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RĀDHĀ: THE PARODHĀ NĀYIKĀ

BY



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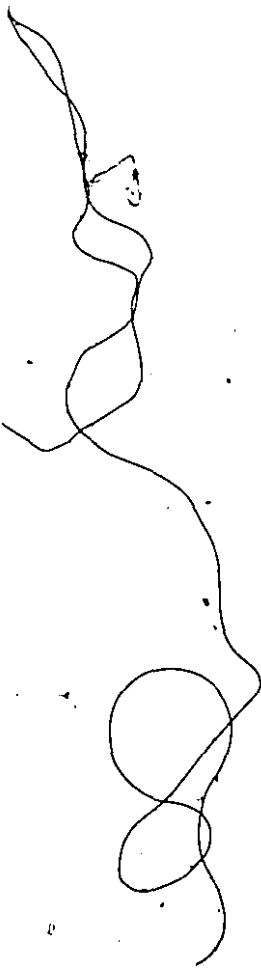
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the adultery theme in the major texts of Bengali Vaisnavism. Using a chronological approach to the literature a study was made of how the adultery, or parakiya, theme was used in various texts throughout this tradition. This was facilitated by focusing on the figure of Rādhā who was considered the favored consort of the cowherd god Kṛṣṇa.

The literature involved is categorized into works which are considered narrative or poetic in character, and texts which are explicitly theological or apologetic. In the former group of literature is included the earliest devotional poetry of the Bengali tradition: the Gītagovinda of Jayadeva (12th century), the padavali of Vidyāpati (14th century), and the padas of Caṇḍīdāsa (14th century). Also included are the Dānakelikāumudī of Rūpa Gosvāmin (16th century) and the Brahmaivaivarta Purāṇa (16th century).

What was implicit in the devotional literature mentioned above was made explicit by the Gosvāmins of Vṛndāvana. The theological perspectives of Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmin on the parakiyā issue vary from the earlier literary tradition, (see Chapt. II, sec. 2). The Tantric Sahajīya cult offered an interpretation of Rādhā's adultery in line with the Sahaja practice of taking a woman in sādhana, (Chapt. II, sec. 3).

In the conclusion questions are raised concerning the appeal of the adultery theme in devotional literature.

Offered are parallel examples of adultery in the literature of other religious traditions and an analysis of this theme in reference to love in separation. This may offer explanations as to how such a theme persisted in the literature of Bengali literature.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BhP	<u>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</u>
BRS	<u>Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu</u> by Rūpa Gosvāmin
BVP	<u>Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa</u>
CC	<u>Caitanya Caritāmṛta</u> by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja
DKK	<u>Dānakelikāumudī</u> by Rūpa Gosvāmin
GG	<u>Gītagovinda</u> by Jayadeva
KHL	<u>Kṛṣṇa in History and Legend</u> by B.B. Majumdar
PHM	<u>Place of the Hidden Moon</u> by Edward Dimock
UNM	<u>Ujjvalaṇīlamanī</u> by Rūpa Gosvāmin
VFM	<u>History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement</u> by S.K. De

INTRODUCTION

The figure Rādhā has been considered by her worshipers to be a unique variation upon the traditional model of the Hindu goddess. Of the goddesses who were portrayed as consorts few were considered anything other than examples of wifely virtue. In Vaiṣṇava myth and literature the divine consort was recognized as dutiful and chaste. Vaiṣṇava consorts were commonly believed to be manifestations of the supreme goddess Śrī Lakṣmī.¹ Among the parts (aṁsas) of Lakṣmī were the various wives of Kṛṣṇa: Rukminī, Satyabhāmā, Jāmbavatī, and Lakṣmānā. As the property of Kṛṣṇa they were considered his own (svakīyā).

Rather than being an example of devotion to her husband Rādhā symbolizes clandestine love, or devotion to a man other than her husband. Although her position in the Vaiṣṇava pantheon differs significantly from the roles of Kṛṣṇa's wives she is believed to be "dearer to Kṛṣṇa than his own life."²

Rādhā embodies the beauty, love, and passion which characterize the essence of Kṛṣṇa's own self. In Bengali

¹Jan Gonda, Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1969, p. 162.

²The Brahma Vaiivarta Purāṇa, trans. Rajendra Nath. Sen (2 vols.; Sacred Books of the Hindus; vol. xxiv; Allahabad: Panini Office, 1920-22: reprinted, New York: AMS Corp., 1974) II, 228.

Vaiṣṇava theology Rādhā is conceived as the feminine aspect of Kṛṣṇa's Self essence (svarūpaśakti). This self essence of Kṛṣṇa's is thought to be the ecstatic love which Rādhā continually feels for Kṛṣṇa. In fact, Rādhā is believed to be the embodiment of love itself. She is the Hlādinī śakti, or the creative power of ecstasy.³ Such a concept was central for the highly emotional bhakti of the Bengali Vaiṣṇavas.

In order for there to be love between Kṛṣṇa and his śakti Kṛṣṇa must divide himself into his male and female aspects so that he can enjoy his own bliss.⁴ This eternal dualism between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā is fundamental to the devotional literature and doctrines of the Bengalis.

In devotional lyrics impediments arise in Rādhā's relationship with Kṛṣṇa symbolizing the eternal separation of man from Bhagavan. Adultery became the means by which authors of devotional literature conveyed this point. In the case of Rādhā the adultery she commits in violation of dharma nonetheless makes her an exemplary devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

Through studying the theme of adultery in the depictions of Rādhā an attempt will be made to understand the religious significance of this concept in the literature and doctrine of Bengali Vaiṣṇavaism. The following study will analyze two contexts in which this theme was expressed. The

³S.K.De, Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement in Bengal from Sanskrit and Bengali Sources (Calcutta: KL Mukhopadhyay, 1959), p. 281.

⁴Ibid.

first context is that found in poetry, drama, and mythology. The portrayal of Rādhā as an adulteress was a motif which served as a major theme in the development of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's relationship in literature. The second perspective on this theme given by the Bengali tradition was theological. This literature discussed the value of adultery as a model of devotion. On account of her adultery as given in poetry and mythology the theologians believed her love for Kṛṣṇa was representative of devotional sentiments. The following survey of the more prominent literary works on Rādhā will make this apparent. From these literary genres we can see that the significance of this theme varies from author to author.

The first type of literature considered will be the Gītagovinda of Jayadeva (A.D. 1200). This was the first major work using Sanskrit conventions to express Rādhā's clandestine love with Kṛṣṇa. On one hand their adultery shows Rādhā's willingness to abandon all social propriety in her love for Kṛṣṇa, while on the other it increases Rādhā's longing by separating her from Kṛṣṇa.

Following in the tradition of Jayadeva the poets Vidyāpati (fourteenth century) and Candīdās (fifteenth century) bring out the adultery theme in a more explicit manner.⁵

⁵Jayakanta Mishra, A History of Maithili Literature (2 vols.; Allahabad: Tirabhukti Pub., 1949), I, 134; and Md. Shahidullah, "The Date of Vidyapati," Indian Historical Quarterly 20, no. 3 (1944), pp. 211-17.

Writing in the vernacular, these poets concentrated on the image of Rādhā by elaborating on the range of her emotions for Kṛṣṇa. The influence of both poets was significant in shaping the later image of Rādhā in the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa sect. As each poet approached this subject he brought a different emphasis to this theme of adultery.

During the sixteenth century the theme of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's love flourished in literature. The majority of these works were products of the Gaudīya (Bengali) sampradāya. Of the many works produced by this sect the most influential were the dramas and rasaśāstra of Rūpa Gosvāmin. The works of the Bengali Gosvāmins were quite similar to the earlier period of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotional poetry only differing in their emphasis on the divinity of Rādhā. With regard to the topic in question, the adultery of Rādhā in literature, there is an explicit statement of this in Rūpa Gosvāmin's one act drama (bhāṇikā) the Dānakelikaumudī.

Another work of the sixteenth century, the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, shows a different trend in the interpretation of Rādhā.⁶ As the first major purana to deal with Rādhā, the BVP attempts to portray her as the wife of Kṛṣṇa. Even though it appears to represent the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa literary tradition the BVP does not hold true to the mainstream interpretation of Rādhā. Consequently this work had no sectarian following which persisted or gained significance in Bengal.

⁶Infra., Chapt. I, fn. 85.

A second genre of literature which appears late in the Rādhā cult rationalizes the image of Rādhā in terms of metaphysics and devotionāl theology. These major reinterpretations of the poetic Rādhā were made on light of the adultery theme. Rather than using poetic convention to justify and emphasize Rādhā's illicit love for Kṛṣṇa, the theologians of the Orthodox and Tantric schools used the language of devotionāl theology to support this view.

The adultery doctrine takes on a new significance in this literature. This approach of the tradition in interpreting the meaning of Rādhā's adultery maintains a continuity with the works of devotionāl poets by explicitly outlining the various stages of Rādhā's devotionāl sentiments in poetry and then placing these sentiments, as found in literature, in relation to a devotee's experience. An attempt to prove the inherent superiority of the adulterous Rādhā as a model of devotion was made in this literature.

Since Rādhā sacrificed honor and family to love Kṛṣṇa she was considered an exemplary model of loving devotion. The orthodox Bengali Vaiṣṇavas, as stated in these texts, believed selfless devotion was best exemplified by an adulteress. Likewise to the Tantric Vaiṣṇavas (Sahajīya) the cultivation of selfless love in sādhana (ritual practice) can only arise in adultery since the practitioners represent the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

The following contentions will be made throughout this

study concerning the development of Rādhā as an adulteress in selected literature and its use in the doctrines of later sects.

1. The adultery doctrine was employed in major Bengali lyrical works on Rādhā and continued in significance into the sectarian movements of the sixteenth century. As a necessary aspect of doctrine the adultery theme was given priority by the Bengali Vaiṣnavas.

2. Attempts to legitimate this imagery have either failed to gain popularity, i.e. BVP, or were reinterpreted by later authors in favor of the adulterous Rādhā.

3. There is an inherent appeal of the adultery doctrine which has given Rādhā a suitability to the devotional practice and theology of Orthodox and Tantric Vaiṣnavas.

CHAPTER I

RĀDHĀ--THE DRAMATIC HEROINE AS ADULTERESS

Introduction

In portraying the lovelorn gopī, or cowherd girl, Rādhā, lyric poets have persistently stressed her passionate love for Kṛṣṇa. Through reciting these lyrics the devotee sought either to witness Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa or to cultivate this love by emulating Rādhā.⁷ Rādhā is paradigmatic in that she acts as a metaphor for religious devotion. The descriptions of Rādhā are crucial in providing symbols which complement the bhakta's emotional states in relation to Kṛṣṇa.

Descriptions of Rādhā in various devotional texts present themes which highlight the emotional abandonment of Rādhā's responses to Kṛṣṇa. In order for Rādhā to display a passionate love which is exemplary for the devotee she must appear to have no restraint in her love. If necessary this love must overstep all social convention.

The theme of adultery is the most prominent feature of Rādhā's portrayal in this literature. It becomes the ultimate

⁷The practice of rāgānuga bhakti is described by S.K. De: "The devotee by his ardent meditation not only seeks to visualize and make the whole Vṛndāvana-līlā of Kṛṣṇa live before him, but he enters into it imaginatively, and by playing the part of a beloved of Kṛṣṇa he experiences vicariously the passionate feelings which are so vividly pictured in the literature." S.K. De, VFM, op. cit., p. 177.

sacrifice Rādhā makes for her love of Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā gains nothing by her adultery and loses all through it--family, reputation, and religious merit. To the poet-devotee adultery is Rādhā's response to the irresistible beauty and charm of Kṛṣṇa. Her love of Kṛṣṇa always overrides her guilt.

There is another important consequence in using adultery as a literary theme. The illicit nature of their relationship separates Rādhā from Kṛṣṇa, since adultery is secretive and never sustained in Sanskrit literature. The lovers must consequently suffer love in separation (viraha). This in turn intensifies their love since love, according to Sanskrit literary convention, increases in separation. Other events arising from their adultery provide further circumstances in which their love can grow.

The following chapter will deal with major poetic, dramatic, and mythological works on Rādhā in the Bengali Vaiṣṇava tradition which rely on Rādhā's adultery as a theme. An exception to this will be the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa which is included here for reasons cited below.

The Bengali Vaiṣṇavas canonized various verse as examples of their devotional theology.⁸ Sectarian writings and devotional singing (kīrtan) rely upon the literary works of

⁸Rūpa Gosvāmin, The Padyavali: An Anthology of Vaisnava Verses in Sanskrit, ed. S.K. De (Dacca University Oriental Publications; no. 3; Dacca: University of Dacca, 1934), Intro. pp. llii-liv, and cvi.

⁹E.C. Dimock and D. Levertov (trans.), In Praise of Krishna, Songs From the Bengali (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1967), pp. x-xii.

Jayadeva, Vidyāpati, Candīdās, and Rūpa Gosvāmin.⁹ The centrality of these works to the Rādhā cult influenced the later doctrines of the Bengali Gosvamins and Sahajiyas.

