Vaiṣṇava* *rasa* language of *Vēdānta* also, to refer to the consistent emotion which is experienced in the form of *Bhakti rasa*. If the *sthāyi bhava* in *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga* is 'sthāyi (stable/consistent) on account of its being relished consistently through out a particular scene, Situation of theatrical performance, the *sthāyi bhava* in the *Bhakti rasa* experience of *Gauḍiyya Vaiṣṇava* *rasa* language of *Vedānta* is 'sthāyī' because it is eternal (3.5.1). This *sthāyi bhava* is given the name *rati* here (*Bhakti Rāsamṛta Sindhu* II.5.2). The word *rati* has a convenience for several purposes here. Firstly, it sounds like the word *rati* (= eros), the *sthāyi bhava* of *sṛṅgāra* *rasa*. But, *rati* which is the *sthāyi bhava* of *sṛṅgāra* is eros. The similarities and dissimilarities of *Pṛiti* experience with eros have been discussed above (3.5.1). Secondly, *rati* is considered to be commonly existing in all the eight *rasa* experiences in the poetics of *Nāṭya*, in the sense that all the eight *rasa* experiences are eight different kinds of relishes (*rati* = relish). In this sense also, the word *rati* applies to the *rasa* in the 'upper world' because it is also a kind of 'relish.' Thirdly, the word *rati* is a term of *Vēdānta* also, where it is used to refer to the spiritual relish of the self resulting from the fulfilment of self as Self.

Now, the existence of *Pṛiti* in various forms like servantly, motherly and friendly, mentioned above, implies the existence of the *sthāyi bhava* also in correspondingly varied forms. *Gauḍiyya vaiṣṇava* school recognizes five of such forms of *sthāyi bhava*, implied by five kinds of *Pṛiti* or transcendental loving relation between the self as Self and *Bhagavan*. Rupa (*Bhakti Rāsamṛta Sindhu* II.5) and Jiva (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 84) discuss the five kinds of *sthāyi bhāva* with examples. But they give different names for these *sthāyi bhāva*. Rupa gives them the names *śuddha*, *pṛiti*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *prīya*, whereas, Jiva gives them the names *jñāna bhakti*, *bhakti*,⁴ *vātsalya*, *mātri* and *kānta bhava*

(*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, section 84). The names Of these *bhava*-Sas used in *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* (*Madhya Līlā* XIX.183-4), namely, *santa*, *dasya*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalya* and *madhura*, have got established in the convention of *Gaudiya vaishnava* literature and discourse. This work uses the same henceforth.

The mood of *Sanaka* and *Sanandana* (see Appendix 10), who conceive of *Bhagavan* as being made of *Bramhan* (*Bramhaghana*), is called *śānta bhava* (neutral mood). Their *bhava* is neutral because, owing to their conception of *Bhagavan* as nothing but *Bramhan*, unlike the devotees with the other four *bhāva*-S, they do not maintain any specific relationship, such as that of a servant, a friend, a parent and a beloved, with *Bhagavan*. *Śānta bhāva*, the emotion of a *santa bhakta* discussed here, needs to be distinguish from the *bhava* of *śānta rasa*, the emotion of a self with Advaitic self fulfilment (3.4). According to *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, a self with Advaitic self fulfilment is conceived to be having *jñāna* (the 'knowledge' of non-difference with *Bramhan*) and since such a self is conceived to be viewing *Bramhan* to be the ultimate reality, it can be expected to be having no *rati* for *Bhagavan* (the divine form of the Absolute). On the other hand, the *śānta bhakta* has *rati* for *Bhagavan*. But unlike the other kinds of *bhakta*-S, who have a feeling of 'mineness' for *Bhagavan* (*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, section 84), this *bhakta*, as mentioned above, is devoid of such a feeling since he consideres *Bhagavan* to be *Bramhaghana* (made of *Bramhan*) (*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, section 84). His expression of transcendental love for *Bhagavan* is in the fom of activities like singing the glories of *Bhagavan* (*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, section 84), but not in the form of participating in the associational activities, in which, the other kinds of *bhakta*-S, possessing 'mineness,' participate. This kind of *Pṛīti* is called *santa Pṛīti* (neutral transcendental love) and that is why, this *bhakta* is called *santa bhakta* (a neutral devotee). It may be noted that in the case of a self with Advaitic self fulfilment conceived by the *Advaita Vēdānta*, *Pṛīti* does not exist at all according to *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, because such a self is conceived to be not having *rati* (relish) for *Bhagavan* (the divine form of the Absolute).

-described in *Bhagavata Purana* (X.50.16) as charioteer of *Kṛṣṇa* in *Dvaraka* (see Appendix 4),

the citizens of *Dvāraka* and others, who consider the Absolute as their worshipping master and themselves as His servants, with a feeling of awe and reverence for Him, are said to be possessing *dasya bhava*. It may be noted, here, that the *dasya* (servantly) relation is different from or at the most only a kind of *das* relation mentioned earlier (3.5.1). Considering *dasya* (servantly) relation to be only one kind of *das* relation, itself stands as an evidence that the word *das* (though, literally, means a servant) is being used here in a broad sense to include all the different kinds of transcendental loving relations like *dasya* and those going to be mentioned hence forth. The associates of *Bhagavān* Such as *Yudhiṣṭira*, *Arjuna* (both *Kṛṣṇa*'s Cousins. See Appends 4) and *Śrīdāma* (the cowherd friend of *Kṛṣṇa*), who consider Him as their friend, are said to be expressing *sakhya bhava*. The *bhava* of *Nanda* and *Yasōdā*, who take *Kṛṣṇa* to be their child, is called *vātsalya bhava*. The feeling of transcendental love felt by the *gōpī-s* (cowherd damsels), who have conjugal relationship with *Kṛṣṇa*, is termed as *madhura bhava*. (The discussion here covers only the broad categories of *bhāva-s* of *Bhakti*. But, in fact, further sub-categories within each of these categories are analyzed by Jiva in section eighty four of his *Prīti Sandarbha*).

In fact, there is evidence to understand that *Gaudiya vaisnava* school does not recognize these five kinds of *bhava** as Absolute and mutually exclusive categories, but views them as tendencies ranging between certain positions to which, these categories may be seen as indicators. For example, Jiva analyzes the *bhava* of *Yudhetra*, which is usually described as *sakhya*, and says that, in fact, this character though predominantly possesses *sakhya*, he has a mixture of *vātsalya* and *āśraya* (which is a kind of *dasya*) in him (*Prīti Sandarbha*, section 84). From this point of view, the list of the five *bhāva-s*, namely, *śānta*, *dasya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *madhura*, in that order, can be seen to be forming a scale of *Prīti* for *Bhagavān*, with *Śānta* falling towards the minimum extreme and *madhura* falling towards the maximum. On this scale, the *bhava** of each of the *bhakta* characters need not necessarily fall at the central positions of *śānta*, *dasya* and so on, but, in fact, fall within a range between any two of these points, with an inclination towards one of the either sides. From this

point of view, now it may be seen that, in fact, *santa Bhakti* is the tendency of different kinds of *bhakta-s* towards the *santa* side, with Characters like *Sanaka* and *Sanandana* falling mostly to the *santa* extreme and other characters like *Bhisma* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 84), having only a tendency towards the *santa* side, apart from their own predominant *bhava* of *Bhakti* (*Pṛiti*).

On the whole, it may be noted that the (separated) part-whole relation, conceived by *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, between the self as Self and *Bhagavan* in an Upanisad language, as mentioned earlier (3.5.1), is being explained here, in terms of the above mentioned five kinds of relations in a narrative language.

Continuing the *rasa* language technique of explanation, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school considers *Bhakti rasa* also to be of five kinds, corresponding to these five kinds of *sthāyībhāva-s*. Rupa calls them (i) *Santa*, (ii) *priti* (or sometimes *dasya*), (iii) *preyas* (Or sometimes *sakhya*), (iv) *vātsalya* and (v) *madhura* (*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* II.5.115). Jiva calls the same *rasa-s* as (a) *Santa*, (b) *dasya*, (c) *mātrī*, (d) *vatsaiya* and (e) *ujjvala* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 157). Here, Rupa (III. 1-5) and Jiva (sections 203-369) explain the above five *rasa-s* with examples. *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* gives the names *Santa*, *dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsaiya* and *madhura* to the *rasa-s* with the *bhāva-s* for which, as mentioned above, it uses the same names. These names are again established in the convention of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* literature and discourse, and hence, this work uses the same names henceforth. The *vibhāva-s*, *anubhāva-s* and *vyabhicārī bhāva-s* and so on, corresponding to these five *rasa-s*, are discussed by Rupa (*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* II.1-5) and Jiva (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, sections 203-369) with examples.

It may be noted that as a logical extension of the distinction (supra) between the *santa bhava* of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school and the *bhava* of *Santa rasa* discussed in the *Advaita* poetics (3.4), the *Santa Bhakti rasa*, being mentioned here, needs to be distinguished from the *Santa rasa* of *Advaita Vēdānta* poetics.

The variety in the experience of *rasa* (*Bhakti rasa*) is not limited to the variety based on the multiform relations mentioned above. *Gaudiya vaisnava* school considers that the self knowledge, in the form of self as Self in a transcendental loving relation with *Bhagavān*, is manifest in the form of a variety of activities involving the self as Self and *Bhagavan*. Each of these activities is characterized by a certain emotions, just as in the case of the activities of selves in day to day life. Just as the *Nāṭya Śāstra* recognizes eight of all such possible emotions capable of being *sthayi*, consistently relished, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school also recognizes the same eight emotions to be capable of being *sthayi* even in the plays' (activities/events) of *Vaikuntha* (the realm of self as Self) and the manifestation of these plays on earth (3.5.1), also. Correspondingly, the relish of *rasa* in eight corresponding forms is also recognized to be part of these plays' (*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* II.5.114)(see table 6).

Thus, it can be seen that apart from the five kinds of *rasa* (*Bhakti rasa*), categorized on the basis of the kind of relation involved, *Gaudiya vaisnava* school categorizes also seven kinds of *rasa* (*Bhakti rasa*) based on the kind of consistent emotion involved. But these two categorizations of *rasa* are not mutually exclusive. *Gaudiya Vaisnava* scholars have called the first five kinds, based on relation, as *mukhya bhēdā-s* (primary kinds) and the remaining seven as *gauṇa bhēdā-s* (secondary kinds) (*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* II.5.113-117 and *Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 158), explaining this by proposing that each of the first kind runs through or exists in all the seven secondary types (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 158). This consideration of all the *non-śṛīgāra* seven *rasa-s* to be nothing but different kinds of *Bhakti rasa*, in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, is the model of several *rasa samikarṇa vada-s*, theories of *rasa* equation, in which One Of the *rasa-s* like *karuṇa*, *śānta*, *śṛīgāra*, *adbhuta* is considered to be 'only' or 'actual' *rasa* and all *rasa-s* other than that are considered to be only manifestations or kinds of it (see Appa Rao, 1959 : 215-6 and Rama Krishna Murthy, 1981 : 187-94). Jiva explains the primary nature of the five kinds of *Bhakti rasa* and the secondary nature of the seven kinds in another way also. According to him, the five kinds of

Bhakti rasa based on relation are primary because each of them is capable of being a consistent *rasa* through out the 'play' (episode) and each of the seven kinds of *rasa-s* (based on the emotions) occur only in the specific events of that 'play' (episode) (*Pṛiti-Saṅdarbhā*, section 158). This explanation is in the model of *angi* (central) - *anga* (component) *rasa* method of analyzing a *Kāvya/Nāṭya* (poem/play) (see Appa Rao, 1959 : 216). Thus, it may be seen that in the *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava* theory of primary and secondary kinds of *rasa*, two models, one, of the *rasa samikarana* theories, and the other of *aṅgi-āṅga*, method are getting merged into one. One major distinction between those theories and methods and the *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava* theory, to be remembered, is that all the *rasa-s* being discussed in the *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* theory belong to a self as Self level/plane/situation, whereas, the poetic theories mentioned above (2.6.1), except those related to *santa rasa*, belong to the self as Self level/plane/situation itself. In a sense, the *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava* model leaves the kinds of *rasa-s* (*Bhakti rasa-s*) to remain to be eight only just as the *Bharata's Nāṭya Śāstra* does. Even the names of the *rasa-s* of *Bharata* remain to be the same except *sṁgara*, with *rati* as *sthayī bhava*, in *Bharata*, being replaced by *Bhakti*, with *Bhagavat rati* as the *sthāyī bhava*. Since the primary kinds of *Bhakti* are only five different kinds of this *Bhakti* (replacing *Bharata's sṁgara*), the number remains to be eight only (see tables 6 & 7).

Rupa in his *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* (4.1.7) and *Jiva* in his *Pṛiti-Saṅdarbhā* (sections 157-171) discuss the seven secondary *rasa-s* with examples. The astonishment experienced by the associates of *Kṛṣṇa* when He performs some extraordinary activities such as lifting the *Gōvardhana* mountain (*Bhagavata Purāṇa* X.25)(see also 4.3.5.2.III) is called *adbhuta rasa* (the *rasa* of wonder). When *Kṛṣṇa* performs pranks (see 4.3.5.1), it gives rise to the experience of merriment in His associates and this experience is called *hasya rasa* (the *rasa* of humour). *Vīra* *rasa*, the *rasa* of enthusiasm is of four types. When *Yudhiṣṭira* worships *Kṛṣṇa* by a performance of *yajña* (which, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is considered as the *dharma*, i.e., duty based on order, of an individual)(*Bhāgavata Purnā* X.72)(see appendix 7) he experiences the emotion of enthusiasm for

Table 6

<i>Sthāyibhāva-s</i> and their respective <i>rasa-s</i> in Bharata and Gaudiya Vaisnava school.			
Bharata		Gaudiya Vaisnava school.	
<i>Sthāyibhāva.</i>	<i>rasa.</i>	<i>Sthayibhava.</i>	<i>rasa.</i>
<i>rati</i>	<i>śṛṅgāra</i>	<i>tat pritimaya rati</i>	<i>Bhakti</i>
<i>utsāha.</i>	<i>vira.</i>	<i>tat pritimaya utsāha.</i>	<i>vira.</i>
<i>soka.</i>	<i>karuna.</i>	<i>tat pritimaya śōka.</i>	<i>karuna</i>
<i>vismaya</i>	<i>adbhuta</i>	<i>tat pritimaya vismaya</i>	<i>adbhuta</i>
<i>hasa</i>	<i>hasya</i>	<i>tat pritimaya hasa</i>	<i>hasya</i>
<i>krodha</i>	<i>raudra</i>	<i>tat pritimaya krodha</i>	<i>raudra</i>
<i>bhaya</i>	<i>bhayānaka</i>	<i>tat pritimaya bhaya</i>	<i>bhayanaka</i>
<i>jugupsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>	<i>tat pritimaya jugupsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>

	Table 7				
	Scheme of <i>rasa</i> -s in Bharata and <i>Gauḍiya Vaisnava</i> tradition				
Bharata's scheme of <i>rasa</i> -s	<i>Gauḍiya Vaisnava</i> scheme of <i>rasa</i> -s Five <i>mukhya bhēda</i> -s				
<i>śṛṅgāra</i>	<i>madhura</i>	<i>vatsalya</i>	<i>sakhyā</i>	<i>dasya</i>	<i>santa</i>
<i>vīra</i>	<i>vīra</i>	<i>vīra</i>	<i>vīra</i>	<i>vīra</i>	<i>vīra</i>
<i>karuṇa</i>	<i>karuṇa</i>	<i>karuṇa</i>	<i>karuṇa</i>	<i>karuṇa</i>	<i>karuṇa</i>
<i>adbhūta</i>	<i>adbhūta</i>	<i>adbhūta</i>	<i>adbhūta</i>	<i>adbhūta</i>	<i>adbhūta</i>
<i>hasya</i>	<i>hāsyā</i>	<i>hasya</i>	<i>hasya</i>	<i>hasya</i>	<i>hasya</i>
<i>raudra</i>	<i>raudra</i>	<i>raudra</i>	<i>raudra</i>	<i>raudra</i>	<i>raudra</i>
<i>bhayanaka</i>	<i>bhayanaka</i>	<i>bhayanaka</i>	<i>bhayanaka</i>	<i>bhayanaka</i>	<i>bhayaṇaka</i>
<i>bibhatsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>	<i>bibhatsa</i>
Note Each self as Self experiences <i>rasa</i> -s as shown in one of the columns with the first one					

duty/order which is called *dharma vira rasa* (the *rasa* of enthusiasm for duty/order). The experience of compassion found in the devotees such as *Rantidēva*, who responds with compassion to repeated requests for food from different guests by parting with his entire meal part by part (*Bhagavata Purana* IX.21)(see Appendix 11) is called *daya vira rasa* (*daya* = Compassion. The *rasa* Of enthusiasm for compassion). On the celebration of the birth of *Kṛṣṇa*, His father *Nanda* gives away the best of his cows in charity to the *brāhmana-s* (*Bhagavata Purana* X.5). This act of charity gives him the experience of *dana vira rasa* (*dāna* = charity. The *rasa* of enthusiasm for charity). When *Bhīma* heeds the counsel of *Kṛṣṇa* and kills the demon *Jarāsandha* (*Bhagavata Purana* X.72)(see appendix 7), he experiences *yuddha vira rasa* (*yuddha* = fight. The *rasa* of enthusiasm for fight). The fury experiences by the *gopi-s* when *Akrūra* takes *Kṛṣṇa* away to *Mathura* (*Bhagavata Purana* X.39)(see appendix 4) is called *raudra rasa* (the *rasa* of anger). When *Yasōdā* hears of the entry of a horse shaped demon into *Gōkula*, she becomes scared for *Kṛṣṇa*'s safety. This experience of fear by *Yasōdā* is called *bhayanaka rasa* (the *rasa* of terror). The feeling of disgust experienced by the devotees at the very thought of sense gratification is called *bibhatsa rasa* (the *rasa* of morbidity) (*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* IV.7.3). The grief experienced by the devotees when they see *Kṛṣṇa* in the Clutches Of the great poisonous snake *Kaliya* (*Bhagavata Purana* X.16)(see appendix 6) is *karuna rasa* (The *rasa* of pathos). (The categories of seven secondary *rasa-s*, discussed here, are not exhaustive. Rupa and Jiva discuss many more further categorizations with examples).

However, Rupa was not the first to introduce the concept of *Bhakti rasa*. Hardy notes that

"the *rasa* theory is for the first time definitely employed with reference to the *gopi* songs of the BhP in a work by the Mahārāṣṭrian writer Vopadeva [c.1265] entitled *Muktāphala* and in its commentary *Kavayadīpkā* by the author's patron Hemādri. The idea expressed here is briefly as follows. The classical nine *rasas* (including *śānta*) become transformed into (nine varieties of) *bhakti* - *rasa* when they are suggested by *Kṛṣṇaite* poetry; the underlying idea being that any form of mental

experience [here secular *rasa*] becomes bhakti when directed towards Kṛṣṇa.

Collecting many passages from the BhP [including our *gopī* songs], the work illustrates how all the *rasas* are exemplified in the *pumna*" (1983 : 561). [BhP • *Bhagavata Purāṇa*].

It may also be seen that Jiva quotes 'the author' of a work named *Bhagavannāma Kaumudī* and Sridhara Swami, the famous commentator of *Bhagavata Purana* from the perspective of *Advaita Vēdānta*, as having discussed *Bhakti rasa* in their works (*Pṛitī sandarbha*, section 111). However, based on the discussion in the poetics of *Nāṭya* on *Bhakti rasa* by authors of poetics such as Abhinava (in Bharata, 1994 : 336), it may be concluded that the concept of *Bhakti rasa* is much older. But, it can be observed that the most elaborate development of *Bhakti* poetics is done by Rupa and Jiva in their works and for them *Bhakti rasa* is the key concept to understand the theology of *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava* school itself, unlike for most of the older exponents of *Bhakti rasa*.

In using the word *Bhakti rasa* to refer to the experience of *Bhagavan* and His associates in *Vaikuṇṭha*, Jiva (*Pṛitī Sandarbha*, 110) took a cue also from the *Bhagavata Purana* itself, the prime source of *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava* school (as a description of the manifestation of the activities of Kṛṣṇa and other forms of *Bhagavan* on earth) (3.5.1). In the prefatory part of this work, Vyasa, the author, describes the book as a fruit slipped from the wish fulfilling tree called the *Vedas*, and invites all the 'tasteful people' (*rasika-s*) to taste this parrot tested (tasty) fruit, using the word *rasa* in the sense of relish of the fruit (*Bhagavata Purana* 1.1.3). In fact, 'juice' - of a fruit or a leaf is the etymological meaning of the word *rasa*, which Vyasa, the poet, is skillfully exploiting, to bring home the relishability of his poetic work, the *Bhagavata Purnā*. Another cue for Jiva (*Pṛitī Sandarbha*, section 110) in the usage of the word *rasa* for the 'plays' (sports) of *Bhagavan* is the statement *raso vai saha rasam hi eva ayam labdhvā anandi bhavati* (the Absolute is *rasa* - The self becomes blissful only when he experiences 'rasa') from *Tattvīya Upaniṣad* (2.7.1), where the word is used with reference

to the Absolute Himself. But, the fact that *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school draws this metaphor mainly from the poetics of *Natya* is evident from the use of words like *aiambana vibhava*, used in relation to *Natya rasa*, even in this Context of *Bhakti rasa* Of the *Vaikuntha*.

The words *aiambana vibhava* and others, used in the case of a *drśya Kāvya* (visible poem or theatre) were interpreted for a *śravya Kāvya* (the audible poem) from Anandavardhana onwards (Masson and Patwardhan, 1970 : 4). In this sense of the experience of *śravya Kāvya*, this word is applicable to the *Bhagavata Purana* too. Jiva looks at the above mentioned verse from the *Bhagavata Purnna* from this point of view of poetics and assumes that Vyasa is referring to *Bhakti rasa*, here (*Prīti Sandarbha*, section 110). And since for Jiva, the activities of *Kṛṣṇa* and His forms described in the *Bhagavata Purnna* are nothing but the manifestation of *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates in *Vaikunṭha*, which is transcendental to the phenomenal realm, for him, this concept of *Bhakti rasa* is applicable to the activities of *Vaikuntha* also.

As a consequence of this equation of *rasa* with *Bhagavan* Himself, the conception of *Bhakti rasa* as the experience of different selves as Selves leads to the conception of *Bhagavan* as '*rasa*,' existing in all the possible forms of *Bhakti rasa* experienced by the selves as Selves. Rupa, in fact, uses the words *akhila rasamṛta mūrti* (the form Of the nectar Of all the different '*rasa*'-s) to describe *Bhagavan* (*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* 1.1.1). It may be noted that it is the above mentioned lines from *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, which come handy for Rupa to make this description as *akhila rasamṛta murti*, because *Bhakti rasa* as the experience of *I/Na* (self) leads to the multiform nature of *Bhakti rasa* based on the multiform nature of *jīva-s*.

3.5.3. A scheme of preference for varieties of self fulfilment.

With the above mentioned multiform understanding of self knowledge, *Gaudiya Vaisnava*

school looks at all the different stories of Vaisnavaite *Bhakti* as containing different kinds of selves with different kinds of self knowledge in the form of self as Self with a particular kind of transcendental loving relation with a particular form of *Bhagavān* and thus experiencing a particular kind of primary *Bhakti rasa* and its seven secondary forms. *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school professes that human Individuals can also experience each of these kinds of *Bhakti rasa* by gaining the fulfilment of the self knowledge of the respective kinds. The way to achieve this fulfilment is to like, love, praise, admire, emulate and ultimately identify with one particular kind of self knowledge, among all the infinite possibilities (categorized into five kinds), examples for which are available in the stories of Vaisnavaite devotion described in the various sources.

At this point *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school cautiously specifies that the principle of emulation in the stories chosen for *Līlā* is different from the principle of emulation in the stories chosen for *Natyā* for *Trivarga* and *Natyā* for *Jñāna*. Rupa in *Ujjvala Nīlamanī* professes that if *ramadivat vartivayam na kvacitrāvanādivat* (one should emulate characters like Rama and not characters like Rāvaṇa) is the principle of emulation for poetry concerned with *dharma, artha, kama* and *mōksa* (*Ujjvala Nīlamanī* III.15), the principle for *Bhakti Śāstra-s* (devotional literature) is *vartivayam śamichchadabhir bhaktavat na tu krsnavat* (one should emulate the devotees and not Kṛṣṇa) (*Ujjvala Nīlamanī* III.14). The spirit of the principle seems to be the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* Vedantic principle (as part of *Bhakti Vēdānta*) that any human self can only have a self knowledge in the form of a devotee of *Kṛṣṇa* but not as *Kṛṣṇa* Himself (3.5.1). It may be noted that no where in the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school's model of self knowledge, being discussed in this book or, in fact, any where else, the self is defined as the Absolute itself or *Kṛṣṇa* Himself. All the models of self knowledge have an individual identity distinct from the Absolute as a bottom line.

Here comes another major distinction of *Gaudiya vaisnava* school in comparison to other schools of

Bhakti Vādānta mentioned above. Gaudiya Vaisnava school considers particular kinds of self knowledge more choosable than others based on a degree of choosability among (i) kinds of transcendental loving relations between self as Self and *Bhagavan* and (ii) features of different forms of *Bhagavan*. The kinds of relation are the same, *santa*, *dasya*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalya* and *madhura* mentioned above (3.5.2). The features are awe inspiring nature (*aśvarya*) and choseness inspiring nature (*mādhurya*).⁵ Both among the kinds of relations (*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* II.5.115) and the features of *Bhagavan* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 97), the latter are considered to be more choosable than the former. Combining these two schemes of choice results in the consideration of the *madhura* (conjugal) relation with the *madhurya* (closeness inspiring) feature of *Bhagavan* as the most choosable.

The hierarchy begins with the consideration of *Bhakti rasa* itself as more choosable than the experience of Advaitic self realization. Articulating this position of Gaudiya vaisnava school, Rupa says that millions of years of *samādhi* (meditation) in *brahmānanda* (bliss of formless *Brahman*) can not be equated to the experience of even a miniscule from the ocean of *Bhakti* (devotion for *Bhagavan*) (*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* I.1.38). The reason for this consideration is the Gaudiya Vaisnava school's consideration that such a self fulfilment is devoid of *Pṛiti* (3.5.2).

Caitanya Caritāmṛta explains the greater and greater choosability of the later and later self knowledges by explaining the greater choosability of the later and later of the five kinds of *rasa*-s. *Santa* (neutral love) has relinquishing passions (*trsnatyāga*) and conviction in *Kṛṣṇa* (*Kṛṣṇa nṛṣṭha*) (*Madhya Līlā* XIX.215). But, it may be noted that there is no 'mine' feeling (*mamata*) for *Kṛṣṇa* (3.5.2) in it (*Madhya Līlā* XIX.218). *Dasya* (servantly love) has, apart from the above two qualities of *santa*, an additional quality of *sēva*-`service to' (*Madhya Līlā* XIX.221) *Bhagavan*. The knowledge of *Bhagavan* of the Self with *dasya* is characterized by a feeling of total awe (*pūma aśvarya jñāna*) (*Madhya Līlā* XIX.219) for *Bhagavan*. Because of this perception of *Bhagavan* as the Lord, this kind of self is

predominated by charisma (*sambhrama*) and reverence (*gaurauva*) (*Madhya US XIX.220*) for *Bhagavān*. (Thus mine' feeling begins with *dasya* in the form of the feeling of 'my master'). *Sakhya* (friendly love) has the same qualities of *sānta* and *dasya*. But the difference lies in the interpersonal trust (*viśvāsa*) replacing charisma and reverence of *dasya* (*Madhya Līlā XIX.222*). The self having this relation has more mine' feeling towards *Bhagavan* and treats Him as its equal (*Madhya Us XIX.225*). The behaviour of this kind of a self is in the form of sporting and fighting with *Kṛṣṇa*, serving *Kṛṣṇa* and taking service from *Kṛṣṇa* (*Madhya Līlā XIX.223*). *Vātsalya* (parental love) has the qualities of *sānta*, *dasya* and *sakhya*, but the difference lies in the service taking the form of control (*pālana*) (*Madhya Līlā XIX.226*). The self with this feeling considers itself as the controller (*pālaka*) and *Kṛṣṇa* as the controlled (*pālya*) (*Madhya Līlā XIX.228*). If friendly love is characterized by lack of inhibition (*asaṅkōca*) and lack of reverence (*agaurava*), parental love is marked by beating (*adana*) and chastising (*bhartsana*) (*Madhya Līlā XIX.227*) Thus, this attitude is characterized by more 'mine' feeling in the form of 'my child.' In *madhura* (conjugal love), apart from conviction (*niṣṭha*), intensity of service (*sēvāśraya*), lack of inhibition (*asaṅkōca*), cuddling (*ālana*), greater mine feeling (*mamatādhikya*), there is service done through offering one's own body (*nṛāṅga dyē sēvana*) (*Madhya Līlā XIX 231-2*).

Jiva explains the same scheme of choice on the basis of *Pṛīti* (transcendental love). For Jiva, *mamatva* ('mine' feeling) is a measure of *Pṛīti* (*Pṛīti Sandarbha*, section 84). In other words, greater and greater mine' feeling indicates or implies greater and greater transcendental love.

It may be noted that the relations presented as more and more choosable in the above scheme are characterized by closer and closer relations. For example, the awe in *dasya* is almost the opposite of closeness. A friend is definitely closer than a servant. But parents are still closer on account of their control over their ward. The closeness is the most intense in the case of conjugal relation because of the sharing of the most confidential aspects also. This analysis of the

scheme of choice among the relations from a closeness point of view has one advantage. The word *mādhurya*, which, as shown above, indicates closeness inspiring nature, is **derived** from the word *madhum*. The word *madhura* though technically is being used to refer specifically to conjugal relation, the conclusion drawn above that, according to the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* scheme of choice, it is the closest relation, when read with the meaning of *madhurya* as closeness inspiring nature suggests that in the *Gaudiya vaisnava* jargon, the word *madhura* is closely linked with closeness. It is true that the word *madhura*, in fact, means **sweet.** But the analyses done here indicates that **sweetness,** a metaphor of taste, here, is being used to refer to closeness. In other words, in the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* scheme of choice, closer relations are considered to be sweeter relations and *madhura* relation is probably so called because it is the closest and hence the sweetest relation.

Jiva, in his *Priti Sandarbha* (section 97), explains the choice of features of *Bhagavan* in order to explain the choice of the greater choosability of the self knowledges based on choice of these features. Based on the **two** features Of *Bhagavān*, **namely**, *aisvarya* and *madhurya*, *Bhagavān-ness* of the forms Of *Bhagavan* is Classified into **two** kinds, namely, *parama aisvarya rupa* (*Bhagavān-ness* in the form of utmost awe-inspiring quality) and *parama madhurya rupa* (*Bhagavān-ness* in the form of utmost **closeness-inspiring** quality). It may be noted that the *Brahman* form of *Bhagavan* has neither of these features.

Among the different divine forms of *Bhagavan*, forms like *Narayana* are examples for the forms predominating in awe-inspiring quality. Among forms predominating in the closeness-inspiring quality, the form of *Kṛṣṇa* in *Vṛndavana*, the flute yielding cowherd boy, playing (**sports/pastimes**) with **gōpa-s** (cowherd boys) and **gōpi-s** (cowherd girls) in the hamlet called *Vṛndāvana*, is considered to be the 'sweetest' (**the most closeness-inspiring**), since it is in this form that the selves as Selves are seen engaged in a transcendental love of the closest type with *Bhagavan* (*Priti Sandarbha*, section 98). **It** may be noted that **within** the *Bhagavata Purana*, where the form Of *Bhagavan*

is described, *Kṛṣṇa* is shown to have left *Vṛndāvana* to *Mathura* and later to *Dvaraka*, and to have participated in several royal, political activities (Book X.41.90). The forms in *Mathura* and *Dvārakā* are considered to be relatively more awe-inspiring than the cowherd boy form of *Vṛndāvana*. *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school considers that the *Kṛṣṇa*'s flute wielding form, being the sweetest (closest or the most playful') form of *Bhagavan*, as the actual form of *Bhagavān* of which all of the other forms (including the forms in *Mathura* and *Dvārakā*, which manifest awe inspiring nature apart from closeness-inspiring nature) are only different manifestations. This consideration is articulated by Rupa by saying that this form is the *svayaṁ rūpa* ('His own form') of *Bhagavan* (*Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.2). Jiva (*Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, section 28) substantiates this perspective by citing a sentence from one of the verses of the *Bhagavata Purana* (1.3.28). Here, the *Bhagavata Purana* gives the names of the various forms of *Bhagavan* and says that if all these forms are His fractions, the form of *Kṛṣṇa* is *Bhagavan* Himself (*svayaṁ Bhagavan*). In other words, if the other forms have only a few of all the unlimited potential possible features of the Absolute, *Kṛṣṇa* has all of them. While some of the other schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* consider *Narayana* or *Vaṅkuntha* mentioned above as having the completeness of all these potential features of the Absolute and interpret *Kṛṣṇa*'s 'being Himself as possessing all that completeness, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school considers *Kṛṣṇa* as the form having the completeness of all the features, and interprets *Kṛṣṇa*'s 'being Himself in this sense, and includes *Nārāyaṇa* among the other forms having only a fraction of these total number of features.' Rupa explains this consideration in his *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*. Continuing the theatrical language to talk about *vaṅkuntha*, Rupa says that *Kṛṣṇa* has all the features like *dhira udatta* (composed and magnanimous), *dhira śānta* (composed and calm), *dhira lalita* (composed and refined) and *dhira udhḍhata* (composed and vehement) (*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* II.225 - 240) (2.3) and infinite features parallel to features like *mahākulīnata* mentioned in the poetics of *Nāṭya* (for *Trivarga*) (2.4). Mentioning sixty four of these infinite features, he says that *Narayana* has all these features except four of them. These four features are (i) *līlā madhurya* (sweetness of 'plays'); (ii) *premaṇa mādhyaya* (sweetness of transcendental love); (iii) *venumadhurya* (sweetness of flute)

and (iv) *rupa madhurya* (sweetness of figure). It may be observed that *madhurya* (sweetness = closeness inspiring nature) is common among the four features given by Rupa. This is a sample of Rupa's model of the consideration of the form of *Kṛṣṇa* as primary and of the fractionality of the other forms of the Absolute. Based on this consideration of the primacy of the form of *Kṛṣṇa* and of the fractionality of the features in the other forms, *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school views all these forms as the parts of *Kṛṣṇa*. But if the *jīva-s*, as mentioned earlier (3.5.1), are called the separated parts (*vibhinnaśa*) of the Absolute, the various different forms of *Bhagavan* are called His own or unseparated parts (*svāśa-s*. *sva* = own or unseparated, *aśa* = parts) (*Paramātmā Sandarbha*, section 8) and based on the above mentioned primacy of *Kṛṣṇa* form, they are described to be the unseparated parts' of '*Kṛṣṇa*.' This consideration of primacy for the *Kṛṣṇa* form is the reason for the use of the word *Kṛṣṇa* in the answer of Chaitanya to Sanātana. In other words, whatever be the form of *Bhagavān* (of '*Kṛṣṇa*') which is included in the self knowledge of a self, *Gaudiya vaisnava* school considers that self to be, in fact, associated with, i.e., *das* of *Kṛṣṇa*. Thus, it may be noted that the *das* relation between the self as Self and *Bhagavan* mentioned earlier (3.5.1), read with this description of the relation between the two leads to the idea that the *dās* relation is, in fact, a (separated) part whole relation with *Kṛṣṇa*.

