

Jaiva Dharma

Division Three: Rasa-tattva

Chapter 26

“INTRODUCTION TO RASA-TATTVA”

Vijaya Kumara was absent for about a month. During this time, Vrajanatha’s grandmother, who understood the dispositions of both Vrajanatha and Vijaya Kumara, arranged for a suitable bride through a *brahmana* mediator. When Vijaya Kumara was informed, he sent his younger brother to Bilva-puskarini to organize the wedding ceremony, which was duly performed at an astrologically auspicious time on an auspicious day.

Vijaya Kumara arrived some time later, when all the marriage proceedings had been completed. He sat without much interest in the situation around him, and did not discuss worldly affairs such as health and prosperity, for his heart was deeply absorbed in spiritual matters. Vrajanatha detected his indifference, and said, “Uncle, your heart appears to be uncertain these days. Why is that? It is simply by your order that I am bound in the shackles of worldly life. What have you decided to do yourself?”

Vijaya Kumara said, “I have decided to finally go to Sridhama Puri to have the *darsana* of Sri Purusottama (Sri Jagannathadeva). Some pilgrims are setting out for Puri in a few days, and I will also go with them. I shall go and take permission from Sri Gurudeva.”

After taking lunch that afternoon, Vrajanatha and Vijaya Kumara went to Mayapura, where they offered *dandavat-pranama* at Sri Raghunatha dasa Babaji’s feet and begged his permission to make a pilgrimage to Puri. Babaji Mahasaya was delighted to hear their plea. His heart melted with affection and he said, “It is very good that you are going to Puri to take *darsana* of Sri Jagannathadeva. Sriman Mahaprabhu’s sitting place is in Kasi Misra’s house in Puri, and Sri Gopala Guru Gosvami, the disciple of Sri Vakresvara Pandita, is present there now in all his glory. Be sure to have his *darsana* and accept his instructions with devotion. Nowadays, it is only in that *mahatma*’s throat that the splendor of Sri Svarupa Gosvami’s teachings is fully manifest.”

Having received Sri Gurudeva's permission, Vrajanatha and Vijaya Kumara joyfully returned home. On the way, at Vrajanatha's eager request, Vijaya Kumara agreed to also take him to Puri. When they arrived home, they disclosed their plans for the pilgrimage to everyone. Vrajanatha's grandmother was also ready to go with them, so finally it was decided that all three would go to Puri together.

The famous Ratha-yatra of Sri Jagannatha, Sri Baladeva and Sri Subhadra-devi is held in Puri in the month of Asarha (June-July). At that time, those who are dedicated to *dharma* flood in from all corners of India and descend on Puri en masse. For this reason, pilgrims from distant places set out from their homes many days beforehand in order to arrive in good time. The month of Jyestha (May-June) had scarcely begun when these three also set out for Puri, along with the other pilgrims. After walking for some days, they passed Dantana and arrived in Jalesvara. Gradually moving on, they took *darsana* of Ksiracora Gopinatha, and came to Sri Viraja-ksetra, where they performed *nabhigaya-kriya* and took bath in the Vaitarani. Later, they had *darsana* of Sri Saksi Gopala in Kataka, and Sri Lingaraja in Ekamra-kanana, and finally arrived in Sri Ksetra, Puri-dhama.

All the pilgrims were accommodated in various places as directed by their respective *pandas* (guardian priests). Vijaya Kumara, Vrajanatha, and Vrajanatha's grandmother found lodgings at Haracandi Sahi. In accordance with the regulative principles, they took bath in the sea, and then went for *darsana* of Sri Jagannatha. They began to take *darsana*, perform *parikrama*, and honor the *prasada* of the various *tirthas* of that *dhama*. After three or four days, Vijaya Kumara and Vrajanatha had *darsana* of the *sri-vingraha* of Sriman Mahaprabhu as well as His footprints, and also His fingerprints impressed on the Garuda *stambha* (column of Garuda) in the temple of Sri Jagannathadeva. When Sriman Mahaprabhu took *darsana* of Sri Jagannathadeva, He would become overwhelmed with *prema* and streams of tears would flow from His eyes. At such times, the stones beneath His feet melted from His touch and were marked with His footprints. At the same time, His *prema* also melted the Garuda *stambha*, which He used to support Himself, and the marks of His fingers became imprinted there. When Vijaya Kumara and Vrajanatha saw these impressions, they became overwhelmed with *prema*.