Included here as the earliest major work of the Bengali Vaiṣnavas is the Gītagovinda of Jayadeva. Dating from the twelfth century, this text's significance comes from its originality and popularity for the early Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa sect.¹⁰ The adultery theme is couched within the terminology of Sanskrit erotics. Jayadeva did not explicitly state the nature of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's relationship but hints of its illicit nature through using the conventions of erotic literature.

The next major works composed on Rādhā are the vernacular lyrics of the Maithilī poet Vidyāpati. These fifteenth century lyrics also use the conventions of Sanskrit erotic poetry. Vidyāpati makes direct reference to Rādhā's marriage to another man. Among several padas this theme has a significant part in showing Rādhā's incessant longing and her defiance of social authority. This study includes Vidyāpati's padavalis as the earliest examples of vernacular Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poetry.

To the poet Candīdās are attributed the earliest padas of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Bengali. The variation in his style from Jayadeva and Vidyāpati and the centrality of adultery to nearly every verse on Rādhā raises questions as to the doc-

¹⁰The Gītagovinda can be considered a "transitional" work between the classical and medieval periods. It shows the influence of vernacular lyric poetry on Sanskrit poetics. E.C. Dimock (ed.) et al., The Literatures of India: An Introduction (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1974) pp. 150-52.

trinal significance of adultery to Candidas and his audience.

Eventually a place is made for Radha's adharmic imagery in Sanskrit rasaśāstra. The major author of the sixteenth century Bengali sampradāya, Rūpa Gosvāmin, devised an entire set of criteria for describing the adulterous Rādhā. Rūpa composed several dramas to illustrate the types which he had outlined in his rasaśāstra. Adultery plays a significant part in Rūpa's bhāṇikā the Dānakelikaumudī by providing a major element in the plot. The other works of Rūpa Gosvāmin which have bearing on doctrine apart from literature will be taken up in Chapter Two.

Departing from devotional poetics and drama a significant literary version of Rādhā is found in the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa. This text was composed independently of the mainstream Bengali Rādhā cult and envisions Rādhā as the wife of Kṛṣṇa. The BVP was an attempt to recreate the image of Rādhā in line with general cultural norms. The trait of passionate love remains in this portrayal of Rādhā, but the absence of adultery changes the essential nature of Rādhā's relationship to Kṛṣṇa. This example is included here to show an attempt at legitimating the image of Rādhā. The BVP failed to gain any significance in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotion because it did not take into account the religious role of her adulterous character.

The Parakīyā Rādhā in Literary Conventions

Rādhā's adultery and passion are described in terms delineated by classical Sanskrit dramatics and poetics. The strict conventions of the Sanskrit literary tradition provided a structure in which the religious figure Rādhā could be portrayed. In erotic literature the language of lovemaking was drawn from erotic treatises. (kāma śāstra). Rādhā is described as the consort of the young gallant (nāgaraka), and as the dramatic heroine (nāyikā) of classical drama. As a nāyikā Rādhā's personality and emotional states are all prescribed.

Within the set definitions of a nāyikā in rasa śāstra, or aesthetic treatises, the poet could choose appropriate types to describe Rādhā. The most significant trait of a nāyikā was her marital status in relation to the hero, and so in the description of a nāyikā this matter became the first object of consideration. The nāyikā, as the property of a man, belonged either to himself as a wife (svakīyā), to another man as a daughter (kanyakā or parakīyānudhā), to another as wife (parakīyodhā), or to all men as a common woman (sādhārānā strī).¹¹ The Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poets of Bengal considered Rādhā as parakīyodhā.

¹¹The Daśarūpa of Dhanamjaya, trans. George Haas (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1962) p. 149.

The very category of "adulterous woman" was, however, not accepted by the mainstream Sanskrit tradition. This subject was recognized by only a few poets of erotic literature. The first classical work on dramatics, Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra (700 A.D.), and the much later Sāhitya Darpaṇa of Viśvanātha (fourteenth century) do not include the parakīyodhā in their lists of allowable nāyikās.¹² A tenth century dramatical treatise which borrows from Bharata states the following about the use of parakīyodhā in drama.

A woman who is married to another should never figure in the principle sentiment; but love for a maiden one may employ at will, in connection with the principle of the subordinate sentiments.¹³

Even the Kāma Sūtra of Vātsyāyana shows restraint and hesitation in its instructions for seducing the wives of others. Only when there are specific goals to be achieved, such as revenge, should a man resort to another's wife, "and not for mere carnal desires".¹⁴ Seducing the wives of others causes the "destruction of artha and dharma".¹⁵ Adultery is suspect even in erotic literatures, nevertheless it is found in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa literature. The poets knowingly used an adharmic model in portraying Rādhā. Rather than using the unmarried

¹²S.K. De, History of Sanskrit Poetics (2 vols; Calcutta: KLM Mukhopadhyay, 1960) II, p. 270, and The Sāhitya Darpaṇa Paricchedas I, II, X, Arthalankaras with Exhaustive Notes; ed. P.V. Kane (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965), p. ix.

¹³Daśarūpa, op. cit., p. 32.

¹⁴The Kāma Sūtra of Vātsyāyana, trans. R. Burton and F.F. Arbuthot (St. Albans: Panther Books, 1963), p. 33.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 147.

maiden (kanyakā), or the svakīyā they relied on imagery which was unacceptable to the standards of morality.

However, the tradition of Sanskrit erotic poetry did have allowances for the parakīyā maiden and the courtesan who were commonly employed in erotic literature. Since neither was married to "another" they could be used without violating dharma. The well defined tradition of portraying illicit love was used by the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poets to describe the divine love of Bhagavan and his śakti. Here we may consider several typologies in Rādhā's portrayal.

The conventional eight types of nāyikās (aṣṭa nāyikā), show various situations in which the heroine expresses her anxiety in separation from her beloved.¹⁶ The type which best exemplifies the parakīyā Rādhā is the abhisārikā nāyikā; one who goes to a tryst with her lover. Unable to control her desire for her lover the nāyikā leaves her home in search

¹⁶The Rasikapriyā of Keshavadāsa, (trans.) K.P. Bahadur (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972) p. 110. M.S. Randhawa, Kangra Paintings on Love, (New Delhi: National Museum, 1962) pp. 63-83.

The following eight types of nayikas are based on various moods and situations. This particular list is from the Rasikapriyā of Kesavadās (17th century).

- 1) Svādhīnapatikā: Has her lover under her control.
- 2) Utkānthitā: The nāyikā who longs in separation from her lover.
- 3) Vāsakasajjā: Waits for her lover dressed and ornamented for lovemaking.
- 4) Kalahāntarītā: Remorseful after having rebuked her lover.
- 5) Khanditā: A woman jealous of marks of lovemaking on her lover's body.
- 6) Proṣitapatikā: One whose husband is abroad.
- 7) Vipralabdā: One neglected by her lover.
- 8) Abhisārikā: Goes out at night to seek her lover.

for her lover.

While separated from Kṛṣṇa Rādhā can be considered to fit into the literary type of a virahinī, or a woman suffering the pangs of love in separation.¹⁷ As an adulteress Rādhā cannot be assured of her lover's return. The social barriers preventing a parakīyā woman from meeting with her lover are what keep her a virahinī. Passionate longing results from the impossibility of there being constant union between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Adultery prevents the fulfillment of their longing.

The Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poets repeated the literary themes of parakīyodhā, abhisārikā, and virahinī in creating a perfected and idealized image of Rādhā. The resources of Sanskrit literature were employed in articulating the religious symbol of Rādhā through providing the Vaiṣṇava poet with certain well known models. In this way each of Rādhā's moods was easily identified and experienced by an audience.

Rādhā is admired as an ideal of the perfect lover. By stripping the nāyikā of imperfections she is raised to an ideal type. The Hindu aesthete, by conceiving of aesthetic perfection as a generalized personality, creates a universally identifiable characterization which is not subject to the individual limitations and peculiarities of actual life.¹⁸

¹⁷Lee Siegel, Sacred and Profane Dimensions of Love in Indian Traditions as Exemplified in the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978) p. 240.

¹⁸E. Dimock (ed.) et al., The Literatures of India, op. cit., pp. 217, 229.

Elements of humanity which are not universal to experience obscure the proper aesthetic sentiments in an audience.¹⁹

The idealized nāyikā is conducive to the arousal of the pure poetic sentiment of the erotic, or the śṛṅgāra rasa, in the audience.²⁰ If the nāyikā is suitable an audience can cultivate this erotic sentiment. Her love must typify the role of a "woman in love": she must possess youth and beauty, love only one man, have no signs of pregnancy or children, and not perform household chores.²¹ Her only function is to serve as the means by which the audience comes to experience the love of the hero and heroine.

Rādhā's adultery and passion are glorified by the poets through the general perfections which they attribute to her. Rādhā appears as the padminī woman of literature, having deer like eyes, a lotus scent, the voice of a kokila bird, the gait of an elephant, and lips like the bimba fruit.²² The padminī Rādhā is a fully desirable object of Kṛṣṇa's love. Devotion to Kṛṣṇa is achieved by the devotee through identifying with this universal symbol of the perfect lover.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Randhawa, op. cit., p. 51.

²¹Rakesagupta, Studies in Nāyaka Nāyikā Bheda (Aligarh: Granthayan, 1967), pp. 319-21.

²²Rātī Śāstram, trans. A.C. Ghose (Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1977), pp. 12, 17, 81.

The Triumphant Nāyikā of the Gītagovinda

The Gītagovinda of Jayadeva is set in the secluded wood of Vrndāvana. Rādhā, the lovelorn cowherdess, passes through the various stages of love common to a nāyikā accompanied by her confidante and lover. Nothing is said of the reasons for Rādhā loving Kṛṣṇa. The audience is only told that Kṛṣṇa leaves Rādhā after a brief tryst, abandoning her in the midst of a spring day, "a cruel time for deserted lovers."²³ Rādhā aimlessly wanders lamenting her lost love.

The clandestine nature of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's relationship provides the background for what little action transpires. The ever growing passion of Rādhā is accentuated by her separation from Kṛṣṇa, and further frustrated by Rādhā's inability to act aggressively towards Kṛṣṇa. The secretive and illicit nature of their affair inhibits their union but increases Rādhā's longing.

Kṛṣṇa is not married to Rādhā in the GG. It is not altogether certain whether Rādhā is married to a man other than Kṛṣṇa or if she is an unmarried maiden. Jayadeva does not pair Rādhā with a husband as does later literature, but there are certain indications from descriptions and terms of Sanskrit erotics in the poem which would make Rādhā a parakīyodhā / nāyikā.

²³Barbara S. Miller, Love Song of the Dark Lord, Jayadeva's Gītagovinda (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 74.

Jayadeva associates Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the kulatā and nāgaraka of Sanskrit erotics. The nāgaraka was a young gallant whose main pursuit in life was pleasure. The Kāma Sūtra tells of social gatherings, drinking parties, and festivals where the nāgaraka used his charms to seduce a kulatā, or a woman who had many lovers besides her husband.²⁴ The title of the GG's seventh sarga, nāgara nārāyaṇa, or sophisticated Viṣṇu, refers to the city bred lover Kṛṣṇa.²⁵ The erotic sport of Kṛṣṇa with the gopīs and Rādhā in the GG can be compared to the social gathering (gosthī) of the Kāma Sūtra.

The nāgaraka and nāyikā were well-skilled in the sixty-four arts conducive to intelligent conversation and sexual knowledge.²⁶ Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are well skilled in the sexual arts (VII.10; X.15).²⁷ The sakhi explains to Kṛṣṇa how Rādhā sulks in separation thinking only of his skill in the sexual arts.

She has a bracelet made of spotless lotus fibres and she lives henceforth solely by your skill in lovemaking.²⁸

"Women going to their lovers" dominates the background

²⁴Rakesagupta, op. cit., p. 63.

²⁵Siegel, op. cit., p. 163.

²⁶Moti Chandra, The World of Courtesans (Delhi: Vikas Publishing, 1973), pp. 66 ff.

²⁷Siegel, GG, op. cit., p. 163.

²⁸Ibid., p. 263, vs. vi.4.

scene of the moonlit Vṛndāvana forest.²⁹ "Paths of unchaste women", (kulatākulavartma), refers to the kulatā nāyikā who mostly frequented the gosthī.³⁰ At the height of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's tryst the Vṛndāvana forest is filled with adulterous women who have gone to their lovers.

As night came, the much displayed cratered stains, seeming to flaunt its guilt in betraying secret paths of adulterous women....³¹

Jayadeva further alludes to the adultery transpiring in the Vṛndāvana forest. A humorous verse refers to a married couple who leave for the forest to commit adultery only to find that they have mistakenly met one another in the dark.

From an embrace, then from a kiss, then from scratching with their nails, then from love's rousing then from shaking about (in coition), then from sexual exertion, both are pleased--when husband and wife who have gone to an affair with another (lover) come together by mistake and (then) recognize (each other) by their speech here in the darkness, their pleasure is mixed with embarrassment, isn't it? isn't it?³²

The above examples allude to the abhisārikā nāyikā who goes out to meet her lover.³³ Under the cover of night the misconduct of the lovers is hidden from public view. The precincts of Vṛndāvana forest provide a haven for the lovers of Vraja. It is on this moonlit evening that Rādhā goes to Kṛṣṇa as an abhisārikā.