It may be remembered that *Gaudiya vaisnava* school considers *Vaikuntha* to be existing in different forms corresponding to the different forms of *Bhagavan*. The *Vaikuntha* corresponding to the *Kṛṣṇa* form (the flute wielding cowherd boy form of *Bhagavan*), where He is conceived to be performing His activities of transcendental love, is called *Goioka* (realm of cows) (*Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha*, section 116). *Goioka* is considered to be the most choosable form of *Vaikuntha* where the activities (plays) of transcendental love of *Kṛṣṇa* are the sweetest (the most 'playful') (*Chaitanya Caritāmṛta*, *Madhya Līlā*XXI.44).

The selves as Selves, who are depicted in the *Vaisnava Bhakti* stories and whom a *Gaudiya vaisnava*

practitioner emulates for his attaining *Bhakti-rasa*, are considered to be of two kinds also; (i) those who relish awe-inspiring aspect of *Bhagavan* (*aiśvarya*) more than the closeness inspiring one (*madhurya*). These are called *parama aiśvarya anubhava pradhana* (*parama* = supreme, *anubhava* = experience, *pradhāna* = predominant in); and (ii) those who relish closeness inspiring aspect of *Bhagavan* more than the awe inspiring one. These are called *parama madhurya anubhava pradhana* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 97). Gaudiya Vaisnava school considers that all the five kinds of relations, namely, neutral, servantly friendly, parently and conjugal, are possible for both the selves as Selves, mentioned above. Correspondingly, the five kinds of *sthāyībhāva-s* and five kinds of *rasa-s* are also possible for both kinds of selves as Selves. The scheme of preference among the relations (see supra) and the corresponding *sthāyī bhāva-s* and *rasa-s* (see supra) holds good for each of these two kinds of selves as Selves. Combining this with the scheme of preference for the forms of *Bhagavan* (supra) leads to the principle of utmost choosability of the self knowledge in the form of self as Self with a *madhura* (conjugal) relation with a form which is predominant in closeness ('palyfulness') inspiring quality (*madhurya*), which is one of the prime principles of Gaudiya Vaisnava school (see table 8).

Quoting an incident from the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* (X.45) Jiva says, when *Kṛṣṇa* killed *Kamsa* and released His parents *Dēvaki* and *Vasudēva* from prison (see Appendix 4), they perceived *Kṛṣṇa* (and His brother *Balarama*, who is considered to be one of His forms) as the Supreme Lord(s), though He (They) was (were) their son(s). Hence they did not embrace *Kṛṣṇa*, but remained in a reverential mood. Later, when *Kṛṣṇa* addressed them with transcendental love as mother and father, it was then that they took *Kṛṣṇa* in their laps and embraced Him Their voices were choked with emotion and their eyes filled were with tears (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 97).

According to Jiva, here, the parents of *Kṛṣṇa* experience both *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya* features of *Bhagavān*. In the beginning, they experience awe (*aiśvarya*) for *Kṛṣṇa* as they consider Him as the

Table 8.**Scheme of choosability of varieties of selves.**

Greater choosability.

	<i>Parama Mādhurya Rupa.</i>	<i>Parama Aaiśvarya Rupa</i>
<i>Madhura.</i>	The self as Self in <i>Madhura</i> relation with <i>Parama Mādhurya Rupa</i> .	The self as Self in <i>Madhura</i> relation with <i>Parama Aaiśvarya Rupa</i> .
<i>Vātsalya.</i>	The self as Self in <i>Vātsalya</i> relation with <i>Parama Mādhurya Rupa</i> .	The self as Self in <i>Vātsalya</i> relation with <i>Parama Aaiśvarya Rupa</i> .
<i>Sakhyā.</i>	The self as Self in <i>Sakhyā</i> relation with <i>Parama Mādhurya Rupa</i> .	The self as Self in <i>Sakhyā</i> relation with <i>Parama Aaiśvarya Rupa</i> .
<i>Dāsyā.</i>	The self as Self in <i>Dāsyā</i> relation with <i>Parama Mādhurya Rupa</i> .	The self as Self in <i>Dāsyā</i> relation with <i>Parama Aaiśvarya Rupa</i> .
<i>Śānta.</i>	The self as Self in <i>Śānta</i> relation with <i>Parama Mādhurya Rupa</i> .	The self as Self in <i>Śānta</i> relation with <i>Parama Aaiśvarya Rupa</i> .
Types of self.		

Supreme Lord But later this awe was substituted by their parental affection for Him, hence they experience Closeness and Sweetness' (*mādhurya*). This is the model Of *a parama aisvaryā anubhava pradhāna* self as Self according to Jiva.

Jiva argues that, unlike the selves as Selves, who experience the awe inspiring aspect Of *Kṛṣṇa* (in *Dvārakā*) more, the inhabitants of *Vṛndāvana* do not get bewildered when *Kṛṣṇa* 'reveals' His awe inspiring nature, for example, by lifting *Gōvardhana* hill with His hand (*Bhagavata Parāṇa* X.250. Also see 4.3.5.2.III). Their desire to see Him as a normal sweet child becomes more intense whenever they witness His awe inspiring nature. In other words, the desire for *madhurya* increases whenever *Kṛṣṇa* 'reveals' His *aisvaryā*. This is due to their attachment for the *madhurya* aspect of *Kṛṣṇa* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 100) This is the model Of *parama madhurya anubhava pradhana* according to Jiva. This model is more choosable, among the two illustrated here, for emulation according to Jiva.

Illustrating the different kinds of relations and corresponding *sthāyī bhāva-s* within *parama anubhava pradhāna* model, Jiva cites three examples from the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* for three such selves as Selves. The cowherd boys, who fight with *Kṛṣṇa* playfully, steal butter together with Him in other people's homes, relish His *madhurya* (sweetness/closeness) aspect in *sakhya* (friendly) *bhāva*; mother *Yasōdā*, who binds *Kṛṣṇa* with rope, in order to punish for His mischievous acts, relishes *madhurya* (sweetness/closeness) in *vātsalya* (parently) *bhāva*; and similarly, the *gōpī-s*, who perform amorous pastimes with *Kṛṣṇa*, such as, playing tricks and dancing with Him, relish *mādhurya* (sweetness/closeness) in *madhura* (conjugal) *bhava* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 100). (Jiva, however, does not give any example for *dasya bhava* here. This is, probably, because the awe-inspiring nature of the Absolute required for the relish of *dasya bhāva* in the self, is considered to be totally absent in *Kṛṣṇa* in *Vṛndavana*).

This relishing of *madhurya* in *madhura bhava* is the most choosable experience for emulation

according to Jiva (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 102). This most choosability of the *gopi* model, for emulation, is mentioned by Jiva, in comparison to other *madhura* relation holding selves as Selves also. Contrasting the *gopi*-s with the wives of *Kṛṣṇa* of *Dvāmka* (and using the words from the poetics for the categories of heroines, namely, *svakiya*, wifely heroine, and *parakiya*, non-wifely heroine), Jiva says that the love of *gōpī*-s, who hold a *parakiya* (non-wifely) relation with *Kṛṣṇa* of *Vṛndāvana* (either as unmarried girls or wives of other cowherds), is more choosable for emulation than that of the wives of *Kṛṣṇa* in *Dvāmka*, who hold a *svakiya* (wifely) relation with Him (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 278). Rupa explains the greater choosability of the non-wifely love of *gōpī*-s on the basis of their absense of this-worldly or other-worldly expectations of a wifely condition (for example, expectations of wordly benefits like security, patronage and children, and the otherworldly benifits like virtue acquired through an unstinted commitment for husband, which are glorified in the Vedic worldview) in them (*Ujjvala Nīlamani* III,11). It may be noted that even the greatest choosability of the *parakiya* relation is also based on the criterion of 'playfulness' in the sense of being devoid of earthly or otherwordly desires, i.e., the greatest degree of 'playfulness' in this sense is being considered to be available only in the *parakiya madhura* relation with the *parama mādhubhya rupa* of *Kṛṣṇa*. It may be observed that the word *parakiya* here, like the other words drawn by Gaudīya Vaisnava school from the poetics of *Nāṭya/Kāvya*, is only a metaphor to refer to a specific theological concept. This becomes clear when Jiva says that those who are being referred to as *parakiya*-s are, in fact, *parama sviya*-s (most actual His owns') in reality, i.e., in *aprakata Līlā* (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, Section 278). The paradox in calling *parakiya*-S as *parama sviyā*-s Can be resolved only by realizing that both these words are metaphors referring to the same theological notion. Jiva overtly explains this by saying that the *parama sviyā*-s of *aprakata Us* when manifest in *prakata Līlā* (in the 'language' of *prakata Uṣm* can) manifest only as *parakiya*-s (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 278). The word *parama sviya*-s (most actual His 'owns') has reference to the theological fact of the selves as Selves being *Bhagavan*'s own separated parts and the word *parakiya* is a narrative description of these selves as Selves, described to be in non-wifely

conjugal relation with *Bhagavan*. It is obvious that Jiva provides this clarification to avoid taking of the **non-wifely** relation, **described** in a narrative form as an 'immoral' activity without realizing the theological import in it (see 4.3.5.2.II).

The ladder of superiority among the selves as Selves in transcendental loving relation with *Bhagavān* reaches its pinnacle in *Radha*, the closest to *Kṛṣṇa* among the *gōpī-s* and the central character of *Ras Līlā-s*. *Radha* is described to be an eternal unseparable consort of *Kṛṣṇa*. If *Bhagavan* is the divine form of the Absolute experiencing *rasa* out of infinite transcendental loving relations with selves as Selves, *Radha* is the pleasure potency (*hlādinī śakti*) of Him. She is unseparable from Him in that sense. Explaining this concept of *Radha*, O.B.L. Kapoor says,

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate source of the infinite partial manifestations of the divine personality, and Radha is the ultimate source of the endless divine energies of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.....she is the predominated moiety, while Sri Kṛṣṇa is the predominating moiety of the absolute.....The function of Rādhā as the divine consort of Kṛṣṇa is to please him by fulfilling all his desires and administering to all his needs... This purpose is eternally fulfilled by her in the company of her innumerable partial manifestations in the form of Gopi-s or the **milk-** maids of Vraja, who also join in the spiritual pastimes of Kṛṣṇa... The service rendered to Kṛṣṇa by the Gopi-s are the associated aspects of the service of Rādhā. The association of numberless consorts in the amorous pastimes ... of Kṛṣṇa is necessary to enhance the bliss enjoyed by **him**....; hence, the emanation of numberless divine consorts from Radha" (1976: 98).

Thus, being the source of the pleasure experienced by all the selves as Selves who experience *Bhakti rasa* as they perform associational activities with *Kṛṣṇa*, the experience of *Bhakti rasa* of *Radha* is both infinitely highest, as well as unique. *Rādhā*'s self knowledge is similar

to that of other *gōpī-s* in a direct *parakīya* (non-wifely conjugal) relation with *farm* in *Vrndaavana* to the extent of being such a conjugal **relation**, but is distinct in being infinite, highest and nothing but the pleasure potency of *Kṛṣṇa* itself.

One of the propositions in *Gauḍīya vaiṣṇava* school which looks very strange for a student of this school is the greater choosability of the model of **attendants** or the handmaidens of *Rādhā* called *sakhī-s* and *mañjarī-s*, than of the model of *Radha* itself, for emulation. In other words, the best possible is not the best choosable for emulation. This **principle** may look strange to many Indian readers on account of the familiarity of the more widely prevalent convention of identifying the self with *Rādhā* and the **Absolute** with *Kṛṣṇa* among **the general Indian** public. But according to *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school, emulating *Radha* may result in acquiring the relish of a direct **nonwifely** conjugal relation with *Kṛṣṇa* like the *gōpī-s* mentioned above, but not the distinguishing features of *Rādhā*, since *Radha*, by definition, is a unique self as Self. Even the direct non-wifely conjugal relation, which is considered to be possessed by some other *gōpī-s* and considered to be attained by emulating *Radha* or any of **these** *gōpī-s*, is considered to be less choosable than the indirect relationship, i.e., relationship with *Kṛṣṇa* through *Radha*, possessed by *sakhī-s* and *mañjarī-s* (in Rupa **Goswami**, 1981 : 177).

Haberman says that the choosability of the *sakhī-s* and *mañjarī-s* can best be

"... understood in the context of the ashraja theory, which I think is so central to these texts - the ashraja is the **'container'** of the emotions, so to speak.

Emotional **experience** is dependent upon the quality of the container. *Radha*, by definition, is the deepest container. Her container is defined as being infinitely deep. If one has an independent relationship with *Kṛṣṇa*, then one's emotional relationship will ultimately depend on the quality of one's own vessel. But if one is a *mañjarī*, that is in **communion** with *Rādhā*, one shares her emotional experience.

Since her emotional experience is infinite, in this way one can tap into that infinite experience" (1992 : 323).

Thus, it can be seen that *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, apart from considering the *das* relation of the self as Self with the *Bhagavan* to be **multiform**, propounds a scheme of preference among these **various** *dās* relations, presenting the model of self as Self in an indirect relation with the utmost closeness inspiring form **of** *Bhagavan* (as the attendant of another self as Self, namely, *Radha*, in a direct relation with Him) as the most choosable among all such relations and consequently the *Bhakti-rasa* resulting **from** such a **self** knowledge as the **most** choosable **for** relish.

All the above elaboration found in (different sources of) *Gaudiya Vaisnava* literature for the central statement of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school found in **Chaitanya's** answer to Sanatana, i.e., "*jīvēṇa svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya das*" (the **self's** actual/original identity is being *Kṛṣṇa's* **eternal** 'servant') (3.5.1), may be seen to be highlighting the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school's distinct view (in **comparison** to the Other *Bhakti Vādānta schools*) (see table 9) Of **concepts** Of (i) the **primacy** Of *Kṛṣṇa* form Of *Bhagavan*; (ii) the *dās* relation to be a multiform relation with a corresponding multiform experience of *rasa*; (iii) this relation and the self knowledge of that relation to be eternal (*nitya*), with the manifestations of this relation and the self knowledge on earth being described in the *Puranas*; and (iv) the self knowledge in the form of self as Self related to *Kṛṣṇa* with the above features being actual identity (*svarūpa*) of a self. This answer of Chaitanya to Sanatana is not only a diagnosis but also a (suggestion of) prescription to emulate the manifestations of this kind of self knowledge using the descriptions of these manifestations in the *Puranas* and other sources. Here, a systematic scheme of preference among the different kinds of self knowledge is presented by *Gaudiya vaisnava* school, in which the self as Self with a non-wifely conjugal relation with the closeness inspiring form of *Bhagavan* is considered to be the most preferable for emulation (see table 8). But, as mentioned above, the emulation of a self as Self in an

Table 9.**Comparison between different schools of Bhakti Vēdānta.****I. Common features.**

1. Relation between self and the Absolute perceived as *Dās* relation.
2. *Bhagavān* form or divine form of the Absolute recognized.
3. Self is not non-different from the Absolute.
4. *Bhakti* is the means and the goal.

II. Differences.**Schools such as *Dvaita* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita******Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school.****1. Issue : Primary form of *Bhagavān* and His above.**Nārāyaṇa and *Vaiṣṇava**Kṛṣṇa* of *Vṛndāvan* and *Gōḷoka*.**2. Issue : Relation between primary and the other forms of *Bhagavān*.**

Only Nārāyaṇa in the upper world and all others in lower

All forms in 'upper' (internal) world and 'lower' in 'lower' (external) world.

3. Issue : The perception of spiritual and phenomenal realms.

Upper - Lower.

Internal - External.

4. Issue : The perception of *Avatāra*.

'Descending.'

'Manifesting.'

5. Issue : Formlessness of the Absolute.

Not at all recognized.

Recognized but least preferred.

6. Issue : Simultaneity of difference and non-difference between self and Absolute.

Question does not arise because non-difference not recognized.

Accepted.

7. Issue : *Rasa* language for describing spiritual realm.

not found.

Found.

8. Issue : Perception of devotion.All kinds of '*Dās*' relation recognized but no scheme of choice.

There is scheme of choice with a preference for 'closeness' and 'playfulness' (of cowherds)

attentively relation with *Rādhā* is considered to be more choosable than the emulation of a self as Self in a direct non-wifely conjugal relation with *Kṛṣṇa*.

Līlā performances are considered one of the means to present the above mentioned multiform self knowledges as **described** in the *Puranas* and the other sources to be emulated by the audience according to the scheme of preference mentioned above (see 4.3.5.2).

3.6. The issue of same sources for *Bhakti* and *Karma* plays.

But choosing *Itihāsa-s* and *Puranas* as a source of stories to present the *Bhakti Vēdānta* plays may look to be a problem because many stories in *Itihāsa-s* and *Puranas*, as discussed earlier (2.3), overtly appear to be instructing *Trivarga*. As mentioned earlier (3.5.1), some of these stories are used to present *Bhakti vedanta* also. The problem is the same as in the case of using the stories of *Purāṇa-s* to present *Natya* for *Jñāna* (2.6.2). It has been discussed in the earlier chapter how the instruction of *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Jñāna* appear to be contradicting each other and how the problem can be solved from the point of view of *vedanta* which accomodates *Karma Kānda* within itself (2.6.2 & 2.8). It may be noted that this analysis helps to visualize how the same story from *Puranas* and *itihasas* can be presented from the point of view of both *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Jnana* (2.6.2).

The problem which persists in the case of the relation between *Karma Kānda* and *Bhakti vedanta* also is similar to this. Apparently *Karma Kanda* and *Bhakti Vēdānta* seem to be contradicting each other, because *Karma Kanda* instructs the path for the successful fulfilment of urges of *artha* and *kama*, whereas, *Bhakti vedanta* defines *Bhakti* itself in terms of the transcendence of urges (3.5.1). But Jiva explains how in reality this contradiction does not exist. In the earlier chapter, it was mentioned that *Vēdānta* resolves the problem of contradiction between *karma* and *inana* by

theorizing that *Vedas* instruct *Karma Kāṇḍa* for those individuals who by their personality are attached to sensual desires. Jiva takes a similar position and compares the individuals interested in the results, such as heaven, from performing *Karma Kāṇḍa* activities, such as *yajña*, to children, who are attracted to sugar sweets and so on. It was also mentioned in the earlier chapter that according to *Vēdānta* one of the reasons for *Vēda-s* to instruct *Trivarga* is to create a *sattva* predominated personality, in which there is a scope for the rejecting *artha* and *kama*. Jiva goes further and says that the instruction of *Karma Kāṇḍa* is, in fact, aimed at leading the self towards the rejection of *artha* and *kama* and ultimately towards serving *Bhagavan*. He compares this instruction to the administration of medicine by luring a child with sugar sweets and so on. He says that, luring a child with sugar, sweets and so on to make him accept the medicine, is not just aimed at administering the medicine but is done for the ultimate goal of curing the child from the disease. Similarly, the showing of results such as heaven to make an individual perform *Karma Kāṇḍa* activities such as *yajña* also, is not merely aimed at providing heaven and so on, but is ultimately aimed to help the individuals to realize the need to give up (desire from the pleasure of) *Karma Kāṇḍa* activities.

Anticipating a counter question of why the giving up of *Karma Kāṇḍa* activity was not instructed in the beginning itself (directly itself), Jiva says that (just as a child does not directly realize the need for getting cure for the disease) the human individual in the beginning may not have a serious conviction for 'serving' (performing transcendental loving associational activities with) the *Bhagavan*, or in other words, transcending the urges leading to miseries in favour of serving the *Bhagavān*. Hence the need for luring with heaven, happiness and so on. This lack of conviction is because of lack of disinterest in the urges. Such an individual must follow the part instructed in the *Karma Kāṇḍa* section of the *Vēda-s* to fulfill the urges of *artha* and *kama*.

If the individual gives up the activities instructed in *Karma Kāṇḍa* without developing disinterest

in this- worldly and other-worldly pleasures, such an individual is bound to be guilty of inaction and as a result is bound to face the punishment for the violation of laws of nature as instructed in *Karma Kānda*. If the activities **prescribed** in *Karma Kānda* are performed without a desire for the pleasures there of and are performed only to please *Bhagavān*, the said punishment can be averted though the pleasures of such activities are not received. Such performance of activities (intended) to please the *Bhagavan* give the **benefit** of transcendence of (urgeful performance of) activities and results in the transcendence of the desire for **this-worldly** and **other-worldly** **benefits**.

Jiva, quoting from *Bṛhad Aranyaka Upaniṣad* (IV.4.22), argues that performing *Karma Kānda* activities gradually leads to the gradual evolution of the personality of the individual so as to be able to transcend worldly desire and helps him to become eligible to acquire **experience/knowledge** of the nature of *Bramnan* (Absolute) (*Bhakti Sandarbha*, section 62). The above mentioned lines of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, in fact, are the basis for the theory of partial self fulfilment leading gradually to total self fulfilment mentioned in the last chapter (2.8). Jiva adds the *Bhakti* interpretation to these lines and says that *Karma Kānda* gradually leads to (*Bhakti*) *Vēdānta*.

In fact, Jiva goes to the extent of arguing that once a person acquires the capability of giving up *Karma Kānda* activities through strong conviction in the practice of *Bhakti*, it becomes his **'duty'** to give up such activities. Such a giving up does not lead to punishment (which is mentioned as a consequence of violation of *Karma Kānda* laws) since he is now governed by the laws of *Bhakti* where performing activities of *Bhakti* remains to be the only duty (*Bhakti Sandarbha* section 23)(4.3.5.2.III).

The *Puranas* contains the narrative form presentation of all these principles of relation between *Karma Kānda* and *Bhakti Vēdānta* **also** along **with** the principles of *Karma Kānda* (2.2.2),

and the relation between *karma* and *Jnana Kāṇḍa-s* (2.8), which are mentioned earlier. If the *Purāṇa-s* like the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* contain stories of giving up of *Karma Karpa* activities in favour of *Bhakti* on the one hand and pure performance of activities of *Bhakti* on the other, *Itihāsa-s* like *Mahabharata* present Stories Of performance Of *Karma Karpa* activities aimed at pleasing *Bhagavan* - along with the stories discussed in the earlier chapter. In *Līla-s*, these stories of *Itihāsa-s* and *Puranas* also are presented with a focus on the *Bhakti* aspect of them.

From the above analysis of *Gauṇīya vaiṣṇava* poetics, it can be seen that according to the poetics of *Līla*, the stories chosen from the *Itihāsa-s* and the *Puranas*, especially those from the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* and the *Brahma Vāivarta Purana*, and from the lives of saints, as the themes of *Līla* plays are significant not because they are the stories of selves attaining *artha* and *kama* within the norms of *dharma*, not even because they are the stories of the selves who seek *Jnana* (self knowledge in the form of self as Self non-different from *Brahman*) but because they are the stories of the Absolute and His incarnation on earth, in which the selves as Selves are described to have enjoyed and expressed the transcendental love (*prīti*) for Him. In other words, the significance of these stories for *Gauṇīya vaiṣṇava* school lies in their being the narrative form presentation (3.5.1) of the laws of nature according to *Gauṇīya Vaiṣṇava* school, namely, the self who acts with the self knowledge as self as Self gets liberated from miseries; and that self with this self knowledge but with an additional feature of self as Self non-different from *Brahman* experiences a formlessness; whereas, that self as Self with a transcendental loving relation with *Bhagavan* experiences (*bhakti*) *rasa*, which is full of an infinite and exuberant pleasure because of this transcendental love (*prīti*); and the self without this self knowledge gets rewards and punishments for the compliance and non-compliance with *dharma*. It may be seen that this frame of laws of nature makes the Advaitic laws of nature (3.4) only a special case of the laws of nature from *Gauṇīya Vaiṣṇava* perspective. In the words of *Chaitanya's* answer to Sanātana mentioned earlier (3.5.1), these laws of nature can alternatively be stated as follows. The self with *das* self

knowledge experiences the infinite bliss in the form of *rasa* through the associational activities with *Bhagavān* and the self who acts devoid of *das* self knowledge suffers from miseries.

However, it may be observed that, among the stories from the *Purāṇa*-s and the *Itihāsa*-s such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Ramayana*, the same themes may be written and performed for *Natya* for *Trivarga*, *Natya* for *Jñāna* and or *Līla*. For example, it can be seen that Bhatta Narayana took a theme from the *Mahabharata* and wrote *Vēṇīsamhāram* as *Natya* for *Trivarga*. In this play the *Pāṇḍava*-s (especially *Yudhishṭira* and *Bhīma*) attain *artha* in the form of the kingdom through following *dharma*. Dr. Ambadapudi Nagabhushanam, in his introduction to this play holds that, *Vēṇīsamhāram*, by offering instruction about *dharma*, proposes *Trivarga* (in Bhatta Narayana, 1988 : xxxiv). As mentioned in the last chapter, themes from *Mahabharata* when written as *Natya* for *Jñāna* instruct *Jñāna* and provide the experience of *santa rasa* (2.6.1). But when the same themes portray the *Pandavas* as the associates of *Kṛṣṇa* expressing transcendental love for Him then they become *Līla-ras* as is seen in the case of *Mahabharata Līla*-s in *Vrindavan*).

3.7. The validity of the concept of *Bhaktirasa* as a theatrical experience.

3.7.1. The distinction of *Bhaktirasa* in the issue of self fulfilment

Using the same name *Bhakti rasa*, (given, as above, to the transcendental level spiritual experience) to refer to the experience of the audience resulting from watching/hearing *Līla* performance/recitals has become controversial in the literature on poetics of *rasa*. Certain ancient scholars rejected the stature of *rasa* to *Bhakti* in the literature/theatre whereas, certain others accepted *Bhakti rasa* in literature/theatre, but some of them merged that into *sānta rasa*.

Reviews on poetics of *rasa* by the modern scholars have been done as if these polemics by both the parties, for and against the separate status for *Bhakti rasa* in the poetics of *rasa*, are being

done from the same background. This resulted, as shall be demonstrated in future, in the modern scholars such as Surendemath **Shastri** and Raghavan accepting one stance of a given author of poetics of *rasa* as correct and the stance of the other author of poetics of *rasa* as wrong. Now, with the different backgrounds of these stances of the authors of poetics of *rasa* becoming clear from the earlier discussion in the present research work (2.5.2, 2.8, 3.4 & 3.5), each of these stances can be found to be correct from within the background on which the stance is based.

It has already been demonstrated above that *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga* and *Līla* have the back grounds of *Karma Kānda* and *Vedānta* (*Jñāna Kānda* section of *Vēda-s*) respectively. When Dhnananjaya suggests that *Pṛiti* (love) and *Bhakti* (devotion) are *bnava-s* alone and should not be given a separate status, because they merge in *harṣa* (joy - a *vyābhicārībhava*) and *utsāha* (enthusiasm - a *sthayī bhāva*)(*Daśarūpakam* IV.83) and when **Mammata** refuses to accord the status of *rasa* to *Bhakti* in *Nāṭya*, on the ground that *rati* related to gods and the like, which is only a transitory emotion, can be called only a *bhāva* (and thus not *rasa*), and only that which is expressed in relation to a woman is *frngara* (*rasa*) (1995 :135), it may be noted that their stances are strictly in accordance with the list of *sthayī bhāva-s* and *vyābhicārībhāva-s* given by Bharata (2.6.1). Thus, consciously or unwittingly, they are arguing within the framework of *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga*, which is the framework of *Karma Kānda* (2.5, 2.6.1 & 2.8) and are treating the concepts of *rati*, *rasa* and so on, to be valid only within that framework. Surendemath Shastri is probably echoing, probably uncritically, the argument of Dhnananjaya, Dhanika and **Mammata**, when he says that "love in the form of devotion of God [Bhakti - *rati*]" is an 'immature sentiment' (not mature enough to evolve into *rasa*) (1961 :290).

In a similar vein, it may be noted that when scholars such as Abhinavagupta, Rupa, Jiva and Madhusudana Saraswati reject the above mentioned arguments against *Bhakti* *rasa* and accept

Bhakti as a *rasa*, they are taking a Vedantic position. Among these, it is **Madhusudana** Saraswati, though is **historically** the latest of them, who articulates on behalf of all the **pro-*Bhakti* *rasa*** theoreticians, the reasoning behind rejecting the position of **Mammata**, Dhananjaya and others. He says that the **argument** (of Mammata) that the love towards gods can not give rise to the experience of *rasa*, is applicable in the case of gods such as *Indra* (2.7.2) and others. In the case of these gods, *rati* may be a *bhava*, but in the case of the Absolute (*Paramātmā*),⁶ *Bhakti* is a *rasa* (as quoted in **Ramakrishnamurthy**, 1981 : 180).

Madhusudana is pointing out that Mammata and others have used the word *dēvādī* (concerned with gods and the like. By others, Madhusudana indicates the love for elders, children and so on) uncritically to refer to both the gods such as *indra* and *Bhagavan*, the Absolute. His suggestion is to distinguish between the two. It may be noted that '*gods* such as *Indra*.' here, refers to the realm of *Karma Kanda* (2.7.2), where the self knowledge is in the form of *Trivarga* seeking self and the case of *Bhagavan*' refers to the realm of *Jñāna Kanda*, where self knowledge is in the form of self as Self. What **probably** Madhusudana misses to highlight is that the word *rati*, when used in the context of the realm of self as Self, is not the same as the word *rati* used in the context of the realm of *Trivarga* seeking self. As long as *rati* is used in reference to *Trivarga* seeking self, it does not belong to the realm of self as Self and vice versa. Madhusudana's statement amounts to saying that when *rati* is used in the context of gods such as *indra*, it (it is only this and not the *rati* for *Bhagavan*, which is possible in this realm) can not be a *rasa* and can be only a *bhava*, because the norm of *Natya* for *Trivarga* requires a conjugal relation in *rati* for it to become *rasa*. **But, when** the word is used in the context of self as Self, *rati* for *Bhagavan* (which is the only *rati* possible in this realm. *BhagavSn* for Madhusudana is a synonym of *Bramhan*, the formless aspect of the Absolute) is a *rasa*. A corollary of this analysis of Madhusudana can be that as long as the self is a *Trivarga* seeking one, the *rati* of that self, even if it is called (perceived as) *Bhakti* and is (described to be or perceived to be) a relation with the Absolute, is not a *rasa* but only a

bhāva.

Madhusudana, after establishing *Bhakti* as a *rasa*, goes on to the extent of saying that the experience of *Bhakti rasa* is far more superior to the experience of the eight *Natya rasa-s* mentioned by Bharata. According to him, '*Natya rasa* (the eight *rasa-s* mentioned by Bharata in 2.6.1), when compared to *Bhakti rasa*, is like a fire fly as unto the sun (Ramakrishnamurti, 1981 : 180).

But from among those who accept *Bhakti* as *rasa*, the status given to *Bhakti vis-a-vis santa* by them, varies based on the particular school of *Vēdānta* they adhere to. For example, Abhinavagupta holds that *Bhakti* merges in *santa* (as quoted in Rama Krishna Murti, 1981 : 178). Whereas, for Jiva and Rupa, *Bhakti rasa* has a separate status and *santa rasa* recognized by Abhinava, being centered around the formless *Bramhan* (with which *Bhakti* relation ,as understood by *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school, is not possible) is not a (*Bhakti*) *rasa* at all, but *ianta* as a neutral emotion for *Bhagavān* can be only a kind of *Bhakti rasa* called *śānta Bhakti rasa*. The reason for these two stances can be easily understood on the basis of the position of these schools towards the form of the Absolute and the place of *Bhakti* as a process of attaining the realization of the Absolute discussed above.

Since, for *Advaita vedanta*, the divine form, on which the devotee meditates, merges with formless *Bramhan*, in the ultimate realization of the meditator (3.3), the experience of *Bhakti*, which is experienced by the meditator as he meditates on this devine form ultimately merges into the bliss of the formless *Bramhan* realization or into the experience of the realization of **non-difference** from the formless *Bramhan*. Even in the case of *Līlā* performances, for an Advaitic audience, the devine form of *Kṛṣṇa* appearing on stage, is merely a manifestation of the formless *Bramhan* and all the experience of *Bhakti* (3.3) for such a divine form, thus, ultimately merges into the experience of **non-difference** with the Absolute, which is called *śānta rasa*. It is in this sense that Abhinava's

stance for *Bhakti rasa* merging into *santa rasa* can be understood.

In this context, Jagannatha also stands in line with **Madhusudana** and Abhinava, in having been able to recognize the reasons for the possibility of the status of *rasa* to *Bhakti*. Deviating from Abhinava, Jagannatha does not agree to merge *Bhakti* into *santa*. He agrees that like other *rasa-s*, *Bhakti rasa* also has **constituents** like *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *vyabhicārībhāva*, *anubhava*, and *sthāyī bhava*. But strangely, all of a sudden, he resolves to reject the status of *rasa* to *Bhakti*, merely on the ground that the established opinion of Bharata and other 'muni'-s (sages - probably referring to Anandavardhana, Abhinava and others) allows for the acceptance of only the nine *rasa-s* and no more, lest there be chaos in *rasa* theory. This fear of chaos in Jagannatha is very much justified within the framework of *santa rasa* poetics because, in this context, a place for *Bhakti* as *rasa* obviously leads to several fallacies. The solution to the problem of chaos may be seen to be found in Jiva's conception of *Bhakti rasa* discussed in the previous sections, as he takes *Bhakti rasa* into a totally different platform than that of *śānta rasa* (3.5.2).

It may be noted that when Raghavan, in his book Number of Rasas, says that in "dramas [sic] on Rama, Kṛṣṇa and Siva, which are very large in number, there is Bhakti and through it *santa* is depicted as the ultimate *rasa*...." (1975 AT), he appears to be taking the stance held by Abhinava. There is evidence, in the above mentioned book, to believe that Raghavan knew of the minute differences in the stances of Bharata, Abhinava, Madhusudana, and Rupa and Jiva. But strangely, he includes Caitanya Candrōdaya of Kavi Kāmapura, more strangely, despite recognizing that it **belongs to** Chaitanya tradition (Gauḍīya Vaisṇava school) (1975 : 41), **under his** long list of *santa rasa* plays merely on the ground that "... dramas [sic] on the life of saints and devotees are Śānta Rasa plays" (1975 : 47). As noted above (3.5.3), according to the Gaudiya Vaisṇava poetics of *Līla*, when the plays on Rama, Kṛṣṇa and the saints are performed as *Līla-s*, they are meant to give the experience of **various** kinds of *Bhakti rasa-s* and not *śānta rasa*. It can be seen that by listing

Caitanya Candrōdaya under *santa rasa* plays, **Raghavan** is, atleast, not placing this *Gaudiya Vaisnava* play in the perspective of its tradition, if not committing the mistake of calling a play meant for *Bhakti rasa* **experience** as a *santa rasa* play. Thus, it can be assumed that Raghavan did not care either to apply his knowledge of the distinction of *Gaudiya vaisnava* poetics vis-a-vis Abhinava's or to **acknowledge overtly that he is taking the stance of Abhinava**. It is in the context of this kind of approach by the modern scholars of *rasa* theory that the distinction between *Natya* for *Trivarga*, *Natya* for *Jnana* and *Līla* and the corresponding stances of **Dhananjaya/Dhanika**, **Abhinava/Jagannatha** and **Rupa/Jiva**, being delineated in the present work, becomes significant.