That same day they went to Kasi Misra Bhavan. In that great house constructed from stone is Sri Gambhira, the small room in which Sriman

Mahaprabhu would reside in His state of *prema*. There, in order to console Him when He was immersed in feelings of separation from Krsna, His dear associates, Sri Svarupa Damodara and Raya Ramananda, would recite *slokas* and sing *bhajan*s about the pastimes of Radha and Krsna. Vijaya Kumara and Vrajanatha took *darsana* of that place, and of Srīman Mahaprabhu's paraphernalia, such as His wooden sandals, that are gloriously present there. On one side, within, is the *mandira* of Sri Radha-Kanta, and on the other side was the seat of Sri Gopala Guru Gosvami.

Vijaya and Vrajanatha fell at Sri Gopala Guru Gosvami's feet. They were carried away in the happiness of *prema* and began to shed tears. Sri Guru Gosvami was very pleased to see their ecstatic sentiments and embraced them. He made them sit down close to him and immediately asked, "I wish to know who you are." When Vijaya and Vrajanatha introduced themselves, Guru Gosvami's eyes began to stream with tears of love. Hearing the name of Sri Navadvīpa, he said, "Today I have become blessed by seeing the residents of Sridhama Navadvīpa. Tell me, how are the Vaisnavas in Mayapura, such as Sri Raghunatha dasa and Goracanda dasa? Are they well? *Aho!* When I remember Raghunatha dasa, the memories of my *sikṣa-guru* Sri Dasa Gosvami come to my mind."

Guru Gosvami called his disciple, Sri Dhyanaçandra, and said, "These two *mahatmas* will take *prasada* here today." Sri Dhyanaçandra took them both to his room and offered them *sri-mahaprasada*. Afterwards the three of them discussed many subjects. Dhyanaçandra Gosvami was overjoyed when he saw Vijaya Kumara's vast erudition in *Srīmad-Bhagavatam*, and recognized Vrajanatha as a fine scholar of all the *sastras*. He related all their discussions to Sri Guru Gosvami, who was also delighted to hear of their expertise in *sastra*. Sri Gopala Guru Gosvami called them near to him, and said, "You are both very dear to me. Kindly allow me to see you every day, as long as you stay in Sri Purusottama Dhama."

Vijaya Kumara humbly replied, "O Prabhu! Sri Raghunatha dasa Babaji of Sri Mayapura has bestowed great mercy upon us. He has given us so much *sikṣa*, and he ordered us to accept instructions at your divine feet."

Guru Gosvami said, "Raghunatha dasa Babaji is a highly learned scholar, and you should follow his instructions thoroughly. If you want to know anything further, you may come here tomorrow afternoon and present your inquiries. You may honor *mahaprasada* here tomorrow." They conversed for

some time, and then Vijaya and Vrajanatha took permission from Sri Guru Gosvami and returned to Haracandi Sahi.

The next day, Vijaya Kumara and Vrajanatha returned to Sri Radha-Kanta Matha at the appointed time. They honored *prasada*, and then approached Sri Gopala Guru Gosvami. When they had offered their respectful *pranama* to him, they said, “Prabhu, we want to know about *rasa-tattva*. Our lives will become successful when we hear about *krsna-bhakti-rasa* from your lotus mouth. You are the pre-eminent holy master of the Nimananda-sampradaya and you are reigning as *jagad-guru* on the seat of Sriman Mahaprabhu’s successor, Sri Svarupa Gosvami. We desire to hear *rasa-tattva* from your divine lips, so that our scholarship may become fruitful.”