²⁹Ibid., p. 277, vs. xi.12.

³⁰Gītagovinda of Śrī Jayadeva, ed. A. Sharma (Hyderabad: Sanskrit Academy, 1969) vii, 1.

³¹Miller, GG, op. cit., p. 97, vs. vii.1.

³²Siegel, op. cit., p. 262, vs. v.18.

³³Supra., Chapt. I, fn. 16.

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's affair begins in the secrecy of Vṛndāvana hinting at Rādhā's parakīyodhā status. In the first pada of the GG the audience is told that a storm approaches Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa is given over to the care of Rādhā by his step-father Nanda.

'Rādhā you alone must take him home.' This is Nanda's command. But Rādhā and Mādhava stray to a tree in the grove by the path and on the bank of the Yamuna their secret love games prevail.³⁴

According to Siegel this action by Rādhā "...is in defiance of Nanda...who as a representative of authority exemplifies the social order, the ideal of dharma."³⁵ The secret meeting of an unwed couple is generally unacceptable to the codes of dharma but allowed in erotic literature. There is still an ambiguity whether Rādhā is an unmarried maiden or a parakīyodhā. The implication in this verse is that Rādhā is older than Kṛṣṇa, since he is given over to her care. If this is the case it would seem likely that Rādhā was not a young maiden but a married woman.

The love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa remains secretive throughout the work. Nanda is again defied when Kṛṣṇa uses clever speech (vidagdha vacana), in arranging a meeting with Rādhā.

'Why do you rest beneath the banyan tree which is the abode of black snakes (Kṛṣṇa the enjoyer)? O Brother! Why don't you go to the joyful house of Nanda which is within sights range from here?' Concealing a message for Rādhā, in the presence of Nanda, from the mouth of a traveller, Govinda's words filled

³⁴Siegel, GG, op. cit., p. 240, vs. 1.1.

³⁵Ibid., p. 119.

with excellence for evening guests prevail!³⁶

The secretive and illicit nature of Rādhā's relationship to Kṛṣṇa necessarily means that their love will be impeded by society. A major section of the GG portrays Rādhā as lamenting in separation from Kṛṣṇa. Not being married to Kṛṣṇa Rādhā has no control over Kṛṣṇa's infidelity. Throughout sarga seven (8-28) Rādhā in a fit of pique (māna) jealously broods over Kṛṣṇa's tryst with another woman.

While Balarāma's fickle brother is delighting some pretty girl, Why does barren disgust haunt my bower of branches, tell me friend?³⁷

Rādhā has no legal claim to Kṛṣṇa's love because of her parakīyā status. She must either wait in anxious anticipation for his arrival or go to him out of frustration.

Eventually Rādhā becomes abhisārikā in the eleventh sarga. Earlier Rādhā was unable to express her passion since her naivete in dealing with Kṛṣṇa made her mugdha.³⁸ Rādhā's confidante eventually convinces her of Kṛṣṇa's sincere desire to be with her. The sakhī (or friend) upbraids Rādhā and tells her to abandon all pride and shame in her relationship to him.

³⁶Ibid, p. 264.

³⁷Miller, op. cit., p. 102, vs. vii.28.

³⁸Stella Sandahl Forgue (trans.) Le Gitagovinda Tradition et innovation dans le Kavya (Stockholm Oriental Series; vol. 11; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1977), p. 134.

"...Radha incarne tout ce qu'on entend par le mot mugdha. Elle est éprise, égarée, innocente, peut-être même un peu sotte, mais belle et charmante dans sa sincérité, dans son amour naïf, émouvant.

He made himself soothe you with flattery.
He made himself fall limp at your feet.

Meet his rich mood without shame!
Madhu's tormentor
Is faithful to you fool mugdha
follow him Rādhikā.³⁹

Eventually Rādhā loses her hesitation in going to Kṛṣṇa and becomes a bold pragalbhā nāyikā. The pragalbhā is known by her aggressive and bold approach to her lover.⁴⁰ Rādhā goes in search of Kṛṣṇa finding him in his hidden bower. As an abhisārikā, or parakīyā woman in search of her lover, Rādhā approaches Kṛṣṇa shamelessly.

She neared the edge of the bed.
Masking her smile by pretending to scratch
As her friends swarmed outside-
When she saw her lover's face
Graced by arrows of love,
Even Rādhā's modesty left in shame.⁴¹

The long separation which both lovers experience throughout the GG ends when Rādhā loses her modesty and carries out her clandestine tryst with Kṛṣṇa. Only the final sarga is committed to love in union. This work reasserts that the parakīyā woman seldom enjoys the presence of her lover. The various moods of love depend upon separation and separation is greatest for the parakīyā nāyikā. The development of Rādhā's passion in this work depends on her parakīyā status.

³⁹Miller, GG, op. cit., pp. 115-16, vs. x1.2, 7.

⁴⁰Rasikapriya, op. cit., pp. 36-39, 45.

⁴¹Miller, GG, op. cit., p. 121, vs. x1.33.

Rādhā in the Padavalis of Vidyāpati

The lyrics of Vidyāpati's padavali give a courtly view of the parakīyodhā nāyikā Rādhā. These Maithili padas show the influence of the GG but differ in their portrayal of Rādhā.⁴² The padavalis of Vidyāpati are independent stanzas dealing with particular aspects of the love between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, unlike the coherent tale of the GG, and the focus of attention is the lovelorn Rādhā.⁴³ Rādhā is portrayed at various stages of her relationship to Kṛṣṇa, proceeding from an inexperienced mugdha nāyikā, afraid of committing adultery, to an experienced pragalbhā nāyikā willing to go to Kṛṣṇa for a tryst. Eventually Rādhā shows no restraint or fear in committing adultery.

The setting of Vidyāpati's poems is not removed from public view as is the Vṛndāvana forest of the GG. Social responsibilities encroach upon Rādhā's affair with Kṛṣṇa. Her passion is heightened by the social censure of her family.

Rādhā comes from an aristocratic background while Kṛṣṇa is portrayed as a village rustic. For fear of social chastisement Rādhā is extremely secretive in keeping her trysts with

⁴²Deben Bhattacharya (trans.), Love Songs of Vidyāpati (London: Allen and Unwin, 1963), Intro. p. 29.

Two hundred years after the composition of the GG Vidyāpati is proclaimed Abhinava Jayadeva, or the "New Jayadeva" by king Śiva Śimha of Mithila. Jayakanta Mishra, op. cit., I, p. 160.

⁴³Bhattacharya, Vidyāpati, op. cit., p. 30.

Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā is extremely secretive in keeping her trysts with Kṛṣṇa. Social impropriety is a problem in this affair of a village cowherd and a courtly nāyikā.

I who body and soul
am at your beck and call
was a girl of noble family
I took no thought for what would be said of me,
I abandoned everything.⁴⁴

Vidyāpati does not mention Rādhā's husband as later authors do, but we are told that Rādhā must hide her love for Kṛṣṇa in public for fear of the "older throng with blaming eyes."⁴⁵

Early in her relationship to Kṛṣṇa Rādhā is bashful and goes so far as to complain to Kṛṣṇa about his amorous ways.⁴⁶ At this point Rādhā is unwilling to sacrifice her reputation through an adulterous relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Typical of the mugdhā nāyikā Rādhā cannot take the initiative in lovemaking.

New to love, I shrank from loving,
Yet the night grew and all was done.
I did not relish sweets of dalliance,
My shyness warred against my will.⁴⁷

At another stage of her relationship to Kṛṣṇa Rādhā begins to take the initiative in establishing trysts. Rādhā's growing experience in her adultery allows her further to abandon social propriety in her love. Rādhā's growing aggres-

⁴⁴In Praise of Krishna, Songs from the Bengali, op. cit.
p. 51.

⁴⁵Bhattacharya, Vidyāpati, op. cit., p. 120.

⁴⁶Rakesagupta, op. cit., p. 288.

⁴⁷Bhattacharya, Vidyāpati, op. cit., p. 66.

siveness is portrayed by the abhisārikā nāyikā. As a married woman Rādhā risks her reputation by leaving her home under the cover of night to meet her lover. Rādhā here reflects on the chance she takes in meeting Kṛṣṇa.

If I go I lose my home
 If I stay I lose my love
 The enemy moon
 Wickedly bars my way.
 The sky is bright from end to end.
 Thinking it was dark,
 I set out on my way
 And then it rose
 In its provoking form.
 Who can control the demon moon?
 But I must keep my tryst
 With Kṛṣṇa.⁴⁸

The moon beckons lovers to join at night since it arouses memories of love.⁴⁹ On the other hand it betrays Rādhā's tryst by its illumination of the night, "the night is alight, from afar the unkind can gaze at will...".⁵⁰ Rādhā is concerned with her reputation, but is willing on account of her growing love to take the chance of exposure in going to meet Kṛṣṇa.

Eventually Rādhā becomes familiar with Kṛṣṇa and decides that nothing else matters but her love for him. Rādhā proceeds to her tryst hiding nothing as a bold pragalbhā nāyikā.

I am going today dear friend,
 And shall not fear the elders at home.
 Words will not trouble me.
 I shall cover my body in white

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 65.

⁴⁹Randhawa, op. cit., p. 83.

⁵⁰Bhattacharya, Vidyāpati, op. cit., p. 68.

And walk with leisured steps.
 When the sky is lit with the smiling moon
 From staring eyes I shall not flinch
 Nor shall I hide.
 So much did I conceal
 From fear of others,
 Even the currents of my love.⁵¹

As Rādhā encounters the aggressive Kṛṣṇa, her experience and love grows further. Through Kṛṣṇa, the rustic cowherd, Rādhā comes to learn that love is greater than the restrictions of marriage and caste.

Rādhā is at the age where "childhood merged in youth", or early adolescence.⁵² The audience of Vidyāpati's lyrics could well understand the marriage of a young girl in the bloom of youth to a man she does not love. Rādhā's true love goes to Kṛṣṇa not her legal husband. The social censure Rādhā undergoes in her defiance of her youthful marriage would seem cruel rather than just. Rādhā is too naive to be criticized for her behaviour since she is essentially mugdhā. The freedom represented by Rādhā's illicit love would be cherished though it was reprehensible to social mores. In this way, an unresolvable tension arises between love and dharma in Vidyāpati's works.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 127.

⁵²Ibid., p. 116.

An Early Bengali Version of Rādhā

The earliest literary sources for Rādhā in Bengali, two poets by the name Candīdās, depend heavily upon the parakīyā theme. One Candīdās authored the Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtan in which "the spirit...was much against the conceptions of Caitanya", and the other composed forty to fifty padas in the spirit of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism.⁵³ The Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtan failed to gain the popularity of the Candīdās padas because of this text's unique interpretation of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's affair.⁵⁴ The latter Candīdās exerted a lasting influence on the Gaudīya sampradāya. This study will limit itself to this Candīdās who is accepted by the Sahajīya and Orthodox Vaiṣṇavas as canonical.⁵⁵

The most significant addition to Rādhā's mythology in Candīdās' works is her marriage to Aihān, or Āyāna, the cousin of Kṛṣṇa.⁵⁶ Rādhā's marriage to Āyāna is continually emphasized

⁵³Dusan Zbavitel, Bengali Literature, ed. Jan Gonda (vol. IX; Fasc. 3; A History of Indian Literature; Weisbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1976) p. 179.

⁵⁴S.C. Mukherji, A Study of Vaiṣṇavism in Ancient and Medieval Bengal Up to the Advent of Caitanya (Calcutta: Puthi Pustak, 1966), p. 136.

⁵⁵The author of the SKK is familiar with the GG but the tone of his work differs from the earlier work. Kṛṣṇa does not love Rādhā, but desires to lure her into an affair to destroy her reputation. B.B. Majumdar, Kṛṣṇa in History and Legend (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1969), p. 243.

⁵⁶A.K. Majumdar, "A Note on the Development of the Rādhā Cult," Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, (1955), p. 243.

as a source of her social censure.

As in Vidyāpati's works Rādhā is a young girl barely twelve, while Kṛṣṇa is the slightly older aggressive lover.⁵⁷ The events of Caṇḍīdās' padas transpire in village life. Unlike Jayadeva's Rādhā she is not free to express her emotions in the seclusion of Vṛndāvana forest. Rādhā is very aware of her role as a married woman. Although similar to Vidyāpati in that he recognizes the importance of social duty, Caṇḍīdās removes Rādhā from the setting of courtly love and immerses her in peasant life.

The degree of passion ascribed to this Rādhā far exceeds that of the Rādhā of other poets. These padas are not refined literary works, but show the characteristics of early vernacular literature in Bengali.⁵⁸ Vernacular traditions lent a greater freedom to the portrayal of Rādhā. No longer an ideal of Sanskrit conventions limited by artifice, the Rādhā of Caṇḍīdās is of flesh and blood.⁵⁹

The restraint typical of earlier poets in depicting Rādhā's emotions is gone in Caṇḍīdās. Direct in her statements, unafraid of the social consequences of her adultery, Rādhā is an experienced and bold woman (pragalbhā), forward in her adulterous relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

⁵⁷Zbavitel, op. cit., p. 157.