3.7.2. Rasa from the play as a result and means of *rasa* in the play.

It may be noted that the presentation of (the process of) self fulfilment as a provision for the emulation of that (process of) self fulfilment was mentioned to be part of the theory of *Natya* for *Trivarga* and *Natya* for *Jnana* (just as it is in the theory of *Līla*, as mentioned above) (2.4, 2.6.2 & 3.5.2-3). Whether this idea of emulation is part of the theory of Drama or not is not clear but the presentation of failure in self fulfilment as mentioned above (2.2.2), clearly distinguishes **Drama** from all the three kinds of *Natya*, namely, *Natya* for *Trivarga*, *Natya* for *Jnana* and *Līla*, in as much as these three kinds of *Natya* present the success in self fulfilment. As mentioned earlier, this presentation of success (in self fulfilment) is a precondition for the **possibility of *rasa* in *Natya*** (2.6.1). **Now** the possibility of *rasa* in all the three kinds of *Natya* may be seen to be based on this presentation of success (in self fulfilment). The **principle** of the kind of *rasa* resulting from the performance of a play being governed by the kind of self fulfilment presented in the play (2.6.1), leads to the idea that the ***rasa*** resulting from the performance of *Līla* is different in kind from the eight ***rasa-s*** of *Natya* for *Trivarga* on the one hand and from the *santa rasa* resulting from the *Natya* for *Jnana* on the other. It may be noted that in *Natya* for *Trivarga*, *rasa* is limited to the

experience resulting from the play and is not recognized (by the most) to be existing in the play (2.7.3). It may also be remembered that in *Natya* for *Jnana*, *rasa* resulting from the play is equated with the experience presented in the play (3.4). Now, as a result of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school's recognizing *rasa* as the experience in the content of the play (which is the transcendental loveful activities of the selves as Selves in the *Vaikuntha*/internal energy of *Bhagavān* and its manifestation on earth), *rasa* becomes not only a result of (the performance of) play but also that which is existing in the play. Coupled with the pan *Natya* idea of the purpose of play being to provide a model for emulation (2.4 & 2.7.2), this leads to the idea of *rasa* resulting from the play being a means to emulate and ultimately attain the *rasa* in the play. It may be noted that if what is considered to be provided for emulation in *Natya* for *Trtvarga* and *Natya* for *Jnana* is self fulfilment, it is the *rasa* resulting from or contained in the self fulfilment also, which is considered to be provided by *Lila* for emulation. It may be argued that even the goal of *Natya* for *Trtvarga* also is the 'pleasure' resulting from the fulfilment of the urges of sex, power and order (2.5). But, it may be noted that this pleasure can not be called *rasa* on account of not being transcendental. A similar argument may be possible in the case of *Natya* for *Jnana* too. It is true that the consideration of *sānta rasa* to be non-different from the experience, resulting from or contained in the fulfilment of self as Self nondifferent from *Bramhan* presented in *Natya* for *Jñāna*, also amounts to saying that *Natya* for *Jnana* provides the same experience for emulation as the one resulting from it. But *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school's approach of vice versa (considering the experience emulated itself as *rasa* and the theatrical experience as non-different from it) emphasizes the place of *rasa* as a goal of *Lila* (type of *Natya*).

This is one of the most significant aspects of *Gaudiya vaisnava* school. It may be noted that the principle of *bhaktavat na tu kṛṣṇavat* (the human individuals should emulate devotee but not *kṛṣṇa*) (3.5.3) implies that in a *Lila* performance (unlike in *Natya* where in accordance with the principle of *ramadivat varttavyam na kvacit ravanadivat* - one should emulate Characters like *Rāma* and not

characters like *Rāvana* - the audience identify with the hero and not with the antagonist) the audience (are supposed to) identify with the devotee self but not with *Kṛṣṇa*, though *Kṛṣṇa* is the hero of the *Līlā* plays. It goes without saying that the variegatedness of *rāsa* in the transcendental realm has its implications for the experience of *rāsa* in the theatre also, since, as mentioned earlier (3.5), the audience have a wide choice of self knowledges to identify with and since each self knowledge is experienced in the form of a kind of *rāsa* and finally since *rāsa* from the play is the result and means of *rāsa* in the play, *rāsa* from the play also is as **variegated** as *rāsa* in the play and, in fact, all the *rāsa*-s from the play are just corresponding to *rāsa*-s in the play with the same names and the *rāsa* experienced by a specific audience corresponds to the self knowledge chosen and emulated by that audience (*Pṛitī Sandarbha*, section 111).

3.8. *Rāsa*. as the purpose of instruction in *Līlā*.

The position of *rāsa* in the play as a goal of watching *Ula* performances, discussed above (3.7.2), has another implication. It is with regard to instruction **vis-a-vis** pleasure aspect of *Līlā*. *Līlā*, as a form of *Nāṭya*, by being a narrative form presentation of the ideas of *Vēdānta*, shares the feature of *Nāṭya*, namely, being a conversion of a kinglike instruction into a **belovedlike** instruction (2.3). That is, *Līlā* shares the feature of pleasure being **the** means of instruction. But the implication of *rāsa* being the goal of all endeavour in *Gauḍīya vaiṣṇava* school, as mentioned above (3.5.2-3), implies that *rāsa* is the goal of this instruction too. If in the words of Rāpin who, as **mentioned** earlier (1.4) says, "**for no other end is** [Drama] **deightful** man **it may** be profitable"; for *Nāṭya* for *Tnṡvarga*, *rāsa* is given for no other purpose than to instruct in *Tnṡvarga* (which, in turn, may lead to a worldly pleasure) (2.2.2); in *Ula*, *rāsa* from the play is the means of instruction in *pṛitī* which is, in turn, the means of *rāsa* in the play. Thus, in the case of *Līlā*, *rāsa* becomes both the means and goal of instruction. Another point to be noted here is that (based on the idea

that instruction is the means of *rasa* in the play, it can be said that) apart from giving *rasa* to those who have self knowledge, *Līlā*, by instructing the audience in the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* scheme of emulation of self knowledge, aims also at transforming those who can not experience *rasa* (owing to the lack of self knowledge), into those who can **experience** it.

3.9. ***Bhakti Rasa* as a day to day experience.**

Another significant implication of the conception of *rasa* (***Bhakti rasa***) as the experience of fulfilment of self as Self in 'playful' association with *Bhagavan* is that *rasa* does not remain to be a **theatrical** experience alone. It is conceived to be the experience, in other daily activities also, of an individual experiencing the fulfilment of the self knowledge in the form of self as Self in a transcendental loving relation with *Bhagavan*. It may be noted here that in the case of poetics of *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga*, *rasa* is considered **strictly** to be a theatrical experience and not at all a **daily** life experience (2.6.1). In fact, even in *śānta rasa* poetics, a situation similar to *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics is possible, because, there, *śānta rasa* is being conceived to be non-different from the experience of the self fulfilment in the form of self as Self **non-different** from the formless *Brahman*. But the word used for the daily life experience of such a self fulfilment in *śānta rasa* poetics is *brahmādvaita sukha* and *śānta rasa*, the theatrical experience, is considered to be **non-different** from this **daily** life experience (3.4), whereas, in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics, the word *rasa* is given to the **daily** life experience too.

However, as mentioned above (3.5.2), *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics considers that *rasa*, whether in theatre or outside that, is possible for a human individual only if the self fulfilment in the form of self as Self in *das* relation with *Bhagavan* is attained by that individual. The attainment of *das* self knowledge, according to *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, is possible only if the emulation of *das* self knowledge becomes a round the dock activity (*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* 1.2.8 and *Bhakti Sandarbha*,

sections 94 & 115). For this, Rupa in his *Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* proposes an elaborate list of activities with sixty four items (1.2.74 - 1.2.243) such as worshipping the deities at the temple, studying devotional scriptures such as the *Bhagavata Purāṇa*, associating with the other practitioners of *Bhakti*, living in holy places (like Mathura) and chanting the names of *Kṛṣṇa*, to be made part of a day to day activity. Rupa cites the examples of all these actions from various *Puranas* (which, as mentioned in 3.5.1, supposedly describe the actions performed by selves who are established in *das* self knowledge) and other sources. In other words, by following these actions, the selves are supposed to be emulating the actions of the selves as Selves established in their *das* self knowledge. These actions are expected to give relish (*ratī*) for *Kṛṣṇa* (*Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu* 1.2.245), and when this is intensified the selves attain transcendental love (*Chaitanya Caritāmṛta*, madhya Līla XIX. 177) for *Kṛṣṇa* and thus self fulfilment in the form of *das* self knowledge. That is, these actions help the selves to give up their identity which is devoid of *dās* self knowledge and to cultivate the *das* self knowledge which helps in experiencing *rasa*.

The possibility of *rasa* experience for human individuals on earth is considered by *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school to be exemplified in the behaviour of great devotees like Gaurangadas Babajī, Panditdas Babaj, Krishnadas Babaj and so on (whose stories are described by O.B.L Kapoor in his book *Brajā Kā Bhakta*). Chaitanya's behaviour mentioned, at the beginning of this discussion (3.5.1), is considered to be the best example of the most intense levels of experience of *rasa* (plates 1-3). The aim of all *Gaudiya Vaisnava* practitioners is to reach similar levels of experience of *rasa*. All the daily routine of a *Gaudiya* practitioner has this single goal of such an experience of *rasa*.

Watching *Līla* performances is, thus, considered by the followers of *Gaudiya vaisnava* school to be only one of all these activities, which help the individual attain *das* self knowledge and

experience *rasa*. Whether it is participating in *Līla* or in the other kind of activities, all of them are means of **experiencing** *rasa* inside and outside the *Līla* performances. It may be noted that watching *Līla* performances and other kinds of activities are complementary to and continuities of each other (see 4.4).

The concept of *rasa*, thus, dominates the entire *Gaudiya vaisnava* discourse imposingly. It works not only as a key concept of this philosophy but also as its characteristic feature. The criterion for the claim of this philosophy as the most choosable path among the paths of *Vādānta* also is the provision of *rasa* in this philosophy.

3.10. Playfulness' as the distinction of *Līla*.

Another key concept of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school (apart from the concept of *rasa* mentioned above) is the concept of *Līla*. The literal meaning of the word *Līla* is a '**playful**' activity. Interpretation of **'playfulness'** (of activity being called as *Līla*) as absence of expectation of desire for **gain/purpose** is well established (for example, Yamadagni, 1980 : 2 and Pandey, 1980 : 37). But if the word 'playful' can be interpreted as dose in expressions like '**playful**' relations and 'playful' form, it has been shown above that *parama madhurya rupa* (the sweetest form = the utmost closeness inspiring form) can be called as the most '**playful**' form and *madhura bhāva* (literally, the sweet relation here, the conjugal relation, considered to be the closest relation) can be called as the most '**playful**' relation. Based on this reasoning, it has also been shown that the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school's scheme of greater and greater **choosability** of *parama madhurya rupa* (the utmost sweet form), *madhura bhava* (conjugal relation) and *madhum bhava* (conjugal relation) **with** *parama madhurya rupa* (the utmost sweet form) can be understood to be rooted in or implying the greater and greater choosability of greater and greater degree of 'playfulness,' i.e., greater and greater degree of ***Līla*-ness**.

However, Jiva's explanation for the greater choosability of *parakiya madhura bhava* (non-wifely conjugal relation), among all the relations possible between self as Self and *Bhagavan*, has also been shown earlier (3.5.3) to be based on the idea of absence of expectations of either this world or the other world, in other words, on the basis of the 'playfulness' in this sense. Since interpreting *Līla* in this sense of 'playfulness' is well established, this explanation of Jiva can be seen as based on greater *līla*-ness.

This is how the idea of *Līla* can be seen to be all pervading in the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school and to be a key criterion for the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* value system. This centrality of 'playfulness' in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theology leads to the centrality of the same notion in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics and in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theatre also, because *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theatre, i.e., *Līla*, is only a theatrical presentation of *Gaudiya vaisnava* theology, through a narrative language (3.5.1). This is what makes *Līla*, the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theatre, the theatre of 'playfulness'.¹

It may be noted that the distinction delineated so far between Drama, *Natya* for *Tnvarga*, *Natya* for *Jnana* and *Līla*, at different occasions in the past discussions of this work, can now be understood in terms of 'playfulness'. For example, the distinction between these different kinds of theatre, in terms of 'playfulness', can be seen to be as follows. In Drama and *Natya* for *Trivarga*, 'playfulness' is not possible for the self, because the self in both these forms of theatre has passions which are just the opposite of 'playfulness' (purposelessness). Though *Natya* for *Jnana* also presents a self which is free from passions, in this theatre, the self as Self is considered to be in association with the formless aspect of the Absolute which has no activity¹ (either 'playful' or 'non-playful') as its feature. This leaves no scope for the entire variegated world of 'playfulness'¹ conceived in *Gaudiya vaisnava* school to exist in *Natya* for *Jnana*. Since in *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, as mentioned earlier (3.5), the self as Self is in association with *Bhagavān*

who has 'playful' activity as one of His important features, there is a scope for the huge variegated world of 'playfulness' conceived in *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school in *Līla*. Thus, among **Drama**, *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga*, *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna* and *Līla*, it is only in *Līla* that there is a scope for the presentation of 'playful' activity.

In the last chapter (2.6.2), it was shown that there is scope for the presentation of actions in *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna* also. These actions are free from desire and in this sense may be considered to be 'playful.' But the distinction in the actions presented in *Līla* is that they are presentations of 'playful' (transcendental loving) activities of **self as Self** with a playful *Bhagavan*

It may be noted that the word *kṛīḍānīyakam*, often quoted from Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra*, literally means 'playable' and thus is applicable to different forms of *Nāṭya* or at least to *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga* which has been the subject matter of the *Nāṭya Śāstra*. As discussed earlier (2.6.1), this word, in fact, can be seen to be referring to the *rasa* giving nature of *Nāṭya* and in this sense, it can be seen to be applicable to all the three forms of *Nāṭya*, namely, *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga*, *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna* and *Nāṭya* for *Bhakti/Līla*. But 'playfulness' of *Līla* is not limited to the 'playability' (*Kṛīḍānīyatā*) of this kind. Its distinction is, in fact, in the kind of self that it presents. As a theatre which presents a 'playful' self and a 'playful' plane/aspect of Reality, *Līla* can be called as a Theatre of 'playfulness.'

The name 'theatre of playfulness,' being given here to *US*, may appear similar to the name 'theatre of the Absurd'. This similarity in the coinage of the name is not only unwarranted but also deliberate. The similarity is justified at least for one reason. Both the theatre of the Absurd (at least as represented in the plays of Samuel Becket) and the Theatre of 'playfulness,' i.e., *Līla*, give an impression of total absence of 'action,' ('absence of action' in the sense of insensitivity/indifference in the Theatre of the Absurd and in the sense of no conflict in *Līla*). But

Table 10.
Comparison between different schools of Nāṭya.

I. Common features.

1. Happy ending.
2. Themes from *Itihāsa-s* and *Purāṇa-s*.
3. Self presented as models for emulation.
4. Worldview basis is Vedic.
5. Performance as a Vedic activity.
6. Personality of the participants restricted.
7. *Rasa* as the term for the aesthetic experience of the audience.
8. Theatre as theatrical form presentation of the narrative form of the Vedic laws of nature.
9. Self fulfilment in terms of the urges of the self.

II. Differences.

<i>Nāṭya</i> for <i>Trivarga</i>	<i>Nāṭya</i> for <i>Jñāna</i>	<i>Līla</i>
1. Issue : Philosophical background.		
<i>Karma Kāṇḍa</i> section of the <i>Vēda-s</i>	<i>Jñāna Kāṇḍa</i> (<i>Vēdānta</i>) section of the <i>Vēda-s</i> - <i>Advaita Vēdānta</i> perspective.	<i>Jñāna Kāṇḍa</i> section of the <i>Vēda-s</i> . <i>Bhakti Vēdānta</i> perspective.
2. Issue : Self in terms of qualities.		
<i>Triguṇa</i> bound self.	<i>Triguṇa</i> free self (Self).	<i>Triguṇa</i> free self (Self)
3. Issue : Self.		
<i>Karma</i> bound self.	The self as self seeking/attained non-difference with the formless Absolute.	The self as Self seeking/attained transcendental loving association with the Absolute
4. Issue : Self in terms of urges.		
<i>Trivarga</i> seeking self.	<i>Jñāna</i> (Knowledge) seeking/attained	<i>Prīti</i> seeking/attained self.
5. Issue : Attitude towards performance.		
<i>Yajña</i> , the <i>Trivarga</i> giving ritual.	<i>Jñāna</i> giving ritual.	<i>Prīti</i> giving ritual.
6. Issue : Aesthetic experience in terms of <i>Rasa</i> .		
Eight <i>Rasa-s</i> listed by Bharata	<i>Śānta Rasa</i> .	Several different kinds of <i>Bhakti Rasa</i> .

7. Issue : Comparability with the spiritual experience.		
Considered to be similar.	Considered to be the same.	Considered to be the same.
8. Issue : Identification by the audience.		
With the <i>Trivarga</i> seeking protagonist.	With the <i>Jñāna</i> seeking/attained protagonist.	With the <i>Prīti</i> seeking/attained protagonist.
9. Issue : Possibility of <i>Rasa</i> inside and outside the theatre.		
Only inside.	Both inside and outside.	Both inside and outside.
10. Issue : Pleasure from the theatre due to		
Fulfilment of <i>Trivarga</i>	<i>Brahmādvaita</i> [non-difference from <i>Brahmān</i>].	Fulfilment of <i>Prīti</i> .
11. Issue : Instructs as goal		
<i>Dharma</i> .	<i>Jñāna</i> .	<i>Prīti</i>
12. Issue : Type of happiness experienced by the self		
Mixed with miseries	Born of <i>Jñāna</i> , free from miseries	Born of <i>Prīti</i> , free from miseries
13. Issue : Laws of nature depicted/instructed		
Law of <i>Karma</i> (2.2).	Law of <i>Advaita Vēdānta</i> (2.5&3.4).	Law of <i>Bhakti Vēdānta</i> (3.5).

Table 11. Comparison between Drama and different kinds of <i>Nāṭya</i> .			
Drama	<i>Nāṭya</i> for <i>Trivarga</i>	<i>Nāṭya</i> for <i>Mōkṣa</i>	<i>Līla</i>
	1. Issue : Qualities of the self.		
Passionate and/or m-sensitive/ignorant	Passionate but order bound and passionate but order violative.	Free from passions.	Free from passions.
	2. Issue : Type of self.		
Tragic (failing in self-fulfilment).	<i>Karma</i> bound (both succeeding and failing in self-fulfilment).	Tranquil.	'Playful.'
	3. Issue : Laws of nature depicted		
Various forces of determinism	Law of <i>Kama</i> (2.2).	Law of <i>Advaita Vedanta</i> . (2.5&3.4).	Law of <i>Bhakti Vedanta</i> (3.5).

there is a difference in the cause for lack of 'action' in these two. If there is no 'play' (conflict-free interpersonal communication) in the Theatre of the Absurd there is only 'play'¹ (conflict-free interpersonal communication) in *Līla*. If lack of 'play' in Absurd Theatre is because the self in it is depicted to be 'cut off from the religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots which gave meaning and purpose to the existence. . . .' (1.2.7), there is only 'play' in *Līla* because the self is cut off from the nature, the *guṇa-s* and their resulting qualities (2.5.2), but still in action (performing activities immensely).

3.11. Conclusion.

Thus, it may be seen that extending the **worldview** based study of *Natya* to *Līla-s*, taking the help of *Gauḍiya Vaisnava* literature on poetics to trace the worldview underlying the *Līla-s*, helps in understanding the distinction of *Līla-s* from the other forms of the *Natya* on the one hand (see table 10) and from Drama on the other (see table 11), in terms of self and self fulfilment

It has been mentioned in the earlier chapter that Drama and *Natya* can be distinguished on account of the presentation of failure alone and success along with the failure, respectively, of self and self fulfilment. There, it has also been mentioned that *Natya* for *Trivarga*, among the various categorizations of *Natya*, shares with Drama the presentation of the self with passions, though it differs from Drama in presenting the successful passionate self. Now at the end of this chapter, it can be seen that *Natya* for *Jnana* and *Līla*, while sharing the presentation of successful self fulfilment with *Natya* for *Trivarga*, both differ from it in the presentation of a dispassionate self. *Līla* among these two categories of *Natya* presenting a state of self transcendental to the three modes, differs from the other because of the presentation of 'playful' activities of a 'playful' self in association with 'playful' Bhagavan. If Drama and *Natya* for *Trivarga* present the self with the urges for sex and power, *Natya* for *Jñāna* and *Līla* present a self free from these urges. Fulfilment or

non-fulfilment of *Dharma*, *Jñāna* and *Pṛiti*, respectively, are the determining factors of success and failure, in *Natya* for *Tṛvarga*, *Natya* for *Jnana* and *Līla*, respectively.

If each form of Drama, is a presentation of one of the discoveries of the material laws of determinism (1.1 & 1.3), *Ula*, the Theatre of **'playfulness'** is a presentation of a Reality conceived to be free from such a material determinism, which in Vedic **worldview** is explained in terms of bondage to three modes (2.4.2). If *Natya* for *Tṛvarga* is a presentation of actions in compliance and non-compliance with the laws of determinism of the self in bondage with the three modes, *Natya* for *Jnana* and *Līla* are presentations of liberation, of the self which surpasses the three modes, from these laws. But as mentioned above, *Natya* for *Jnana* does not have a conception of actions of the self in that mode in association with a 'playful' Absolute. Whereas, *Ula* is a presentation of actions of the self liberated from these laws and yet in association with the Absolute (which too is conceived to be a 'playful' (acting) entity.

Thus, the axis of the concepts of self and self fulfilment helps in understanding *Līla* in relation to Drama and helps to see that in line with the phrases such as the Theatre of the Absurd, used in the case of Drama, it deserves to be called as the Theatre of **'playfulness'**.

The predominance of the concept of **'playfulness'** in the context of *Līla* resulted in the form and technique of it being predominantly **'playful'**, in the *Rās Līla-s* performed in Vrindavan (4.4). The details of this technique will be studied in the next chapter.

End notes :

1. It should be noted that *Jnana Kānda* of *Vēda-s*, mentioned earlier (2.5.2 & 2.8) is a section of *Vēda-s*, which deals with the issue of liberation of self from miseries and laws of nature applicable to self as Self and so on, where as, *Jnana marga* is a particular path or method or school of interpretation/practice of this *Jnana Kānda*.

2 With an equation to the stories of devotees mentioned in the *Puranas*, even the stories of devotees from the history are referred to as *Līla-s*.

3 These three miseries are interpreted by O.B.L. Kapoor, a *Gaudiya vaisnava* scholar, as follows. He describes '*ādhadavika*' as that "which proceeds from the gods, e.g., famine and epidemics," *ādhibhautika* as that which proceeds from material causes' and *ādhyātmika* as that which pertains to the **mind**' (1976 : 135).

4. It may be noted that though *Bhakti* is used in a general way to mean devotional service, Jiva gives this term to the particular mood of a devotee, who considers *Kṛṣṇa* as His master and himself as *Kṛṣṇa* 's servant.

5. *Mādhurya* (sweetness) should not be confused with *Madhum* (conjugal) *bhava*.

6. For **Madhusudana**, *Paramātmā* is a general word referring to the Absolute, unlike in *Caudiya vaisnava* school, where it refers to only that aspect of *Bhagavan*, which organizes the universe according to the laws of nature (3.5.1).

7. It may strike to a student of Drama that **Miracle** plays, among the plays of the West, have not

been taken up for **comparision** here, though, these plays are closest to the *Līla* performances, atleast to the extent of being religious. Probably, it will be interesting to compare these plays also with Drama and see how the problem of self is dealt within these plays differently than in mainstream Drama, just as **it** has been done here, in **comparision** with the *Līla-s*, thus placing *Līla-s* and miracle plays into one slot. But given the well known **dis-similarities** between the Christian theology and *Vēdānta*, obviously Miracle plays can not be seen as identical to *Līla* performances. Bringing these into discussion would require a whole lot of discussion of the complicated problems of **differences between Christian theology** and *Vēdānta*. Such a discussion is beyond the scope of the present work as the focus here is to understand *Līla vis-a-vis* Drama and *Natya*.

Chapter 4.

Līlā as a playful process of self fulfilment

4.1. Localization of Rās Līlā-śo Braj.

The previous chapter has delineated the theoretical background required to study the *Ras Līlā* performances of *Braj*. There, it was shown how, according to *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics, experience of *Rasa* in theatre is continuous with and complimented by the experience of *Rasa* in **daily** life. This chapter shows how the *Braj* culture provides for this continuity and complementarity between theatre and **daily** life.

One significant aspect of *Rās Līlā* performances, the special **variety** of *Līlā*, is that it has been an activity strictly localized for a region called *Braj Mandal* (covering a **circumference** of 168 Kms) which covers the shrines **such** as **Gokul**, Barsana and Nand Gaon, located around the famous shrine Vrindavan and which come under the Mathura district in **Uttar** Pradesh. Such a localization has been traditional in the sense that *Ras Līlā-s* performances have been performed in *Braj* for generations and for all these generations it has been considered ideal to localize *Rās Līlā-s* **to** *Braj Mandal*.

The thinking behind this consideration can be grasped by observing the culture of *Braj*. All the places discussed above are associated with the legends of *Kṛṣṇa*, the cowherd boy incarnation of *Nārāyaṇa/Viṣṇu*, as described in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Though it is said that these shrines were **founded** during the sixteenth century by some devotional saints (for example, *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, *Antya Līlā* 218 and *Bhakti Ratnākara*, 1992: fifth wave), these places are popularly believed to be the same places where *Kṛṣṇa* lived His cowherd boy life, during the mythological

dvāpara age and what the sixteenth century saints did, is considered to be a 'rediscovery' of those mythological places, in the **various** locations within *Bra/*. The legends associated with these places go beyond the stories narrated in the *Bhagavata Purana* and include those *Purāna-s* like the *Bramha Vālvarta Purana*, a huge number of popular versions of *Kṛṣṇa* stories, some prevalent as folklore and some **described** in the lyrics of the medieval devotional poets of this region like Surdas, Swam Haridas and Hit **Harivams**. One noteworthy aspect of these popular legends is that all of them, not only invariably include the cowherd (*gōpī*) beloved of *Kṛṣṇa* called *Radha*, but they bring a great significance to the name *Rādhā* itself.

Today, these shrines are one of the most crowded pilgrim centres of **India**, where apart from a buzzing floating population, there are a considerably big number of *Kṛṣṇa* devotees, who have, once for all, settled in these places and live in their cottages, houses, hermitages, temples and so on. One cultural continuity between the present day life of these places and the *Bhagavata Purāna* is the word *vraja* (of which *Braj* is considered to be the local pronunciation). Today, *Braj* culture is a strong local cultural identity of these places, usually identified through the rural dialect of Hindi called *Braj bhasa*, spoken in these places. For example, residents of these places are referred to as *Brajvāsī-s* and *Braj bhasa*, the rural dialect spoken in these places, is claimed as a strong mark of their cultural identity. *Braj bhasa* as a vernacular language has been in vogue for the last several centuries. Famous literature, like the songs of devotional poets like Surdas mentioned above, were all composed in *Bra/* dialect only. Whatever might have been the traditional culture of these places before their 'rediscovery' during the sixteenth century, today, the predominant culture of these places **is** that of various devotional cults like *Vallabha Sampradaya*, *Nimbarka Sampradaya*, and *Radha Vallabha Sampradaya* (see **Mital**, 1968 : Ch.S 5-7, for a discussion on these devotional cults) and this is what is today referred to as *Braj* culture in general.

Vrindavan, the shrine, is the most crowded and **developed** of all these places and is almost a centre of activity of the entire *Braj Mandal*. Entry into Vrindavan makes the individual to enter into the **world** of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*. At every few steps, the visitor can spot either a temple of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*, or a temple like *asram* (covenant). Just within Vrindavan, there are more than five thousand temples of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* and *asram-s* (plate 4).

In fact, it is in Vrindavan that the significance of *Rādhā* mentioned above, is more explicitly manifest. For the *Brajvāsi-s*, *Radha* is *Vṛndāvanāśvarī*, the Queen of Vrindavan and *Kṛṣṇa* is Her Beloved and they - Their servants. The attachment of the devotees to *Radha* is expressed in many ways. Every wall and tree in Vrindavan is painted with the name of *Radha* (plates 5-7) The devotees of Vrindavan greet each other with '*Radhe Radhe*.' A rickshaw walla (tricycle puller) shouts '*Rādhā*' even to a person who blocks his way on the road. The telephone calls in Vrindavan are also received with a *Radhe Radhe*, instead of Hello! The prominence of *Rādhā* can also be seen by the way the deities are named. The deities in the temples are called *Radha Raman*, *Radha - Madan Mohan*, *Radha - Vinōda*, *Radha - Gopinatha*, and *Radha - Śyāmsundara*. Whatever form *Kṛṣṇa* takes, such as *Śyāmsundara* (beautiful dark complexioned boy), *Madan Mōhan* (one who charms even the cupid - *Madan*) and so on, for the devotees of Vrindavan, it is for *Rādhā* that He takes it, because He **belongs** to Her. (The *Gaudiya Vāsṇava* explanation for the significance of *Radha*, it may be noted, has been discussed while discussing the schematic choice of self knowledges and the greatest superiority given to *Radha* in this scheme in section 3.5.3 of the previous chapter).

The *Braj* culture of Vrindavan **comprises** of intense devotional activities like worshipping the deities of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* in the temples and the *āśram-s*, chanting the names of the *Kṛṣṇa* on the beads (plates 8 & 12-13), performing congregational chanting of the names of *Kṛṣṇa* (*sankīrtan*. Plates 14-15) and attending discourses on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*



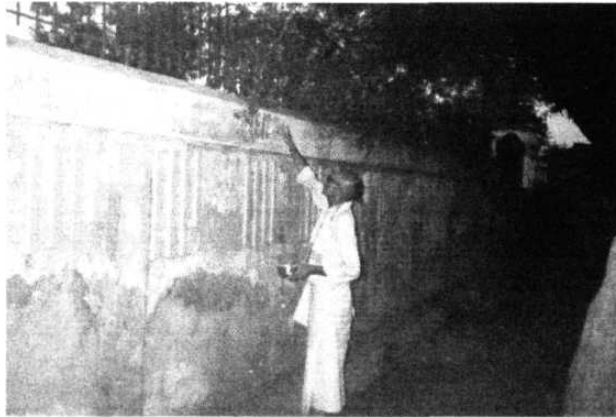
4. Vrindavan is a cluster of temples and ~~asrama-s~~ (convents) on the bank of river Yamuna. The tower seen is Radha-Madanmohan temple built by Sanatana Goswami (3.5.1).

5-7. Every wall and tree in Vrindavan bear the name of Radha.

5. Each of the row of trees in Raman Reti street with an inscription of the name of Radha in Sanskrit and English



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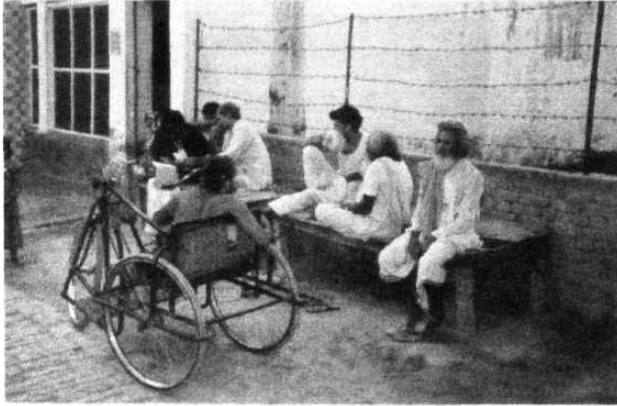


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6 A wall with the sbgan of `repeat (the name of) *Śrī Radha*.'

7. Painting the name of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* on the walls is the pastime of *RādhāBaba* (*Nimbārka Sampradāya*).

Source : Researcher's own documentation



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8 The local Brajavasi-s The rustic simplicity of these natives of Braj Mandal which is considered to be the reminiscence of the obscurity inspiring form of Krishna and His cowherd associates is the model for emulation for the devotees with elitist affluent backgrounds also. All the locals are relaxing at the end of a day. Note the bead bags in some of the hands.

Source : Researcher's own documentation

9-12. Certain spots in Vrindavan treated as the exact places where the incidents described in Bhagavata Purana occurred in the past.

9. Shows a tree, which is considered to be the tree from which Krishna jumped into the pond of Kaliya (see Appendix 6). This place is called Kaliya Dah



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10. A temple at *Kaliya Dah*. Note *Kṛṣṇa* on the hoods Of *kaliya*.



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11. *Cīr Ghat* on the banks of River *Yamuna*. This is believed to be a place where *Kṛṣṇa* stole the clothes of *gōpi*-s bathing in *Yamuna* (*Bhāgavata Purana* X.22]. This story is considered to be instructing surrenderence of ego to *Bhagavān*, symbolized by relinquishing of clothes. Pieces of women's clothes seen hanging/tied by the women as a gesture of surrender of their ego to *Kṛṣṇa*.



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12. An *āśrama* (Sri Chatanya Prem Samsthan) at *Bhramara Ghat* (the lake of bumble bee), a place on the bank of river *Yamuna*, which is considered to be the place where *gōpi-s* sang the famous lyric called *bhramara git* (bumble bee song), treating the bumble bee as a messenger of *Kṛṣṇa*, during their pangs of separation, during *uddhava's* arrival at Vrindavan (*Bhagavata Purāṇa*, 10.47) (4.3.5.2. V). The back drop of the wall shows *Radha* (elevated) and *gopi-s* singing *bhramara git*. Note the bumble bee at the feet of *Radha*. The picture shows a *sankirtan* session inside Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.

Sources : 9-11 Researcher's own documentation. 12 Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan

Discussing Vrindavan, **Gelberg** quotes Klaus Klostermaier as saying,

'The atmosphere is filled with the drone of drums, the tinkling of bells and the incessant, chorus - like invocations of *Kṛṣṇa* . and Radha: in the temples, in the houses, on the streets, in the fields. Everywhere and everybody sings the praises **of** the divine couple....Everywhere, their picture hangs, everywhere their statues stand, everywhere there is a tree, a stone, a temple, a square connected with a particular incident in the life **of** *Kṛṣṇa* .." (in Rosen, 1992 : 11).