Sri Gopala Guru Gosvami was overjoyed, and taking these worthy disciples, to a solitary place, he spoke to them. “Sacinandana Nimai Pandita appeared in Sri Navadvipa-Mayapura, and He is the very life-breath of the *bhaktas* of Sri Gauda-mandala, Sri Ksetra-mandala and Sri Vraja-mandala. May that Sacinandana give us joy. May Sri Svarupa Gosvami, whose *madhura-rasa-seva* always fills Sri Mahaprabhu with elation, be manifest in the core of our hearts. Sri Vakresvara Pandita thoroughly captivated Nimai Pandita with his dancing. He also showered his mercy on Devananda Pandita by purifying him and making him Krsna’s *bhakta*. May that Sri Vakresvara Pandita confer all auspiciousness upon you.

“*Rasa* is an unequalled *tattva* which can be compared to the rising of the moon, whose radiance is the expanding *lila* of *parabrahma* Sri Krsna. *Bhakti-rasa* is the function of *krsna-bhakti* when it becomes absolutely pure.”

**Vrajanatha:** Is *rasa* a principle that is predetermined?

**Gosvami:** I cannot answer that question in a single word, “Yes” or “No.” I will explain the subject elaborately so that you can understand it clearly. The *krsna-rati* about which you have heard from your Gurudeva is called *sthayibhava*. When the other components (*samagri*) of *rasa* are combined with the *sthayibhava*, the *resultant manifestation is called krsna-bhakti-rasa*.

**Vrajanatha:** Will you kindly explain in detail what is *sthayibhava*, and what are the constituent ingredients (*samagri*) of *rasa*? We have heard from our Gurudeva about *bhava*, but we have not heard how *bhavas* combine with each other to form *rasa*.

**Gosvami:** Ordinarily, at the stage of *bhava*, *bhakti* is *krsna-rati*. This *rati* arises in the heart of the *bhakta* from the *samskaras* of past and present lives, and develops further to the stage of *rasa*, when it becomes the very embodiment of *ananda*. It is made up of four different ingredients: 1) *vibhava*, 2) *anubhava*, 3) *sattvika* and 4) *vyabhicari* or *sancari*. I will first explain these ingredients.

*Vibhava* is the cause of tasting *rati*, and it has two divisions: *alambana* (the support) and *uddipana* (the awakening stimulus). *Alambana* also has two divisions, namely, the object (*visaya*) and the abode (*asraya*). The *asraya* of *rati* is the person in whom *rati* exists, while the *visaya* of *rati* is the person towards whom *rati* is directed. Krsna's *bhaktas* are the *asraya* of *rati* because they have *rati* in their hearts, whereas Krsna is the *visaya* of *rati*, because *rati* is directed towards Him.

**Vrajanatha:** So far we have understood that *vibhava* is divided into two parts: *alambana* and *uddipana*, and that *alambana* is also divided into two categories, namely, *asraya* and *visaya*. Krsna is *visaya*, and the *bhaktas* are *asraya*. Now we are inquisitive to know whether Krsna is sometimes the *asraya* of *rati*.

**Gosvami:** Yes, He is. When *bhaktas* have *rati* towards Krsna, Krsna is *visaya* and the *bhaktas* are *alambana*, and when Krsna has *rati* towards the *bhaktas*, then Krsna is *asraya* and the *bhaktas* are *visaya*.

**Vrajanatha:** We have heard from our Gurudeva about Sri Krsna's sixty-four qualities. If there is anything further to be described in regard to Sri Krsna, please tell us.

**Gosvami:** Although all the qualities exist fully in Sri Krsna, His manifestation is complete in Dvaraka, more complete in Mathura, and most complete in Gokula. This is because of the degree to which the qualities are manifested in the respective *dhamas*. Krsna is one, but He plays the parts of four types of heroes (*nayaka*) according to the differences in His *lila*. They are 1) *dhirodatta*, 2) *dhira-lalita*, 3) *dhira-santa* and 4) *dhiroddhata*.