⁵⁸Deben Bhattacharya (trans), Love Songs of Chandidas the Rebel Poet Priest of Bengal (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976), pp. 27-32.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 32-33.

I throw ashes at all laws
 Made by man or god.
 I am born alone, with no companion.
 What is the worth of your vile laws
 That failed me in love,
 And left me with a fool a dumbskull [Ayāna] ?

My wretched fate is so designed
 That he is absent for whom I long.
 I will set fire to this house
 And go away.⁶⁰

For a married woman to take such an attitude is unknown in Sanskrit literature. Rādhā is not only a nāyikā who pines for her lover, but her obsession for the love of Kṛṣṇa alienates her completely from village life. Rādhā calls her husband a fool and threatens to burn down her family's house.

Rādhā abandons all social propriety in the name of love, specifically the love of Kṛṣṇa.

...casting away
 All ethics of caste
 My heart dotes on Krishna
 Day and night.
 The custom of the clan
 Is a far away cry
 And now I know
 That love adheres wholly
 To its own laws.⁶¹

In loving Kṛṣṇa Rādhā violates the basis of caste, showing no care for the realities of social structure. The uncontrollable "love" which Rādhā speaks of is anything but constructive or capable of being fulfilled. Candīdās uses the word "fire" as a synonym for this love. This emotion continually wastes Rādhā's conscience while destroying her social life.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 67.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 135.

In a metaphorical sense fire has connotations of an unquenchable lust. Love consumes the once fair Rādhā.

I have blackened my golden skin
 Longing for him,
 Though he was not my husband.
 I belonged to a respectable home.
 As the fire encircled me,
 My life began to wilt.
 And my heart,
 Brooding eternally,
 Parched for my dark darling
 My Krishna...⁶²

Rādhā's explicit and emotional monologues in Caṇḍīdās show no use of suggestion in conveying the themes of passion and adultery. Opulent natural imagery is not used to develop the mood as in Vidyāpati and Jayadeva's works. Caṇḍīdās in this sense reflects a popular tradition rather than the Sanskritic tradition.

The Rādhā of Caṇḍīdās was favored by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas even though his exclusive attention to Rādhā is not typical of later pada literature.⁶³ In Caṇḍīdās adultery is essential to the basic theme of each pada unlike the lyrics of late Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa literature. The bold woman of passionate and uncontrolled emotion peculiar to Caṇḍīdās breaks completely with dharma for the sake of love.

⁶²Ibid., p. 76.

⁶³Supra., fn. 52. Although Caitanya's followers enjoy the lyrics of Caṇḍīdās they hold to a conservative portrayal of Rādhā.

Rādhā in Rūpa Gosvāmin's Dāna Keli Kaumudī

Before examining the particular portrayal of Rādhā in the Dāna Keli Kaumudī we should note the general ideas Rūpa Gosvāmin held about the depiction of religious erotic figures. The definitive work by Rūpa on the erotic mood, or the śṛṅgāra rasa, the Ujjvalanīlamani, discusses the allowable types of nāyikās in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa literature. Bhakti is proclaimed by Rūpa to be the sole rasa.⁶⁴ One cultivated bhakti to Kṛṣṇa through using the mode of the erotic rasa. Sanskrit literary artifices were subsumed by devotion.

The UNM is unique in that it is the first attempt at outlining typologies for nāyakas and nāyikās in line with the parakīyā theme.⁶⁵ Although limited in its aesthetic interests, Rūpa's work became the definitive expression of devotional aesthetics. In this work Rādhā is proclaimed the greatest nāyikā and Kṛṣṇa the epitome of nāyakas.

Kṛṣṇa vajrendranandana is the crest jewel of nāyakas--and of nāyikās, his consort Rādhā.⁶⁵

Rūpa claims that the major influence on this work came from Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra and Sīṅhabhūpāla's

⁶⁴S.K. De, VFM, op. cit., pp. 166-67, 203-224.

⁶⁵S.K. De, History of Sanskrit Poetics, op. cit., pp. 266-68.

⁶⁶Edward C. Dimock, The Place of the Hidden Moon: Erotic Mysticism in the Vaisnava Sahajīya Cult of Bengal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966) p. 219. Quoted from the Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya xxiii; 45, on the subject of the UNM.

Rasasudhākara.⁶⁷ Rūpa differs from these works in that he accepts the parakīyodhā nāyikā as a legitimate object of drama. Previously in rasaśāstra the adulterous nāyikā was deemed unacceptable as a heroine and did not merit classification as other nāyikās.⁶⁸ Under Rūpa's scheme a parakīyā woman could be further defined using the categories of mugdāhā, madhya, and pragalbhā.⁶⁹

Other criteria of a parakīyodhā nāyikā were listed by Rūpa as the degree of her youth, her willingness in lovemaking, and the degree of aggressiveness in her approach to the hero.⁷⁰ These criteria placed the adulteress in a clearly recognizable literary context. This outline was to give structure to many later Bengali works on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme.

The allowance made for this theme by Rūpa was later to develop into a dispute for later Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.⁷¹ Attempts to rationalize Rādhā's adultery appear in Rūpa's theology. Rādhā was a divine (divyā) nāyikā, not limited to the same criteria as human nāyikās.⁷² The subject of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as lovers was no longer a subject which was within the limits

⁶⁷S.K. De, Sanskrit Poetics, op. cit., p. 253.

⁶⁸Supra., Chapt. I, fn. 13.

⁶⁹S.K. De, VFM, op. cit., p. 206.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Infra., see conclusion on debate.

⁷²Dimock, PHM, op. cit., pp. 208-10.

of ordinary literary criticism. According to Rūpa the sole intention of Bharata and other Sanskrit authors was the depiction of ordinary heroes and heroines.⁷³ The distinction of Rādhā as a religious heroine as opposed to a secular heroine was emphasized by the Gosvāmins. This is explicitly stated in the mangalācarana of the DKK.

...which Yoge...though sublime lacks in dignified deportment and though often unconventional is essentially pure.⁷⁴

Thus, even though the DKK appears to be like any other ribald erotic farce it should be seen as essentially a religious drama. The uneasiness felt by Rūpa Gosvāmin in portraying Rādhā as an adulteress was rationalized in this way.

Rūpa considered Rādhā parakīyodhā, mugdhā, and dhīrā.⁷⁵ Rādhā as a mugdhā can be gentle in her anger towards her lover, bashful, opposed to lovemaking, and under the control of her sakhi.⁷⁶ All of these themes classified in the UNM are fully elaborated upon in the DKK.

A dialogue transpiring between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in verse fifty of the DKK well displays Rādhā's character. Kṛṣṇa demands sexual favors as payment for a toll tax due him from Rādhā and her sakhis. In this frivolous verbal parley

⁷³De, VFM, op. cit., p. 205.

⁷⁴Dāna Keli Kaumudī of Rūpa Gosvāmin, trans. T. Bheemacharya, ed. N. Shastri (Indore: Bharati Research Institute, 1976), p. 3.

⁷⁵Ibid., Intro., p. xxiii.

⁷⁶Rakeshgupta, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Rādhā questions Kṛṣṇa's moral character while Kṛṣṇa sarcastically insults Rādhā's infidelity.

Kṛṣṇa: (laughing loudly) Lustful woman! Are you prepared to give yourself in place of a cowrie as payment?

A man like me would feel ashamed even to touch with his feet a woman like you whose neck is bent by the heavy weight of butter. So do not betray your wretchedness with a hypocritical laughter.

Rādhā: Oh libertine! ever devoted to the service of a thousand birds, (women who go to meet their lovers stealthily) I am not a bird (a woman) of that type to fly (to go to a love tryst).⁷⁷

The teasing is intended to heighten the erotic mood in anticipation of the immanent love affair of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Infidelity is the central theme in this dialogue between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Their adultery is taken jokingly. The stage directions have Kṛṣṇa laughing or smiling during his speech. Rādhā defends her self respect in coquettish anger.⁷⁸ The conflict of the play is pretended.

While Rādhā insinuates that Kṛṣṇa is an impetuous village simpleton Kṛṣṇa speaks of her adultery.

Kṛṣṇa: (smiling) Wrathful lady! True you are devoted to an irascible husband. I am therefore anxious to render some appreciable service to you.

(or) Oh Virtuous Lady! True you are avowed to your eager lover; I therefore feel inclined to serve your thighs.

⁷⁷DKK, op. cit., pp. 126 ff.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 139.

Lovely woman! You think yourself to be the most distinguished (someone else's) woman in this forest. Shell out then the toll tax today.⁷⁹

From Kṛṣṇa's sarcasm we know Rādhā is parakīyodhā, married to an irascible husband (utkopapatau).⁸⁰ In the final segment quoted Kṛṣṇa plays on the word parā, glossed by Jīva Gosvāmin as either "best" (utkrstā) or "another's".⁸¹ The double entendre hints at Rādhā's adultery.

Rādhā's reluctance to give in to Kṛṣṇā suddenly heightens the erotic and comic mood of the play. The conflict of Rādhā's threatened chastity with Kṛṣṇa's roguish intentions forms the basic mood of the drama. As an erotic farce the DKK does not address the problem of adultery in a serious way. All of the characters contribute to the illicit meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The sakhis Paurṇamāsī, Nandimukhī, and Vṛndā set the plot into motion by arranging Rādhā's abduction by Kṛṣṇa.⁸² As a naive mugdha nāyikā Rādhā is unaware of her friends' intentions and trustingly follows their advice. After a bawdy dialogue with Kṛṣṇa's companions the sakhis decided that Rādhā is best suited as payment for the toll tax.

Rādhā pleads with Paurṇamāsī,

Please please your holiness! in this abject calamity, do not consign this shy person who is by

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 137-40.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 139.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 140..

⁸²Ibid., pp. 21 ff., p. 118.

nature straightforward, into the hands of this harsh toll gate chief in lieu of toll tax.
(She pretends to weep with dry eyes and rolls at her feet).

Paurṇamāsī: (Encircling Rādhā in her arms)
Dear child! Do not weep. All this will end well with you.⁸³

Rādhā is then given away to Kṛṣṇa by her sakhis.⁸⁴

There is no conflict between dharma and Rādhā's love in Rūpa's drama. All of the characters are willing participants in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's affair. The sakhis worship Rādhā as the perfect embodiment of Kṛṣṇa's love. None of them doubts her exemplary love, nor feels jealous towards the favor she receives from Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā is considered by Rūpa the greatest heroine--the Uttama Prakṛti Nāyikā.⁸⁵

The Svakiyā Rādhā of the Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa

The Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa offers a svakiyā version of Rādhā which varies from the parakiyodhā theme of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotional literature of Bengal. Some aspects of this purāṇa remain true to the poetic versions of Rādhā examined above. Love in separation and passionate love are present in Rādhā's portrayal, but these traits are representative of the

⁸³Ibid., pp. 280-1.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. xxiii.

svakīyā Rādhā. As the first major purāṇa to deal extensively with Rādhā the BVP offers a later interpretation which is not typical of this literature.⁸⁶ The BVP can be considered an attempt at synthesizing the parakīyā nāyikā with a svakīyā goddess--an attempt which failed to gain popularity.⁸⁷

No longer a pitiful cowherd girl whose lamentation arouses Kṛṣṇa's sympathy, the Rādhā of BVP is the Mahādevī whose love traumas upset heaven and earth. Rādhā resides in the heavenly realm of Goloka, a transcendental abode of jewelled mansions and idyllic forests. As the queen of the spherical abode of Goloka, the rasa mandala, Rādhā is served by millions of cowherdresses.

Rādhā's role in Goloka is the jealous and chaste wife of Kṛṣṇa who hatefully pursues her rival consorts. The recurrent jealousy of Rādhā is the most consistent trait she possesses apart from the love in separation she experiences with Kṛṣṇa.

A frequently repeated myth in the BVP is Rādhā's discovery of Kṛṣṇa's affair with Virājā a river goddess. After being told of Kṛṣṇa's affair with Virājā, Rādhā takes her

⁸⁶Cheever M. Brown, God as Mother, A Feminine Theology in India, An Historical and Theological Study of the Brahma Vaivarta Purana (Hartford: Claude Stark & Co., 1974), p. 29. Brown concludes that the present form of the BVP dates from the 15th to 16th centuries A.D.. This date seems feasible on the basis of its use of the name Rayana for Radha's husband (Brown, p. 22), and the obvious sakta influence in the interpretation of Radha.

⁸⁷S.K. De, VFM, op. cit., pp. 11-13 and p. 205. The BVP was a product of the late North Indian Rādhā Kṛṣṇa cult. Its influence on later works is extremely limited.

celestial chariot to Virājā's diamond mansion.⁸⁸ Storming the mansion's doorkeeper Śrīdama, Rādhā and her sakhis scare away Kṛṣṇa. Out of fear Virājā commits suicide and becomes a river circling Goloka.⁸⁹

Kṛṣṇa reappears and Rādhā upbraids him with "unbecoming unsuited, undignified, and cruel words."⁹⁰ Angered by her cruelty to Kṛṣṇa, the loyal servant Śrīdama curses Rādhā to be born as a cowherdess in Vraja.

Mother, your anger is human; and so you will be born a woman.