The point is that *Rās Līlā* performances are also, only a part of this entire *Braj* culture. It is a different matter that within *Braj* culture *Ras Līlā* performances are considered to be the most interesting, attractive and juicy. Prabhudayal **Mital**, explaining the place of *Ras Līlā-s* within *Braj* culture opines,

if the culture of Vrindavan is compared to a big tree and the various aspects of its culture to the branches of the tree, then *Ras [Līlā]* can be compared as its **mellifluous** fruit (1983:5).

For *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* followers, the significance **of** *rasa* and *Līlā* ('playfulness') (3.10) can be seen to be rooted in the localization of *Ras Līlā* to *Braj* culture itself. Firstly, the rusticity of the *Braj* culture as reflected in the affinity for the *Braj* dialect and the rural lifestyle is part of the 'playfulness' in the sense of closeness inspiring (3.5.3), **non-pompous**, **non-showy** simple, nature (plate 8). Even eloquent scholars in Sanskrit and Sanskrit *sāstra-s* (literature), elite individuals from privileged class and families in their adaptations to *Braj* culture, develop an affinity for the rustic aspects of *Braj* culture, including the use of *Braj bhāṣā* (language). It may be noted here that *Ras Līlā* performances, in which even such scholars and elite individuals participate, are invariably performed only in *Braj bhāṣā*. This adaptation is also motivated by the belief that *Braj Mandal* is, in fact, the same *Braj Mandal* where *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates performed their **cowherdly** activities

(plates 9-12) and *Braj bhāṣā* is the language in which they spoke. Because of the same belief *goseva* (taking care of cows) has become one of the prominent ways of life for a lot of the devotees settled in Vrindavan (plate 17). This cow service, it may be noted, is not done, as in the case with occupational cattle rearers, as a job for payment or for the gain of milk and milk products to be used as saleable commodities. The whole activity is just without any material purpose and merely with an attitude that it is the best pastime, which helps them in the emulation (3.6) of the **cowherdly** associates of Kṛṣṇa.

Secondly, the most frequent purpose, that is mentioned, during the invitation for any activity in *Braj Mandal* is *ras līlā* ('taking,' i.e., relishing 'rasa'). A devotee invites the other devotee to go to a temple, to participate in a festival; or to watch a *Līlā* performance saying, for example, *āīyē! āīyē! ras lījyē* (please come! please come! please 'take,' i.e., relish rasa). Gaudiya Vaisnava's explanation for the localization of *Ras Līlā* to *Braj Mandal* can now be easily understood on the basis of the centrality of *Līlā* and *rasa* concepts, in Gaudiya vaisnava theology (3.10). As mentioned in the previous Chapter (3.5.1), for Gaudiya Vaisnava-s too, *Braj Mandal* is the **same** *Braj Mandal* of *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Thus, for the Gaudiya Vaisnava followers, all the transcendental loving affinities between the selves as Selves and *Bhagavan* take place in *Braj Mandal* **eternally** and it is for the devotee to develop an ability to **See** them. It is believed that those devotees who attain the self fulfilment in the form of *das* self knowledge can 'See' such happenings in *Braj Mandal* which remain invisible for the ordinary devotees who are yet to attain this **self** fulfilment (3.5.1). Watching *Ras Līlā* performances is one of the best means to develop such a self fulfilment according to the followers Of Gaudiya Vaisnava school (3.6). The followers Of Gaudiya Vaisnava School also consider that the simplicity and rusticity of *Brajvāsi* way of life, when followed, are also part of the emulation of the choosable self knowledges **as** they are "playful" **self** knowledges (3.6).

4.2. Norms of *Rās Līlā* performances found in the daily life of *Brajvāsī-S*.

In the last chapter, it was mentioned that watching the *Ras Līlā* performances is only part of a daily routine of devotional activities for its audience. *Brajvāsī-S*, whether travellers, residents of *āśram-S*, shopkeepers or others, have a systematic daily routine which, in one form or the other, is centered around *Radha Kṛṣṇa* devotion and keeps them engaged in devotion, round the clock. *Brajvāsī-S* get up early in the morning (around 4 A.M), take their bath (some of them in river *Yamunā* on which lies the Vrindavan) and go to different temples (either of their choice or according to their cult affiliation or according to convenience), to attend *mangala aratī* (literally, camphor flame refreshing, here, the **early** morning watching of the deities, freshly opened for public). Returning from the temple, some of them sit down to chant (*jap*) the names of *Kṛṣṇa* (turning the beads in the hand) (Plates 13), some others participate in *sankīrtan*, i.e., congregational singing of names and lyrics in praise of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* (plates 14 & 15) and others get engaged in their daily course of the study/recital of *Radha Kṛṣṇa bhakti* literature (around 6 A.M. to 9 A.M)(plate 16) with occasional visits to temples by those of **them**, who are interested in participating in some special daily services. Now, the *Brajvāsī-S* prepare themselves for taking food. Those of them who have a **vow** to take only the food collected through begging from the other *Radha Kṛṣṇa* devotees, go to beg and others who cook their own food, set off to cook their food. After this, most of the *Brajvāsī-S* disperse to get engaged in the daily service chosen by them. Quite often, the service chosen for this is *goseva*, taking care of cows (plate 17). But some people prefer more chanting or singing or study of *Radha Kṛṣṇa bhakti* literature for the day. Those of the *Brajvāsī-S* who are engaged in jobs like working for *āśram-S* and **shopkeeping**, consider these jobs as part of their *Rādhā Kṛṣṇa* devotional service and get engaged in them (10 A.M to 5 or 8 P.M). These services are interrupted by a visit to a temple at noon, to participate in *raj bhōg* (grand meal) service, afternoon full meal offered to *Kṛṣṇa*. In the evening, *Brajvāsī-S* collect again in temples for *sandhyā aratī* (literally evening camphor flame refreshing, here, evening watching **of the** deities)(6 P.M) **and** from there they disperse **to** take part in



P-13

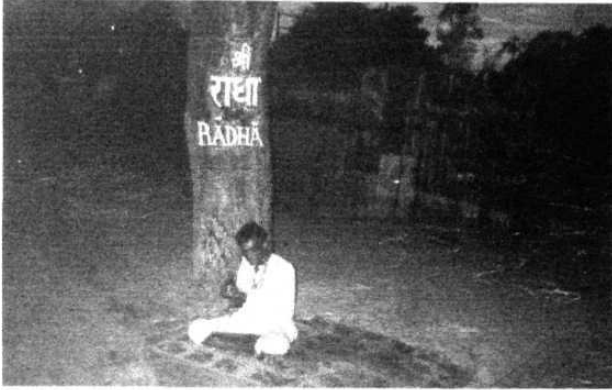


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13-17. The daily routing of *Brāhṁas* is one or the other activity of devotion to *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*.

13. A devotee of Gaurangdas *bābāji asrama* engaged in **chanting**

14. Devotees performing *sankirtan* (congregational chanting) at the *samādhi* (tomb) of Gopala Bhatta Goswami (an associate of Rupa and Sanatana) attached to *Sri Radha Raman* temple built by him.



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15. A blind devotee loses himself in *kīrtan* (singing the names of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa*) under a tree.

16. Residents of Gaurangadas *bābājī āśrama* (in Raman Reti) engaged in the *Bhagavat Pathan* (reading out *Bhagavata Purāṇa*). One of the residents is seen reading out, while the other two listening.



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17. Haridas **Shastriji**, one of the rare surviving erudite traditional **shastric** scholars of *Gaudiya vaisnava* tradition, engaged in *gōṣeṣā* (serving cows).

Sources : 12-16 **Researcher's** own documentation. 17 Haridas Shastriji, **Vrindavan**.

18. A typical *pravācan* (discourse) session during the festival season. Purushottamdas **Gosvami**, on the elevated seat, is giving a lecture on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. The accompanying singer and orchestra, to the right of the dias, add devotional singing **in between**

Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem Samsthān**



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19 and 20. The audience respond with raised hands to the slogan *jay jay śrīrādhē* during a *Bhāgavata* discourse.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.



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21. An event of collective ecstasy. **Purushottamdas Goswami**, the priest of *Rādhā Raman* temple (in front), conducting a *sankīrtan* session. Devotees respond ecstatically experiencing freely and **variously**.

Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem** Samsthan, Vrindavan.

activities like *sankīrtan* or discourses (*pravacan*) on *bhakti* literature or to *Līlā* performances during festival occasions. After meals, they go to bed after a few minutes of gossiping relaxation, where the gossip is, again, usually centered around their daily activities of *Rādhā Kṛṣṇa* devotion, or after a few minutes of chanting on the beads.

This is the daily routine of *Braṇvāsī-s* except on festivals days like *janmastami* (the birth/appearance of *Kṛṣṇa* which falls in the month of August. See 3.5.1), *rādhāstami* (the birth/appearance of *Radha*, which falls fifteen days after *janmastami* in the month of August - September), *hōī* (festival of colours, which falls in the month of March), *jhulan yātra* (swing festival, which falls in the month of July - August), the birth/appearance and death/disappearance of saints' of the respective *sampradaya-s*, during different periods of the year, when some additional activities such as *parikrama* (circumambulation) around holy places like Vrindavan, Goverdhan hill (in Mathura which is about 25 Kms from Vrindavan, which is considered by *Braṇvāsī* as the same hill, which as discussed in 4.3.5.2.III, is lifted by Krishna with His hand, during His *Avatāra*) and *Braj Mandal*, and attending discourses in the *Bhāgavata* *saptaha*, a week long discourses (*pravacan*) on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, delivered at various venues in and around Vrindavan (plates 18-20), are performed with increased mood of celebration, revelry and joy (plate 21).

The routine described above, is repeated everyday almost in the same way. For persons valuing change and variety in life, this routine looks to be strange. But for *Braṇvāsī-s*, there is not a pinch of feeling of monotony or boredom found in doing the same thing repeatedly, day and night, through out the year. Huberman articulates the feeling of the non-*Braṇvāsī* observers when he says,

"Each day follows, exactly like the preceding one, with no desire for change or hope for something better in the future" (in Rosen, 1992 : 125).

The attitude of *Brāṇvāsī-s* towards all these activities is devoid of any material gain or purpose. All activities are looked at as the best way to vili away time, before they reach what they want to attain. This attitude of activities as '**pastime**' is another important meaning of the word '*Līlā* as **play**' (3.10). Almost all the *Brāṇvāsī-s* share the feeling. They have nothing else to do than to participate in these pastimes,' that is, '*Līlā-s*'. The biographical information of several devotees settled in *Braj* as *Brāṇvāsī-s*, collected during the present research work reveals that most of them were well off and busy, doing extremely well in their earning activities and later gave up their careers, for settling down in *Braj*. **Huberman** quotes Brooks as commenting about this attitude of *Brāṇvāsī-s* as follows:

"History, progress, achievement, betterment, ideals, theories, and mass movements all belong to the world of time. But in this land, there is nothing but the Lord's play, his "game" so to **speak**..." (in Rosen, 1992 : 128).

Gelberg also expresses a similar feeling about the attitude of *Brāṇvāsī-s* towards their daily activities when he says,

"People living in the earthly Vrindavan do not see themselves as participating in normal activities, but rather taking part in the esoteric drama completely arranged **by Kṛṣṇa himself**" (in Rosen, 1992 : 13).

The word 'drama' used by Gelberg is important and interesting. Obviously Gelberg refers to theatre in general by that word. He also refers to a feeling of amusing excitement and desired wonder by using the word '**drama**.' This feeling of transportation into a spiritual plane of experience can be seen to be **expressed** by *Brāṇvāsī-s* in their day to day expressions during their activities

Best examples for such expressions **can** be found in the celebrations of festivals like *janmāṣṭamī*, *jhulan yātra*, and *hōḍī*, **which** are performed during the respective occasions. **During** *janmāṣṭamī*,

Brāṇvāsī-s collect at temples and wait for the moment of the birth of baby *Kṛṣṇa* (which is midnight on the *janmāṣṭamī* day). Once the moment of *Kṛṣṇa's* birth arrives, there is a spurt of joy and its expressions and all the services which are performed for a new born baby, like bathing the baby, are enacted by the priest in the temple through offering special sacred bathing to the deities in the temple. The theatrelikeness in the rituals of the temple with the priest becoming the director, the deities, the actors and the devotees, the audience, is worth noting. The immobile and mute actors, which the deities are, are capable enough to become the characters in the experience of the audience called devotees. Right from the evening, there is a reverberating mood of celebrations. Devotees greet each other saying *badhai hō* (congratulations). Special songs called *badhāi* (congratulation) songs are sung in the evenings throughout the week, ending with *janmāṣṭamī* (plates 22-23). The whole mood is that they are the cowherds, who gathered at the house yard of *Nanda* and *Yasōda*, awaiting the birth of *Kṛṣṇa*. The deity is intensely felt and treated as a real new born baby and all the close affection is poured through various expressions by *Brāṇvāsī-s* over the deities.

Thus, *janmāṣṭamī* celebrations best illustrate the feeling of transportation experienced by the *Brāṇvāsī-s*. It may be noted that this feeling makes the *Brāṇvāsī-s* participate in the theatre of deity worship presented by the priest, by directly entering into the stage as actors'/characters' breaking the 'play' - audience barrier which otherwise exists during their daily visits to temples. A similar transportation and the merging of 'play' - audience barrier can be seen in *hōlī* celebration, where the *Brāṇvāsī-s*, apart from sprinkling colors on to each other, notably, only as a participation in a play (*khēl* = sport) of *hōlī* with *Śyām* (the dark one, i.e., *Kṛṣṇa*), offer colors to the deities of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* with the feeling of sprinkling colors on *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* themselves. This friendliness is another meaning of 'playfulness' which *Brāṇvāsī-s* experience with *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*.

A similar evidence of transportation feeling can be seen in *faejnuian yatra* festival. In this festival



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22 and 23. A *badhāi* singing session inside Radha Raman temple during *janmastami*.

22. Lead singer is Purushottamdas Gosvami, one of the priest of the temple.

23. The lead singer in close-up, his left hand gesturing *badhāi hō!* (congratulations). The book in front of him is the book of *badhāi* songs.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan

Brāṇvāsī-s swing the deities of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* in *jhūlā-s* (swings) with a feeling that they are assisting *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* in their conjugal pastimes.

If these festival participations transport the *Brāṇvāsī-s* into the mythological 'time' of occurrence of the respective episodes of *Kṛṣṇa's* life, there is another activity which transports them into the place of occurrence of the activities. It is the *paṅkrama* (circumambulation) mentioned above, in which this happens. In this activity, *Brāṇvāsī-s* go around either Vrindavan shrine (covering about 5 miles) or the Goverdhan hill (covering about 14 miles) or the entire *Brāṇ Mandal* (covering about 128 miles) or around each of them on separate occasions. Since different spots, which they come across in this going around, are considered to be the actual places where *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* performed their pastimes in the past, *Brāṇvāsī-s* again get transported into those activities and become ecstatic.

This feeling of ecstasy and manifestation of involuntary responses like tears, screaming and crying loud chants of the names of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* are found throughout these daily and festival time activities of *Brāṇvāsī-s*. These expressions are, obviously, indicators of the intensity of transportation experienced by them. This intensity of experience, though is mainly rooted in the feeling of being at the actual place and/or time of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* and Their activities, and to an extent, in the reinforcement effected by a long and continuous repetition of activities, another factor can be seen to be contributing to this intensity. It is the collective participation of *Brāṇvāsī-s* in most of these activities and the emotional intensification such a collectivity generates. *Brāṇvāsī-s* enjoy this transportation and resultant ecstatic emotions and the collective relishing of them.

In fact, that is what is expressed in their inviting each other to come and take Vas' - *ras lēnā* (4.1)- and in their congratulating each other. It is for this bliss and for nothing else, that they participate

in all the *Brajvasi* activities. It is in this sense that the whole *Brajvasi* life is just **playful**' (3.5).

From a *Gaudiya Vaisnava* point of view, this daily routine is the execution of the principle of always remembering *Bhagavān* and never forgetting Him (3.9) and an exercise of emulation of the *dās* self knowledge through the method suggested by Rupa in the form of sixty four items of *bhakti* (3.9). All the key concepts of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theology like *rasa* and *Līlā*, in both the senses of closeness and 'acting without purpose' (3.5 & 3.10), can be seen to be embedded in all the activities of *Brajvasi* life.

It is with this background of a daily routine that a *Brajvasi* becomes an audience² of *Ras Līlā* performances, which, as mentioned above (3.9), are, in fact, only one of these items of routine for them

Producers, directors, actors and audience, all come from those *Brajvāsī-s* sharing this culture all the time. This way *Ras Līlā* shares another feature of *Nāṭya*, i.e., all the participants in the performance share the worldview presented in the performance. If in *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga*, the central notion of that culture is *dharma* (2.7), in *Līlā-s*, the participants share the culture of which *prīti* (transcendental love beyond *Tnvarga*), *rasa* and *Līlā* are the key concepts (3.5). Because of this reason, *rāsdhārī-s* (literally, those who hold the *Ras*, here, directors of *Ras Līlā-s*³) are supposed to have a saintly personality and are usually referred with a prefix *Svāmī* (saint). For example, some of the well known *rāsdhārī-s* of contemporary *Rās LIB* theatre are referred to as *Svāmī* Har Govind, *Svāmī* Ram Svarup, and *Svāmī* Fateh Krishna (plate 24).

The script of *Ras Līlā-s* is said to have evolved from the texts of the sixteenth century poet-saints like *Svāmī* Haridas, *Svāmī* Hita Harivams, and Surdas. Even today, most of the contents of *Ras Līlā*, like songs and basic plots are chosen from the literature composed, again, by saints



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24. Fateh Kṛṣṇa, one of the *rāsdhārī-s*. *Rāsdhārī-s* are respected as *Svāmī-s*. The costume represents him as a **saint**. (see intro. & 5.1).

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan.

25. Child performers in the middle of a make up session. The squatting boy is being asked to face the camera, while he shies in blushes to do so. These boys are locals of *braj mandal* and hence rural in culture.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan.

mentioned above and the later saints like Caca Vrindavandas, Nagaridas **Babaji**, Bhagavat Rasik and Albeli Ali (18th. cen.), and **Narayan Svami**, and **Lalita Madhuri** (19th. cen.) (Hein, 1972:155). Even the actors are chosen from among the *Bravāsī-s* and the reason mentioned by the *Ras Uli* groups for this choice of actors is quoted by Hein as follows :

"And who are more qualified than the actors of the Braj country, Krishna's fellow countrymen and neighbours, to present these scenes authentically?" (1972 : 131).

One of the most interesting aspects of *Rās Līlā* performance production is that roles like *Radha*, *Kṛṣṇa*, *gopā-s* and *gōpī-s* are essentially played by boys below the age of sixteen only (plate 25). This is said to be done for the sake of avoiding interference on the part of the actors, of their sexual urges, with their performances, as most of the themes deal with 'conjugal' affairs of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*. This care to avoid sexual stimuli is manifest even in the separation of male and female audience into two different physical spaces in front of the stage.

On the whole, all the participants including the audience being *Bravāsī-s* with the daily routine described above, bring all the key concepts of *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* poetics such as *priti*, *rasa* and *Līlā* into *Ras Uli* performances.

4.3. The format of *Rās Līlā* : *Rās Līlā* as *Nāṭya* adapted to *Braj* culture.

Ras Uli performances, at a broader level, are part of traditional Indian theatre and share the features of traditional Indian theatre along with the other forms of it found all over India. But the distinction of *Ras Uli* performances can be seen to be rooted in the localization of *Ras Līlā* performances to *Braj* and the adaptation of these performances to the local culture. How the features of *Ras Līlā* performances are complimented by the features of the general *Braj* culture can

be understood only by taking an elaborate look at the details of the *Rās urn performances*. The following section is devoted to this purpose.

4.3.1. Origin and components of *Rās Līlā* performances.

The past researchers like Vasant Yamadagni, Ramnarayan Agrawal and Prabhudaya **Mital** have identified that the present form of *Ras urn* performances has evolved during the past 400-450 years. These scholars observed that the devotees of Vrindavan of the **15th-16th** centuries who belonged to various *Sampradāya-s* **SUCH as** *Vallabha*, *Nimbārka*, *Radha Vallabha*, **and** *Gaudiya* took everything that was available to them, such as *Vēdānta*, **art**, poetry, music, sculpture, dance and theatre, and transformed them for their devotional purpose. And *Ras Līlā* was one of their creations and a most important form of devotional practice for them. However, some of these scholars hold that theatre with *Kṛṣṇa* themes could be older. For example, Hein opines that

"...the stage tradition of the *Kṛṣṇa* **cult** of Mathurā goes back to origins as old as those of any known theatre of **India**" (1972 : 276).

He argues that *Kṛṣṇa* plays in vernacular flourished in the 2nd cen. B.C. and thus the form which is seen now is a modified version of the older forms which were already available for the **saints**. (see Hein, 1972 : Ch. 9 and Agrawal, 1981 : part 1, for a discussion on the history of theatre with *Kṛṣṇa* themes).

Devotees of different *Sampradāya-s* claim the origin of the present day *Ras Līlā-s* to a saint connected with their own *Sampradaya* (see Agrawal, 1981 : Part 1. Ch 8, for a discussion of the origin of sixteenth century *Ras*). Each of them quote certain legends which are recorded in some of the works such as *Ras Sarvasva* of *rāschārī* *Radha Kṛṣṇa* (1872), which involve the names of the saint of their *Sampradāya* (**For *Rās Sarvasva's* account of the origin of sixteenth century *Rās Līlā***

theatre, see Hein, 1972 : 224-5, Mital, 1983 : 49-53, and Jamadagni, 1980 : 154). Whatever *Sampradāya* the devotees may belong to, for all these devotees, participation in the *Ras Līlā* performances is the most important aspect of devotional service. Once they become part of the audience, the individual identities of their *Sampradāya-s* get submerged under the broad and dominant single identity, the '*rask*' - the relisher of the *Līlā-s*.

The forthcoming analysis of the performance of *Līlā-s* is based on the participant observation during the years 1993-1997. The following description is of the average of common features of various versions of performances of *Ras Līlā-s* done in *Vrindavan* by various *Ras mandalī-s* (*Ras Groups*).

A *Ras Līlā* performance of each day, in fact, has two parts apart from the *maṅgalācarana* (invocation ritual). The first part is *Ras* which consists of a routine dance sequence which is the enactment of the dance performed by *Kṛṣṇa* with *Rādhā* and the *gopī-s*. This is, more often, called *mtya Ras* (eternal *Ras*), probably based on the idea that *Kṛṣṇa* performs such a dance as part of His eternal activity in *Gōḍīka*. The tradition originally began with the performance of *mtya Ras* only, i.e., originally, this dance was performed everyday in the **sixteenth** century by the saints of *Vrindavan*. This, probably, is another reason, why it is called *nitya Ras* (here, **daily** *Ras*). Just as the conception of the devotees, of themselves as *mtya Kṛṣṇa das* (eternal servant of *Kṛṣṇa*) (3.5) led to their daily activities such as visiting temples, reading the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and performing *sankīrtan* among other things (3.9 & 4.2), this *mtya Kṛṣṇa das* identity probably led to the performance of and participation in *Ras* everyday.

The second part of the *Ras LIU* performances, that is, *Līlā*, is a story form **play**.¹ According to Varadapande, the *Līlā* part was introduced by a *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* saint called Narayana Bhatta (1982 : 52). Since then both *Ras* and *LIU* were performed by the devotees everyday. According

to the *bhakti* traditions of Vrindavan, *Kṛṣṇa* performs the other activities too, eternally (For example, *Gōvinda Līlāmṛta* by the *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* scholar **Krishnadas Kaviraja describes** certain *Līlā-s* and calls them the eternal *Līlā-s* of *Kṛṣṇa*). Probably, this is why they considered it appropriate to add *Līlā* part to the *Ras* part. The devotees developed a format of performance in which they performed *Ras* everyday along with a new episode selected from the *Līlā-sof Kṛṣṇa* after the *Ras*. **Each Rās Līlā** performance, in **fact**, is an independent entity. Though the *Ras Līlā* performances of all the fourty days together form a cycle, a body, except for the first **and** the last **few Līlā-s**, the **order of** the *Ras Līlā* performances within the body is not **fixed**.

At a broader level, the every day performance **of Ras Līlā-s** has almost disappeared except at two not so crowded places called Bansivat and Topi Kunj. After the extinction of the habit of the daily performance of *Ras Līlā-s*, they are now performed during the festival seasons in Vrindavan. The choice of festivals as the occasion to perform the *Līlā-s* may be seen to be part of the tradition. Abhinava too considers the festival time as the best occasion for the performance of *Nāṭya* (of which *Līlā* is a kind). As mentioned earlier (4.2), this has also got to do with the transportation of the participants into the time of occurrence of the activities depicted in the *Ras Līlā-s*, since, usually, the *Līlā* with which the festival is connected is performed on the respective festival day. *Ras Līlā-s* are performed for the longest duration in the period generally beginning with the New moon in the month **of śrāvaṇa** (which generally falls in **June-July**) to the eighth day of waning half of *bhādrapada* (which generally falls in **July** - August). However, different *mandalī-s* start *Līlā-s* performances on different days. The most famous groups perform them for about forty days extending to a few days *after janmāṣṭamī* (the **birth/appearance** day of *Kṛṣṇa*) or even upto *rādhāṣṭamī* (the **birth/appearance** day of *Radha*). There are, at least, a dozen places in Vrindavan where *Līlā-s* are held during this festival period. Another important time for *Līlā* performances occurs during the *hōlī* festival, which is also the appearance day of **Chaitanya**. Apart from these two times there are several other festive seasons such as the

month of *kārtika* (October - November) and a few special days which occasion the performances of *Līlā-s*. These festivals, as mentioned above (4.2), are special times which allow the devotees to spontaneously enter the **time** of the *Līlā-s*.

The *Rās Līlā-s* are rich in poetry, music, dance, speech and other elements required to make a theatrical performance pleasurable both as a visual and auditory experience (according to *Nāṭya*)(2.2.2). *Ras Līlā* shares the features of *Natya* described in the *Nāṭya Śāstra*, namely, being a dance theatre and a composite art performance incorporating several skills as said in the verses of the *Nāṭya Śāstra* (1.116-117) such as " *śāstra* (scripture),' **art**,' **craft**' and all branches of **learning**' different arts and actions.' The theoretical fitness of *Līlā* within the framework of *Natya* has already been discussed in the last chapter (3.6). The technical similarity between *Natya* and *Līlā*, being discussed here, can be understood on that basis.

Scholars hold that though *Rās Līlā-s* are written in the vernacular *Braj* language, their standard cannot be considered as being inferior to Sanskrit theatre. Hein, for example, says,

"When one considers their function in the regional culture one realizes that one should not speak of them as the rustic folk drama' as some **modern**' Indian writers of bygone generations have done. The dignity of the dramas [sic] approaches that of literature, with which they have a close connection. The stage people of Braj are literate, and they or their playwrights draw upon the society's recognized religious writings - not on its Sanskrit scripture, true, but on the transformation of the Sanskrit **heritage** in Hindi **works** of the highest literary understanding. They do not cater to the dead levels of mass tastes, but inculcate traditional ideals which are approached by the **society's** honoured classes. Their dramas [sic] are refined, in most or all senses of that **word**" (1972 : 273).

Elsewhere he notes,

"What makes the *rāsila* remarkable is the treasure of literature on which it draws, the refinement of language and feeling which it derives from generations of literate stage people, and its consequent power to attract and influence relatively sophisticated and cultured audience" (1972 :157).

As mentioned earlier (4.1), this use of *Braj* language is part of the adaptation of *Braj* culture, and as mentioned earlier (4.1), this is part of the affinity for closeness, based on the reasons such as simplicity, rusticity and the resultant 'playful' (non-pompous) feeling and most importantly, the consideration that it is *Kṛṣṇa's* own language.

In fact, according to Agrawal, one cannot expect *Ras Līlā-s* without the *Braj* language. He says that if *Rās Līlā* theatre leaves *Braj* language and starts using *khadī baulī* (Hindi used in North Indian states like U.P and Delhi) then it would definitely lose its popularity (1981 : 267).

The dance appears like Kathak but *rāsdhārī-s* say that it is different. For them, it is the *Rās* style of dance (plates 26-27). They argue that, in fact, it is Kathak which borrowed a few steps from *Ras* and hence both appear similar. Both Agrawal (1981 : 241) and Mital (1983 : 109) hold the same opinion and conclude that *Ras* is much older than Kathak. More conspicuous than this similarity with Kathak is folk styles adapted in the dances used in *Rās Līlā* performances (plate 28). The dance consists, mostly, of delicate steps as almost all the *Līlā* performances show the loving pastimes of *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates.⁴ These are performed, mostly, by *Radha*, *Kṛṣṇa* and Their young cowherd associates. The children are trained in the dance regularly.

The songs are taken from the *Braj* devotional poetry written by the saints such as Surdas and others mentioned earlier (4.2). Even though the poetry is very sophisticated, the child actors have the ability to render the verses with amazing clarity. They are trained too in the art of



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26 and 27. Such postures in *Rās Lilā* dances have a classical touch.
Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.



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28. A circular dance by *Kṛṣṇa* and cowherd boys.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.

29. The *samāji-s* (the orchestra) of a *Rās* performance. The lead singer standing in front of the podium is Fateh Krishna. (Intro. & 5.1), the *rāsdhāri* of the team. Also note the use of electronic gadgets (right projecting from the wing curtains) in contemporary *Rās* performances (see fn.17).

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan

rendering the poetry too by the *rāsdhārī-s*. Singers in most cases are *rasdhari-s* (the directors) themselves and are usually seated with the instrumentalists on the left side of the performers. Senior members, such as *Svāmī Śrīram*, are given an elevated seat or sometimes they even stand up and sing. The singers play the Harmonium in accompaniment to their song. Usually, there are one or two accompanists who repeat the lines which the lead singer has sung. *Pakhāvaī*, a North Indian instrument, is used for the *drupad style*⁵ of songs as a percussion accompaniment. For Hindustani light classical style of songs, *tablā* is used. Flute is used as melody accompaniment. *Jhāṅgh* (big cymbals) are used for marking out the important beats of the rhythmic cycle (*tāl*)(plate 29). Earlier *sārangī*, a stringed instrument, was used which has the capability of producing a continuous and melodious music. But due to lack of players, it is no longer in use now. Various styles of singing are used such as *drupad*, *thumri*, *dadra*, *kavitta*, *savaiyyā* and *lōkchand* (folk metres). The songs are composed in the various *raga-s* and syllables such as *tha tha* are interspersed in the songs to give rhythmic support to the dances. (See Thielemann, 1998, for more details on the music of *Rās Līlā-s*).

Since taking part in *sankirtan*, *badhāī* and other kinds of congregational singing is a regular practice among the devotees, the singers develop an expertise in singing devotional music and rendering *Brāj* poetry. The devotees are initiated, right from the childhood, into these activities, due to which they develop a natural flair for devotional singing. In fact the singing of devotional songs becomes a second nature to the devotees. The belief that *Kṛṣṇa* and the *gopī-s* themselves are musicians, makes the devotees to take intense pleasure in singing.

The *singers*⁶ sing in high pitched mellifluous voices. There are two reasons for singing in this high pitch. In the olden days, there was no microphone system available. Since the singers are trained to sing to a huge audience, they are used to singing in a loud and high pitched voice. Now, with the introduction of microphones, the singers sing softly suitable for the microphone

even though they continue to sing in high pitch from force of habit. The other reason is as follows. Most of the *Līlā-s* revolve around child characters. The range of the children (who also sing as they play their parts) is usually four or five notes higher than the normal male range. In Western musical terminology their tonic pitch is between F# and Ab (four and half to five and a half in Carnatic musical terminology and *kāī tīn*, i.e., **black** three to *kāī car*, i.e., black four in Hindustani musical terminology). So, to match this pitch, the singers have to start high. If there are any older actors, who can not take high notes, they sing one octave lower. Earlier the actors also spoke in high pitched voices. Now that they have adapted to the microphone system, they speak their lines in their natural pitch.

The distinction of *Rās Līlā*, in its greater leaning towards folk rather than classical features of Indian art, as has been noted in the use of *Brāj* dialect, folk dances, folk music, and folk style of enactment, can also be understood on the basis of this theoretical discrimination discussed in the last chapter. It may also be noted that all these folk, rural and rustic features of *Ras Līlā* performances are, in fact, part of the adaptation of the devotees settled in *Brāj Mandal* to *Brāj* culture. As mentioned earlier (4.1), this adaptation is rooted in the affinity for playful, i.e., non-pompous and closeness inspiring features for the devotees of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*. And as noted earlier (4.1), for the followers of *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school, this is in accordance with their scheme of choice of self knowledges and their consideration of closeness - inspiring and non-pompous features as the most choosable features (3.5.3 & 4.1).

4.3.2. The pre-stage of *Rās Līlā* performances : *Līlā* as a devotional ritual.

It has been discussed in the second chapter (2.7.2) that the poetics of *Nāṭya* considered that *Nāṭya* should not begin without worshiping the gods in the **pre-presentational** ritual (*pūrvavarga vidhi*) and the Sanskrit poets followed this ritual by composing *nandī* at the beginning of their plays

in the glory of the gods. A similar Sanskrit verse is found in *Natya* for *Jndna* also. The *Ras Līlā* performances, being rooted in the Vedic **worldview**, follow the rule of including the **pre-presentational** ritual. A *Ras Līlā* performance begins with a ritual of offering hymns in praise of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* called *mangalacarana* (invocation ritual).

During the *mangalacarana*, *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* are seen sitting on the *simhasana* (throne) indicating *Kṛṣṇa* as the Absolute Himself and *Radha* as His consort (3.5.3). The closest associates and hand maidens of *Radha*, the eight *sakhī-s* (3.5.3), are seen engaged in Their service. Two of them take up *camara-s* (hand made fan with silk tassels or with hand made cloth laced with peacock feathers) and fan *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa*. Sometimes, the renounced mendicants (*bābājī-s*) can also be seen fanning *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* with *camara* (plate 30). This ritual is carried to the stage from the temple, where the deities are served in this manner (plate 31).

The scene is supposed to be located on a circular area (*Mandal*) in the forests of *Gōlōka*, which, as mentioned in the last chapter (3.5), is considered as the eternal abode of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*. This arrangement, according to Varadapande, is based on the description of the pastimes of *Kṛṣṇa* in the *Bṛamha Vaivarta Purāna*. Varadapande describes the **scene** from the *Bṛamha Varvarta Parana* as follows :

"It says that the open -air *Ras* stage was situated on the bank of a beautiful lake - *Kṛidasarovara* [a lake for play] - in the Vrindavana forests. Being circular in shape it was called *Ras Mandalam* : *Vartulakaram Tatraiva Ras Mandalam*.' The circular dance floor was spacious *Suvistama*', of equal level all over *Susama*', and soft *Susnigdham*'. It was decorated with green mango leaves, garlands of jasmine, coconuts and banana plants. *Mangala Ghatas*, auspicious pitchers full of water, were kept at appropriate places. There was also a jewel



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30. Sripad bābājī, one of the most familiar devotees of Vrindavan, fanning *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* with *camara* during a *Ras* performance.

Note treating the performers as dieties.