**Vrajanatha:** What type of *nayaka* (hero) is *dhirodatta*?

**Gosvami:** The symptoms of Krsna as *dhirodatta-nayaka* are gravity, courtesy, forgiveness, compassion, modesty, and concealed pride.

**Vrajanatha:** What kind of *nayaka* is called *dhira-lalita*?

**Gosvami:** Krsna falls under the control of His beloved *gopis* because

He is expert in relishing loving mellows (*rasika*); He is on the threshold of youth (*nava-yauvana*); He is ingenious in joking (*parihasa-caturi*); and He is free from anxiety (*niscintata*). That is why He is called *dhira-lalita-nayaka*.

**Vrajanatha:** And what are the symptoms of *dhira-santa*?

**Gosvami:** Krsna is known as *dhira-santa-nayaka* when He is decorated with the qualities of being naturally sedate, forbearing, judicious and humble.

**Vrajanatha:** What is *dhiroddhata*?

**Gosvami:** Sometimes in His *lila*, Krsna is also seen to be jealous, egotistical, deceitful, angry, fickle, and boastful. At that time, He is known as *dhiroddhata-nayaka*.

**Vrajanatha:** The qualities that you have described are mutually contradictory, so how can they possibly exist at the same time in one Krsna?

**Gosvami:** Krsna is by nature fully independent, autocratic, and supreme, and He has boundless opulence. It is by the action of Krsna's *acintya-sakti* (inconceivable potency) that these contradictory qualities exist in Him at the same time. For example, we read in the *Kurma Purana*:

*asthulas canus caiva / sthulo 'nus caiva sarvatah  
avarnah sarvatah proktah / syamo raktantalocanah  
aisvarya-yogad bhagavan / viruddhartho 'bhidhiyate  
tathapi doso parame/ naivaharya kathancana  
gunaviruddha apy ete / samaharyah samantatah*

All contradictory qualities are splendidly and very beautifully manifest in Bhagavan at the same time. Although He is intangible and minute in every way, He is tangible and all pervading in every way. He is devoid of mundane color, but He has a transcendental *syama* hue, and the corners of His eyes are reddish. This is how He has been described in the *sastras*. Bhagavan is said to possess contradictory virtues on account of His mystic opulence. Nevertheless, no fault can be attributed to Paramesvara. Although the aggregate of His qualities seems to be contradictory, these qualities are certainly virtues in all respects.

In the *Maha-Varaha Purana*, it is stated:

*sarve nityah sasvatas ca / dehas tasya paratmanah  
hanopadana-rahita / naiva prakrti-jah kvacit  
paramananda-sandoha / jnana-matras ca sarvatah  
sarve sarva-gunaih purnah / sarva-dosa-vivarjitah*

All the bodies of that Paramatma are *nitya* and free from the two types of activities known as ‘giving up’ and ‘accepting’. His bodies are not born from material nature, but are composed of consciousness and are the embodiment of *paramananda*. Each and every limb of His body is filled with all transcendental qualities and is free from all defects.

Vaisnava-tantra states:

*astadasa-mahadosaih / rahita bhagavat-tanuh  
sarvaisvaryamayi satya-vijnanananda-rupini*

Bhagavan is endowed with all kinds of superhuman power, perfect knowledge and joy, and His body is free from the eighteen types of general faults.

These eighteen general faults are:

*mohas tandra bhramo ruksa-rasata kama ulbanah  
lolata mada-matsaryau himsa kheda-parisramau  
asatyam krodha akanksa asanka visva-vibhramah  
visamatva parapeksa dosa astadasodita*

Visnu-Yamala

1) illusion, 2) lethargy, 3) bewilderment, 4) dullness, 5) intense lust, 6) fickleness, 7) pride, 8) envy, 9) violence, 10) remorse, 11) desire for excessive peace and comfort, 12) untruthfulness, 13) anger, 14) hankering, 15) fear, 16) hallucination, 17) contradiction, and 18) the tendency to depend on others.