Fools will call you on earth the wife of Rāyān. You will secure the company of Kṛṣṇa in Goloka and merrily dally with him at Vṛndāvana. You will be separated from Hari for a century, and being subsequently reunited with him you will come back to Goloka.⁹¹

The curse is made in response to her behavior, "unbecoming" of a goddess and disrespectful to her husband Kṛṣṇa. The curse will subject Rādhā to social condemnation and ritually polluting work. The earthly Vṛndāvana is a fallen state which Rādhā must endure. The adultery which she commits under her curse actually transpires between Rādhā's "shadow", identified as Vṛndā, and Rāyāna, her husband. The actual Rādhā, in the opinion of the purāṇic authors, is too superior actually to take part in adultery.⁹² Such an earthly fate

⁸⁸BVP, op. cit., II, p. 103.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 103-104.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 105

⁹¹Ibid., II, p. 107.

⁹²Ibid., II, p. 430.

for Rādhā would be degrading.

Another variation in the portrayal of Rādhā of the BVP is her lack of innocence or mugdha qualities. There is nothing endearing about the love which Rādhā feels towards Kṛṣṇa in the BVP. Her love is cruel, selfish, and demanding. As Kṛṣṇa's wife Rādhā demands his fidelity. In the BVP Rādhā confronts six rival consorts driving each to suicide or flight.⁹³ The Gīta Govinda on the other hand portrays Rādhā as the unsure, coy, and naive girl who broods over Kṛṣṇa's fickle ways. But never does Rādhā challenge Kṛṣṇa's fickleness, instead she feels a "perverse" love for his unfaithful behavior.⁹⁴

In this narrative, Rādhā not content with Kṛṣṇa's reassurances of his love for her, continuously nags him about which consort he loves more. A humorous tale is told in KJKH CXXVI, concerned with Rādhā's incessant prying. On returning to Goloka after Śrīdama's curse of adultery Rādhā asks Kṛṣṇa why he had gone to the trouble of fighting for Satyabhāmā and Rukminī, two other wifely consorts. "Tell me truly," Rādhā asks, "which of your spouses you love most."⁹⁵ Rādhā continues in her tirade, "Is your love to Rukminī the same as it was before or has it increased? You enjoyed the society of

⁹³Ibid., I, pp. 31-122. Having discovered Kṛṣṇa with Gāṅgā, Rādhā proceeds to terrorize Virājā, Sobhā, Prabhā, Sāntī, and Kṣāmā.

⁹⁴Siegel, GG, op. cit., p. 251.

⁹⁵BVP, op. cit., II, p. 544.

the hunchbacked woman...having promised to come here. Why did you not come back?"⁹⁶ Weeping, Rādhā collapses and dies before Kṛṣṇa and the gopis. Seemingly unmoved by Rādhā's death Kṛṣṇa restores her to life and proceeds to explain the ontological identity of all women, attempting to rationalize his infidelity, "I am the consort of the whole world, not to talk of Rukminī and other women."⁹⁷

Rādhā is not a mugdhā parakīyā nāyikā but a pragalbhā svakīyā nāyikā. Even as the wife of Kṛṣṇa Rādhā does not fit the role of the complacent wife who lives solely to please her husband. The highspirited and uncontrolled Rādhā acts out of jealousy as well as love.

Essential to Rādhā in the earlier examined poetic works were those qualities familiar to a devotee's experiences in devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Since Rādhā serves as a paradigm for this love, her character in literature must reflect the devotional sentiments. But the BVP version of Rādhā does not reflect the selfless, free, and spontaneous love which violates the social realm. As a jealous wife Rādhā acts passionately, insulting her husband and terrifying her rivals.

When portrayed as a goddess Rādhā can no longer be an adulteress. There are no social hindrances to Rādhā's love in Goloka. It is only when Rādhā is cursed to be reborn on earth that adultery becomes possible. The authors of this

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 544-45.

⁹⁷Ibid.

text envisioned Rādhā as a goddess of passionate love, but of love which is divine, unattainable by man.

Rather than a model for man's devotion to Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā becomes an object of man's worship. The love which Rādhā displays toward Kṛṣṇa "does not serve as the model for man's attitude toward god, but testifies to her qualification as redemptress."⁹⁸ The theology of this purāṇa places Rādhā in the role of Divine Mother who serves as a mediator between the devotee and the paternal Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā's marriage to Kṛṣṇa only reveals the intimacy with which she relates to Kṛṣṇa. As a wife Rādhā renders service (sevā) to Kṛṣṇa.⁹⁹ In turn Rādhā allows the devotee to approach Kṛṣṇa as a servant (dāsyā). The wifely Rādhā of the BVP lacks the familiarity with Kṛṣṇa that the Rādhā of devotional lyrics displays. This purāṇa does not reflect the major theme of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotion in that Rādhā and man are placed in a position of deference before Kṛṣṇa.

⁹⁸Brown, God As Mother, op. cit., p. 196.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 197-98.

CHAPTER II
DOCTRINAL ASPECTS OF PARAKĪYĀ

Introduction

By the fifteenth century a religious movement had gained prominence in Bengal which held up the illicit and passionate love of Rādhā as a paradigm for the religious life.¹ The sectarian writings of this religious movement reinterpreted the earlier portrayals of Rādhā in light of her parakīyā status. These sectarian authors used the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poetry of preceeding centuries to establish their theological claims.² Prior to the sixteenth century devotional poets wrote without the apologetic zeal of these later authors. The Gītagovinda, for instance, was as much a work of secular poetics as a devotional lyric work.³

Under the impetus of the sixteenth century Bengali saint Caitanya the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa movement developed a sectarian teaching.⁴ The conception of Rādhā was to undergo a process

¹A verse from the anthology Subhāsitataratnakosa of Vidyakara (11th century Bengal) gives an early account of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotion. "The pilgrims in the street...with voices clear and sweet...break the morning slumber of the city folk with the songs of the secret love of Mādhava and Rādhā." An Anthology of Sanskrit Court Poetry, The Subhāsitataratnakosa of Vidyakara, trans. Daniel H.H. Ingalls (Harvard Oriental Series; vol. 44; Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965) p. 287.

²Siegel, op. cit., p. 54.

³Ibid., pp. 178-184.

⁴De, VFM, op. cit., pp. 116-118.

of rationalization by the scholastic followers of Caitanya. Essential to the canon of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas: Jayadeva's Gitagovinda, Vidyāpati's Padavali, Caṇḍīdās' padas, the Kṛṣṇakarnāmṛta of Bilvamaṅgala, the Brahmasaṁhita, and the BHP, was the parakīyodhā portrayal of Rādhā and the gopīs.⁵ By exegeting these texts a general conception of Rādhā was developed. Doctrinal positions which had previously been implicit in poetry were made explicit in doctrine. A theology of the parakīyā Rādhā was developed by the orthodox and tantric Vaiṣṇavas to clarify the devotee's relationship to Kṛṣṇa.

In redefining the literary Rādhā in a theological context the Gosvāmins and Sahajiyas created two varying interpretations of the parakīyodhā doctrine. The Sahajiyas and Gosvāmins associated the parakīyā woman with prema, or selfless love. Rādhā, as the greatest of all parakīyā nāyikās, was identified as the Hlādinī śakti, or the active principle of devotional bliss. This principle of "ecstatic devotion", in the case of the Gosvāmins, or "great bliss", in the Sahajiya cult, was given its highest expression in Rādhā as parakīyodhā nāyikā. The centrality of Rādhā to both cults followed from the superiority of the parakīyā Rādhā. Secondly, other symbols of devotional practice such as the married consorts of Kṛṣṇa were reinterpreted in light of the parakīyā doctrine. The svakīyā consorts were believed to represent selfish love, or kāma.

⁵Ibid., p. 112.

The sectarian image of Rādhā shared a common expression in the devotional poetry of both sects. Although the Sahajiyas and Gosvāmins differed in their doctrinal approaches they both held Rādhā to be the greatest expression of selfless love to Kṛṣṇa. By thoroughly exegeting the early works on Rādhā the Gosvāmins and Sahajiyas reinterpreted Purāṇic, tantric, and poetic literature to favor Rādhā's supremacy as an example of passionate devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

This history of the parodhā theme in doctrine will be considered in three related sectarian movements: the pre-Rādhā Bhāgavatas, the early Gosvāmins Rūpa and Jīva, and the tantric Sahajiyas. Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmin were opposed to the parakīyā in doctrine while Rūpa described Rādhā as such in literature. The Sahajiyas, on the other hand, held this aspect of their doctrine as essential to their practice. Later Bengali Vaiṣṇavas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were to support the parakīyā Rādhā despite the Gosvāmins on account of the influence of the Sahajiyas.

Parakīyā in the Bhāgavata Cult

The Bengali sampradāya patterned their image of Rādhā upon the theology of their predecessors, the South Indian Bhāgavatas (dating roughly between 400-1000 A.D.).⁶ Drawing

⁶Scholars have attempted to identify the South Indian Pinnai, or Nappinai, as an early predecessor of Rādhā, eg. A.K. Majumdar, "A Note on the Development of the Rādhā Cult," op. cit., pp. 232-34. The earliest reference to Pinnai is found

from the BhP narrative the Bengalis included Rādhā as the favored gopī of Kṛṣṇa. And, unlike the gopīs, Rādhā was not merely a figure in a religious allegory, but an actual goddess. Her adultery was conceived by the later Bengalis as fact--to the Bhāgavatas this was metaphorical.

The use of the lovelorn woman as a symbol of the bhakta's relation to Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa has a history predating the Rādhā sect.⁷ As forerunners to the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult the Bhāgavatas allegorized the devotee's relation to Kṛṣṇa as that of a mistress to her lover. In the narrative of the BhP the gopīs flee their homes to make love to Kṛṣṇa. This act of passion by the gopīs was done in the spirit of conjugal love even though it appeared as adultery.

Though parakīyā of Kṛṣṇa according to the letter, the gopīs are svakīyā, faithful and chaste wives, according to the spirit...⁸

This doctrine had only symbolic significance for the Bhāgavatas. The adulteress was not as suited as a married woman for a paradigm of bhakti since she pursued her lover out of lust, or kāma. Selfless love, or prema, could only be

in the 4th century Tamil epic the Śilappadikaram.

"Is Pinnai...so charming that... Viṣṇu....forgets to look at his consort Lakṣmī...?" Śilappadikaram (The Ankle Bracelet) by Prince Ilango Adigaḷ, trans. A. Danielou, (New York: New Directions, 1965) p. 115. The alvars Aṁḍal and Nammalvar make reference to Pinnai as an incarnation of Nīlādevī. It is likely that this Nappinnai is a version of Durgā. See Dennis Hudson, "Pinnai Krishna's Cowherd Wife", paper given at Conference on Radha and the divine Consort, Harvard University, June, 1978.

⁷Charlotte Vaudeville, "Evolution of Love Symbolism in Bhagavatism," Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. 82, New Haven (1962) p. 38.

"devoid of sensual desire" kāmanārahitam, if it was suited to loving Kṛṣṇa.⁹

The Bhāgavata's borrowed the conception of prema from classical Sanskrit literature: Rarely found in early and epic Sanskrit, prema was used to describe the love of a hero and his wife in erotic poetry.¹⁰ In epic literature prema had the connotation of the duty and submission of a married woman to the interests of her husband.¹¹ The Nārada Bhakti Sūtras instruct on the cultivation of prema which is motivated by a sense of duty, not lust.

...one should cultivate love and love alone, which has as its principle in those stages of devotion, which are known as constant service [nityadāsa] and constant wifely conduct [nityakantā].¹²

The Bhakti Sūtras do mention the parakīyā model in reference to the gopīs. But, it continues to say that if one forgets of the Lord's majesty her love will become like the base passion of an adulteress.

Examples do exist, of such perfect expression of Bhakti. Such indeed was the bhakti of the gopīs of Vṛja. Even here, the charge that they did not recognize the divine glory of the Lord, does not hold good. Had they lacked this knowledge of the

⁸Ibid.

⁹The Bhakti Sūtras of Nārada, trans. N. Sinha (The Sacred Books of the Hindus; vol. vii; pt. 1; Allahabad: Panini Office, 1911), vs. iv. 54, and Vaudeville, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁰Vaudeville, op. cit., p. 39.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Nārada Bhakti Sūtras, op. cit., p. 26.

Divinity of the object of their love, their love would have been similar to the base passion of a mistress for her paramour.

There; i.e., in that profane love of the mistress for her paramour, her happiness does not at all consist in the happiness of the other.¹³

The Bhāgavata cult practiced a form of devotion which lacked the frank erotic and illicit symbolism of the later Bengali Vaiṣnavas and in which the supremacy of the Lord was emphasized. In the Bhāgavata's mythology there is no mutuality in the gopi's love for Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, in a position of lordship (aiśvarya) to the devotee, remained aloof from the longings of his bhaktas.

The Rādhā of Bengal was an innovation to Kṛṣṇa bhakti in that she was considered parakīyā. With the elevation in status of Rādhā occurred a change in Kṛṣṇa bhakti. The gopis, whom Kṛṣṇa loved equally, were replaced by the individual, secretive, and personal love of Rādhā.