Source : *Svāmī* Ram Svarup, *rāsdhārī* of Sri Krishna Lila Samsthan, Vrindavan.

31. Kṛṣṇa in His intimate company with *Rādhā* on *simhāsana*, while the *sakhī*-s arrange for their enjoyment. The picture is found abundantly in paintings, calenders and photo frames all over *Braj Mandala*. *Brajvāsī*-s endeavour to get an entry as *sakhī*-s into this scene of *Gōlōka* (3.5.3).

Compare with plate 32.

Source : International Society for *Kṛṣṇa* Consciousness, Vrindavan.

studded throne **for Radha and *Kṛṣṇa*., the presiding deities of Ras'** (1982 : 53).

The above locale is suggested in the *Ras Līlā* performances through attractive backdrops rich in colour. The popular *Ras mandalī-s* which find wealthy patrons for their shows, decorate the stage with attractive curtains and also provide excellent lighting.

The **characters-s** are dressed in the same way as the deities in the temples are dressed in Vrindavan. *Kṛṣṇa* wears *pīṭāmbara* - a yellow dhoti and *kati kacani*- a full high waisted shirt made of silk. He wears *mor mukut*- a crown with a peacock plume, a small turban called *pag* on the head, *tulasi mālā* (beads made of sacred basil) around the neck, a garland called *bajayanti mālā* (made of wild fragrant flowers and leaves), *ghungurū* - anklets with small beads that make a tinkling sound around His ankles, and of course flute in His hand. *Rādhā* also wears a crown **which** is a jeweled tiara. She and Her *sakhī*-s wear necklaces, artificial hair with long plaits, a nose pendant (*bulak*), ear rings (*kunda*) and garlands. They wear ***lehengā-s*** (thick clothed skirts) and veils that cover half of their heads. Another conspicuous aspect of the costume of the *Rās Līlā* performers is the face make up, with alternative dotted decorations on the cheeks and dotted fringes along the eyebrows, usually made up of sandal paste. The *Ras mandalī-s* have their own tailors (who stitch a **variety** of costumes for *Radha* and her *Sakhī*-s, and *Kṛṣṇa*) and a *śringārī* (make up man).

One of the most important features **of *Līlā-s*** is that the characters are considered and treated as *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* Themselves and are referred to as ***svarup-s***, i.e. own forms (of the deities). This can be seen to be happening in the case of deities in the temples also. Thus, the actors on the stage can be seen to be treated on par with the deities in the temple. The devotees believe that the real characters (*Kṛṣṇa* and His associates) **enter** into the actors while they are performing. They feel that *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates have kindly appeared before them on the stage to present to them **their *Līlā-s***' (from a speech given by *rāsdhārī* Kishan **Lal**, *rāsdhārī* of Sri



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32 and 33. Love for *Krsna* spreads on to the *Krsna* role playing performer. The performer becomes a star (32) and a pet (33). In 32, the audience try to have a photo with *Krsna*. In 33, the audience lift *Krsna* in their arms affectionately.

Sources : Plate 32 Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan. Plate 33 Svāmi Ram Prasad, *rāsdhāri* of Braj Ras Lila Mandal, Vrindavan.



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34. One of the devotees prostrating in front of the *Kṛṣṇa* role player during one of the *US* performances. (Orchestra and a section of the audience are also seen).

Note treating the performers as **dieties**

Source : *Svāmi* Bade Thakur (Dr. Krishna Vallabh), Krishnanchal Lok Kalabharati, Vrindavan.

Haribol *Ras mandai*, belonging to *Vallabha Sampradāya*, at the beginning of a *Ras Līlī* performance, 4th August 1995). Even outside of the theatre the children are addressed as *thākurañī* (Master) and *thākurañī* (Mistress) by the local people, which is the way they often address the deities (plates 32-33).

The members of the orchestra (called *samāijī*) and *rasdhari* offer prostrated obeisances (*daṇḍavat-s*) to *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*, who are seated on the throne, to take their permission to start the performance. Then they go to their respective places. Even though the singers/directors are *guru-s* (teachers) and elders (in fact, *Svāmī* Fateh Krishna is the father of the actor who plays *Kṛṣṇa* for his *mandali* and *Svāmī* Sriram is the *guru* of Fateh Krishna himself), they pay respects to the characters by prostrating before them, at the beginning of the performance.

The audience too offer obeisances before settling down (plate 34). It is considered very offensive, an insult to the tradition of *Ras Līlī*, if they do not do this. Agrawal says that earlier the audience used to stand up with folded hands when *Ras Līlī* was being performed and would sit only when the characters sat on the *simhāsana* (1981 : 156).

The *maṅgalācaraṇa* ritual consists of singing various verses in Sanskrit and in *Braj*, the glory of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*, the associates of *Kṛṣṇa* and the places related to Him. The common verse sung in the glory of *Kṛṣṇa* is:

śrī brajarāj kumvar gāyaul sing the glories of the king of *Braj*.

sritādalī lalana vara garyaul sing the glories of one who is dear to *Radha* (who is called *lādalī* : the dear one)

snbrajkau jivana dhan gaiyaul sing the glories of the wealth of life of *Braj*.

bhaktanakau mana bhamatau gaytyell sing the glories of one who gives pleasure to his devotees.



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35. A scene during *maṅgalācaraṇa* (invocation ritual), which is a prelude to a *Ras Līlā* performance. One of the *Sakhī* -s sings and offers *arati*, as others sing with Her.

Compare with plate 36. Note the recreation of an iconic picture in theatre. (For the significance of the scene ref. 3.5.3).

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan

36. Sripad *bābājī*, one of the most familiar devotees of Vrindavan, offering *ārati* to *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* during a *Ras performance*.

Note treating the performers as **dieties**

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan.

The other common songs in *mahagaiacarana* include songs singing in the glory of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* in *yugal vandana* (*yugal* = couple, *vandana* = prayers), of *gōpi*-s in *gōpi vandana*, of the spiritual master in *guru vandana* (*guru* = the spiritual master), of the place of performance in *Ras sthali vandana* (*sthali* = place), and of Vrindavan in *dhām vandana* (*dhām* = shrine).

Then an *arati* (a kind of devotional song associated with camphor flame refreshing)⁷ on *Kṛṣṇa* is sung by the *samāji*-s in the same way as in temples, which is taken up by the *sakhi* -s. The beginning of the song is :

arati kunja bihāri kil arati to the wanderer in the groves

ki girivar Kṛṣṇa murari kil [to] that mountainholding *Kṛṣṇa*, *Mura*'s enemy.'

galē me vajrayanti mālā/ adorned in the neck by the vajrayanti garland

baṭāvai murali madhur bala/ the boy who plays on the flute sweetly.

sravana me kundal jhalakāla/ in the ears the earrings glittering.

Wanda ke nanda hi nandlalal Nanda's dear lad who pleases *Nanda*.

ki gindhara Kṛṣṇa murari kil [to] that mountainholding *Kṛṣṇa*, *Mura*'s enemy

The remaining part of the song is also a sequence of similar glorifications.

As the *arati* is sung, a *sakhi* carries a brass plate containing earthen lamps of camphor flame, takes it around the faces of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* in order to invoke the mercy of the deities into the light (plate 35-36), which is then passed on to one of the members of the *mandali*, who then carries it to everyone in the audience. The members of the audience touch the palms to the fire and then press it to their eyes. This act of the audience represents receiving the mercy of the deities. (See Agrawal, 1981: 157- 160, for a detailed description of the *maṅgalācarana*).

Then each of the *sakhi*-s comes before the microphone and sings a few verses in Sanskrit, gloryfying *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* (who adorn the *simhasana*) and repeats them in *Bra* dialect so that the

audience understand the meaning. While **one** *sakni* recites her verse in praise of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*, the other *sakhi*-**s** say in a chorus *jay ho* (all glories). One of the verses sung by the *sakhi*-**Sis**:

Just before us in *Vṛndāvan* some wonderful, inexplicable thing [*anivacanīya vastu*] is shining. Believe me ; a blue lotus and a yellow lotus are sprouting or two moons with sixty four *kalā*-**s** [parts]' are rising. One is a golden moon [*gaura candra. Radha* has a golden complexion] and the other is dark moon [*Kṛṣṇa candra. Kṛṣṇa's* complexion is dark]. In other places the lotus is on the earth and the moon is in the sky. But in *Vṛndāvan dhām* [shrine] both the lotus and the moon have risen simultaneously at one place on the earth. And look at **this** wonder *sakhi*-**s**. The two; moon and lotus are making each other happy experiencing the bliss. (See Agrawal, 1981 : 160-64 and Hawley, 1981 : 167-170, for a detailed description of the glories sung by the *sakhi*-**s**).

All the songs are sung in light classical Hindustani *raga*-**s**. The *mangaiacarana* takes about fifteen minutes and gives time for the audience to settle down.

Thus, it may be noted that though this *mangaiacarana* ritual in many ways is similar to the *nandi* **of** *Natya* for *Trivarga* and a similar representational ritual **in** *Natya* for *Jnana* (2.7.2), it has several distinct features of its own. Firstly, since the performers see *Kṛṣṇa* as the Absolute, who presides even over the gods, it is He who is glorified in the *mangaiacarana*. Secondly, in the case **of** *Ras Lilā* performances, the subject whose themes are performed and the deity **who** is glorified are one, i.e., *Kṛṣṇa*. Thirdly, in the case of *Ras Lilā* performances, the deities who are glorified are present on the stage itself, in the form of characters. However, it may be noted that just as the performance of *Natya* for *Trivarga/Jñāna* itself can be considered as *yajña* performed for *Trivarga/Jñāna* (2.7), *Lilā* performance can also be considered as a *yajña* performed for the attainment **of** *Pṛiti*.

4.3.3. Maharas Līlā, the genesis, the prototype and matrix of the daily Rās Līlā-s.

On one of the days **during** the fourty day festival, usually on a *pumima* (full moon day which fell on the tenth of August in 1995) and on the *sarat pumima* (full moon day in the month of *kartika*, i.e., October - November which fell on seventh of November in 1995) of every year, a special *us* called *Maharas Līlā* is performed by the *Rās mandalī-s*. (According to the *Bhagavata Purāna* X.29.1-2, *Kṛṣṇa* performed His phenomenal *Maharas* on *śarat pumima* on the banks of the *Yamuna*). This *US* was composed in the middle of this century (Hawley, 1992 : 148). Though, this *US*, like any other *Līlā-s*, is an enactment of an activity performed by *Kṛṣṇa* with His cowherd associates in *Vṛndāvana*, it acquired its special significance for three reasons. Of course, **it is** a *Līlā* which involves *Rās* dance (whereas, the **other** *Līlā-s* are separated from *Ras* dance). But the first reason for its significance is that, this is supposed to be the presentation of the *urn* believed to be the first *Ras US* performance. Secondly, this has a format from which the general format of all *Rās Līlā* performances can be seen to be derived (Hawley, 1992 : 149). In fact even the cycle of *Rās Līlā* performances can be seen **to be** only an elaboration of a *Mahārās Līlā*. Thirdly, this *Līlā* has a charming and fantastic quality of the dance which is presented during this performance.

This *US* shows *Kṛṣṇa* playing the flute™ to attract the *gōpī-s* from their respective homes to dance the *Ras* (circle dance) with Him. The *gōpī-s*, though engaged in their household duties, with their minds being fixed on *Kṛṣṇa*, can hear *Kṛṣṇa* calling them. They leave their work and run to *Kṛṣṇa* in an intoxicated condition to join Him in the ecstatic *Ras* dance in the forests of *Vṛndāvana*. While performing the *Ras* dance with the *gōpī-s* in the forest groves of *Vṛndāvana*, *Kṛṣṇa* suddenly disappears because they have become proud of His company. The *gōpī-s*, who are in the peak of their ecstasy, can not tolerate this separation. They search every grove, speak to



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37. *Mahārās* (the great circle) dance. Each pair in the circle has a *Kṛṣṇa* with a *gopi*. At the center are *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa*.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan.

trees **and** the **deer** in desperation **and** ask every bird and animal **if** they have seen *Kṛṣṇa*. They find that He has gone away with *Radha*. After spending some time with *Radha*, *Kṛṣṇa* finds that she too is proud and so He vanishes from there as well. The *gōpi-s* who **come** there **looking** for Him find *Rādhā* who is shocked at the disappearance **of** *Kṛṣṇa*.

Then *Radha* and the *gōpi-s* begin imitating the pastimes of *Kṛṣṇa*, because of extreme pain of separation they feel for Him. One of the *gōpi-s* becomes *Kṛṣṇa*. Others take her as *Kṛṣṇa* Himself and start taking other roles and perform all the *Līlā-s* which *Kṛṣṇa* performed with **them**.¹¹

As the *gōpi-s* continue this imitation, *Kṛṣṇa* appears among them, pleased by their transcendental love for Him. After the re-union, *Kṛṣṇa* dances *Rās* with the *gōpi-s*. This is the longest of all the *Līlā-s* and the most festive. The performance lasts for about six hours. *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* of various groups (*mandalī-s*) are invited. Different pairs of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* perform *Ras* with different patterns of dances peculiar to that *mandalī*. When a pair from a particular *mandalī* dances, the *rāsdhārī* of that *mandalī* sings the songs **describing** *Ras*. At the end of this, all the *Kṛṣṇa-s* and *gōpi-s* from the different groups form a circle. Each *Kṛṣṇa* is seen paired with two *gōpi-s* with *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* of the host group in the middle of the circle. This dance is called *Mahārās* (the great circle dance) (Plate 37). Thus, it can be seen that unlike the other *Līlā-s* where a story without dance is presented, *Mahārās Līlā* is a story involving dance itself.

The *Ras Līlā-s*, which are performed on each of these fourty days, follow the pattern of this *Līlā*. Every day, the performance shows the *Ras* part of the *Ras Līlā* in which *Kṛṣṇa* performs *Rās* dance with the *Rādhā* and *gopi-s*. At the end **of** the *Ras* the curtain **closes** and raises again **for** the *us* part of the *Ras Līlā* performance. This can be understood as an imitation of *Kṛṣṇa Līlā* by the *gōpi-s*. So what the actors present in *Ras Līlā-s*, is the imitation of the imitation by the *gōpi-s*.

Hawley observes,

" What *Kṛṣṇa*, Radha, and the *gopis* do on stage in modern - day **Brindavan** is really just an imitation [*anukaran*] of what the *gopis* did in an archetypal past - in **ilīo tempore** - and that action is understood as the *Bhāgavatha Pūmna* reports it" (Hawley, 1992 : **149**).

It can be seen that for the devotees of Vrindavan, who choose to emulate the self knowledge of the *gōpī-s* to attain their kind of transcendental love for *Kṛṣṇa*, the emulation of the imitative **play** of the *gopis* is the most choosable theatrical play.' The purpose of *Bravāsī-s* in performing this theatrical 'play' is the same as that of the *gopis* during their imitation of *Kṛṣṇa* activities which is to 'regain' the 'lost' company of *Kṛṣṇa*.

Thus, it can be observed that on the one hand, *Mahārās Līlā* of the *Bhagavata Pūmna* is believed to be the origin of *Ras Līlā* performances by the participants and as such, the description of *Mahārās Līlā* in the *Bhagavata Pūmna*, serves as a model for the entire body of *Ras Līlā* performances. Further, the one day performance of *Mahārās Līlā*, can be seen as a microcosm of the entire body of *Ras Līlā* performances or reciprocally the entire body of *Ras Līlā* performance can be seen as a *Mahārās Līlā* performance spread over forty days.

4.3.4. Ras, the non-narrative and the most choosable play.'

The Ras, which as mentioned above (4.3.1), is performed everyday as the first part of the *Ras* us performances, has a different format than its presentation in the middle of a *Mahārās Līlā* performance. If in the middle of the *Mahārās Līlā* performance the Ras begins with *Kṛṣṇa's* invitation on flute to *gōpī-s* (4.3.3), in the everyday *Ras* performances, *Kṛṣṇa* is shown sitting with *Rādhā* on a *simhāsana* (throne).

After the *maṅgalācāraṇa* the *sakhī*-**S**go near the *simhāsana* and make a request to Radha and Kṛṣṇa :

he *sri prīṭyā prītanjū*, apke *nīṭya ras vīlās ki samay* hay gayau hay. so *kṛpā* kar ras mandal me padhar kei, ap *sukh pāvai*. *tatha sakhi parivār kō sukh* dec.

Yeh lover [Radha] and beloved [Kṛṣṇa]] time is up now for your daily 'play' of Ras. As such, kindly adorn the stage of the Ras, enjoy the Wiss and give us, the group of girlfriends, the same Wiss.

Then Kṛṣṇa looks at Radha and requests her :

he *kiśōrijū*. apke *nīṭya ras vīhār kausamay hayi* gayau hay. so *kṛpā* karike ras mandal me padharau.

Yeh My dear juvenile **girl**! Time is up now for your daily 'play' of Ras. As such, kindly adorn the stage of the Rās.

Rādhā agrees to His request and They both come down to the stage front which represents the *Rās Mandal* [dance floor].

The singers sing a *padā* (poem) describing the *Rās* dance to which *Radha*, *Kṛṣṇa* and the *sakhī*-**s** dance simultaneously.

The dance consists of many different kinds of sequences (about five to ten variations), which are repeated everyday. A circle dance is performed by characters holding hands to form a circle and by revolving in circles. In some sequences, the characters stand side by side, to make two lines along the two side wings of the stage and make dancing movements in opposite directions, to exchange their positions. Similar simple sequences incorporating folk dance patterns are performed (plates 38-39). (See Hein, 1972 : 146-50, for a description of different kinds of dances used in Ras).

Some *mandai*-**s** perform a special dance called the *mor nac* (the dance of peacock) regularly. *Kṛṣṇa* dances, holding an open plume shaped bunch of peacock feathers tied in to His waist,



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38 and 39. Various kinds of dance configurations employed in *Rās Līlā* performances.

38. Flower like dance with sticks.

39. Another circular dance by *Kṛṣṇa* and *gōpī*-s. Note rotation along with revolution.

Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem Samsthān**, Vrindavan



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40. *Mōr Nāc* (the peacock dance). The peacock dance performed by *Kṛṣṇa*. *Kṛṣṇa* dances holding an open plume shaped feathers tied in to His waist, imitating a dancing peacock. Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, **Vrindavan**.

imitating a dancing peacock. This dance is done to the accompaniment of the following song :

5/3 gupālliyē bra/vat, suras racyau bansivat chaiyya|

today Gopal [Kṛṣṇa] along with the Brāj dwellers, He plays to compose the Ras, under the shades of the bamboo groves !

bin pakhavaj bāṁsuri ki chuti ananda sindhu badhyau tehi thaiyya|

to the accompaniment of vina [harp], paknavaj [the drum] and the bāṁsuri [the flute] He, the ocean of bliss dances tehi thai !

bhav uthāyu hiya radhika ke bani mor nacau nandarai kau chayya !

the dear lad of King Nanda dances becoming the peacock of **Rādhikā [Rādhā]** who is excited in Her transcendental **love !**

urantarjani hiye ke han jahanay gayau bani mor kanhayya.

As the song is sung *Kṛṣṇa*, the lad, plays the peacock knowing fully well in the heart wha and where !

Kṛṣṇa **sits** on His knees and makes movements of His shoulders (plate 40). In the end, He makes wide circular movements quickly rotating on His knees and covers the whole stage. This dance is greatly admired by the audience. The actor has to be very adept at this, so as not to fall down while spinning.

After performing the (various kinds of) dance, *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* return to the *simhāsana*. *Kṛṣṇa* is shown readjusting **Rādhā's** dress, garland, ear rings and other items of Her attire. The *sakhī-s* are also engaged in the service of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa*. The *Ras* ends with some prayers sung in the glory of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa*.

It may be noted that if *Ras*, which occurs in the middle of the *Mahārās Urn*, is a prelude to the

disappearance of *Kṛṣṇa*, the *Ras* which is presented as the first part of the daily *Ras Līlā* performance is *nitya Rās* and is conceived to be eternal central situation of *Kṛṣṇa* with *Radhā* and *Her sakhi*-S.

This performance has a central significance for a *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* practitioner (which is shared by some other *Brajavāsi Sampradāya*-S too), because it is the presentation of the most choosable self knowledge, namely, self as Self in a conjugal relation (*mādhura bhāva*) with the closeness inspiring form of the Absolute (*parama mādhurya rupa*), namely, *Kṛṣṇa*, that too in the most choosable *parakiya* ('otherly') form (3.5.3). More significantly, *Ras* is simply in its pure, i.e., non-story 'play' (activity) form where 'play' (activity) is just for the sake of 'play' (activity) and has no other purpose than to be just a 'play' (pastime/sport). This is in what a *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* practitioner would aspire to be eternally established (3.5.3). This is what is lost and desperately sought by the *gōpi*-S in the *Maharāṣ* episode (4.3.3). It is in this performance that the *sakhi* characters, with whom the *Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava* practitioner would choose the most to identify, are presented as engaged in arranging the conjugal pastimes of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* in *Ras*, which is the most choosable situation as explained earlier (3.5.3). Thus, for the *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* practitioners, *Rās* gives *rasa* in its most choosable form.

4.3.5. *Līlā* as the narrative play translation of the ways of *Pṛiti*.

4.3.5.1. The content, form and performance of *Līlā*-s.

Līlā-S are the story form 'plays' presented, as mentioned above (4.3.1), after the *Ras*, which, as mentioned above (4.3.4), is the non-story play.' Each day the *Ras mandalī*-S perform an episode from *Kṛṣṇa*'S *Līlā*-s Starting with the pastime Of *Kṛṣṇa*'S appearance (*Janma Līlā* - *Janma* = appearance) and ending with the pastime in which *Kṛṣṇa* leaves *Vṛndāvana* for *Mathura*, upon *Kāṁsa*'S invitation to kill him (*Kāṁsa vadh Līlā* - *Vadha* = kill) and *Uddhava Līlā*, which takes place



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41. *Kṛṣṇa* stealing butter from a pot with the help of cowherd friends. Note Fateh Krishna (intro. & 5.1), the *rasdhan* and singer, playing on the harmonium, engaged in a joking conversation with *Kṛṣṇa*. Compare with plates 42, 58 & 59.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan

42. One of the cowherd boy characters running away after stealing the butter. Note, as part of a humorous scene of the fun of teasing and being chided by the cowherd women, the performer has come down the stage into the audience, enacting the mischievous fleeing and hiding the butter smeared mouth with one of his hands and looking back at the chasing cowherd women. Audience enjoying the fun (4.4). Note the ecstasy in the smiles of the women with big smiles are of western origin settled as *Brājbāsi*-s. Compare with plates 41, 58 & 59.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan, Vrindavan

after *Kṛṣṇa* leaves *Vṛndāvana*. The *Līlā*-s are not presented in a sequential order, except the first few episodes, which show *Kṛṣṇa*'s birth at *Mathura*, His arrival to *Vṛndāvana*, and His pastimes as *Mākhana Cōr* (Butter Thief) and so on.

The *Līlā*-s are very simple themes full of 'play' (sport), with *Kṛṣṇa* stealing butter in *Mākhana Cōr Līlā* (plates 41-42), He teasing the *gōpi*-s, *gopi*-s and *Kṛṣṇa* trying to outdo each other with witty arguments, playing puns, wearing each other's clothes to reach out to each other, stealing each other's ornaments as in *Bansī Cōrī Līlā* (where *Rādhā* steals *Kṛṣṇa*'s *Bansī* = flute) and *Mudanyā Līlā* (where *Kṛṣṇa* steals *Rādhā*'s *mudanyā* = ring) and so on. These *Līlā*-s, as mentioned above (3.5.3), in *Gaudiya vaisnava* school are seen as the manifestation of *Kṛṣṇa*'s *mādhurya rupa* (sweet = close) nature. There are other *Līlā*-s like *Govardhan Līlā* where *Kṛṣṇa* lifts *Govardhan* hill on his hand, *Yamalāṇjana Uddhār Līlā* (See appendix 5) where *Kṛṣṇa* liberates the two sons of *Kubēra* from their tree bodies, all of which go to show His opulence aspect and extraordinary qualities as the Absolute. In the language of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, in all these *Līlā*-s, the selves as Selves are seen expressing the various kinds of transcendental love for *Kṛṣṇa* and experiencing the different *Bhakti* rasa-s which are discussed in the last chapter with examples (3.7).

Most of the examples mentioned in the last chapter (3.5.2-3), as examples of *bhakti* rasas, can be seen in the *Līlā*-s. For example, cowherd boys, who, in *Mākhana Cōr Līlā* go to steal butter, along with *Kṛṣṇa* and play with Him, are considered to be experiencing *sakhya rasa* (the rasa of friendly relationship). *Gōpi*-s who, in *Maharasa Līlā* (see 4.3.5.2.11) dance with *Kṛṣṇa* are considered to be experiencing *mādhurya rupa* (sweetness) in *mādhura rasa* (the rasa of conjugal relationship). *Gopi*-s who in *Mathura Pravasa Līlā* chide *Akrura* for taking away *Kṛṣṇa* along with him from *Vṛndavana*, are considered to be experiencing *raudra rasa* (the rasa of the anger). The cowherds, who, in *Kāliya Daman Līlā* (see appendix 6) feel pathos as *Kṛṣṇa* get enveloped in the poisonous snake *Kāliya*'s

hoods are considered to be experiencing *karuna rasa* (the *rasa* of pathos).

Not all these themes that are presented in the *Rās Līlā-s* are taken from the *Puranas*. Hein (1972 : 163-178) gives brief synopses of about 106 *Līlā-s*. (His list includes the *Līlā-s* mentioned in this work). Most of them are original and are not found in any of the *Purāṇa-s*. Hein says that he found only twenty eight of them in the tenth canto of the *Bhagavata Purana* (1972 : 156), which describes the pastimes of the *Kṛṣṇa form*. Many of the *Līlā-s* are built on the *pada-s* (poems) written by the madieval devotional poets of Vrindavan such as Surdas, Paramanandadas, Nagaridas, Vrindavandas, Hita Harivams, *Svāmi* Haridas among others. (For the discussion on the literature of *Līlā-s*, see Agrawal, 1981 : Part 2.Ch.2, and also Mital, 1983:Ch.3).

The *Svāmi-s* have their own manuscripts for the *Līlā-s*. They, or their assistants, rehearse regularly with the children. They keep enough *Līlā-s* rehearsed for about 30 to 40 days. If any new *pada* appears interesting to them, they build up the speech for it and intersperse it with some related *pada-s* and make it into a *Us*. There were also some playwrights such as Keshavdev *rasdhari* and Radha Krishna *rāsdhāri* (19th and 20th cen) who wrote *Līlā-s* Hein, 1972 : 154).

Most of the speeches contain spoken verse and their translation in prose. The *Svami* sings a couplet and the actors repeat it after which they translate it into ordinary speech. *US* are interspersed with song and in some cases dance throughout. If any new songs written by contemporary devotional poets are good for the *Līlā-s*, the *Svāmi-s* introduce them by replacing the older ones. They select the song and fit it into one of the popular tunes (from *Līlā-s*) and then use it for *Līlā-s*.

The scene change is brought about by dropping the curtain, changing the scenery and again

raising the curtains, while the *rāsdhārī* sings a song which indicates the forthcoming scene. He also narrates the story for continuity. The *Līlā* for the day ends with the same *arati*, *ārati kunja bihara ki*, which was sung at the beginning (4.3.2). As the *arati* is sung, the audience go on to the stage and touch the feet of the *svarup-s* (characters). After the *ārati* the audience participate in the *sankīrtan* (congregational singing of the holy names) led by the *Svāmī*.

Significance of these story form *Līlā-s* lies not only in their ability to give various *rasa-s* identified by the Gaudiya Vaisnava poetics, as mentioned earlier, but in instructing the audience in the Gaudiya Vaisnava theology through a narrative theatrical form (3.8).

4.3.5.2. Līlā stories as narrative form presentation of theology.

That *Līlā-s* are looked at as narrative theatrical form presentation of Gaudiya vaisnava theology by the followers of Gaudiya vaisnava school, has been mentioned in the previous chapter (3.5.1). It is interesting to see that the *Līlā* episodes, which are chosen from various different sources and presented by *Rās mandalī-s* belonging even to non-Gauḍīya Vaisnava traditions, work perfectly well as the narrative theatrical form translations of Gaudiya Vaisnava theology. All the intricate issues of Gaudiya Vaisnava theology such as the conjugal relation between *Bhagavān* and His *gōpī* associates, being characterized by transcendental love rather than eros, choosability of *mādhurya rūpa* (sweet form = closeness inspiring form) and of *parakīya madhura bhāva* (non-wifely conjugal relationship) (3.5.3), can be seen to be available in these stories to such an extent that these stories by themselves can serve as an articulation of Gaudiya Vaisnava theology, independently, without any discursive commentary. Or, in other words, the stories enacted in the *Līlā* performances are structured in such a way that the instructional commentary for them is in built into the story itself and as can be seen in the forthcoming discussion, internal evidences for the Gaudiya Vaisnava interpretations of the instructions are readily available in *Līlā* stories.

(I) Killed demons as selves without self knowledge.

For example, *Līlā-s* such as *Putana Uddhar Līlā* and *Kāmsa Vadh Līlā* show demons such as *Putana* and *Kāmsa* who attempt to kill *Kṛṣṇa* but get killed by Him in the process. The performances of these *Līlā-s* are structured in such a way that in each performance, apart from killing the demons, *Kṛṣṇa* 'plays' with His associates such as the cowherds and parents. This structure can be seen to be the narrative form presentation of the *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* principle that the self devoid of the *das* self knowledge suffers from miseries and the self with the *das* self knowledge enjoys the company of *Bhagavan* (3.5.3).

(II). Internal evidence in *Maharās*, for the absence of eros.

Mahārās Līlā, discussed above (4.3.3), **selfevidently instructs** the audience to reject *kāma* (sense gratification) and to seek *prīti* (transcendental love) for *Kṛṣṇa* in order to experience *bhakti rasa* (3.5.2 & 3.7). Recognition of this self evidence in *Līlā-s* is specially **significant** for one reason. Things like "instinctual gratification" instinctual exhilaration' 'wildness' and madness,' seen in the story of Dionysus of Greek mythology are quite often being read into the **stories** of *Līlā-s*. This is one of the most common and conspicuous misunderstandings of *Līlā-s*. Rectification of such misunderstanding of *Līlā-s* is one of the important aims of the present research work. The **self-evidence** being discussed here helps this.

Many scholars have interpreted the pastime of *Kṛṣṇa* inviting the *gōpī-s* on His flute to the forest groves and the *gōpī-s* running to the forest from their respective houses to participate in the dance with *Kṛṣṇa* (4.3.3), by placing it out of the cultural context from which this theme is born. David Kinsley, a **historian** of Religion, for example, compares the ecstatic *Rās* dance of

gōpī-s described in the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* (10.29-33), to the Bacchic rites of the followers of Dionysus in Greek mythology. Kinsley, who, in his book *The Divine Player (A study of Kṛṣṇa Uṣ)* (1979), otherwise displays a careful understanding of several intricate issues of *bhakti* traditions such as *Līlā* ('playfulness'), strangely calls the followers of Dionysus, who are 'wild and mad...', who ... torn from their homes at the sound of his (Dionysus') flute, dash to the forest, and join Dionysus in ecstatic dancing' and singing as if intoxicated,' without caring for law or custom' and who in their madness even 'tear apart the wild animals,' as reminiscent of the *gōpī-s*' (1979:260).

Almost in a similar vein, Sudhir Kakar, a prominent psychoanalyst, applying psychoanalysis to these stories, observes,

"Kṛṣṇa's promise, like that of Dionysus in ancient Greece, is one of utter freedom and instinctual **exhilaration**" (1981 : 142).

Elsewhere, he says that Kṛṣṇa's dalliance with the *gōpī-s* and His other similar *Līlā-s* reflect a pursuit of 'libidinous desires.' Upon making this analysis of *Kṛṣṇa Līlā* he adds,

"The cult of Kṛṣṇa affords his devotees all manner of fantasied instinctual gratification through an unconscious identification with him" (1981 : 144).

Thus, both the critics identify certain elements in the *Ras Līlā* stories, which for them are similar to the elements found in the themes of Dionysus, the Greek god. It is true that many common features can be found in these instances. Both of them show women, who, being intoxicated by the influence of a character, run away from their respective homes, breaking all 'law or custom,' in order to join the dance with that character.

But the comparison of the stories of *Līlā-s* to the stories of Dionysus can be shown to be mistaken on account of the following reasons :

(i). The **similarities** of motifs in these stories is only superficial. For example, the myth of Dionysus, atleast as represented in the play The Bacchae by Euripides, depicts the women as participating in the Bacchic rites in the midst of '**revelry**, drink,' who creep to bed down with some man in a quiet **comer**' (1988 : 119-20). The characters in this play are depicted as ripping off bulls, cows and calves with bare hands. And overwhelmed by the madness that results from the influence of Dionysus, one of the characters, Agave, dismembers her son Pantheus with her own hands. It may be noted that in no version of *Līlā* stories, motifs such as '**drinking**,' creeping to bed down with someone in a quite **comer**,' '**ripping** off bulls, cows and calves with bare hands' and '**dismembering** the son with one's own hands,' which show an inebriated condition, sexuality without a concern with whom it is, destructive and cruel tendencies, are found

(ii). These comparisons do not critically take into account the convention in *bhakti* literature that the 'devotees' are those who identify with the devotee characters in the stories and not with the *Bhagavān* character.

(iii). In the *Bhagavata Purāṇa*, which is the prime source of these stories, the author, towards the end of the narration of the pastimes of *Kṛṣṇa* with *gōpī*-s, clearly adds the following statement :

"He who full of reverence hears in the proper order of sequence or recounts the story of the aforesaid amorous pastimes of Sri *Kṛṣṇa*...with the women of *Vraja* is blessed with supreme devotion in the Lord and, becoming a master of his self before long, speedily overcomes lust [which is a malady of the mind]" (X. 33. 40)

This shows that even the narration in the *Bhagavata Purāṇa* of this episode does not give scope and rather positively prohibits meanings like instinctual gratification.'



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43. *Kamdev* is aiming his arrows at the *gōpi*-s engaged in *Rās* dance.
Source : Researcher's own document.

(iv) **Kakar** seems to set aside the theology to **emphacize** that whatever be the 'intended' theological meaning, these **stories** are received the way he puts it. But, atleast in *Līlā* performances, special care is taken within the text of the performance itself, not to leave a pinch of scope for the audience to take either consciously or unconsciously things such as 'instinctual gratification' from the stories.