All these transcendental qualities are present in the forms of the *avatars*, and they are expressed to the utmost extent in Sri Krsna, who is *avatari* (the origin of all *avatars*). In addition to these, Krsna possesses a further eight qualities which indicate His manliness (*purusatva*). These are:

1) *sobha* (beauty), 2) *vilasa* (fascinating, transcendental pastimes), 3) *madhurya* (sweetness), 4) *mangalya* (auspiciousness), 5) *sthirata* (stability), 6) *teja* (brilliance), 7) *lalita* (playfulness), and 8) *audarya* (munificence). His beauty is particularly noticeable in kindness towards the lowly, rivalry towards His peers, valor, enthusiasm, dexterity and the revelation of truth. *Vilasa* is characterized in Him by His profound manner, calm glance and humorous words. His *madhurya* (sweetness) is noticeable for pleasing loveliness is manifest in all His activities. His auspiciousness is the abode of faith of the entire world. His stability means that He is not deviated in any activity. His brilliance means attracting the attention of everyone towards Himself. He exhibits an abundance of amorous sentiments and endeavors and is thus called *lalita* (playful). His mood of completely offering Himself is called *audarya*. Sri Krsna is the crestjewel of all heroes, and in His human-like pastimes, sages such as Garga have been described as His assistants in matters of *dharma*, *ksatriyas* such as Yuyudhana in matters of war, and ministers such as Uddhava in matters of counseling.

**Vrajanatha:** I have fully understood how Krsna is the heroic personification of mellows. Now please tell us about Krsna's *bhaktas* who are fit to experience *rasa*, and who are included in the category of *vibhava*.

**Gosvami:** Only those whose hearts are overwhelmed by loving sentiments for Krsna can be *bhaktas* in *rasa-tattva*. All of the twenty-nine qualities, from truthfulness to bashfulness (being embarrassed by true statements), which have been described in relation to Krsna, are also found in His *bhaktas*.

**Vrajanatha:** How many types of *krsna-bhaktas* are fit to experience *rasa*?

**Gosvami:** There are two types: the *sadhaka* and the *siddha*.

**Vrajanatha:** Who is a *sadhaka*?

**Gosvami:** *Sadhakas* are those in whom *ruci* for the topics of Krsna has arisen, and who have acquired the qualification to have direct *darsana* of Krsna, but who have not yet completely surpassed all obstacles and difficulties.



*Madhyama-bhaktas* adorned with the symptoms described in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.2.46), *isvare tadadhinesu*, are in the category of *sadhaka*.

**Vrajanatha:** Prabhu, are the *bhaktas* described in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11. 2. 47), *arcayam eva haraye* not eligible to experience *rasa*?

**Gosvami:** They are not *sadhakas* until they become *suddha-bhaktas* by the mercy of other *suddha-bhaktas*. Only personalities like Bilvamangala are genuine *sadhakas*.

**Vrajanatha:** Who are the *siddha-bhaktas*?

**Gosvami:** *Siddha-bhaktas* are those who do not experience any suffering, whose activities are all performed under the shelter of Sri Krsna, and who always taste the happiness of *prema*. There are two types of *siddha-bhaktas*: those who have gained perfection (*samprapta-siddha*) and those who are eternally perfect (*nityasiddha*).

**Vrajanatha:** Who are the *bhaktas* who have gained perfection (*samprapta-siddha*)?

**Gosvami:** They are also of two types: those who attained perfection through *sadhana* (*sadhana-siddha*), and those who achieved perfection by mercy (*krpa-siddha*).

**Vrajanatha:** Who are the *nitya-siddhas*?

**Gosvami:** Sri Rupa Gosvami has said:

*atma-koti-gunam krsne / premanam paramam gatah  
nityananda-gunah sarve / nitya-siddha mukundavat*

The *nitya-siddhas* are those who, like Mukunda, are the embodiment of *ananda*, and whose qualities are eternal. Their main symptom is that they are endowed with a *prema* for Krsna that is ten million times more than they have even for themselves.