...love gains not in depth, if it is diverted to others. If the Lord could at once renounce all ties with other Gopis, then alone could he be said to have the deepest love for Rādhā. Hence the Lord took Radha away.¹⁴

This passage from the 16th century Bengali Vaiṣnava text CC reinterprets the BhP account of the special gopī whom

¹³Swāmi Tyāgīśānanda (trans.), Aphorisms on the Gospel of Divine Love of Nārada Bhakti Sūtras. (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1955), pp. 6-7.

¹⁴Sri Sri Caitanya Charitāmṛita by Krishnadāsa Kavirāja Goswāmīn, trans. N.K. Ray (6 vols; Calcutta: N.K. Ray, 1959) Madhya viii, II, p. 155, vol 2.

Kṛṣṇa takes into the forest away from the other gopis.

Although this favored gopi is not named in the BhP, the Bengali Vaisnavas interpret this to be Rādhā.¹⁵ In the original narrative this gopi asks Kṛṣṇa to carry her on his back.

...and the Gopi whom Kṛṣṇa (in preference to the other Gopis) leaving others in the forest, had brought there, now began to regard herself as the most beautiful of all women. Thought she to herself, "the beloved Lord resorts to me only, abandoning all other Gopis who too love him."¹⁶

To remove this gopi's pride in love Kṛṣṇa disappears from sight. Her friends find her crying, abandoned by Kṛṣṇa.¹⁷ The myth displays the results of taking for granted one's familiarity with Kṛṣṇa. The Bengali Vaisnavas, on the other hand, believed Kṛṣṇa to be uncontrollably infatuated with Rādhā. Through Rādhā the bhakta gains an intimacy with Kṛṣṇa which cannot be conveyed by the symbols of married love.

Rādhā in Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmin's Theology

The major theologians of the Gaudīya sampradāya, the six Gosvāmins, created the definitive expression of Rādhā as the principle of impassioned devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Writing in the language of the "great tradition", Sanskrit, the Gosvāmins attempted to establish the cult of Rādhā as an orthodox sect.

¹⁵S. Bhattacharya, The Philosophy of the 'Sri Mad Bhāgavata (2 vols.; Calcutta: Ranajit Ray, 1960), II, p.

¹⁶BhP, op. cit., vs. x.30.35-36.

¹⁷Ibid., vs. 30.40-41.

The Gosvāmins legitimized the relationship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in their religious doctrines in order to establish their teachings as authoritative. Their claim to orthodoxy was problematic since the extant literature involving Radha was composed as erotic poetry describing her as parakīyodhā. A new theology and mythology were needed to create a collection of authoritative writings for the sect, and to defend Rādhā's role as the favored consort of Kṛṣṇa.¹⁸ The disciples of the sixteenth century Bengali saint Caitanya, Rūpa Gosvāmin and his nephew Jīva Gosvāmin, authored dramas, philosophical works, and literary anthologies defending Rādhā's place in Kṛṣṇa devotion.¹⁹

The Gosvāmins held views on the parakīyodhā Rādhā which differed significantly from the earlier and later traditions of Bengal Vaisnavism. In exegeting various texts to theologize Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotional lyrics they deemphasized the parakīyā Rādhā and favored the svakīyā. Rūpa and Jīva denied aspects of the parakīyā doctrine which hinted of immorality. While praising Rādhā as the dearest consort of Kṛṣṇa they went to great lengths to show that her illicit love for Kṛṣṇa was a product of Kṛṣṇa's māyā.

¹⁸De, VFM, op. cit., pp. 114-119. Under the "inspiration" of Caitanya the Gosvāmins authored the official theology of Bengal Vaisnavism.

¹⁹S.K. De, "The Bhakti Rasa Sāstra of Bengal Vaisnavism", Indian Historical Quarterly viii, no. 4 (December 1932), pp. 644-45.

Both theologians attempted to create a thorough philosophy of devotion by reinterpreting the BhP account of the gopis, Lakṣmī, Rukminī, and the queens in light of the Rādhā of devotional lyrics. The exaltation of Rādhā necessarily came at the exclusion of Kṛṣṇa's svakīyā consorts. Rādhā is praised as a symbol of selfless love (prema) while the svakīyā consorts are compared to her as examples of selfish love (kāma). The terms kāma and prema, which were used interchangeably in the GG and devotional poetry were distinguished as opposing concepts by these theologians.²⁰

The Theology of Rūpa Gosvāmin

Rūpa Gosvāmin, the most prolific of the six Gosvāmins, primarily wrote on literary and aesthetic questions. Through his dramas the Vidagdhamādhava, Lalitāmādhava, and Dāna Keli Kaumudī Rūpa fully elaborates on Rādhā's marriage to Abhimanyu in displaying his theory of parakīyā bhāva. The ambiguity of Rādhā's relationship to Kṛṣṇa is never sufficiently resolved by Rūpa. The UNM states that any man who loves a parakīyā woman violates the laws of dharma.²¹ Kṛṣṇa is not an ordinary lover, according to Rūpa, so cannot be judged by regular standards of morality. Since he is the supreme lord he cannot be judged as having actually committed adultery.²²

²⁰Siegel, op. cit., p. 69.

²¹Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 56.

²²Ibid.

Another attempt is made by Rūpa to reconcile the problem of immorality by referring to a common practice in ancient Indian society. The gopīs and Rādhā, in his argument, had actually been married to Kṛṣṇa by gandharva rites--a marriage based on mutual consent without traditional ritual.²³ Such a form of marriage would seem inconsequential when compared to the brāhma marriage which requires the sanctions of a priest. The gandharva marriage is a conventional method in poetry and drama whereby the poet lends legitimacy to the tryst of his hero with a parakīyā maiden through marriage. Rūpa further states that in the unmanifest realm of Goloka Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are married in the gandharva manner. It is only in the earthly manifest realm that Rādhā appears as an adulteress through the spell of Kṛṣṇa's yogamāyā.²⁴

The setting of Rūpa's dramas can be considered the earthly "manifest" aspect of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's love. The dramas Lalitāmādhava and Vidagdhamādhava set the selfless impassioned love (prema) of Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa into conflict with the possessive selfish love (kāma) of Rādhā's rival. The rival, usually an incarnation of Lakṣmī, makes vain attempts to dis-

²³A.L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India, A Survey of the History of the Indian Sub-Continent Before the Coming of the Muslims (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 169-70. "This form of marriage was often clandestine...Gandharva marriage which often might amount to no more than a liaison, was surprisingly respected."

²⁴De, VFM, op. cit., p. 349, fn. 3.

tract Kṛṣṇa from Rādhā. The rival insists on marrying Kṛṣṇa while Rādhā faces the chastisement of family and husband in order to meet clandestinely with Kṛṣṇa. These works imply that Rādhā's relationship to Kṛṣṇa is representative of the proper devotional relationship to Kṛṣṇa.

The first major dramatic composition of Rūpa's, the Vidagdhamādhava, portrays Candravallī as desirous of Kṛṣṇa for her husband. Rādhā sorrowfully longs for a tryst with Kṛṣṇa impeded by her impotent husband Abhimanyu and her mother-in-law Jaṭilā.²⁵ The culminating act of the Vidagdhamādhava depicts a farcical scene in which Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are united despite Candravallī's selfish motives. Kṛṣṇa, disguised as the goddess Gaurī, awaits a secret tryst with Rādhā at a temple.²⁶ Their secret meeting foils the plans of Candravallī to join with Kṛṣṇa and Abhimanyu to take Rādhā from Vraja.

Candravallī must necessarily lose out to Rādhā according to Rūpa's conception of the ujjvalarasa since the love which Candravallī feels towards Kṛṣṇa is like that of a wife toward a husband. Although not married to Kṛṣṇa Candravallī is a maiden who regards Kṛṣṇa in his aspect of lordship (aśvarya). Her relation to him has the quality of respect (ādhara). In describing Candravallī's love Rūpa compares it to clarified

²⁵De, VFM, op. cit., p. 584.

²⁶Ibid., p. 584, and Majumdar, KHL, op. cit., p. 212.

butter (ghṛta sneha).²⁷ All of Candravālī's actions prove that her love for Kṛṣṇa is not sincere. When she becomes jealous of Kṛṣṇa she exhibits udāttamāna, or jealousy which is unbecoming of prema.²⁸ This "dignified" or "noble" pique which Candravālī displays is selfishly motivated. At a later stage of love with Kṛṣṇa, known as rāga in devotional theology, Candravālī does not express or show her love for Kṛṣṇa.²⁹ All of her actions show a degree of duplicity.

The love which Rādhā holds for Kṛṣṇa threatens her own marriage to Abhimanyu. Approaching Kṛṣṇa of her free will Rādhā regards him as her lover, not her lord. Her love is madhu sneha--like honey.³⁰ Rādhā's love shows no deception. The complete sincerity and devotion of Rādhā makes her love like "honey". Both ghee and honey are apt metaphors for these consorts.

...Ghṛta sneha, constant fondness, solidifying like Ghee, but impotent in itself in producing the taste [or the rasa of affectionate attachment to Kṛṣṇa]...

Mādhū sneha, constant fondness, like honey, strong in itself and potent in producing its sweetness.³¹


²⁷ Donna Wulff, "A Sanskrit Portrait: Rādhā in the Plays of Rūpa Gosvāmin," Paper given at conference on Rādhā and the Divine Consort, Harvard University, June, 1978, p. 14.

²⁸ Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin, trans. T.S.B.H. Bon Maharaj (vol. 1; Vrindaban: Institute of Oriental Philosophy, 1965) Intro., p. xxxv.

²⁹ Ibid., p. xxxvii.

³⁰ Wulff, op. cit., p. 14.

³¹ De, "The Bhakti Rasa Śāstra of Bengal Vaisnavism", op. cit., p. 682.



Rūpa distinguishes the consorts of Kṛṣṇa's adult life in Mathurā and Dvārakā from his childhood and adolescent loves in Vraja. The adulterous gopis of Vraja are known as samarthā consorts, or the "competent" consorts.³² This relationship is the only means capable of cultivating mahābhāva, or the highest form of devotional love. The wives of Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā are samañjasā, or proper and reasonable consorts. They express love to Kṛṣṇa which is done out of self interest as much as it is done for their love for him. Since this love is not as completely self sacrificing as the love of the samarthā consorts it is not conducive to mahābhāva.³³

Rūpa sets up a comparison between the two līlās (Dvārakā/Mathurā, Vraja) of Kṛṣṇa in his Lalita Mādhava. Through this drama it becomes apparent that the earlier relationship of Kṛṣṇa with the unmarried consorts held a greater emotional appeal for Kṛṣṇa. The Vrndāvana līlā is interpreted by the Gosvāmins as the free, unstructured, and carefree realm of Kṛṣṇa's youth where adultery served as the model relationship of the gopīs as devotees of the lord.

Both Rādhā and Candravālī are daughters of the Vindhya mountain, brought to Vraja by the demoness Pūtānā.³⁴ The

³² Sāra Saṅgraha, A Work on Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism Attributed to Rūpakavīraja, ed. K.G. Sastri (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1949), pp. xx-xxi.

³³ Ibid., p. xxiii, and BRS, op. cit., pp. 272-273.

³⁴ Majumdar, KHL, op. cit., p. 213.

drama is not limited to the Vraja līlā but includes the move by Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā and Dvārakā.

When Kṛṣṇa leaves Vraja for Mathurā Rādhā is so overwhelmed by grief that she commits suicide by jumping into the Yamunā river.³⁵ Rādhā passes into the sun and becomes reborn as Satyabhāmā, a princess of the BhP who is a rival consort of Rukminī.³⁶ The Lalitāmādhava follows the BhP account in which Satyabhāmā is a gift of Surya to king Satrājit who is then given to Kṛṣṇa.³⁷ In this manner Rādhā is identified with a married consort of the Dvārakā līlā.

Candravālī is identified with Rukminī and is abducted by her brother Rukmin to marry Śiśupāla. This narrative also follows the BhP account and Candravālī-Rukminī is kidnapped by Kṛṣṇa.³⁸ The gopīs of Vraja are likewise carried away by the demon Nāraka to become the 16,000 wives of Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā.³⁹

Although there is a complete identification of Kṛṣṇa's gopī consorts with the queens of Mathurā the new roles which they assume are not comparable to their previous relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā, now a queen, does not hold Kṛṣṇa's love

³⁵Ibid., p. 214.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷BhP, op. cit., vs. X.56.

³⁸Ibid., vs. X.53.

³⁹Majumdar, op. cit., p. 214.

as she once did in Vraja. As a modern commentator on Rūpa's theology claims,

This identity between Satyabhāmā and Rādhā supplies evidence to raise an inference of identity in their emotional attitudes of love: But this is a mere supposed identity and, really speaking, the two sets of līlas are fundamentally different according as they took place at Dvārakā and Vraja.⁴⁰

Kṛṣṇa continually longs for the earlier days in Vraja when he sported with the gopīs and Rādhā.

While in Mathurā Nārada directs a group of actors to perform a play on Vṛndāvana to keep Kṛṣṇa from becoming disconsolate.⁴¹ In the midst of the play Kṛṣṇa, now a princely ruler, forgets himself and runs towards the stage thinking himself a gopī. Even though the parakīyā gopīs are now married to Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā as various queens and princesses, they no longer hold the same attraction for him as svakīyā consorts.