The *Mahārās Līlā* achieves this by introducing the **character** *Kamdev* (also called *Madan*), who is described in the *Puranas* as the instigator of erotic desire in the individual and **who** is capable of influencing even the gods, sages and ascetics, activating the sensual desires in them. In *Maharas UIS*, *Kāmdēv* boasts of these powers. He attempts to influence the *gōpī-s* and *Kṛṣṇa* by targetting them with the five arrows which he generally uses to victimize the individuals (plate 43)." But *gōpī-s* and *Kṛṣṇa* can not be influenced by his arrows. By thus showing the *gōpī-s* as being immune to the influence **of** *Kamdev*, this *Līlā* **shows** *gōpī-s* as being free **from** the desire of 'instinctual gratification.' It can be observed **that** the *gōpī-s* even emphasize this point in their conversation with *Kṛṣṇa*. *Kṛṣṇa*, trying to tease the *gōpī-s*, says that they have come to Him in order to fulfill their sexual desire. To this, one of the *gōpī-s* replies,

It is not pleasure that we want but it is You. To ask for sensual desire is *kama* whereas, our desire is to serve you alone. What we have for you is *prema* [transcendental love. This word is a synonym of *prīti*].¹ (Source : *Vraṇ Rās UIS Samthan* conducted by *SvamiHar Govind*).

The issue of rejection of custom has also been dealt in this *UIS*, as a scene shows *Kṛṣṇa* attempting to test the *gōpī-s* by trying to send them away using the pretext of Vedic injunctions. He tells the *gōpī-s* that according to Vedic injunctions it is the duty of every woman to be satisfied with her husband alone. Hence the desire of the *gōpī-s* to be with Him is wrong. To this the *gopi-s* reply as follows :

Uptill now we have been serving the clay forms [indicating their husbands] in your absence. Now that you, who is our real husband, have come, why should we go back to the service of those clay models. Though it is true that according to the Vedic injunctions, a woman must serve her husband, according to religion, you are the actual husband of each one of us' (*Vraja Rās us Samthān* conducted by *Svami* HarGovind)

Thus, **this text of Līlā** performance is compelling the following **meanings** :

- (a). **What gōpi-s** have for *Kṛṣṇa* is *prīti*, i.e., transcendental love, i.e., *prema* of Chaitanya (*Chaitanya Cantāmṛta*, *Madhya Līlā* 23.3)" but not *kāma*, i.e., **desire** for sensual gratification.
- (b). Relations of *tvarga* (which includes *kama*) bound self plane are being considered not **actual** and hence the word 'clay,' and relations (of **self** as Self) with *Bhagavan* are the actual relations.
- (c). Activities like serving a husband dutifully and sincerely are only tentative replacements for the **actual** activities for serving *Bhagavān*, 'in His **absence**' and **hence**, the word '**clay model**.' The principle of Vedic worldview that the *Karma Kānda* leads to the *Jnana Kānda* (2.8 & 3.6) and the **principle** of *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school that *bhakti* activities are performed for the emulation of actual self knowledge (3.6 & 3.9) can be seen as being suggested here. **Coming** away from husbands or in Kinsley's words not caring **for 'law or custom'** is being clearly explained as relinquishing the *Karma Kānda* activities in preference for the *Jnana Kānda* activities.
- (d). Thus, it may be said that words like **husband** used in the story need not be taken in the literal sense of those words, but should be recognized as metaphorical usages refering generally to '**relation**' between self and self, self and *Bhagavan* etc. In other words, relations like part and

whole relation between the self and the Absolute can be, in a narrative language, **described** with the help of words like **husband** and **wife**.' Since these narratives are considered to be narrative form expressions for the theology (4.3.5.2), it may be seen that this story gives a narrative form expression for the interpretation of the *Mahārās* story of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* (10.29-33).

(v). It may also be noted that as mentioned above (4.2), the norm of only boys below sixteen to play *gopa-s* and *gōpi-s* is intended to avoid interference of sexual desires on the part of the performances. Since, as part of a folk **theatrical** atmosphere, the audience know the performers personally, the awareness of audience that the performers are boys below sixteen years avoids sexual attitude on the part of the audience also. This is one of the senses in which the *Līlā* performance becomes just a 'play.'

(vi). Atleast in the case of *Līlā* performances of *Braī*, it should be remembered that all the participants including most of the audience are those who come to settle down in *Bra* renouncing their lives of 'instinctual gratification' (4.1).

(vii). As **has already** been mentioned (4.3.1), physical separation of male and female audiences in a *Līlā* performance **clearly** indicates conscious efforts to avoid the interference of possible sexual stimuli.

(viii). It may also be remembered that atleast *Gauḍiṣa Vaisṇava* followers are instructed to strictly identify with the devotees, for example, the *sakhī-s* and emulate the self knowledge (3.5.3 & 3.7.2) involving, by definition, a love which is **transcendental** to eros (3.5.3 & 3.5.1).

(ix). **Another** frequently misunderstood **aspect** of *Līlā* performances is the meaning of apparent illicit relationship between *Kṛṣṇa* and *gōpi-s*. Atleast in literature such as *fcavya-s* (poetry), fiction,

and short stories, plays and films in India, these stories are shown to be used by individuals to justify their illicit relations. (Probably this is a reflection of real life happening too). Perhaps this understanding of the 'parakiyā (non-wifely) relation of gōpī-s with Kṛṣṇa led certain authors of poetics to consider the *rasa* situation here has *rasabhasa* (2.6.3). Sudeva, without quoting the names of these authors of poetics, counters this view by saying that it is true that the description of the amorous dealings of a *parodha nayika* (heroine married to someone else) with the paramour, would not provide *śṛṅgāra rasa* and hence is only *rasabhasa* (pseudo *rasa*) - but this applies only to the heroines of the phenomenal world - but not with respect to the gōpī-s who play with Kṛṣṇa. This argument of Sudeva in his *Ras Vīṭa* is quoted and is corroborated by Rupa in his *Nāṭaka Candrika* (1964 : 4). It may be remembered that Jiva explains this position by considering the disinterest of gōpī-s in any this worldly and the otherworldly benefits of their relation with Kṛṣṇa (3.5.3). It may also be remembered that in the last chapter (3.5.3), it was shown that not all the gōpī-s participating in *ras* are married, some of them are unmarried. What is common between the relation of all of them with Kṛṣṇa is a non-wifely nature of that relation and that the 'otherly' (non-kinly) mood of the gōpī-s in *aprakata* (unmanifest) *Līlā*-s, when manifest in the phenomenal world, is considered to be able to take only the form of the mood of the women who maintain a non-wifely relation with Kṛṣṇa (*Pṛiti Sandarbha*, section 278).

Thus, non-desiring, non-kinly and non-sensual nature, which is the actual meaning of *us* and which is just the opposite of 'instinctual gratification,' is the defining feature of the very meaning of the *parakiyā* relation. Hence, depiction of relation between gōpī-s and Kṛṣṇa as *parakiyā* can be seen to be another compelling evidence and strategy for communicating only a non-erotic relation.

(x). The story of *Mahārās Līlā* (4.3.3), when seen from the perspective of *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school, is also symbolic of the individual self's position in the phenomenal world. The selves in the

phenomenal world have **lost** the company **of** Kṛṣṇa, as they have developed an identity independent of the *dās* **self** knowledge, which is referred in this *tīts* as '**pride**' of the selves as Selves (the *gōpi-s*)(4.3.3). The selves experience misery due to the separation from Kṛṣṇa and look for Him in everything. The search culminates as the selves start symbolically imitating the activities of Kṛṣṇa in the form of various devotional activities **which** are discussed in section 4.2. The goal of such acts of imitation is to attain the association of Kṛṣṇa, the object of transcendental love (4.3.3). The theatre called *Rās Līlā-s* is one such act of imitation. This level of symbolism more clearly establishes the mistake of reading things like 'instinctual exhilaration' which could, at the most be, the literal meaning appearances **of** the story into it.

(xi). Finally, there is another important difference between the theme of Dionysus and the theme of Kṛṣṇa. The theme of Dionysus presents a god, who punishes the citizens of Thebes (for not recognizing him as a god), by evoking passionate desire in **them** with his **power** (1.2.1). On the other hand, the theme of Kṛṣṇa shows the Absolute - presiding over the gods (3.2 - 3.5) - who blesses His devotees by evoking transcendental love in them with His charms.

In essence, this *Mahārās Līlā* may be seen to be instructing the following :

- (a) the rejection of *kāma* by a *trivarga* bound **self**, for the attainment of Kṛṣṇa, leads to the fulfilment of **self** as Self in 'playful' association with Him (3.6).
- (b). Justification for the rejection of the activities of the *Kāma Kānda* from the point of view of *bhakti sāstra* (3.6).
- (c). Need to overcome *kāma* in **order** to relish *bhakti* rasa (3.6).

(III). Breaking *Kāma Kānda* rules for *prema*, as process but not as problem.

There is another story which more conspicuously narrativizes the 'playfulness' of the activities of

Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd associates in the sense that the cowherd associates reject even the benefits of *Karma Kāṇḍa* and do not mind the punishment therefrom and perform activities pleasing to *Kṛṣṇa*. In this story from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, all the cowherd associates of *Kṛṣṇa*, including His father who is the chief of the hamlet of *vṛndāvana*, set out to perform a ritual to appease *Indra* so that he would bless them with rain which in turn, would give fodder for the cows. *Kṛṣṇa*, seeing this, counsels them to give up that ritual and instead worship the *Govardhan* hill on which their cows graze, because it is reasonable to display gratitude to the hill which nurtures the cows. All the cowherds immediately accept the advice during the wrath of *Indra* because it pleases *Kṛṣṇa*. *Indra* sets out to avenge this rejection by sending down a shower of stones. It may be seen that the analogy of Dionysus in the play *The Bacchae* (4.3.5.2.11) suits to this *Indra*, who, like the former is the one who avenges the violation of his authority. In order to protect His associates from the shower of stones, *Kṛṣṇa* immediately lifts the *Gōvardhan* hill with His hand and all the cowherds take shelter beneath it. This act benumbs *Indra*. Realizing *Kṛṣṇa* as the Absolute Himself, he comes down to earth, falls down at His feet and begs forgiveness. *Kṛṣṇa* forgives him and sends him away. After *Indra* leaves, *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates continue the worship of *Govardhan* with great pleasure and express and experience transcendental love for each other. (On the stage, the lifting of *Govardhan* is not usually demonstrated. The *Gōvardhan* is shown on a huge backdrop and the *Govardhan parikrama* - circumambulation of *Govardhan* by the *gopa-s* is shown as part of the worship to *Govardhan*).

In this way, the *Govardhan Līlā* story simultaneously instructs the following:

- (i) The chosability of *bhakti* activities and *dās* self knowledge vis-a-vis *Karma Kāṇḍa* activities (3.6).
- (ii) Position of gods like *Indra* vis-a-vis the Absolute (3.2).
- (iii) Assurance that the rejection of *Karma Kāṇḍa* in preference for *bhakti* activity does not lead to misery as it does in a *trivarga* bound self plane. Moreover, it leads to closer association with *Kṛṣṇa* (3.6).



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44. A scene from *Mākhana Cōr Līlā*. Kṛṣṇa jumps in to the arms of Yaśōda saying, 'I want to sit in your lap wtiich I prefer to *Bramhan*'.

Source : *Svāmī* Bade Thakur (Dr Krishna Vallabh), Krishnanchal Lok Kalabharati, Vrindavan

(iv) Chosability of the non-pompous, natural (in contrast to civilized) entity like a hill

(IV) Playfulness' as reward and formlessness as punishment

As mentioned in the last chapter (3.5.1), another significant distinguishing feature of *Līlā* performances **vis-a-vis** the other forms of *Nāṭya*, especially *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna*, according to *Gauḍiya Vaisnava* school, is its consideration of the **self** knowledge of **self** as Self in association with divine form of the Absolute as more chosable than the self knowledge of self as Self **non-different** from the formless aspect of the Absolute. This idea is repeatedly expressed in narrative form in different *Līlā* performances. In one of such instances which is a **non-puranic**, probably improvised version of the Butter **Thief** *Līlā* of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (10.8), *Kṛṣṇa* Himself is made to express this preference.

In this *Līlā*, once *Yasoda* (*Kṛṣṇa*'s mother) asks *Kṛṣṇa* to go to *gurukula* (study place) for studying *śāstra* (scriptures). *Kṛṣṇa* questions her about the use of studying *sastra*. *Yasōda* replies that such study would lead to an understanding of the Absolute Truth (*tattva jñāna*) which is in the form of the all pervading *Bramhan*. She says that by attaining the knowledge of *Bramhan* one can attain *mukti* (liberation) and experience *bramhananda* (bliss of the realization of **non-difference** from formless *Bramhan*). *Kṛṣṇa* asks her then, if there would be butter, *gōpi-s*, *Yasoda* and the cows after the attainment of liberation. *Yasōda* laughs at this and replies that *bramhan* is formless and has none of these things. To this *Kṛṣṇa* asks her,

Are you so annoyed with me for stealing your butter [At the beginning of this performance, *Kṛṣṇa* is depicted to be stealing butter prepared by His mother] that you want to send me to such a place. I don't want that *Bramhan*. O Mother! I just want to sit in your lap and eat **butter**' (plate 44) (Source : *Vraja Rās Līlā Samthan*

conducted by Svāmī HarGovind).

Here, the subtle wit of narrative lies in presenting *Kṛṣṇa* to be an **innocent** child asking for things like butter, *gōpī-s*, *Yasoda* and cows in preference to *brahmhananda*. At an **apparent** level this is quite natural of a child as it does not understand issues like *Brahman*, *mōkṣa* and *brahmhananda*. From an Advaitic point of view, this preference is quite foolish, though childlike. The laugh of *Yasoda* represents this point of view. But from a *Gaudiya Vaisnava* point of view, butter, *gōpī-s*, *Yasōda* and cows indicate all the variegated, juicy richness of the world of playful activities and the resultant **variegated** richness of *rasa* **experience**. Even an oldest *Gaudiya Vaisnava* would have said what the child *Kṛṣṇa* said here. (The ecstatic response from the audience during the performance of this *Līlā* shows their empathy for this).

Though making *Kṛṣṇa* express this point of view affords authority to it, making a child express this in a childlike way is a theatrical strategy to communicate the beauty of *Līlā-ness* (**playfulness**), in the sense of childlike nature, inherent in the *Gaudiya vaisnava's* preference for 'playful' (childlike) activity to formlessness (3.5.3).

(V) The glory of the rustic and the poverty of the glorious.

One of the most popular *Līlā-s* is *uddhava Līlā* which is significant not only for the intensity of ecstatic experience expressed by the audience during this performance, but also for the effective narrative theatrical form instruction it gives to choose the self knowledge of the *gopa* - *gōpī/Brā* type and especially *gopī* type, vis-a-vis self knowledge of self in association with the awe inspiring form of *Bhagavān* and the Advaitic self knowledge (3.5.3). With a few improvisations over the story Of *Uddhava's* visit to *Vṛndavana*, described in the *Bhagavata Purana* (10.46-47), this story articulates *Gaudiya vaisnava* point of view in an impressive manner.

The *Uddhava* us shows the *gopi*-s feeling intense separation due to the absence of *Kṛṣṇa* who left *Vṛndāvana* to become a king in *Dvārakā*. After the passage of some time, *Kṛṣṇa* the king of *Dvārakā*, sends His minister and friend *Uddhava* to give *jñāna* (wisdom) to the *gōpi*-s to pacify them so that they can bear His separation and carry on with their normal life. When *Uddhava* comes to *vrndavana*, the inhabitants of *Vṛndāvana* rush to him on learning that he is *Kṛṣṇa*'s friend. When they relate to him their unhappiness and question him as to why *Kṛṣṇa* has not come to *Vṛndāvana*, *uddhava* begins to instruct them.

He tells them that *Kṛṣṇa* is the all pervading Absolute and asks them to meditate on *Kṛṣṇa* as the all pervading formless Absolute to overcome misery. But the *gōpi*-s want nothing but *Kṛṣṇa* and they want Him in the form of the flute wielding youth whom they **know** so well. Rejecting his teachings, they take him around *Vṛndāvana* narrating the incidents that took place there between them and *Kṛṣṇa*. They then question him on the possibility of seeing Him as something else (as a formless Absolute) when each of these places remind them of His beautiful *Līlā*-s (pastimes). *Uddhava* tries various arguments with the *gōpi*-s and each time they defeat him with their nascent expression of transcendental love for *Kṛṣṇa*. Whereever they go and whatever they do, **they** are always absorbed in the transcendental sweet (*madhura*) loving *Līlā*-s (pastimes) **of** *Kṛṣṇa* which He performed with them.

uddhava then asks them to go with him to *Dvārakā* to see *Kṛṣṇa* as a solution to their suffering from separation. The *gōpi*-s reject this solution too and ask *Uddhava* to communicate to *Kṛṣṇa* their urge to see Him again in *vrndavana*, to perform all the *Līlā*-s (pastimes) that He used to perform near the river *Yamuna*, in the forest groves (*kunja*-s), with the cows, stealing butter, teasing the *gōpi*-s, getting bound to the transcendental love of *Yasōda* and so on.

In this process, *Uddhava* is enamoured by the intensity of the *gōpī-s'* love *for Kṛṣṇa*. Though *Uddhava* finds all the *Bṛā* associates **of Kṛṣṇa**, like His parents, friends, elders and neighbours, express their intense longing for the company **of Kṛṣṇa**, he acknowledges the greatest intensity of that longing in *gōpī-s*. Struck by the unparalleled transcendental sweet love of the *gōpī-s* for *Kṛṣṇa*, *uddhava* prostrates at their feet, though he is *Kṛṣṇa's* friend and a minister in His court.

This story adapts the strategy of making a city dwelling, high positioned, knowledgeable associate of the awe **inspiring** form of *Kṛṣṇa* (in *Dvaraka*) accepting the superiority of the rustic, simple, ignorant *gōpī* associates of the closeness inspiring form of *Kṛṣṇa*, by acknowledging their transcendental love as superior to his. This, in the language mentioned in the last chapter(3.5.3), is a narrative form instruction of the superiority of *madhura* (conjugal) association with *mādhurya rūpa* (**sweet** form) Of *Bhagavān* (*Kṛṣṇa* in *Vṛndavana*) **over** the association With the *aiśvarya rūpa* (opulent form) of *Bhagavān* (*Kṛṣṇa* in *Dvārakā*)(3.5.3). Similarly, by showing the *gōpī-s* rejecting *Uddhava's* proposal to meditate on the formless *Brahman* aspect of *Kṛṣṇa*, this *Līlā* instructs the choosability of *gōpī-s'* self knowledge to the **Advaitic** self knowledge (3.5.3).

(VI) Ignorance of Kṛṣṇa as the Absolute as most choosable.

The establishment of *gōpī-s* in the self knowledge of self in association with the closeness - inspiring form **of Bhagavān** and the **'rejection'** of His being the Absolute (3.5.3) is expressed, in a way, in a scene from the *Dan Līlā*(the pastime of donation). This episode from a non-puranic source probably collected from the songs of some medieval *Bṛā* poets, employs techniques similar to the *Mākhana Cōr Līlā* mentioned above (4.3.5.2.IV).

In this *Līlā*, the *gōpī-s* are seen taking butter to the Demon king *Kamsa as tax*." *Kṛṣṇa* stops them on the way and demands that they can proceed **only** after giving Him some of the butter. The *gōpī-s* in turn try to frighten Him by referring to the demon *Kamsa* to which *Kṛṣṇa* replies, 'I am



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45. *Kṛṣṇa* pleading innocence saying, mother! I did not eat **butter** (see Appendix 5). Note the childlike crying. His associates in Vrindavan can not believe that such an innocent mother fearing child can be the **Absolute**
 Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.

Bramhan (referring to the Absolute in an Upanisadic language) and hence *Kamsa* can not do anything to Me' (Source : *Vraja Rās Līlā Samsthān* conducted by *Svāmi Har Govind*).

To this statement of *Kṛṣṇa*, the *gōpī-s* retort sarcastically,

If you are such a powerful *Bramhan*, the owner of the three worlds, the all pervading principle in everything, then why do you go to every house to steal butter? I once caught you stealing and snatched away your *pitāmbara* [yellow cloth that *Kṛṣṇa* wears]. When your mother bound you with a rope for stealing curd and breaking the pots [depicted in the *Uḷūkh Bandhan* *Līlā* - the pastime of binding to the mortar], remember, it was us, who saved you from your bondage. And now you Say you are *Bramhan*' (*Vraja Rās Līlā Samsthān* conducted by *Svāmi Har Govind*).

This story is structured as if it is a narrative form elaboration of statements such as - '*gōpī-s* take the closeness inspiring form of *Bhagavan* so much to be His only form, that even if the Absolute Himself comes and tells them that He is the Absolute (indicated by the word *Bramhan*) who presides over all the gods and has unlimited supernatural powers and so on, they would not accept it and make fun of Him' (3.5.3). Even when *Kṛṣṇa* manifests His opulence by lifting the *Gōvardhan*, in the *Gōvardhan Līlā* (4.3.5.2.III), or by showing the universe in His mouth to *Yasōda*, in the *Mṛttikā Bhaksana Līlā* or dances on *Kāliya* snake, in the *Kāliya Daman Līlā*, the associates of *Kṛṣṇa* think that He is being protected by the gods, to whom they pray for His protection. They cannot believe that such a delicate child can be the Absolute (plate 45). This is also an indication of how perfectly *Bhagavan* manifests His closeness inspiring form, enacting exactly whatever is expected of such an ordinary simple rustic human being.

At one level, the reaction of the *gōpī-s*, in the *Līlā* discussed here, looks to be a reflection of

their unlearned or ignorant nature and provokes laughter from that point of view. But the audience of these *Līlā* performances, who consider this kind of *bhakti* as ideal, get an ecstasy out of empathy while watching this performance. This story can be seen to be instructing the supremacy of the self knowledge of self as Self in association with the closeness inspiring form of *Bhagavān*, reaching the limit of the self as Self being ignorant of the closeness inspiring form, in fact, being the Absolute (3.5.3). The laugh provoking, fun making resorted to by *Kṛṣṇa*, is seen by the audience as His deliberate **play** (sport) enacted with a dear knowledge of the answer to come from the *gōpī-s*, with an aim to demonstrate the intensity of the belief of *gōpī-s* in his cowherd boy form.

(VII). The luck of the stolen : story showing the superiority of Radha.

One of the incidents of *Mahārās Līlā* narrated above (4.3.3), which deserves a special attention, is *Kṛṣṇa's* taking away *Radha* along with Him while His disappearance from among the *gōpī-s*. *Gōpī-s* on the stage laud *Rādhā* for her good fortune of being able to be chosen by *Kṛṣṇa* to go away with Him and to be with Him even at a time when He decides to desert all others. Based on this choice of *Kṛṣṇa*, they come to the conclusion that she must be the best of the *gōpī-s* and must be serving *Kṛṣṇa* in the most likable way for Him, and they mention this point to each other in their conversation of sharing of suffering of separation from *Kṛṣṇa*. This incident from the *Mahārās* episode is to be found in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (10.33) also, but for the name *Radha* given to the "anonymous *gōpī*," described to have been taken away by *Kṛṣṇa*. This incident can be seen to be a narrative form depiction of the *Gauḍiya vaiṣṇava* principle of the greatest superiority of *Rādhā* among the *gōpī-s* mentioned (3.5.3). In fact, this superiority is made to be mentioned by *Kṛṣṇa* Himself in a discourse which He gives preceding the *Mahārās Līlā* performance.

One of the principles mentioned in the last chapter, which is conspicuously absent in the

narrative form presentation is the greatest choosability of the self knowledge of the *sakhī-s* (attendants) of *Radha*. One place where this principle finds mention in the *Līlā* performances is the speech made to be given by *Kṛṣṇa* as a prelude to the *Mahārās* *Us* performance. Based on the fact that it is part of everyday talk of most of the *Brajavāsī-s* to acknowledge the greatest choosability of *sakhī* self knowledge, it can be assumed that, this principle is taken for granted and not considered necessary to be presented in a narrative form by *rāsdhārī-s*. In other words, the identification of *Brajavāsī* audience with the *sakhī-s* of *Radha*, whenever they are presented on the stage, in performances like *nitya* *Ras* and *Līlā-s* where the intimate conjugal activities between *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* are presented, and *sakhī-s* are the only characters who have an opportunity to be present during those intimate moments and assist them in those activities, is taken for granted by the *rāsdhārī-s*.

4.3.5.3. Scope for taking different meanings.

Thus, it can be seen that the stories presented in *Līlā* performances, sometimes in their puranic versions themselves and sometimes in their improvised versions, as composed by either the medieval devotional poets or sometimes by the *rāsdhārī-s* themselves, communicate effectively the principles of theology (4.3.5.2). But in spite of all care taken in the narrative structure and method of presentation of these *Līlā-s*, there is possibility of certain audience not taking the intended meaning of *Līlā-s*. For example, audience who are not involved in *Brajavāsī* devotional practice and watch *Līlā-s*, may take different meanings depending on their background. An audience looking at it as just one of the plays like Sanskrit plays may look at them as the stories of *Kṛṣṇa* as hero, *Rādhā* and *gōpī-s* as the heroines and demon killing activities of *Kṛṣṇa* as His heroic deeds. It may be noted that this is a *Natya* for *Trivarga* point of view. A follower of *Advaita Vēdānta* may like to look at *Kṛṣṇa* as the manifestation of formless *Bramhan* and all the *Līlā-s* as one kind of formful manifestations of *Bramhan* (3.3, 3.5.1 & 3.7.1). It may be noted that this is a *Natya* for

Jñāna point of view. The audience who are used to watching the plays of Western theatre and watch *Līlā-s* as one of those plays, may look at *Līlā-s* as stories of 'instinctual exhilaration' (4.3.5.2.II). To put it the other way, if any of the meanings, mentioned here, are being taken by any of the audience of the *Līlā-s*, they are not the intended meanings, but are meanings being taken on account of the various cultural backgrounds of the audience. The intended meaning of these performances is well communicated to the *Braṇvāsī* audience, again, because of their cultural background. Atleast, one of the most prominent traits of the intended meaning of *Ras Līlā* performances is that of the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theology (discussed in the third chapter), which is communicated or which is received by the *Gaudiya vaisnava* audience, again, because of their cultural background.

4.4. *Rās Līlā* performance as a microcosm of *Braj* culture.

An interesting aspect of the format of *Ras Līlā* performances is that it incorporates various elements of the day to day life of *Braṇvāsī-s* into it.

For example, the element of deity worship can be seen in the ritual of *maṅgalācaraṇa* discussed above (4.3.2). As mentioned earlier (4.3.2), the *Braṇvāsī-s* treat the characters as they do in the case of deities in the temple and interact with them just as they do with the deities in the temple

A similar kind of interaction with the deities can be seen in a ritual called *darsan* (audience) or *jhāṅkī* (beholding), which is performed during the interval after the *Ras* part is performed and before *Līlā* part begins and sometimes in between the *Līlā* performance. In this ritual, *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* are seen standing on the throne resembling the deities in a temple (plates 46 & 47). The audience are invited by the *rāsdhārī* to come on to the stage to get Their blessings. Almost the



46. *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* standing in a *darsan* posture during one of the *Ras Līlā* performances. Note the attempt to make the performers look like the dieties.

Compare with plate 47. Note stage of a *Līlā* performance becoming a temple.

Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem Samsthan**, Vrindavan

47. The dieties of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* opened for *darsan* (audience) in *Kṛṣṇa Bavarām* temple.

Compare with plate 46.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.



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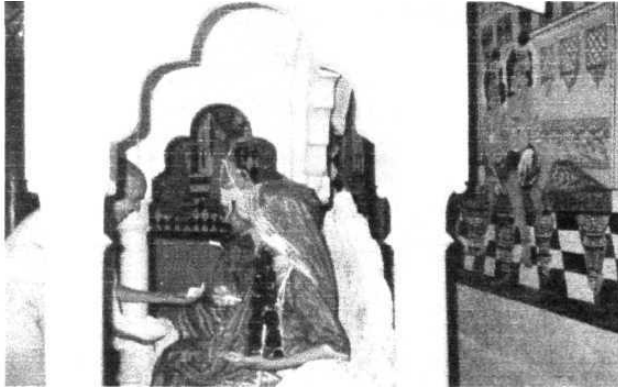
48. One of the audiences bending to touch the feet of the *Kṛṣṇa* role player during one of the *darśan* occasions in the *Līlā* performances. **The crowd of the audience are waiting for their turn** to worship *Kṛṣṇa*. Note the stage becoming a temple.

Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem**samsthan.

49. A family among audience takes the privilege of feeding sweets to the *Kṛṣṇa* role playing performer during an interval. Note the treatment of performer as diety and attitude of feeding the child with a parental affection.

Compare with plates **31**, **37**, **47** & **48**.

Source : *Svāmī* Ram Prasad, *rāsdhārī* of Braj Ras **Līlā** Mandal, Vrindavan.



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50. One of the audience offers ice cream to *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* during the interval (between the *Ras* and *Līlā* performance). The backdrop of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Balarama* eating butter, though incidental, matches with the incident on the stage.

Compare with plates 30, 36, 46, 47 & 49. Note the continuity of the feeling of devotion with closeness even in a flexible shift to a modern food product.

Source : **Researcher's** own document.

entire audience go on to the stage and touch Their feet with the same feeling of closeness as they have for the deity (plate 48). The practice of offering money to the deities (by moving the money in a circular fashion around the actors and placing it at their feet), called *nyauchāvar* (contribution), is also followed here in a way in which it is done during deity worship in temples (plates 49 & 50). The *darsan* changes depending upon the *Līlā* of the day. For *Uḷūkh Bandhan UIS*, in which *Yasōda* binds *Kṛṣṇa* to the waist for His mischief, the *darsan* of *Yasoda* and *Kṛṣṇa* is arranged. Sometimes *Kṛṣṇa* and *Balarama* (*Kṛṣṇa*'s elder brother) stand on the throne with crossed legs (a scene which can be seen depicted in the paintings and in temples of Vrindavan), with Their right hands raised in the form of a blessing *mudrā* (posture). In *Gōvardhan Līlā*, *darsan* of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Balarama* along with *Gōvardhan* is arranged. The famous *mandali-s* spend a lot of money on the clothes so that the characters look very attractive during the *darsan-s*. All this is because the audience, who feel the performers to be none other than *Rādhā*, *Kṛṣṇa* and others. They themselves, can be convinced only when the depiction is upto their expectations about the characters. Usually the performers are quite successful at creating an aura of divinity and as a result the audience get into the ecstasy of having had the privilege of beholding *Radha*, *Kṛṣṇa* and others directly.

Thus, the stage of the *Ras Līlā* performances can be seen to be occasionally transforming into a temple, the performers becoming deities, *rāsdhārī-s* becoming the priests. As mentioned above (4.2), the ritual in the temple has its theatrical features and with theatre becoming the temple ritual their mutually **allomorphic** relation is established.

One of the conspicuous elements of daily *Brāj* activities found in *Ras Līlā* performances is *pravacan*, the discourse (4.1 & 4.2). In *Ras UIS* performances two kinds of discourses are found. One, is speech given by some *rāsdhārī-s* as a prelude to *Līlā* part of the *Ras Līlā* performances or during the interval between *Ras* and *UIS* parts of the *Rās Līlā* performances. This lecture usually contains

an **orientation** part, where the greatness of *Braṇ* is **eulogized**, the efficacy of **performing *bhakti*** activities in Vrindavan is highlighted, **keeping the freshers to** Vrindavan in **mind**, request is made to look at the *Rās Līlā-s* as part of spiritual practice and not just as a general theatre, and various intricacies of *bhakti* theology (probably from the perspective of specific tradition to which the *rāsdhārī* and *rSs mandalī* belongs) are explained and the audience are requested to watch the *Rās Līlā* performances with such a theological **understanding**

The second kind of discourse is found in *Mahārās Līlā* performance in which, as mentioned earlier (4.3.5.2.VII), *Kṛṣṇa* is made to come on to the stage before the actual *US* performance begins and give a lecture. This lecture contains, again, the glory of Vrindavan, theological aspects such as the relative superiority of *gōpī-s*, the *sakhī-s* of *Rādhā* and *Rādhā*, the transcendental love of *Kṛṣṇa* for Vrindavan, and *gōpa-gōpī-s*, the *sakhī-s* and *Radha* (3.5.3). This technique of making *Kṛṣṇa* Himself say these things, because of the treatment of performers as deities, brings a great amount of authenticity of what is said. Especially, when *Kṛṣṇa* says that He plays, runs after the *Braṇvāsī-s* (the *gopa-s* and *gōpi-s*) as part of the play¹ not simply to play with **them**, but, in fact, so as to allow the dust from their feet to fall on His head (to take the dust of the feet on the head is a symbol of extreme salutation in almost all the traditional cultures in India), almost all the audience scream, shout and shed tears in ecstasy overwhelmed by this expression of extreme love by *Kṛṣṇa*. This extreme glorification of the *gopa-s* and *gōpī-s* with whom the audience identify, as mentioned above (3.5.3 & 4.3.52), by none other than *Kṛṣṇa* Himself, makes the audience ecstatic and usually the audience respond **frivolently** to such statements made by *Kṛṣṇa* in His speech.

Discourses have become frequent inclusions in Drama and modern Indian theatre too. In both these, either a director or a narrator - character comes on to the stage to give a discourse in the beginning, middle or end of the performance. In some of the experimental forms of these two,

even one of the characters is made to give a speech usually at the end of the performances. But in *Ras Lilā* performances this technique has a different function. On the one hand, it serves the function, as in case of Drama and modern Indian theatre, to explain the perspective with which the performance is sought to be watched. But apart from this, the discourse in *Ras Lilā* performances establish a continuity between the **daily** *Braṇvāsī* activities and the *Ras Lilā* performances. The performance turns out to be a visual aid to the discourse in the *Ras Lilā* performance, whereas, such a visual aid is lacking in the discourses such as the *Bhagavata saptaha* which the *Braṇvāsī-s* attend (4.2).

The other element of daily life found in *Ras Lilā-s* which needs to be highlighted next is the *sankīrtan* or congregational chanting of the names of *Kṛṣṇa*. *Rasdhari-s* and performers lose no opportunity to make the audience participate in congregational chanting throughout the *Ras* *Us* performances. Especially, during the interval between *Ras* and *Lilā*, when the *darsan* is arranged and the audience go on to the stage for *darsan*, the *rasdhari* starts singing a devotional **lyric** and requests the audience to join him. The audience join him spontaneously and the *sankīrtan* goes on all through the quarter of an hour during which the *darsan* takes place.

During the occasions of scene change, if there is time needed for the scene change, the audience are requested to join the *sankīrtan* so that their mood does not deviate. Similarly, as mentioned above (4.3.5.1), at the end of the *Uṛṇ* performance, the audience participate in the *sankīrtan* led by the *rasdhari*. One Of the **most** popular **lyrics** used in *sankīrtan* **goes**: *govinda bold gopala bold* (say Govinda say Gopala), *radha ramana hari govinda bold* (say Radha ~~Ramana~~, Han and Govinda) **or** *hari bol hari bol* (say Hari) **say Han!**).