It is said in the *Uttara-Khanda* of the *Padma Purana*:

*yatha saumitra-bharatau / yatha sankarsanadayah  
tatha tenaiva jayante / nija-lokad yadrchaya  
punas tenaiva gacchanti / tat-padam sasvatam param  
na karma-bandhanam janma / vaisnavanan ca vidyate*

Vaisnavas are not bound by *karma*, nor do they take birth like mundane human beings. Rather, they appear as Laksmana and Bharata, the sons of Sumitra, appeared with Sri Ramacandra; as Balarama and others appear in this material world with Bhagavan Sri Krsna by His will, and then return again to the eternal transcendental abode along with Him; or as the members of the Yadu dynasty also appear in Bhagavan's manifest pastimes, and then return with Him to the supreme abode (*parama-dhama*) when His pastimes become unmanifest.

**Vrajanatha:** Prabhu, I have understood the *alambana* aspect of *vibhava*. Now kindly explain what is referred to as *uddipana*.

**Gosvami:** *Uddipana* is that which causes *bhava* to be excited or stimulated. Krsna's qualities, His activities, laughter, and the fragrance of His bodily limbs, His flute, bugle-horn, ankle-bells, conch-shell and footprints, the places of His pastimes, Tulasi, His *bhaktas*, the auspicious times such as Ekadasi (*hari-vasara*), and so on – these are all *uddipana*. Krsna's qualities (*guna*) are of three types, related to His body, mind and speech, respectively (*kayika*, *manasika* and *vacika*).

Age (*vayasa*) is prominent among the qualities relating to His body. There are three divisions of Krsna's age: *kaumara*, *pauganda* and *kaisora*:

*kaumaram pancamabdantam / paugandam dasamavadhi  
asodasac ca kaisoram / yauvanam syat tatah param  
Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (2.1.306)*

The *kaumara* period lasts until the age of five. The *pauganda* period lasts from this point until the age of ten, and the *kaisora* stage begins at the age of ten and continues until the age of sixteen. The age after that is called *yauvana*.

The *kaisora* stage also has three divisions, which are called the beginning, middle and end (*adya*, *madhya* and *sesa*). Among the bodily qualities, the consideration of beauty is predominant. Beauty is present when the bodily limbs are in proper proportion to each other. Clothing, decoration and the

arrangement of articles, including the hair and so on, is called *prasadhana*. Krsna has three kinds of flute: *vamsi*, *venu* and *murali*. The *venu* is twelve fingers long and as thick as a thumb, and it has six holes. The *murali* is two hands in length and has four finger-holes, besides the hole in the mouthpiece. The *vamsi* is 17 fingers long. Of this, there is a clear space of three finger-widths at the tail end. At the head end of the flute is another space of four finger-widths, which is also clear, except for the hole for blowing, which is half a finger's width from the end. In the middle is a space containing eight finger-holes separated from each other by a gap of half a finger's width. The *vamsi* therefore has a total of nine holes.

The conch-shell that turns to the right and rests radiantly in Krsna's hand is called *Pancajanya*.

Through these *uddipanas*, the *rati* of the *bhaktas* awakens, and when it is directed towards Krsna, the object of *rati*, it becomes the very embodiment of *ananda*. *Rati* is *sthayibhava*, and it alone *transforms into rasa*.

Come here tomorrow at the same time; I will tell you about *rasa*, and I will also explain *anubhava* and so on.

Vijaya Kumara and Vrajanatha offered *dandavat* at Srila Gopala Guru Gosvami's lotus feet and took their leave. Absorbed in contemplation on the subject of *rasa*, they went to have *darsana* of Siddha-bakula. From there, they went to take *darsana* of Sri Jagannathadeva and then returned to their quarters.

THUS ENDS THE TWENTY-SIXTH CHAPTER OF JAIVA-DHARMA,  
ENTITLED  
“INTRODUCTION TO RASA-TATTVA”