Other incidents arise in the Lalitāmādhava making the past history of Vṛndāvana immanent in Dvārakā: (1) Remembered love appears throughout as in the ninth act Kṛṣṇa reveals cave frescoes of the Vṛndāvana līlā with the gopīs to Satyabhāmā (Rādhā) while in Dvārakā. (2) A new Vṛndāvana (navāvṛndāvana) is constructed in the midst of Dvārakā where Rukminī (Candra-valī) is queen. (3) Satyabhāmā (Rādhā) is at the mercy of her

⁴⁰Sāra Saṅgraha, op. cit., p. xxxiv.

⁴¹Wulff, op. cit., p. 12.

jealous rival Rukminī until Kṛṣṇa realizes that Satyabhāmā is Rādhā.⁴²

The major thrust of this work is that Rādhā as Satyabhāmā retains her superiority to her samañjasā rival Candravālī. Nonetheless, Rādhā's essential nature can only be expressed in Vraja as a parakīyā woman. Kṛṣṇa desires only to return to the playful and free illicit love of Vṛndāvana forest. The Lalitamādhava, as most devotional plays of the Gosvāmins, well displays,

The superiority of the first and free adolescent love for Rādhā at Vṛndāvana, for which Kṛṣṇa secretly longs and languishes, even though he is happy in wedded love with Satyabhāmā in Dvārakā.⁴³

Rādhā in Jīva Gosvāmin's Metaphysics

Jīva Gosvāmin presents us with a conservative interpretation of the parakīyodhā Rādhā. He cites rasasāstra which is opposed to the parakīyā consort. The vulgarity of the adharmic portrayal of Rādhā, according to Jīva's Bhāgavat Saṁdarbha, obstructs the cultivation of the erotic rasa.

adharmamayātvapratītau tvaślīlatayā vyāhanyata
eva rasah⁴⁴

⁴²Wulff, op. cit., p. 12.

⁴³De, VFM, op. cit., p. 623, and Majumdar, KHL, op. cit., p. 216.

⁴⁴De, VFM, op. cit., p. 349.

Jīva further states that the BhP account of the gopīs does not support the parakīyā position. The gopīs, he claims, were never actually married to the gopas since their marriages were never consummated. The gopas were deceived by Kṛṣṇa's yogamāyā to imagine that the gopīs were theirs.⁴⁵

Jīva attributes the parakīyā status of the gopīs to the māyā of the manifest (prakata) līlā of Kṛṣṇa. The historical manifestation of Rādhā's sport with Kṛṣṇa resembles parakīyā through vidyāmāyā, or the illusory power of divine sports. In vidyālīlā Kṛṣṇa is the husband of Rādhā. The husbands of the gopīs are under the spell of avidyāmāyā which constitutes the illusory social realm.⁴⁶ Only in the avidyālīlā, or the manifest prakata līlā, does parakīyā have any social consequences. In the unmanifest (aprakata) Goloka, or eternal heaven, Kṛṣṇa is always married to Rādhā, but when manifest in history for the sake of sport they appear unmarried.

According to his Prīti Saṁdarbha the gopīs and Rādhā appear to be other's wives (parakīyāmānah), "to foster the intensity of the sentiment by placing an apparent or imaginary obstacle in the way of their perfect realization of love."⁴⁷ Denying the poetic tradition of illicit love in Rādhā's por-

⁴⁵Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 202.

⁴⁶Bhattacharya, The Philosophy of the Śrī Mad Bhāgavata, op. cit., II, p. 107.

⁴⁷De, VFM, op. cit., p. 409.

trayal, Jīva transcendentalizes the otherwise earthly Rādhā. The human and earthly Rādhā is deprecated as an illusion.

In Jīva's Samdarbhas Kṛṣṇa's consorts are manifestations of his own form or nature (svarūpaśakti). By creating his consorts through his own nature Kṛṣṇa "realizes himself in his own bliss."⁴⁸ Jīva proclaims Rādhā to be the dearest consort of Kṛṣṇa since she embodies the highest potency of Kṛṣṇa's aspect of bliss. The feminine creative power which radiates from Kṛṣṇa as Rādhā is called the Hlādinī śakti.⁴⁹ Since Rādhā is innately similar to Kṛṣṇa, being of his own nature (svarūpa), it follows in Jīva's thought that Rādhā is his own (svakiyā).⁵⁰ Jīva skirts the issue of parakiyā by describing Rādhā's role as the creative principles of Hlādinī, rather than emphasizing her mythic uniqueness as a parakiyā consort.

Rādhā is then compared to the married consorts of Kṛṣṇa since they essentially derive from the Hlādinī śakti. Jīva establishes the centrality of Rādhā by claiming her ontological superiority to married consorts. The CC of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja summarizes Jīva's teaching on Rādhā's

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 281.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Bhattacharya, The Philosophy of the Śrī Mad Bhāgavata, op. cit., II, pp. 103-04.

creative power. Rādhā is believed to be the source of all the loves of Kṛṣṇa.

The beloved consorts of Lord Krishna are of three kinds: (1) the Lakshmis (2) the Queens (3) and the milkmaids of Vraja who are the cream of all. All these consorts proceed from Sri Radhika.

Just as the incarnating principle Lord Krishna causes his incarnations, so the integral principle Sri Radhika is the cause of all these consorts.

The Lakshmis are her partial manifestations. And the queens are her images and reflections. The Lakshmis are parts of her Vaibhava Vilasa. And the Queens are her prabhava Prakasa.

The Vraja devis are of diverse appearance and nature. They are her satellites and the instruments of enjoyment of rasa.⁵¹

There is no longer a distinction made between the parakīyā and svakīyā forms of devotional sentiments. Intimacy with Kṛṣṇa is established by the relationship the various consorts take to the principle of the Hlādinī śakti. An analogy is made in the above passage with the sun. —Rādhā and the gopīs are the sun. The Lakṣmīs (Rukminī, Satyabhāmā), are likened to the sun's rays. The Queens are merely reflections of the sun's light. It is the likeness the consorts take to Rādhā which imbues them with the potential to love and be loved by Kṛṣṇa.

In overemphasizing Rādhā's divinity and ignoring her humanity Jīva attempts to eliminate all immoral aspects of her love for Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā remains the embodiment of impassioned love, but the Hlādinī śakti cannot be considered parakīyā.

Although Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmin's works were canonized

⁵¹CC, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 45.

as the authoritative teachings of the Bengalis, their teachings on the parakīyā aspect of Rādhā were not to remain unchanged. Religious figures in the early and post-Caitanya cult held strongly to the illicit side of Rādhā's love. Contemporary to the Gosvāmins these "parakīyāvadins" came out in opposition to the svakīyā Rādhā. Their reasons for doing so were stated from the doctrinal position of the tantric Sahajīya Vaiṣnavas. The relationship of the Orthodox Gosvāmins to the Sahajīyas was close--each borrowed elements of the others' theology.⁵² The Sahajīyas stated their opposition to the svakīyā position through showing the inherent superiority of the parakīyā Rādhā as a symbol of tantric sādhana. Reasserting the validity of the parakīyā doctrine the Sahajīyas influenced the later Orthodox Bengālī Vaiṣnava tradition.

Rādhā in Sahajīya Vaiṣnavism

The orthodox doctrine of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotion represented by the Gosvāmins resembles the Sahajīya sectarian position on Rādhā. Both shared the common poetic imagery of the parakīyā Woman found in Jayadeva's, Vidyāpati's and Candīdās' lyrics. Doctrinally the Sahajīyas were at odds with the Gosvāmins in their use of the parakīyā image.

The orthodox Vaiṣnavas believed Rādhā represented man's essential relationship to Kṛṣṇa. It follows from this

⁵²Dimock, PHM, op. cit., see Chapt. 1, "The Vaiṣnava-Sahajīya Synthesis".

that religious practice was fulfilled in eternal longing in separation from Kṛṣṇa, not in eternal union. The incomprehensible difference in non-difference (acintyabhedābheda) of man and Kṛṣṇa meant that the devotee shared in Kṛṣṇa's nature but remained ever apart from him.⁵³ The bhakta would never lose sight of his individual identity in blissful union with Kṛṣṇa. Orthodox devotion to Kṛṣṇa is characterized by man's eternal separation from Kṛṣṇa.

The parakīyā Rādhā in Sahajīya doctrine was the only vehicle by which the devotee could experience the great bliss (mahārasa) of union with Kṛṣṇa. As most tantric traditions the Sahajīya attempts to realize the union of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, through reenacting that union individually between a man and woman.

Woman participates in the nature of Rādhā and man in the nature of Kṛṣṇa: hence the 'truth' concerning the loves of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā can be known only in the body itself, and this knowledge on the plane of 'corporeality' has a universal metaphysical validity.⁵⁴

The correspondence between Rādhā and the female partner of a Sahajīya practitioner must be complete. The Rādhā of poetry was parakīyā so the nāyikā of tantric sādhana must likewise be parakīyā--the microcosm must reflect the macrocosm. In actual practice the female ritual partner, or nāyikā, must be as similar as possible to Rādhā.

⁵⁴Mircea Eliade, Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom (Bollingen Series LVI; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 265.

These are the signs of the nāyikā: she is of greatest beauty and has a husband at home; her qualities are equal to her beauty, most wonderful.⁵⁵

The tantric Sahajiya parakīyā doctrine had greater social consequences than the orthodox position. Not only were the Sahajiyas faced with a literature which condoned love with a parakīyā woman but this socially reprehensible symbol was used as a model for religious practice.

The necessity of the parakīyā sādhanā in the face of social censure is well described in a hagiography on the Vaiṣṇava Sahajiya poet Candīdās.⁵⁶ According to this legend the poet Candīdās was a brāhmaṇa temple priest whose ritual partner was a low caste washer maid Rāmī.⁵⁷ Despite social chastisement from fellow villagers Candīdās remained with Rāmī. The goddess Bashuḷī, whom Candīdās worshipped, instructed him on how to view his love for Rāmī.

The woman you love, you must not possess. Rāminī, the washermaid represents Rādhā herself within her form. She is the meaning of your devotional songs.⁵⁸

The goddess tells Rāmī,

Transplant your soul in Candīdās
To reach the heaven,
The changeless land.

⁵⁵Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 235, quoted and translated from Nāyikā Sādhana Tika.

⁵⁶Dimock, PHM, op. cit., pp. 55-67.

⁵⁷Bhattacharya, Love Songs of Candīdās, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 20.

Let loving and prayer
 Unite in joy:
 In Rādhā and Krishna
 And their eternal love.⁵⁹

Adharmic qualities became a necessary aspect of their love. The joy of union in Sahajiya practice is heightened by the knowledge that the woman is parakiyā. Accompanying this illicit but sacred union of man and woman is the arousal of selfless love, or prema. The experience of prema can only arise in the company of a parakiyā woman since by its very nature the love of a parakiyā woman enhances the spiritual nature of maithuna in sādhana. The actual significance of the parakiyā doctrine for the Sahajiyas is twofold: first it reflects the eternal paradigm of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and secondly it is conducive to the arousal of prema in a social setting.

In defence of their position the Sahajiyas have put forth the following reasons for the superiority of the parakiyā woman.⁶⁰

1) The risk involved with adultery enhances that love. A man takes for granted his relationship with a svakiyā woman. There is no challenge or barrier in sustaining a relationship with a svakiyā woman as there is in an adulterous relationship.

2) All love originates in a relationship with a parakiyā woman. Before marriage a woman belongs to her father

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Manindra M. Bose, The Post Caitanya Sahajia Cult of Bengal (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1930), pp. 46-55.

so is parakiyā. At the dawn of love (purvarāga), during courtship, one feels love toward a parakiyā woman even though she is only a maiden. Married love has its origins in the love of a parakiyā maiden.

3) Because of marriage's routine nature it becomes dull in time. A relationship with a parakiyā woman is continually changing since it consists of brief clandestine meetings. Sanskrit erotic poetry contains many examples of marriage which has grown dull, as displayed in the Amaru'satakā.

Formerly we two had an undivided body; there after
You were the lover and I your despairing beloved.
Now you are my husband and I your spouse.
What else? This is the outcome of my accursed life
Which is hard as adamant?⁶¹

4) The compulsory nature of love in marriage lacks freedom and spontaneity. The svakiyā woman's duties are outlined in the sāstras allowing her no freedom to express her love to anyone other than her husband. The parakiyā woman freely chooses to love the man she desires. It is only to sustain dharma and attain merit that the wife loves her husband. The parakiyā woman loves for the sake of love.

5) Prema cannot grow in the security of marital love. Only in the anxiety of separation can prema develop. The parakiyā woman is continually kept away from her lover by the fear of discovery. An adulterous relationship, as described

⁶¹ Amaru'satakam: A Centum of Ancient Love Lyrics of Amaru, trans. and ed. C.P. Devadhar (Poona Oriental Series; no. 101; Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1959), p. 97.

in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa literature, consists of infrequent, clandestine, and secretive trysts. Parakīyā implies constant separation (viraha) from the beloved. In the Vaiṣṇava tradition prema can only arise in separation.