If some of the audience, who are freshers to **Vrindavan**, begin to leave without participating in the *sankīrtan*, the *rasdhari* stops them and requests them to participate in the *sankīrtan*. One of the

speech is as follows :

'This *jīva* [self] is lost in this world since millions of years,. It is possible to attain **the** lotus feet of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* by watching Their love sports. Vrindavan is very glorious and those who attain it are glorious. Madhusudana Saraswati [3.7] said, "I read *Vēdānta*, I meditated on the Absolute, I searched all the leaves of the Vedic **tree** But when I went to Vrindavan I heard about *Kṛṣṇa* for whom everyone is searching. When I hear that *Kṛṣṇa* requests his mother for some butter, my mind runs towards Him and forgets all **else**.' [Obviously, the *rasdhari* wants to show it to the audience that even an **Advaitic** scholar of the stature of Madhusudana Saraswati has an attraction for the *bhakti* in the *Līlā* stories]. So when you have come to Vrindavan, kindly watch the *tīts* performances, which alone can give you *prīti* [transcendental love] for the lotus feet **of** *Kṛṣṇa*. Keep your minds fixed on *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* and participate in singing Their glories in *sankīrtan* (*Rasdhari svamī* Kishanlal, age 60, *Vallabha Sampradāya*, *rasdhari of* Sri **Haribol ras mandal**, on 10.8.1995).

Then the audience stop and participate with raised hands and dap to *jay rādhā raman han bōl śrī rādhā raman han bōl* (say *Han*, one who gives pleasure to *Radha*. Say *Han*, one who gives pleasure to the glorious *Radha*).

This element of *sankīrtan*, though as mentioned above (4.3.5.1), has theatrical performance strategy such as providing time for scene change, can also be seen to be a technique of involving or drawing the audience into the performance. Though such techniques are not so frequent in Drama or modern Indian theatre, they have become common practice in performances like Rock concerts (plate 51. Also see plates 19 & 20). But the function of this in *Ras Līlā* performances has a different aspect. As in the case of **darsan-s** (visions) on the stage and *pravacan-s* (discourses), this too provides a link between the daily *Bravāsī* activities and the *Ras*



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51. *jay jay śrī rādhē*. The audience respond with raised hands to this slogan by *rādhārī*. This technique of involving or pulling the audience in to the performance is found in Rock concerts. Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem Samsthān**.

52. *Sakhī-s* swinging *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* in a swing during the performance of *Jhulam Līlā*. Compare with plates 53. Note the festival type activity in the **theatrical** performance.



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P-54

53. Two women among the audience climb on to the stage and take the pleasure of swinging *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* with their own hands.

Compare with plates 52. Note the audience playing the role of *Sakhī*-s.

Source : Bade Thakur (Dr. Krishna Vallabh), Krishnanchal Lok Kala Bharati, Vrindavan.

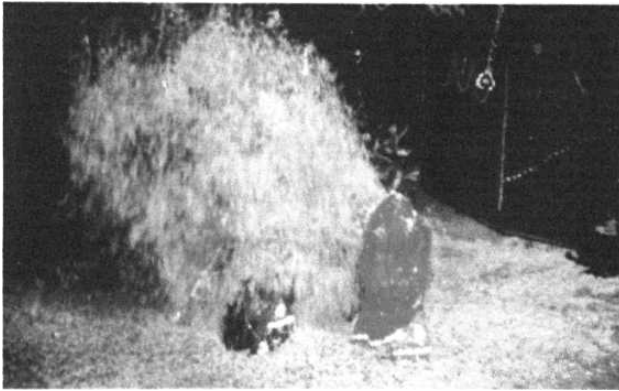
54 *Hōlī Līlā* performance. *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* accepting by bending the throwing of yellow flower petals.

Compare with plates 55 & 56. *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* are yet to be totally submerged under the petals.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem Samsthan.



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55. *Hōlī Līlā* performance. The audience come on to the stage to play *hōlī* with *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa*. The play is in the form of showering yellow flower petals from the baskets in their hands over the performers.

Compare with plates 54 & 56. Note the glee of **privilege** in the faces of the audience. An example of barrier breaking between audience and performers.

Source : *Svāmī* Ram **Svarup**, *Rasdhan* of Krishna **Līlā** Samsthan, Vrindavan.

56. Performance of *HSi US*. The cowherd characters on the stage submerged the characters of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* under a heap of pale lemon flower petals. Note the rush out of excitement in the tragedianes of flower petals.

Compare with plates 54 & 55. Note the festival enacted on the stage of *Līlā* performance

Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem** Samsthan.

Lilā performances On the one hand, it serves as an outlet for the audience to express the ecstasy which they get from time to time during their watching of the *Ras Lilā* performances and on the other hand, *sankīrtan*, which is considered to be the central practice, is practised without losing even the slightest opportunity for it.

Another element of *Ras Lilā*, where involvement of the audience of the performance goes to the extent of breaking the performance - audience barriers, is the recreation of festivals employed by *rāsdhārī* during the performances. Festivals like *Jhulan yatra* (swing festival), and *hōlī* (festival of colours)(4.2) are recreated as part of the performance and audience participate in them almost as they do in those festivals. During the performance of *Jhulan Lilā*, a *jhūlā* (swing) is made which is very beautifully decorated with garden fresh leaves and flowers. *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* sit in it while the *sakhī-s* move it gently for Their pleasure (plate 52). As in the case of the festivals (4.2), the audience go on to the stage and themselves •become' *sakhī-s* to swing *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* (plate 53).

Another *Lilā* which is a best example for the festival like *Ras Lilā* performance is *Hōlī Lilā*. *Hōlī* is one of the major festivals in Vrindavan in which all the devotees participate with great exuberance. The *Hōlī Lilā* consists of *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates sprinkling colours at each other. This *Lilā* is completely playful.' *Gōpī-s* and *Kṛṣṇa* tease and mock at each other, fight and then shower colours as a sort of competition. In the place of colours the actors shower flower petals at each other which represent the colors. Some of the audience join the characters as they sing the *hōlī* songs (songs describing the *hōlī* pastimes performed by *Kṛṣṇa*). At the end of the performance, the whole crowd goes on to the stage to shower flower petals on 'Radha and *Kṛṣṇa*,' who are seated on the throne, till they are totally submerged in them (plates 54 - 56). Flower petals are heaped by the patrons for the use of the audience. After playing' with *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa*, the audience pick them up and throw them at each other and play *hōlī* for a long

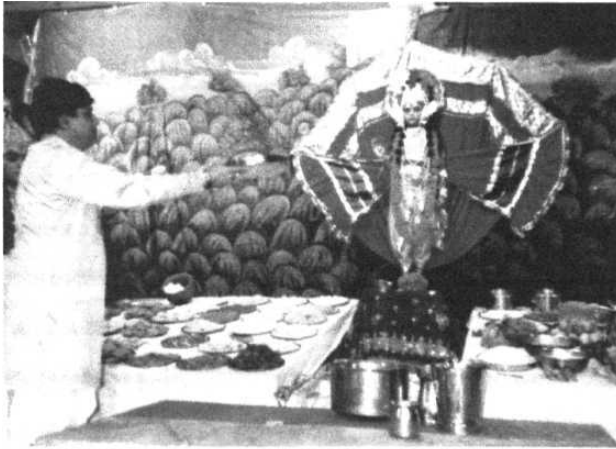
time.

Though these mock festivals do not transport the *Brāṇvāsī-s* into the time of the story of the festival, except when these performances are conducted on the festival day itself, the festive atmosphere which these *Rās Līlā* performances bring has a great impact on the effect of the performance. The details of these mock festivals are **exactly** the replica of the details of the festivals as they are performed in **Vrindavan**. On the one hand, these *Ras līlā* performances give a narrative and theological context for the festivals and on the other, they bring the *Brāṇvāsī* life into *Rās Līlā* performance more intensely than any other of such elements being discussed here.

Govardhan Līlā, though to an extent is like the performances based on festivals discussed above, differs from them, in that the *parikrama* (circumambulation) around the *Gōvardhan* hill, which takes place on the actual festival day is an actual going around, where as, in the *Gōvardhan Līlā* performance, the audience only mentally circumambulate around *Govardhan* hill (in the form of the backdrop screen).

In *Govardhan Līlā*, discussed above (4.3.5.2.III), when the *Brāṇvāsī-s* decide to worship *Govardhan* hill and not *Indra* at the insistence of *Kṛṣṇa* and the audience, the characters circumambulate (do *pankrama*) around it, which, as discussed above (4.2), is the custom even today. The *rāsdhārī* requests the audience to : " kindly say jay (hail or all glories) with words, and within the mind do *pankrama* with *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates' (Source : *Vraṇ Rās Līlā Samsthān* conducted by *Svami Har Govind*). Following the request of the *rasdhari*, the audience get transported into the *Līlā* and by imagining themselves to be part of the characters, perform *parikmma* with them mentally.

Fifty sixty kinds of food (*chappan bhōg*)¹⁵ are offered to a *Gōvardhan sālegṛāma* (a stone picked up



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57. Offering of *chappan bhōg* to *giriājī Gōvardhan*. Hill is shown as heap of stones at the backdrop. The diety in front of the backdrop is *Srināthji* (the deity of *Kṛṣṇa* built by the medieval saint Vallabhacarya on the Govardhan hill). The devotee is offering *ārati* (4.3.2) to the *Govardhan* hill (4.3.5.2.III). Note the stage of performance becoming a temple.

Source : *Svāmī* Ramprasad, *rasdhan* of Braj Ras Lila mandal, Vrindavan.

from *Gōvardhan* hill representing the hill) in pots which is donated by the wealthy patrons. At the end of *pankrama*, *abhisēk* (bathing) and *pūjā* (worship) are performed for *Govardhan*. Pots of milk and other fluids are poured on *Govardhan* as *Kṛṣṇa* helps His associates. Everything is done here in a way in which it is done in the temples during *gīrāj mahotsav*, the grand festival of *Gōvardhan* (plate 57). It is here that the audience break the barriers, and go on to the stage and become part of the stage. At the end of the *Līlā*, *prasād* (literally, mercy, here, food offered to the deity of *Gōvardhan* which is received as his mercy) is distributed to the audience. It may be noted that this has the element of temple rituals too. In fact, even the actual *gīrāj mahotsav* is conducted in a makeshift temple structure.

Though *Ras Līlā* performances have many more details which are not limited to the above mentioned elements which are incorporations of *Brājavāsī* daily life, these elements nevertheless have got a mark making impact on the *Ras Līlā* performances and make the entire *Ras Līlā*, performance context a microcosm of the day to day life of *Brājavāsī-s*. In other words, though *Rās Līlā* performance context has got a distinct function, colour, and structure of its own, **vis-a-vis** the other day to day activities of *Brājavāsī-s*, this microcosm incorporation of the other elements of the *Brājavasi* life provides a strong continuum between the other daily activities of *Brājavāsī-s* and the *Ras Līlā* performances. It may be noted that it is this continuum which is one of the main consequences of the localization of *Rās Līlā* performances to *Brāj* (4.1). This is one significant way in which the theatre of *Ras Līlā* performances looks very much different from the other forms of theatre.

4.5. Character of *Ras Līlā* performances as a consequence of their localization to *Brāj*.

After having seen the components of daily routine of *Brāj* way of life incorporated into *Ras Līlā*

performances, it can be now be seen that such an incorporation leads to the distinctive (see Intro.) features of *Ras Līlā* performances, which have been shown (4.2) to be contained in the **components of Braj daily** routine also.

What immediately catches the eye of a stranger in a *Ras Līlā* performance is the way the performance is treated just as a play.' Hawley, for example, talking about the actors of *Ras Līlā* performances says,

'The people who played the sacred children's roles really were children, and their play was not just play in the dramatic sense but in the childish sense as well' (1992:161).

He adds that the children (playing the roles **of Radha, Kṛṣṇa, gopā-s and gōpī-s**) "do what they do for its own sake, for the fun of it; they are **truly at play**" (1992 : 161).

This applies to the other participants of the performance like *rāsdhārī* and the audience also. Taking it as a 'play' does not mean that the participants do not get involved in it at all. **In fact**, the participants get totally involved, immersed and totally get transported into the spiritual realm being presented in the *Ras Līlā* performances. This transportation is what makes them participate in the performances in such a collective way as to frequently break the barriers between the performance and the audience, and it is this transportation which makes them experience intense levels of ecstasy, which is usually **described** as experience of '*rasa*.'

For example, when *Rādhā-s* scene is **prominent** in the US, a song is sung addressing Her as *Prīyā* (beloved), *Śyāmā* (the dear one of *Śyām*, i.e., *Kṛṣṇa*), the names which signify Her unalloyed love for *Kṛṣṇa*. At the end of the song, the *rāsdhārī* says '*jayjay śrī rādhē.....ōē*' (all glories to *Sri Radha*) with raised hands inviting the audience to glorify *Radha*, to which the audience join enthusiastically. Whenever *Radha* appears on stage this is repeated. And When *Kṛṣṇa* appears

the *rāsdhārī* sings 'bōḷyē kṛṣṇabhagavān ki...jay' (say all glories to Lord Kṛṣṇa) and the audience join him. When both *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* are present, the *rasdhārī* and the audience sing 'bōḷyē jugal sarkār ki...jay' (say all glories to the divine couple) (plate 51). Some devotees are seen folding hands at the sight of *Rādhā* and *Kṛṣṇa* with 'bhāṇ' (feeling). When *Kṛṣṇa* is carried away by *Vasudēv* (Kṛṣṇa's father) on his head from *Mathurā* to *Vṛndāvana* in *Janma Līlā* (see appendix 4), the audience shout ecstatically, without the singer asking them, 'bōḷō bāla kṛṣṇa bhagavan ki....jay' (hail child *Kṛṣṇa*, the Lord), raising their hands.

The actors too speak directly to the audience. For example, in a scene from *Ulūkh Bandhan Līlā*, *Kṛṣṇa* jokingly asks *Yasoda* to get Him married. He then turns towards the audience and says, 'will you all come to my wedding.' The audience participate in the joke saying 'hi....' (yes) smilingly. *Kṛṣṇa* then turns specifically towards the women audience and says, 'will you sing at My wedding.' The women blush at this and shyly respond by saying 'haan' (Source : *Svāmī Fateh Krishna Ras Maṇḍali*). These tactics of the performers make the transportation of the audience into the place and time of *Līlā* effective, intensifying the feeling of the audience of really being present in front of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Yasōda*. Another instance of such techniques, employed by the performers for transportation of the audience can be seen in *Mākhan Cor Līlā*, in which, sometimes the *Kṛṣṇa* role player and some times the role player of His cowherd boy associate comes to the stage front or comes down the stage and distributes the stolen butter. Audience rush towards them to take their share of butter (plates 58 & 59)

A similar transportation tactic on the part of the performers, can be seen in taking the audience into community gathering of the cowherds to settle a dispute. In such dispute settling gatherings in Indian villages, the parties in dispute turn towards the participants in the gathering or in other words the members of the community for a supporting vote. *Gōvardhan Līlā*, as discussed above (4.3.5.2.III), shows *Kṛṣṇa* and His associates celebrating the *gīṛnāj mahōtsav*, the grand



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58 Audience eagerly rushing towards *Kṛṣṇa* asking for the butter stolen by him.
Compare with plate 59.

Note the excitement of privilege in the faces. Note also breaking of barriers between the audiences and the performers (audiences are playing the cowherd friends of *Kṛṣṇa* here). Note also performance is just a play. The urban elite pilgrims look on this participation of the traditional audience.

Source : *Svāmī* **Ram** Prasad, *rāṣḍhārī* of Braj Ras **Līla** mandal, Vrindavan

59. Children among the audience eagerly asking for butter and a cowherd character is seen **distributing** butter. Note the smiles of fun and excitement in the faces of the children. Note the performance becoming just a play, with all the banners of performer - audience vanishing.

Compare plates **41**, **42**, & **58**.

Source : Sri Chaitanya Prem **Samsthān**, Vrindavan



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60 The flood of beaming nascent smiles in the ecstasy of the child audience during a *Rās Līlā* performance. These children are the students from Bhaktivedanta **Swami** International Gurukula (study place). Two of the children devotees in front are of western nativity.
Source : Sri Chaitanya **Prem Samsthan**, Vrindavan.

festival of the king of mountains - *Gōvardhan*. As *Kṛṣṇa* and the cowherd community have discussions over the worship of mount *Govardhan*, one of the characters who insists on the worship of *Indra* turns towards the audience and says,

'Dear *Brajavāsī-s*. This is a question of prestige. [Pointing towards a character] He says that we must worship *gīrāj Govardhan*. I say we must worship *Indra*. So we have decided to depend on your support.'

When the character seeking the vote of audience says '*indra ki ...*' (Hail *Indra*) no one responds. When *Kṛṣṇa* says '*gīrāj gōvardhana ki* (hail *Govardhan*, the king of mountains),' thousands among the audience simultaneously shout '*aaa...y* (hail).' Then some of the audience pick up '*gīrāj govardhan ki.*: and to this the rest respond with raised hands '*āāā...y* (hail)' (Source: *Svāmi Fateh Krishna Rās Maṇḍali*) This makes the audience feel themselves to be a part of the actual gathering to settle the dispute of the cowherds of the place and time of *Gōvardhan Līlā*.

This kind of transportation, many a time, makes the audience express ecstatic symptoms. The audience participate in the humour of the characters (plates 60 & 42), feel excited as the characters are excited and feel sad when they are sad. During the scenes of separation, they totally empathize with the characters who feel lost at the separation of *Kṛṣṇa* and can not control their tears. This can be observed in *Līlā-s* such as *Uddhava Līlā* (4.3.5.2.V). While watching this *Līlā* the audience are in uncontrollable emotion. They become very emotional as the *gopī-s* defeat *Uddhava*.

Donna Wulff narrates her observation saying,

"In a performance of the *Līlā* representing *Yasodā's* grief at *Kṛṣṇa's* departure for Mathura, which I saw in Brindavan in 1972 during the 40 - day festival surrounding *krṣṇajanamāṣṭamī* the emotional response of the audience grew so

intense that the *līlā* was somewhat abruptly cut short. Afterwards I was informed that the *gosvāmin* [the **priest** of the temple] presiding over the occasion feared that the devotees watching the *līlā* who had been weeping throughout, would not be able to bear any more grief. It is such an experience of total absorption in the eternal *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa of complete self - forgetfulness through communal participation in intense emotions toward the Lord like those expressed on the stage, that is the cherished goal of this form of Kṛṣṇa devotion; and this, at least for a few brief hours the *līlās* make possible" (1977 : **44-45**).

Even though these *Līlā-s* are known to everyone of the audience (who have been hearing them since their childhood, studying and watching them daily in some form or other), every year the *Līlā-s* are still a grand success. The devotees eagerly await the festival which brings them the *Rās* performances. One can hear local people saying, the festival of *Līlā-s* is coming. Take **pleasure.**' This form has survived hundreds of years, when in the West and in urban places, the practitioners of theatre constantly need a new form to depict the forces of determinism hitherto not realized (1.4). Most of the audience don't even watch any other theatre and the performers perform the same *Līlā-s* all their lives.

It may be noted that all these distinct features of the *Līlā* performances such as (i) 'playful' participation; (ii) getting transported into the spiritual **realm**; (iii) a collective participation without performance - audience barriers; (iv) intense expressions of emotional experience; and (v) recurrent practice of the same thing again and again, are all noticed in all the daily activities of *Braṇvāsī-s* also (3.2). The continuity between these daily activities and the *Rās* performances (4.4) can easily be assumed to be the cause of these commonnesses between the two. Though, 'playfulness' in the daily *Braṇvāsī* activities is in the sense of treating activities just as a pastime, performed without any gainful motive, and '**playfulness**' in the *Rās Līlā* performances is in the

sense that the performers and the audience alike treat the performance as a child's play among themselves, i.e., they do not employ extraordinary skills of acting and so on, but simply talk as they do in general conversation (being, on the other hand, totally immersed in the performance as the children are in their play), but both the 'playfulnesses' are part of the same *Bravāsī* nature of happy-go-lucky simple disposition, coupled with a devotional transcendence of worldiness.

It is this transportation into the **spiritual** realm and the feeling of moving and acting in that realm, which makes the *Bravāsī-s* participate in both daily life activities and fias *Līlā* performances collectively, seldom maintaining the barriers of **performance-audience**. Though the methods employed by priests in temples, the speakers in discourses, leaders of congregational chanting and *rāsdhārī-s* have an important role in the effectiveness in this transportation, the voluntary submission of the participants to this effectiveness, with a relish **for 'rasa'** (3.7), is equally responsible for that magic of that transportation. All the participants feel rewarded for their all the way coming to Vrindavan and submitting themselves to the spell of it, whenever they get the ecstasy of 'rasa,' either in **daily** activities (3.2) or in *Ras Līlā* performances (3.7). Both in daily life and in *Rās Līlā* performances, recurrence is not monotony (4.2), but rather a reinforcement or '*abhyāsa*' (an exercise through repetition). Chanting, i.e., repeated utterance of *Bhagavān's* names, which is considered to be the central devotional activity, is symbolic of such a repetition of all activities including *Rās Līlā* performances.

As mentioned earlier in the last chapter (3.8), *Līlā* performances give *rasa* not only to the individuals with the self fulfilment of *das* self knowledge, but also aim at transforming the individuals without this self knowledge. Hein gives three remarkable examples of the effectiveness of *Ras Līlā-s* in such a transformation :

"There is the story of *Alībhagavān*, converted to **Krishnaism** in the theatre, and of *Mīr Mādhava*, once a wealthy **muslim**, who went with a devotee to see a performance in

Mathurā and was so affected by it that he settled in Vrindavan and became a devotee and a writer of poems in Krishna's praise. A companion story is the tale of Canda the bandit, who swooped down upon a rasmandal to rob the actors of their jewels but stayed to become a devotee" (1972 : 158).

In other words, a **Ras Līlā** performance can be as such, only when it is performed in *Braj Mandal* because of the entire atmosphere and effect, and every bit of life and existence that *Braj Mandal* provides. To put it differently, *Rās Līlā* performance, though well performed with exactly the same format and structure, if performed at a different place than Vrindavan as an evening recreation in an auditorium for the participants coming there after a daily routine not at all related to the practice of *Radha* and *Kṛṣṇa* devotion, loses its character totally.* Even if a replica of *Braj Mandal* is created at a different place and all the provisions are made for the atmosphere available at *Braj Mandal*, one point which still significantly misses is the belief in the *ksētra mahima* (supernatural power of the very place *Braj Maṇḍal*) as part of which every bit of the place is believed to be the place of activities of *Kṛṣṇa* and reminds those activities. Probably, another aspect of *Braj* which cannot be created, is the centuries old rural and rustic *Brajvasi* language, and culture which evolved in *Braj* mould (plate 8). That is why, it may be understood that **Ras Līlā performances** for the last four centuries have been traditionally and ideally localized to *Braj Mandal*.

4.6. Conclusion : Rās Līlā-s of Braj as cut out for the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava process of self fulfilment

The *ksētra mahima* concept mentioned above (4.5), is basically a devotional concept and is common to all devotional cults. But as mentioned in the last chapter (3.3), most of the prominent schools of *Bhakti Vēdānta* are Vaiṣṇavite and hence are associated with the shrines of

(incarnations of) Lord *Viṣṇu*. *Braj Maṇḍal* is, among them, the choice of those *Bhakti* Vedantīn-s who love the *Kṛṣṇa* incarnation more among the incarnations of Lord *Viṣṇu*. As mentioned earlier (4.3.5.2.VII), this choice of *Braj Maṇḍal*, and especially Vrindavan within that, is articulated by making *Kṛṣṇa* Himself express that He likes Vrindavan the most among all the places on the earth. Here, *Kṛṣṇa* explains His choice of Vrindavan by saying that he gets a chance to serve the cows and **cowherdmen** and women, who bind him by their sweet transcendental love by calling him Butter Thief (indicating, in the language of *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava* school, that the love that He **experiences** is full of *madhurya* = sweetness = closeness). For *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava-s*, who, as mentioned in the last chapter (3.5.3), consider the flute wielding cowherd form of *Kṛṣṇa* as the most primary form of *Bhagavan*, and Vrindavan as the very place where He performed His activities along with His cowherd boy and cowherd **girl** friends (3.5.1 & 4.1), Vrindavan is **naturally** the best choice among all the shrines of *Bhagavan*.

For example, a shrine of *Narasimha* is the shrine of awe inspiring form of *Bhagavān*, in contrast to Vrindavan, which is the shrine of the closeness inspiring form of *Bhagavan*, to use the *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava* categories, mentioned in the last chapter (3.5.3). As mentioned earlier (4.1), the *Brajvāsī* language and culture, its simplicity rusticity and 'playfulness' also fit into this *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava* scheme of choice. *Gaudiya vaiṣṇava* practitioners, as mentioned above (4.2), look at all the daily routine of *Brajvāsī-s* and *Ras Līlā* performances from the point of view of their theology. Everything that happens here suits it. Especially, the two central notions of *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava* theology, namely, *Līlā-ness* (in both the senses of activity without gainful motive and closeness) and *rasa* (manifest through the symptoms of ecstasy) are also, as shown in this chapter (4.1 & 4.5), central to *Braj* culture including *Rās Līlā* performances. Though, according to *Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava* theology, the symptoms of ecstasy found among general *Brajvāsī-s* are not the manifestation of *rasa* unless the *Brajvāsī-s* concerned have attained fulfillment of the self knowledge of self as Self in one of the forms of *das* self knowledge (3.5.2 & 3.9), *Brajvāsī-s* as part of their day to day language, use

words like 'bhāva' and 'rasa' to **describe** these symptoms and the experience. These usages **might** have seeped into the day to day *Braj* language from the theological literature of the devotional traditions of Vrindavan, atleast, the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* tradition. From a *Gaudiya vaisnava* point of view, the emulation of *dās* self knowledge, which is manifest through these **symptoms**, bears fruit in the form of the actual self fulfilment of *das* self knowledge and actual experience of *rasa* because of the exercise through repeated experience. *Rās Līlā* performances have a significant role in the exercise of repetition within a *Gaudiya vaisnava* framework, especially on account of their theological nature, especially keeping in view the theatrical metaphor/analogy predominant in *Gaudiya vaisnava* theology (3.5.2). It may be noted that this theatrical metaphor/analogy, as shown earlier in this chapter (4.2), suits even for the other **daily** practices **of Brajvāsī-s**. It may also be noted that, the distinct features **of Gaudiya Vaisnava** theory such as *rasa* being the result and means of *rasa* in the play (3.7.2) and *rasa* being considered to be possible in **daily** routine also (3.9), all fit into the *Brajvāsī* culture, as explained earlier (4.2). It has been shown in the earlier sections (4.3.4 & 4 3.5.2 VII) that *Ras Līlā* structure suits greatly for emulating the *sakhī* self knowledge and the associated *rasa* (*parakīya madhura rasa*, i.e., non-wifely conjugal *rasa*) which is the best among all the various *dās* self knowledges and the associated kinds of *bhakti rasa-s* according to the scheme of choice of *bhakti* theology (3.5.3). Thus, it may be seen that the **daily** routine of *Brajvasi* life and the *Ras Līlā* performances compliment each other in their ultimate purpose of helping the *Gaudiya vaisnava* practitioner achieve the self fulfilment of *das* self knowledge.

The tendency in the performers **of Līlā**, of not presenting the constantly changing situation in the world and of holding on to one particular form and content, may be explained as rooted in the belief that if the world changes and if the self experiences newer kinds of miseries and newer kinds of conflicts (which is the content of Drama), they are still in accordance with the **same laws of nature** which function under the supervision of the Absolute (3.5.3). As shown

in this chapter (4.3.5.2), *Līlā-s* successfully present, in a narrative **form**, these laws of nature believed by the *Gaudiya vaisnava* practitioners.

However, it goes without saying that it is not intended in this work to conclude that *Bravāsī-s* first learn *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* theory (3.5) and set out to implement it perfectly by living the *Bravāsī* **life** including the participation in *Rās* *US* performances. It only means that what happens in Vrindavan can perfectly be understood and explained through the theory of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school or if one wants to see the manifestation and reality of the philosophy of *Gaudiya Vaisnava* school, what happens in Vrindavan serves as a perfect model for that purpose.¹⁷

End notes :

1. The principle of considering the selves as Selves participating in **associational** activities with the incarnation of *Bhagavān* on earth as '**appearances**' of the entities of spiritual realm in the phenomenal realm is extended to all
2. Of course, the audience include even short time visitors who are constituted of pilgrims, researchers and other types of enthusiastic travellers.
- 3 Though, the performers also perform *Gaurāṅga Līlā-s* (the pastimes of Chaitanya) and other *Līlā-s*, the directors are called *rāsdhārī-s* because they are primarily associated with *Rās Līlā-s*
4. Occasionally, even rigorous dances are performed to suit the context. For example, in *Mahādēv Līlā* (the pastime of Lord Śiva, who is also referred to as **Mahādēv-the** great Lord), *tandav* dance (a vigorous male dance) is performed.
5. *Drupada* is a north Indian style of music which is considered to be having a more ancient tradition than what is called Hindustani music today. Now, it is sometimes seen as one of the styles of Hindustani music along with *khayāl*, *dādrā*, *thumrī*, *hōrī*, *tappa* and so on.
6. Singers and **instrumentalists** also take roles sometimes. For example, Fateh Krishna, one of the *rasdhārī-s* and a lead singer for his group, plays Śiva in *Mahārās Līlā* and *Uddhava* in *Uddhava Līlā*.
7. Literally, refreshing of God. It comes from the root *ram* which means resting.
8. The mountain referred to here is *Gōvardhan*. *Mura* is a demon whom *Kṛṣṇa* Killed.

9. The sixty four *kalā-s* is a traditional phrase under which sixty four skills are listed. This is considered to be the list of all the skills constituting perfection of creativity in an individual. Though the origin of the number sixty four is considered to be linked with the number sixteen of the phases of moon in a fortnight, the phrase sixty four has always been used just as a metaphor for the exhaustive coverage of all the skills. The *nayaka* (hero) and *nāyikā* (heroine), here, are being described with this metaphor indicating that they are perfect personalities.

10. Flute is the predominant accompaniment in this *Līlā*. Sometimes it is played solo when *Kṛṣṇa* is depicted playing it to call the *gōpī-s* for the *Rās* Dance. At certain occasions such as *Kṛṣṇa* calling the *gōpī-s* through his flute, the flute is the only instrument played in the background.

11. *Bhagavata Purāṇa* (10.30.13-23), *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (5.13.24-29) and *Hari Vamśa* (2.21.25-28) discuss *līlānukarana* - the imitation of (*Kṛṣṇa*) *Līlā-s* by *gopī-s* (Hawley, 1992 :147).

12 Five flowers, namely *Aravinda*, *Aśōka*, *Cūṭa*, *Navamallika*, *Nilotpala* are listed in *Puranas* as the five arrows of *Kāmdēv*. Arrow here may be a metaphor referring to the means or instrument of erotic provocation and to shoot an arrow may refer to provoke a particular type of erotic symptom. The words *madan* or *unmadana* (punch or kick in eros), *modana* (the joy, cheer or ecstasy of eros), *śōsana* (exhaustion or feeling of extreme tiresomeness in eros), *sthambhana* (immobility of limbs resulting from eros) and *monana* or *sammonana* (losing oneself due to immersion in eros), mentioned as the (qualities of) arrows of *Kamdev*, can be seen to be symptoms of eros (see Vettam Mani, n.d.: 378-9).

13. It may be noted that the use of the word *Prēma* in *Līlā* performances is in the meaning dose to

that of the technical term *Priti*, used by Jiva -atleast so far as it refers to a transcendental love.

14. The hamlet *Vṛndāvana*, the place of living of the *gōpī-s*, forms part of *Kamsa's* kingdom (see appendix 4). Hence the *gōpī-s* were expected to a share of their produce as tax.

15. *Chappan bhōg* is a word indicating the most glorious food offering. *Chappan bhōg* is performed on Annakut festival, related to the worship of Goverdhan, in important temples like *Rādhā Raman* in Vrindavan.

16. The researcher has witnessed such performances at Hyderabad.

17. One thing that needs mention at this point is that this thesis was talking only about the ideal of the *Ras - Līlā* theatre of Vrindavan. What has been explained is the concept of *Ras - Līlā* theatre as it exists in the minds of the devotees of Vrindavan as 'original.' The devotees claim that when *Ras - Līlā* was originally performed in the sixteenth century (4.3.1), it was true to the ideal. This ideal has been reconstructed through the conversation with the devotees and the other senior residents of Vrindavan. In the modern day performances, there are certain deviations' from this ideal. The traditional practitioners of the devotional culture of Vrindavan consider the use of modern gadgets such as blinking flood lights and color shades, that focus on the performances and the use of amplifiers to magnify the sound of the accompanying instruments, which can be seen to be a trend now - a - days in some *mandalī-s*, as degeneration.' Scholars such as Vasant Yamadagni note that due to the use of the modern stage craft, the *Līlā* performances have lost their naturalness and they have become superficial without any devotional mood in them' (1980 : 233). However, most of the performers are still able to maintain the traditional norms to a large extent and are able to effectively evoke playfulness' and ecstasy among their audience.

Chapter 5.

Conclusion.

5.1. Theory of self fulfilment in theatre.

What has been attempted, in the last four chapters, is to get a clarity about the distinctive features of *Rās Lilā* performances. It has also been attempted to try to catch the whole range of the feeling behind insistence of (for example, Fateh Krishna's, as mentioned in the introduction) **not** calling *flasi* performances as Drama or any such thing. However, use of the axis of self fulfilment, in this attempt, seems to have given rise to a theory of theatre centred around self fulfilment which can accommodate the theories of Western Drama, traditional Sanskrit plays of sex, power and spiritual liberation, and *Rās Lilā* of Vrindavan into a single framework. This theory seems to be able to work as a touchstone against which the distinctions of all these different kinds of theatre, along with that of *Lilā*, can come out.