If there is no parakīyā there can be no birth of bhāva. It is in fear of separation that grief (artī) and passionate longing (anurāga) grow. To svakīyās there is no fear of separation...and without anurāga there is no prema.⁶²

As Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, or the Sahajīya sādhaka and his nāyikā, are kept apart the uncertainty of their next union creates an ever present anxiety. The eventual bliss of union is enhanced by separation. The orthodox Vaiṣṇavas would likewise hold this last belief but would insist that separation was permanent and that the goal was separation not union. Thus Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa feel anxiety at the thought of Kṛṣṇa's departure even when together (premavalcittya).⁶³

These rationalizations of the superiority of the parakīyā woman's love in Sahajīya doctrine, drawn from the poetic imagery of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa lyrics, provide us with an understanding of the conception of love embodied in Rādhā. This love sought to escape from the restrictive nature of marriage. Prema expressed itself as a contradiction to marital love.

⁶²Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 211. Quoted from Durlabhasāra of Locanadāsa.

⁶³Dimock and Levertov, op. cit., p. xix.

When Rādhā leaves her husband to love Kṛṣṇa she violates dharma for the sake of prema. Metaphorically Rādhā demonstrates that all social duties are relativised in the experience of prema. Not only does prema undermine traditional marriage in literature but when applied as a metaphor in religious practices it rejects traditional forms of religiosity.

The image of the married consort (svakīyā) is taken to mean any religious practice one carries out for his own self interest. Those who pursue religious goals through works (karmin), and knowledge (jñānin), are likened to svakīyā women; their motivation is self interested lust (kāma).⁶⁴

Leave off everything adopted on the principles of the utility of work and knowledge, and give up the practices prescribed by the sastras. Do not also follow the Vedic religion, for that is also based upon the svakīyā principle.⁶⁵

The implications of the parakīyā doctrine include one's entire orientation to religious practice.

The Sahajiyas distinguish between love for love's sake and love for worldly ends. Kāma, translated as a wish, desirous love, and lust, is well known as one of the four ends of life. Vātsyāyana's Kāma Sūtra states that all love (kāma) must be directed toward a practical end.⁶⁶ The seduction of another's wife is done for one's self interest. The

⁶⁴Dimock, PHM, op. cit., pp. 213-14.

⁶⁵Bose, op. cit., p. 80. Translated from Ratnasāra of Kṛṣṇadāsa.

⁶⁶Kāma Sūtra, op. cit., pp. 30-34.

Sahajiyas would agree with Vātsyāyana's definition of kāma as self seeking lust, but they would offer an alternative definition of love which is not divorced from sexual impulse.

The CC quotes the Gautamiya Tantra,

'The love of the Gopis is termed as prema. So the Lord's devotees like Uddhava yearn after it.' Kāma and prema have got different characteristics, as iron and gold are different in nature.

The desire of gratification of one's own senses is kāma. And the desire to give pleasure, to the sense of Lord Krishna is prema; kāma has for its object only the gratification of one's own senses.⁶⁷

Although the tantric sādhana is carried out through sexual intercourse with a parakīyā woman there is no fulfillment of personal desire. The Sahajiyas realize that kāma is man's natural inclination. By taking the "natural means", (thus the name "Sahajiya"), the sexual drive is transformed (āropa) from kāma to prema.⁶⁸ The male, as Kṛṣṇa, desires to unite with his sakti, as Rādhā. By merging one's individual desire in the larger absolute bliss, realizable in the eternal paradigm Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, one transforms kāma to prema.

This further implies that the tantric conception of prema involves an ascetic denial of procreativity. Those things in life which create attachment and involvement in society are all manifestations of kāma. Prema is love which does not lead to procreation. Among Kṛṣṇa's epithets are

⁶⁷CC, op. cit., p. 53. Adi 1v., and Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 162.

⁶⁸Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 164.

Acyuta, or the unfallen one. This is interpreted by the Oriya Bhagavata Purāṇa as "one whose seed is unfallen".⁶⁹

Kṛṣṇa does not spill his seed as the tantric sādhaka, since he experiences prema not kāma for Rādhā.

The parakīyā relationship is not directed towards the fulfillment of worldly ends, it only seeks ultimate bliss.

Rādhā, as the symbol of prema, has no part in procreative fertility or family life. The svakīyā relationship, which is based on self interest, has only procreation as its end.⁷⁰

The tantrics would never abandon the parakīyā Rādhā in favor of the svakīyā as the Gosvamins did. If there was to be a complete identity between the individual nāyikā and the absolute feminine Rādhā the former had to mimic the latter in sādhana. Love had to break through the limitations of the world of samsāra by violating social order. Only adultery could break with dharma--which stifled man's awareness of the mahārasa.

⁶⁹F.A. Marglin, "Types of Sexual Union and their Implicit Meaning", Paper given at Conference on Rādhā and the Divine Consort, Harvard University, June 1978, p. 9.

⁷⁰Dimock, PHM, op. cit., p. 213.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

Of the various themes which surrounded Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa devotional literature it was the subject of Rādhā's marital status which became the subject of greatest debate in sixteenth and seventeenth century Bengali Vaiṣṇavism.¹ Outside of Bengal the parakīyā Rādhā did not gain prominence. In Hindi speaking areas Rādhā was considered svakīyā, (Surdās and Nanddās), while in the south Kṛṣṇa's consort Rukminī was favored.² The parakīyā portrayal of Rādhā tells us something of the distinctive nature of bhakti in the Gaudīya saṁpradāya. This theme remained significant in Bengali devotional literature for various historical and theological reasons. For the authors of this literature parakīyā was an appropriate symbol for religious devotion.

As a literary motif in the poetry of Jayadeva, Vidyāpati, and Candīdās parakīyā served as an effective psychological means to create the frenzied love of prema. It was to this end that the Orthodox Vaiṣṇava poets held to the tradition of the parakīyā Rādhā.

¹Dimock, PHM, op. cit., pp. 208-9.
In 1717 a debate was held at the court of King Nabab Jafara Khan between the supporters of the svakīyā and parakīyā interpreters of the gopīs. The subject of the debate dealt with the interpretation of the gopīs marital status on the basis of the BhP, Caitanya's teachings, the Gosvāmin's writings, and Śrīdharaśvāmin's commentary on the BhP. The parakīyāvādins unanimously won the debate.

²Majundar, KHL, op. cit., pp. 227-28, and Majundar, "A Note on the Development of Rādhā Cult", op. cit., p. 231.

The poet expressed his religious experience of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in poetic convention using his own experience of love. There was no distinction made between human sexual love and the divine love of Kṛṣṇa. The Gītagovinda for instance was both a secular erotic poem and a devotional lyric.³

Skill in the arts of the Gandharvas, meditation consecrated to Viṣṇu, playful-creation in poems which are literary works on the truth of the discrimination in erotics--may wise people joyfully purely understand all that according to the Sri Gītagovinda of the poet and scholar Jayadeva whose soul is solely directed to Kṛṣṇa.

Jayadeva takes his knowledge of erotics and directly applies it in devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

In Sanskrit erotic poetry it was known that the most passionate love is felt towards the parakīyā woman. While separated the lovers experience great anxiety in their unfulfilled love. The nature of adultery made the love in union of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa an impossible goal. The continual separation caused by their adultery is intentional in that a marriage would negate the passion they felt for one another. The long and arduous suffering that Rādhā must endure in Vṛndāvana is part of the love she feels for Kṛṣṇa. The Gītagovinda teaches that the goal of their relationship is the pain of separation. Vidyāpati's and Candīdās' padas repeat the same

³Siegal, Sacred and Profane Dimensions of Love, op. cit., p. 29.

⁴Ibid., GG, vs. xii.28.

theme by concentrating on the continual love in separation of the divine couple. A verse by Vidyāpati claims that this love is essentially suffering.

May none other be born to this world. But if it must be, let it not be a girl that is born. But if a girl must be born, let her not know the agony that is called "love".⁵

Rādhā laments her love for Kṛṣṇa. Knowing that complete union with Kṛṣṇa is impossible because of her marriage to another man Rādhā longs only to be free of her suffering. Rādhā's desire is created by her craving for that which is unobtainable--Kṛṣṇa. The obstruction of her desire, adultery increases her desire.

The devotee longs for Kṛṣṇa as Rādhā does. Bhakti is a continual awareness of man's separation from Kṛṣṇa while in the midst of passionate longing for union. Life without the love of Kṛṣṇa is likened to marriage. While one is bound to the world of samsāra his love is directed towards the objects of the world. Once one breaks his social ties to the world, as a woman commits adultery, he is free to go to his true love: Kṛṣṇa.

Adultery in erotic mysticism was not limited to the Bengali Vaiṣnavas nor the Indian traditions. In India and Europe the metaphor of human love was used to express man's longing for the divine. This imagery is expressed in the

⁵Dimock and Levertov, In Praise of Krishna, op. cit., p. 46.

Kannada devotional lyrics of the Virāṣaiva saint Mahādevīyakka. Although of a South Indian 'Saiva sect Mahādevīyakka (12th century) used the same imagery of Sanskrit erotic poetry as the Bengali Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poets. As a woman Mahādevīyakka found that she had to reject traditional social roles in order to devote herself to 'Siva. In this verse she speaks of her husband karma.

I have maya for mother-in-law;
the world for father-in-law;
three brothers-in-law, like tigers;

and the husband's thoughts
are full of laughing women;
no god this man.

And I cannot cross the sister-in-law.

But I will
give this wench the slip
and go cuckold my husband with Hara, my lord.

My mind is my maid:
by her kindness, I join
my Lord,
my utterly beautiful Lord
from the mountain peaks,
my Lord white as jasmine,
and I will make him
my good husband.

Through the aid of her sakhi, or her mind, she is united to her true lord.

In devoting herself to 'Siva Mahādevīyakka realizes that she takes on a goal which is unfulfillable in her life. Never can she eternally unite with her lord. She finds it is

preferable to remain apart in order to truly love him.

Better than meeting
and mating all the time
is the pleasure of mating once
after being far apart.

When he's away
I cannot wait
to get a glimpse of him.

Friend, when will I have it
both ways,
be with him
yet not with him,
my lord white as jasmine?⁸

Mahādevīyakka also feels that love in separation is superior to love in union. It is in her adultery that this becomes possible.

In a study of the heretical Cathar sect and the poetry of the medieval French troubadors Denis de Rougemont isolates a phenomenon similar to that of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa poetry. The Romance of Tristan and Iseult, according to de Rougemont, is a metaphorical account of the mystical "Church of Love" which sought a purification of the individual through passionate love.⁹ This love represented by adultery,

...never does thrill Tristan so wildly as when he is parted from his "lady". This can be accounted for by elementary psychology, but the point here is that it represents the anguish undergone in a purifying askesis. We have seen that in the romance the repeated partings of the lovers answer to an altogether internal necessity of their passion. Iseult

⁸Ibid., p. 140.

⁹Denis de Rougemont, Love in the Western World, New York: Pantheon Books, 1940 reprinted (New York: Harper and Row, 1974) pp. 75-82.

is a woman beloved, but she is also more than this: she is a symbol of luminous love. When Tristan wanders far away from her, his love for her waxes, and the more he is afflicted.¹⁰

Romantic love represented in the metaphor of adultery becomes a means to strip one of worldly attachments. The love of Tristan and Iseult, like that of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, ignores social propriety removing the lovers from the world. Their love becomes a form of purifying asceticism. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa purify their love through the trials of separation.

The Bengali Vaiṣṇava poetic tradition saw the value of adultery as a symbol of passionate love of Kṛṣṇa. By identifying with Rādhā the devotee similarly experienced passionate love for Kṛṣṇa. Within the paradigm of illicit love the symbols of passion were easily identifiable and learned by devotees. The religious practice of the Bengalis was known as rāganuga bhakti, translated as "following in the passion of".¹¹ Through imitation the practitioner could experience the adulterous love of Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa.

The tradition which favored the parakīyā Rādhā saw Kṛṣṇa in his madhurya (erotic) bhāva (mood). The devotee could sublimate his libidinal drives as prema. For this reason the parakīyā model was believed to be the superior mode of experiencing love for Kṛṣṇa. But the madhurya bhāva could also be represented by the svakīyā nāyikā. The more conserva-

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 147.

¹¹ S.K. De, VFM, op. cit., p. 177, Supra.

tive interpreters of Rādhā, such as Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmin, felt that parakīyā was but a semblance of adultery, and prema could develop between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa while married.

There are many reasons why the Gosvāmins may have been reluctant to support the parakīyā doctrine. One possibility was a change in the religiousity of Bengali Vaiṣṇavism. Once Rādhā had gained a substantial cult in Bengal her stature was raised from that of a gopī to a major goddess. With the change in her ~~status~~ and an increase in sectarianism came the reevaluation of her portrayal by the Gosvāmins. In Rūpa Gosvāmin's Dānakelikaumudī a scene recounts the abhiseka or consecration, of Rādhā as the queen of Vṛndāvana. The significance of this act is the apotheosis of Rādhā. All the goddesses of the Hindu pantheon come to pay homage to Vṛndavāṇeśvarī.¹³ Rādhā becomes an object of devotion. In this transcendent position as a supreme goddess the parakīyā theme has little or no place.

¹² DKK, op. cit., p. 203-218.

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