The idea behind bringing out these distinctions has been to try to sensitize the student of Drama to the fact of Drama, 'Nāṭya' and 'Lilā' being categories rooted in different cultural or worldview settings. One way in which such a sensitization, it has been considered here, can be achieved is to first trace the worldview underpinnings of these categories and the notions related to each of them, and show the results of the application with these underpinnings to the facts being covered under the other categories. That the application of one category born out of a worldview, to the facts covered under the other has always been questioned, is also true. The analysis, here, has been done with a care to **verify** and validate such an applicability, by going to the universal rock bottoms of meanings of each of these categories. What has come out of this process is not the confirmation of the inapplicability of categories crossculturally, but the necessity of a greater care in such a crosscultural description. The definition of self used

throughout this work is consistently that of the Deers, i.e., the idea of 'who am I?' in relation to oneself, in relation to others, and in relation to nature, and the idea of a human individual, subject and so on (1.1 & 1.3). And the definition of self fulfilment also is just that of the Deers, i.e., the idea of realization of one's notion of 'who am I?' (self knowledge) (1.1). But what convenience the application of this category to Indian material of *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* is the availability of concepts like *guṇa-s* (2.4), *puruṣārtha-s* (2.5) and *ātman* (2.5.2), which are centered around concepts like *prakṛti* - nature, including human nature (2.5.2), *puruṣa* = human being (2.4) and *ātman* = self itself, respectively. Though, it is the word *ātman*, which is the third person form of the first person pronoun *aḥam* = I, which appears closest to the 'self' of the Deers (2.5), which also has a similar grammatical function, even *prakṛti*, here, human nature, and *puruṣa*, human being, also have translatability with the self of the Deers which, as the Deers themselves make it dear, is used in the sense of human individual, subject and so on, also (1.1). Now juxtaposing this notion of self with these related ideas of the *guṇa-s* (2.4), the *puruṣārtha-s* (2.5) and the *ātman* of Indian Philosophy (2.5), and putting the theones of *Drama*, *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* together, has been shown to be giving rise to a self fulfilment theory of theatre which can be summarized as follows : Each form of a theatre acquires its character based on the depiction of notions of self and self fulfilment in it. Theatre, in which self which is (perennially) in search of self fulfilment and which lacks self knowledge and (hence) each time fails in self fulfilment is depicted, becomes a (form of) Tragedy,' and all 'serious' Western Drama is a good example of this (1.3). Theatre, in which both kinds of selves with and without self knowledge and consequently succeeding and failing in self fulfilment of these two kinds of selves, respectively, are depicted, with a focus on the success of self fulfilment, becomes a *subhānta* or happy ending theatre (2.1, 2.4 & 2.5). Traditional Indian theatre, which is given the name *Nāṭya*, is a good example for this. These *subhānta* plays again differ from each other depending on the kind of self and self fulfilment depicted in them (3.6). If the protagonist self depicted is a *ṭṭvarga* seeking self and is depicted to be succeeding in self fulfilment, it becomes *Nāṭya* for *ṭṭvarga* (2.5 & 3.6). As

mentioned in the second chapter (2.5), most of the Sanskrit plays of authors such as Kalidasa and Bhasa are good examples for this. If the self depicted is a *brahmadvaita* seeking self and is depicted to be succeeding in self fulfilment, the play becomes *Nāṭya for Jñāna* (2.5, 3.4 & 3.6). As mentioned in the second chapter (2.5), Sanskrit plays such as *Bhartrṥhan Nivādam* and *Prabōdha Candrōdayam* are good examples for this. Finally, if the self depicted is a *pūṛṭi* seeking self and is depicted to be succeeding in self fulfilment, the play becomes *Nāṭya for Bhakti* or *Līlā* (3.6). *nas Līlā* performances of Vrindavan are good examples for this.

Each kind of depiction of self and the theatre based on it have kinds and notions of *rasa* associated with them. If *rasābhāsa* is associated with the (forms of) Tragedy (2.6.3), eight *rasa-s* listed by Bharata are associated with *Nāṭya for Trivarga* (2.6.1), *santa* with *Nāṭya for Jnana* (2.6.1 & 3.4), various kinds of *bhakti rasa-s* are associated with *Nāṭya for Bhakti* or *Līlā* (3.7). In the course of presenting *Līlā* as different from Drama and *Nāṭya*, the analysis in this book has come up with certain important observations which missed the attention of the earlier scholars. For example, the list of *rasa-s* as nine became so much routine that, the fact that *santa* among these nine got added into this list only later was not carefully observed by many scholars (2.6.1). Those who took note of this fact, plunged into polemics about whether the inclusion of *santa* into this list was right or wrong (2.6.1). It may be observed that the categorization of *Nāṭya* into *Nāṭya for Trivarga* and *Nāṭya for Jñāna*, by recognizing the two different worldviews underlying the two, has automatically shown that the eight *rasas* sans *santa* and *santa* belong to these two categories respectively (2.6.1). If the issue of *rasa* is being discussed keeping *Nāṭya for Trivarga* in mind, it is very much justified to keep out *santa* from among the list of *rasa-s* (2.6.1). But if the issue of *rasa* is being discussed keeping *Nāṭya for Jnana* in mind, *santa* essentially gets its place in the list and moreover becomes the principle *rasa* in this *Nāṭya* (2.6.1). In the same vein, it may be seen how recognition of the underlying worldviews of *Nāṭya for Trivarga/Jnana* and *Līlā* has facilitated to view the polemics about the status of *rasa* to *bhakti* in a better perspective (3.7).

For example, taking into account of the underlying worldviews in this work has shown how not giving the status of *rasa* to 'bhakti' in *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga* is justified from the perspective of the worldview underlying *Natya* for *Tnvarga* (3.7). But, if the issue of *rasa* is being discussed keeping *Lilā* in mind, *bhakti* should not only be given a status of *rasa*, but should also be recognized as the only *rasa*, for which all the seven *rasa*-s other than *fyhgara* and *santa* become secondary aspects (37).

In fact, the Deers have already come out with the Drama/Tragedy part of the fulfilled self fulfilment theory being discussed here (1.1 & 1.3). What has been done in this work is to extend the theory to *Lilā* via *Natya* for *Tnvarga* and *Natya* for *Jñāna*. Aurthur Miller's consideration that the depiction of failure in self fulfilment is an essential and defining quality of Drama, and his observation that a perennial search for newer and newer laws of determinism with hitherto inexplicable effects' is also a characteristic of Drama (1.1) provides an explanation for the motive behind the perennial search for self fulfilment in Drama. The motive behind the depiction of success and failure in self fulfilment in *Nāṭya* is shown in this work to be based on the idea of theatre as a presentation of models for emulation (2.4), according to the laws of nature believed to be once for all revealed (in *Vedas*) (2.3). These laws of nature are shown in this work to be according to their interpretation found in *Karma Kanda* (2.5.2), *Advaita Vedanta* (3.4) and *Bhakti Vedanta* (here, *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school of *Bhakti Vēdānta*) (3.5), respectively.

Nature of each form of theatre is determined by the nature of self in it. For example, it has been shown that if the tragic nature of Drama (forms of Tragedy) is rooted in the passionate but failing self in it (1.3), the happy ending nature of *Natya* for *Jñāna* is rooted in dispassionate and tranquil self (2.5 & 3.4); and finally the 'playful' nature of *Natya* for *Bhakti* is rooted in the dispassionate and 'playful' self in it (3.5). One feature which has been in all the forms of *Natya*, including *Lilā*, is the consideration of theatre as a means of self fulfilment for its participants (2.7.2 &

4.3.2). It is as part of this consideration that *Lie* is looked at as the **playful** process for self fulfilment.

Eugene O'Neill justifies the choice of a passionate but failing self throughout different forms of Drama by saying that the most tragic character is the noblest. Only as long as he *strives* towards the unattainable 'does man achieve a hope worth living and dying for - and so attain himself (1.3). It has been shown, as mentioned above, in parallel, in different forms of *Nāṭya* including *Līlā*, the consideration of theatre as a presentation of models for emulation (2.4 & 3.5.3) leads to the choice of successful self. Here, it may be noted that, the distinction of *Lie* has been shown, in this regard, to be the presentation of a multiform variegated system of self knowledges structured in a schematic choice (3.5).

It has been shown, *how rasa* and *Lie* are the two vital and key concepts of the theory of *Līlā* from a *Gaudiya Vaisnava* perspective (3.10). Showing that these two concepts are, in fact, pivotal and all-pervading within the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theology (underlying the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics of *Lie*) itself, it has been shown that almost all the distinctive features of *Līlā* can be explained on the basis of these two categories (Ch.4). From the discussion in the third chapter (3.5.2 & 3.9), it comes out that it is the use of *rasa* language to talk about the spiritual realm (3.5.2), the content of *Līlā*-s, which makes *rasa* attain a distinct significance in the theory of *Līlā* vis-a-vis the theory of the other two forms of *Nāṭya*, that is *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga* and *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna*. The consequence of this in *Līlā* has been shown to be importantly the consideration of possibility of *rasa* in activities of daily life too (3.9). The concept of *Lie* as **playfulness**, which has been one of the most discussed concepts in the past literature, has been shown to have a hitherto unexplained significance in the schematic choice of a variegated system of *rasa*-s, which has been shown to be another distinct feature of the theory of *Līlā*-s (3.5.3) The identification of closeness as another meaning of playfulness, other than the meaning of 'not motivated by gain/ purpose/

use' (3.10), recognized in the past literature, has helped in the recognition of this significance (3.5.3). Recognition of this additional meaning of playfulness' has opened many more knots like the understanding of affinity for the simple, rural and rustic *Bṛhjaśi* culture in the theory of *Līlāś*, in terms of playfulness' (4.1).

Two clarifications need to be given here with regard to the concept of laws of nature used in this work. Firstly, though both in Drama (1.3-4) and in *Nāṭya for Tṇvarga* (2.2-5), self is considered to be governed by laws of nature and in both, where ever there is a depiction of violation of laws of nature, self is depicted to be punished for such violation, the laws of nature being discussed in these two cases need not be the same. As already mentioned (1.4), the laws of nature in Drama have been considered to be explored freshly **everytime** for each form of Drama and the laws of nature, which are believed to be once for all revealed through the *Vedas* in the case of different forms of *Nāṭya* including *Nāṭya for Tṇvarga* (2.2-5), need not be the same as any of the laws applicable to any one form of Drama. But what is common between Drama and *Nāṭya for Tṇvarga* is the principle that violation of laws of nature where ever committed leads to punishment of the self (2.2.2).

Secondly, what is intended in this work is only to bring out the fact and to discuss the consequences of the belief in laws of nature in different forms of theatre and not to take the position in favour of the validity of any one of the laws of nature, relevant to any one form of theatre. In a similar vein, it need also to be clarified here, that what is intended through out this work is to bring out the fact and discuss the consequences of various notions such as self without self knowledge' (1.1), '*Tṇvarga* seeking self (2.5) and self as Self (*tṇguna* - free self) (2.5 & 3.5) underlying each form of theatre, but not the validity of any of these notions.

The discussion in the last chapters not only has run on the basis of, but also has established the

dependence of each of the concepts of the previously discussed ones. It is **partly** linked with the Chronological and hence polemical **order of Karma Kanda, Advaita Vēdānta, and Gaudīya Vaisnava Vēdānta**. It is **partly** linked with the order of **familiarity** of a student of Drama which is as follows : the **familiarity** with the notions of Drama greater than with those of *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga*, greater than with those of *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna*, greater than with those of *Lilā*. It may be noted that to make provisions for the convenience of crosscultural comparability mentioned above, the notions in the later discussions have been anticipated in the previous part. For example, it is with this purpose that the urges of self for 'sex,' 'power,' 'order,' 'liberation' and 'conflict-free relations' (1.3) have been brought out of the theory of Drama, though these are not directly discussed there. This anticipation can be seen to be justifying itself each time. For example, when the concept of self in terms of the urges for 'sex,' 'power,' 'order' and 'liberation' is seen in the second chapter (2.5) to be the pivotal in the theory of *Nāṭya*, the anticipation of these notions in the first chapter (1.3) stands justified. This facilitates the discussions of issues such as failures and successes in self fulfilment to run on common axes.

It may be noted that if in the first chapter, the 'self fulfilment' and the 'fulfilment of urges by the self' have been shown to be two not necessarily the same ideas (1.3), in the second chapter onwards, since the self is described as having innate urges (2.5 & 3.5.1), these two ideas become one and the same.

The convenience provided by the recognition of the concepts of *puruṣārtha-s* in defining the self (2.5 & 3.5) and the *guṇa-s*, in discussing the possibility of the self fulfilment (2.4 & 3.5), can be noted to be a consequence of recognizing the often ignored locale of *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga*, *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna* and *Lilā* in the Vedic worldview. Though, the underlying Vedic nature of *Nāṭya* has been noted through some scarce passing remarks, the far reaching implications of such assumptions were not fully explored by the previous scholarship of *Nāṭya* (2.1). Such an exploration attempted

here is, on the one hand, an essential requirement for axis of **comparision** and on the other, a tremendous advantage in dwelling deep into the intricacies of almost all the crucial problems of **Drama-Nāṭya** for *Tnvarga-Nāṭya* for *Jñāna - Līlā* polemics. It may also be noted that, the use of Indian mythology as a narrative form presentation of Vedic worldview has been common to all the different forms of *Nāṭya* (2.3, 3.5.1 & 4.3.5.2). It may also be noted that, the narration of this mythology by *Vyāsa* has been from a **Vedic worldview** and each **form of Natya** adapts it to **suit** to its specific perspective within Vedic worldview (3.6).

5.2. A critique of certain modern uses of terms.

It may also be noted that the identification of the self of tragic hero in a tragedy as predominating in *rajas* (2.4), and the aesthetic experience resulting from watching a Tragedy as *rasābhās* (2.6.2) and so on, have no value intentions. It may be true that from the point of view of a subscriber to the Vedic worldview, *rajas* (2.4) has an inferior value connotation than *sattva* (2.4) and *rasābhās* (2.6.3), an inferior value than *rasa* (2.6 & 2.7.1). But, it goes without saying that, whatever be the name given by a subscriber of Vedic worldview to it, the passionate personality of a tragic hero is heroic and positive for a subscriber to the theory of Drama such as O'Neill, because as mentioned earlier, such a self "pushes to a greater failure" ... by seeking "the unattainable" (1.4). It may also be said that a hero, who rests on the laurels of his success, from the point of view of philosophy of Drama, at least according to Eugene O'Neill, "pursuing the mere attainable," is a spiritual middle classer and hence is not worth imitating' (worth presenting in a Drama) (1.4). Neither *rasa* is talked about as the intended aesthetic experience of Drama in the theory of Drama nor purgation as that of *Natya* in the theory of *Natya*. The comment that the aesthetic experience given by Drama is not *rasa*, but only *rasābhās* (illusion of *rasa*) (2.6.3), is true for the audience who are subscribers to Vedic worldview. It is as much a negative or neutral statement as the statement of a subscriber to the philosophy of Drama that

there is no **Drama** in the Sanskrit plays belonging to *Nāṭya*, keeping in mind that there is not enough thrill of conflict in the action or plot of these plays. Probably, depicting a self predominant in *rās* can be said to be the sought after norm of Drama. It is more appropriate to talk about Drama in terms of purgation and *Nāṭya* in terms of *rasa* only, but again as mentioned above, this whole exercise of crosscultural application of categories is aimed at pointing the incorrectness in the method of application of this kind, done by some scholars (2.6.3).

One good example for such wrong crosscultural descriptions done in the past, is to theorize that Hamlet and other tragedies give *santa rasa*, and also that giving *santa rasa* is their defining quality (2.6.3). It has been shown how according to the theory of *santa rasa*, usages of this kind of the word *santa rasa* are wrong, and it is in this context that it becomes necessary to clarify that if at all there is any word in *rasa* poetics that suits to talk about Hamlet and other tragedies, it is '*rasābhās*' but not '*santa rasa*' (2.6.3). Similarly, it has been shown that to talk about *Līlā-s* in terms of Dionysian element is wrong, keeping in view the internal evidences from within the *Ras Līlā* text (4.3.5.2.II). It is in this context that Dionysus has been shown to be comparable to *Indra* of *Gōvardhana Līlā* that, both are gods who avenge the disobedience to them (4.3.5.2.III).

It may appear from the point of view of non-singularity of the meaning of a text, that the discussion, here in this work, is an attempt to talk about something like the single meaning of *Līlā*. But, it may be noted that one of the important objectives of the present work has been to show how the same theme or form may look differently to different viewers. For example, talking about Drama through the categories such as *rasa*, *rasābhās* (2.6.3), *guṇa-s* (2.4) and *puruṣārtha-s* (2.5) is one such attempt to show what Drama means to the participants of *Nāṭya*, especially *Līlā*. In the same way, it has been shown how the same themes of Indian mythology may be taken up for *Nāṭya* for *Invarga* (for example, Veni'samharam as discussed in 2.3), for *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna* (as shown earlier in 2.6.2) and for *Līlā* (3.5.1 & 3.6). Similarly, it has been analysed how the same *urn*

performance may give different meanings to the audience coming from different cultural backgrounds (4.3.5.3). It may also be noted that atleast the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* poetics of *Līlā* allow the various identifications by the audience, by allowing the possibility of each audience identifying with one of the self knowledges of *das* type being depicted. Thus, if anyone takes 'instinctual gratification' as the meaning of *Līla* (4.3.5.2.11), it falls under Drama interpretation of *Līlā* and may be valid within that paradigm (4.3.5.3). But what is intended is to show that that is not the meaning taken by *Bṛāṇvāsi* participants of *Līla* at least, as long as they hold philosophies like *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school.

It may be noted that the position taken in this work is that reading of West born categories into Eastern material is as much wrong or right as the reading of East born categories into Western material. Both these kinds of readings are found in modern writings on Drama, *Nāṭya*, and *Līla*. In fact, the exercise of showing the distinct statuses of the categories such as Drama, *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* by tracing their cultural and worldview settings (which as seen above helps in tracing the perspectives behind the various meanings), is an attempt to bring out the tendencies of wrong crosscultural readings exemplified above, which are found in these modern writings.

Appendices :

Appendix 1. The Story of *Prabodha Candrōdayam*.

Prabodha Candrōdayam is a play of an allegorical plot. In this play, the conceptual entities are presented as Characters. The title *Prabodha Candrōdayam* means the birth Of *Prabodha Candra*. *Prabodha* is awakening. Birth of *Prabodha Candra* refers to the birth of (the man of) awakening. Allegorically putting forth *Advaita Vedanta* (3.4), this play presents *Moha* (illusion) as the villain. Only *Prabodha Candra* (the moon of awakening) can kill and, in fact, kills *Mōha* (illusion). *Prabodha Candra* is the son of *Vivēka* (the wisdom) and *Upaniṣaddēvi* (the lady of *Upaniṣad*) (2.5, 2.8 & 3.4). Allegorically, this part of the story refers to the birth of awakening, when wisdom is amalgamated with the Upanisadic (Vedantic) knowledge. The characters in the story are divided as protagonists and antagonists. The protagonists are led by *Vivēka* (wisdom), assisted by *Vastu Vicāra* (analysis of reality); *Santosa* (happiness); *Mati* (thinking), wife of *Viveka*; *Upaniṣaddēvi*, another wife of *Vivēka*; *Śānti* (peace), sister of *Vivēka*; *Karuna* (compassion), friend of *Śānti*; *Śraddhā* (faith), *Vivēka*'s ministress; *Maitrī* (friendly love), attendant of *Śraddhā*; *Visnu Bhakti* (faith in Lord *Visnu*), attendant of *Upanisaddevi*; *Sarasvatī* *Devi* (the goddess Of learning) and *Gīta Devi* (the book *Bhagavat Gīta*), attendantS Of *Visnu Bhakti* and *Kṣamā* (tolerance) female servant of *Vivēka*. Antagonists are led by *Mahāmōha* (great illusion), who is assisted by his ministers *Kāma* (desire/sex), *Krodha* (anger/passion), *Lōbha* (greed), *Dambha* (hypocrisy) and *Ahamkara* (arrogance). There are many other characters assisting *Mahamoha*. The story is presented as a high level strategically run battle between the teams of *Vivēka* and *Mahamoha*. In the beginning, the antagonists win and drive *viveka* and his associates from the kingdom. But later, the protagonists recover and attack the antagonists. Finally, they attain victory under the leadership of *Prabodha Candra*.

The knot of intricacy in the story lies in presenting the victory of the protagonist in the story as leading

to the regaining of empire of bliss (as a result of the attainment of *Mōksa* - liberation or *Jñāna* -knowledge of one's true nature as *Brahman*), unlike in other stories of this type, where the individual is depicted to be attaining what he did not have in the beginning. This motif of 'regaining' is very much in line with the concept of awakening in *Advaita Vēdānta*.

Appendix 2. The Story of *Bhartrhari Nirvēdam*.

The play begins with the amorous conversation between King *Bhartrhan* and his wife. During the conversation, *Bhartrhan* praises the love of a woman who volunteers to die on the pyre of her husband. The queen says that true love does not consist in volunteering to self immolation. A true beloved, in fact, instantly dies at the news of her husband's death. The king decides to test whether his wife would really live upto her idea of ideal love. Once, during his hunting expedition, he sends a false message to his wife that he died while hunting. The queen dies instantly at hearing the news. Back home, to his utter dismay, the king finds that his wife was cremated. He gets deeply depressed with remorse for his grave mistake.

A *Yōgi* (sage), invited by the king's Minister to console the king, comes in the guise of a commoner and pretends to be obstinately crying for his lost **box**. The king tries very hard to convince him about the futility of weeping so intensely for a petty thing like box. After a long explanation by the king, the *Yogi* suddenly comes to his own and asks the king to realize that pettiness of a thing lies in the mind of the onlooker and not in the thing itself. The king gets the message right and immediately develops detachment for all worldly things. The minister gets perplexed at this development and seeks the help of the *Yōgi* to get back the king to his earlier self. The *Yogi* revives the queen to life with the help of his supernatural powers. But this does not help to revive worldly interest in the king. The queen, amazed at the development in the king's attitude, tries to revive passions in the king by showing him his young son. But even this method fails to make the king get interested in the family or the kingdom.

The *Yogi* now confirms that the attitude of the king is now irreversible and suggests the coronation of the prince. The king coronates his son and leaves the kingdom forever, to spend time in penance and **spiritual** practice.

Appendix 3. The story of *Rama*.

Rama, the prince of Ayodhya, **voluntarily** goes to exile to fulfill a promise made by his father *Dasaratha* to his stepmother *Kaikēyī*. *Lakṣmaṇa*, his brother, who always accompanies him, and *Sita*, his wife, follow him in the exile. *Ravana*, the demon king of the island called *Lanka*, abducts *Rama*'s wife *Sita* through deceit. *Rama*, after discovering the abduction, when goes in search of her, he gets the companionship of a group of *Vānara-s* (monkey like community) led by *Sugriva*. *Hanumān* a close associate of *Sugriva* becomes closer than other *Vānara-s* to *Rāma* and becomes the most intimate confidant of him, who offers himself to *Rāma* as a servant. *Rama* ultimately secures the release of *Sita* by killing the demon *Ravana*. In this effort he is greatly helped by the *Vānara-s*, especially by *Hanuman*.

Thus, this story is presented with *Rama* as the chief protagonist and *Ravana* as the chief antagonist. *Rama* is presented as an embodiment of *Dharma*, who is so committed to his wife that he faces a trail of vows to regain her from *Ravana*'s custody. As mentioned above, *Ravana* is presented as a case of a *Dharma* violating person, who steals other man's (here *Rama*'s) wife driven by his passions.

Appendix 4. The Story of *Kṛṣṇa* (from *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Book 10).

Dēvakī is the sister of *Kamsa*, the prince of *Mathura*. She is married to *Vasudēva*. As *Kamsa* takes her along with her husband in a chariot to *vasudeva*'s place, he hears an invisible voice saying that the eighth offspring of *Dēvakī* is going to be his ruin. Feared by the prophecy, *Kamsa* wants to kill *Devaki* and *vasudeva*. On their request, he reduces the punishment to imprisonment and settles for the

arrangement of *Devaki* offering each of her **off-springs** to *Kamsa* immediately after its birth. *Devaki* fulfills **the** arrangement and *Kamsa* kills each of the **offsprings**. After six such infanticides, with the grace of Lord *Narayana* of *Vaikuntha*, the seventh conception of *Dēvaki*, *Balarāma*, is transferred to the womb of *Rōhini*, another wife of *Vasudeva*, who was living in an asylum in the house of *Nanda*, the head of a **cattlerearer's** hamlet called *Gokuia* and a friend of *Vasudeva*. During the eighth conception, Lord *Nārāyaṇa* of *Vaikuntha* appears in a vision to *Devaki* and informs that it is He who is incarnating as her eighth conception. He also suggests that He be taken as a baby to *Nanda*'s hamlet and put there in the place of a new born female child in that house, the female child so replaced be brought back to be shown to *Kamsa* as the eighth offspring of *Devaki*. *Vasudēva* follows the suggestion of Lord *Nārāyaṇa* and *Kṛṣṇa* is saved. *Kṛṣṇa* grows up as the child of *Nanda* and *Yasoda*. He is pampered not only by *Nanda* and *Yasoda*, but also by the cowherd clan, as He becomes **obsessingly** lovable for each and every member of the clan. He turns out into a mischievous boy and His mischief, its uncontrollability and attempts to control it become enjoyable pastimes for *Nanda* and *Yasōda* and the entire hamlet. He steals butter (see Appendix 5) in the houses of the cowherds. After receiving several complaints from her neighbours, *Yasoda* once ties *Kṛṣṇa* to a mortar. This turns out to lead to a **miracle** of liberating two divine spirits from the trees in *Yasōda's* background (see Appendix 5).

Upon learning that *Kṛṣṇa* is now growing up in *Gokuia*, *Kamsa* sends many demons such as *Pūtana* and *Tnnāvarta* to eliminate the child. But *Kṛṣṇa* due to His divine power effortlessly kills them all. However, *Yasoda* and *Nanda* do not perceive *Kṛṣṇa* as having divine power at all. Fearing His safety, they, along with the entire **cow-**herd clan, shift to *Vṛndāvan*.

Kamsa relentlessly sends out more and more demons, who come disguised in many forms such as donkey (*Dhēnuka*) and snake (*Aghāsura*). *Kṛṣṇa* and His **brother** *Balarāma* kill them all. Apart from these miraculous adventures of killing the **terrible** demons, *Kṛṣṇa* performs adventurous activities like driving away a snake *Kālīya* found to be poisoning a lake of *Yamuna* (see Appendix 6).

When *Kṛṣṇa* grows up, *Kaṁsa* sends His emissary *Akrūra* to invite *Kṛṣṇa*, *Balarama* and His parents to behold the glory of *Mathura* and to participate in a bow-sacrifice. *Kaṁsa*'s intention in inviting them is to kill *Kṛṣṇa*. All the cowherds, who come to know about *Kṛṣṇa*'s visit to *Mathurā*, are unhappy as they can not bear His separation. The *Gōpī*-s become very furious with *Akrūra* and resist *Kṛṣṇa*'s visit to *Mathura*. However, *Kṛṣṇa* leaves for *Mathura* along with His brother and parents. *Kṛṣṇa* kills all the demons sent out by *Kaṁsa* to kill Him and his final victim is *Kaṁsa* himself. After the death of *Kaṁsa*, *Kṛṣṇa* releases his actual parents *Dēvakī* and *Vasudēva*. He then takes care of the kingdom along with His brother. Later, for political reasons, the capital is shifted to *Dvaraka*. *Kṛṣṇa* and *Balarama* get married and settle down in *Dvaraka* for the rest of their lives. *Kṛṣṇa* is described as having eight of them being principle queens.

The life of *Kṛṣṇa* during this stage is full of several political activities like eliminating certain evil kings like *Śiṣupāla*, *Dantavakra*, *Narakasura* and *Jarasandha* (see Appendix 7). During this Stage, *Kṛṣṇa* gets closely involved with the power struggle between the two families of his cousins, the family of *Dhrtarastra*'s Sons, known as *Kauravas* and the family of *Pandu*'s sons, known as *Pandavas*, for the crown inherited from their ancestors. In this struggle, several principled and respected individuals like *Bhisma* (see Appendix 8), *Kṛpacārya* and *Drōṇācārya* are compelled to fight the battle on the side of *Kaurava*-s, on account of their commitments to the principles of royal loyalties, though they emotionally are with *Pāṇḍava*-s. *Kṛṣṇa* takes side with *Pāṇḍava*-s, on account of their *Dharma* bound nature. After trying to avert the battle between the two families, He finally divides His army into two groups consisting of He Himself on the one side and all His army on the other. He allocates Himself to the army of the *Pandavas* and the rest to the other. During the war He drives the cart of *Anuna*, one of the *Pandavas* and *Pandavas* ultimately win the war after a huge loss of lives on both sides.

Appendix 5. The stories of Butter thief and the liberation of the sons of *Kubēra*
(from *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, 10.9-10).

Kṛṣṇa grows up as a mischievous child. He would collect the cowherd boys in his neighbourhood and would visit the houses in His locality to steal butter. The women try various methods to capture Him but fail to succeed. They then complain to *Yasoda*, who just smiles it away. Once *Kṛṣṇa* goes to her with a demand for milk. She starts feeding Him, but suddenly she observes that the milk put on the oven for *Kṛṣṇa* was overflowing. In a haste, she leaves *Kṛṣṇa* away and goes to take care of the milk. *Kṛṣṇa*, with His anger, breaks the butter pot, eats the butter and shares it with the monkeys. When He sees *Yasoda* advancing towards Him, He runs away. *Yasoda*, after a long chase, catches Him and binds Him to a mortar.

Kṛṣṇa drags the mortar towards the two trees that stand in the front yard. The two trees were actually the sons of *Kubēra* (the Puranic god of wealth). Due to an indiscretion and discourteousness to the sage *Nārada*, they were cursed by him to turn into trees. When the two sons of *Kubera* begged for forgiveness, *Nārada* prophesized that, Lord *Narayana*, in an incarnation, would liberate them. *Kṛṣṇa* who was aware of *Nārada's* prophecy, deliberately crawls between the trees in order to liberate the two sons of *Kubera*. The mortar gets jammed between the two trees due to which the trees fall and the two heavenly beings emerge from where the trees had stood. The two sons of *Kubera* offer their prayers to *Kṛṣṇa* as an expression of their gratitude and return back to their heavenly abode.

Appendix 6. The Story of *Kaiya* (from *Bhāgavata Purana*, 10.16).

There lives a poisonous snake *Kaiya* in the river *Yamuna* in *Vṛndāvan*. He poisons the water, and the thirsty cowherd boys who drink the water fall dead. *Kṛṣṇa* revives them with His divine power. He then jumps into the river to fight with *Kāliya*. All the *Gōpī-s* and *Gōpa-s* gather at the fringe of the river

and are very anxious for *Kṛṣṇa*'s safety. *Kṛṣṇa* fights *Kāliya* for a long time, tames it and sends it out of *Vṛndavan*.

Appendix 7. The Story Of *Bhīma* killing *Jarāsaṁdha* (from *Bhagavata Purana*, 9.22.6-8).

Jarāsaṁdha is born as a prince of *Magadhā*. He is born with his body vertically apart into two parts and hence his mother throws him away. A demoness by the name *Jarā* joins the two parts of his body and brings him to life. He is named as *Jarāsaṁdha* (*Jarāsaṁdha* literally means joined together by *Jarā*).

Once *Yudhiṣṭhira*, the eldest of the *Pandavas*, performs a sacrifice called *Rajasuya Yaga* and makes *Kṛṣṇa* the recipient of the honours. During the performance of sacrifice, *Yudhiṣṭhira* sends his brothers to conquer the different parts of the world. They conquer all but *Jarāsaṁdha*'s kingdom. *Kṛṣṇa* then takes *Bhīma* and *Arjuna* to fight *Jarāsaṁdha* and they go in the guise of *Brahmana*s. Though *Jarāsaṁdha* is aware that they are *Kṣatriya*-s in the guise of *Brāhmaṇa*-s, he receives them cordially and enquires as to their wants. *Kṛṣṇa* asks that there be a wrestling match. *Jarāsaṁdha* chooses *Bhīma* to wrestle with. The bout lasts for twenty seven days. On the twenty eight day *Kṛṣṇa* (who knows the secret of *Jarāsaṁdha*'s birth) makes a sign to *Bhīma*, by taking a twig and breaking it into two parts. *Bhīma* follows *Kṛṣṇa*'s instructions and splits *Jarāsaṁdha* into two halves.

Appendix 8. *Bhīṣma*.

Bhīṣma is the great grand father of the *Pandavas*. A great warrior who remains celibate throughout his long life out of a pledge made by him to help his father keep his promise. *Bhīṣma* is considered to be one of the greatest devotees of *Kṛṣṇa*. In fact, it is *Bhīṣma* who advises *Yudhiṣṭhira* to offer the worship to *Kṛṣṇa* as the recipient of honour during the performance of *Rajasuya* sacrifice performed by *Yudhiṣṭhira* (see Appendix 7).

Appendix 9. The Story Of *Narasimha-Prahāda* (from *Bhāgavata Purāna*, 7.3-8).

The demon king *Hiranya Kasipu* performs penance to please *Bramha*. Pleased by his penance, when *Bramha* appears in front of him, he cleverly contrives to ask for a boon by which he thinks it would make impossible for anyone to kill him. He asks that he be killed neither by a human nor animal, neither indoors nor outdoors; neither on earth nor in the air, neither at day nor at night; and not with any weapon. *Bramha* grants him the boon. *Hiranya Kasipu* becomes very proud and conquers all the worlds. He considers *Nārāyaṇa/Vṣṇu* as his enemy. He wants to kill Him and searches for Him in all the worlds but he can not find Him anywhere. When he returns from his world conquering expedience, he finds a son *Prahāda* bom to him, who is being brought up by the divine sage *Nārada* who is a great devotee of Lord *Narayana*. To his astonishment, he finds that the child has grown into an unstinted devotee of Lord *Nārāyaṇa* whom he hates from the bottom of his soul. *Prahāda* is always immersed in the thoughts of *Nārāyaṇa* and instructs his friends from demon community also to perform *Bhakti* to *Vṣṇu*. *Hiranya Kasipu*, who instructs all the people under his authority not to take the name of *Narayana*, is angered by this. He orders his demon soldiers to kill the child. The demon soldiers try various methods to kill the child but all in vain. *Hiranya Kasipu*, perturbed by this, wants to know from his son who was protecting him. *Prahāda* replies that it is the ail pervading Lord *Nārāyaṇa* of *Vaikuntha*. *Hiranya Kasipu* wants to test the all pervading nature of *Narayana* by breaking the pillar in front of him, to see if *Narayana* is there in it. From the pillar so broken, emerges Lord *Narayana* in the ferocious form of half man - half lion (*Narasimha* - which is neither a human nor an animal), picks up the demon to the entrance of the hall (which is neither indoor nor outdoor), puts the demon on His thighs (which is neither on the earth nor in the air), tears him open with His claws (which can not be termed as a weapon) and kills him in the evening (which is neither day nor the night), thus, fulfilling all the conditions for the death of *Hiranya Kasipu* according to the boon granted to him by *Bramha*.

Appendix 10. The story of Sanaka and his brothers (from *Bhāgavata Purana*, 3.15).

Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat Kumara and Sanatana are **sages**. They are the **sons of Bramha**, the Lord of creation and *Vēda-s*. They remain celibate and are freely allowed into the abodes of the greatest gods *Bramha*, *visnu* and *Śiva*. In *Bhagavata Purāṇa*, these sages are **described** to be always fixed in the meditation of the Absolute. Once they go to *vaikuntha* and see Lord *visnu*. Upon seeing him they **feel/say** that Lord *visnu* is the same Absolute upon **whom** they are meditating.

Appendix 11. The Story Of Ranti Deva (from *Bhāgavata Purana*, 9.21).

Ranti Deva is a devotee of Lord *Nārāyaṇa/visnu*. He observes a fast without even taking water for **fourty** eight days. On the morning of fourty ninth day, when he sits down for a meal, a *Brāmhana* calls on him *Ranti Deva*, who sees Lord *visnu* in everyone, receives his guest and serves him a portion of his food. After the *Brāmhana's* departure, when he is about to begin eating, a person belonging to a lower caste (*Śūdra*) visits him and *Ranti Dēva* offers him too a portion of the food. Then comes an outcaste (*Caṇḍāla*) and he serves him rest of the food and in the end is left with nothing. The three visitors to him are none other than *Bramha*, *visnu* and *Śiva*, who pleased by his benevolence and compassion, appear before him in their true forms, and bless him. Later, *Ranti Dēva* attain salvation as a result of his continued *Bnakti* for *visnu*.

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