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Performative Affects: Bhāva in South Asian Aesthetics and Religions

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Performative Affects: *Bhāva* in South Asian Aesthetics and Religions

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Religious Studies

by

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June 2020

The dissertation of Jeremy Jonathon Hanes is approved.

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June 2020

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Abstract

Performative Affects: *Bhāva* in South Asian Aesthetics and Religions\

by

Jeremy Jonathon Hanes

This study focuses on the ways in which various forms of embodied performances—dramatic, devotional, ritual, and dancing—engender *bhāva* in South Asia. *Bhāva* is variously understood as a mode of being, an emotional change, a disposition, a mode of distributed experience in relationship, a processural transformation or becoming, and a substance that can be shared and that emerges in performance. In its various manifestations *bhāva* involves affective changes, embodied practices, and heightened awareness of lived experiences, sociality, and relationships, and it thus serves as a means of reshaping the world. The range of bodies that temporarily hold and are shaped by *bhāva*s include human and divine, organism and landscape, material and virtual in form. This study attempts to chart how *bhāva*s function as affective forms in performances, modulating the bodies and relationships that emerge in the process of enactment across thresholds that separate domains and worlds normally seen as distinct. I refer to performances therefore as affective ecologies.

My methodology examines key text in South Asian theories of *rasa*, including Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*, Bhoja's formal work on literary analysis (*Śṛngāra-prakāśa*), Abhinavagupta's "new dramatic art" (*Abhinava-bhāratī*) that utilizes an audience-response stance, and Rūpa Gosvāmin's aesthetic theological text on developing devotion to Kṛṣṇa, (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*). I examine these framings of *bhāva* show performance is a medium of modulating affects toward culturally-recognizable forms as dispositions (*sattva*s). Next I

examine one dramatist and poet, the seventeenth-century Bengali Gauḍīya devotee Kavikarṇapūra and his works on Caitanya, the *Caitanya-candrodaya*. In this hagiography, the author imbues his devotional affect into its creation alongside his techniques from aesthetics. In particular I examine how *līlā* functions as a semblance to allow for variation in the stable forms of the tradition. Next I turn to an inset play within the *Caitanya-candrodaya* to examine audience and performer relationships. As mutually-implicated in a larger constellation of embodied forces, both sets of performative roles have to engage persons affectively in a shared habit or style (*vṛtti*). In particular I examine costuming, economic theories of affectivity, and how we are shaped by social forces in performance. Lastly, I turn to the performed works of the famed twentieth-century Bharatanāṭyam dancer, Thanjavure Balasaraswati to examine the way a single person could master these strategies of personal, social, and national affectivity to carve out a space for living in the modernizing world around the time of Indian Independence. In particular, I focus on how her mastery of *abhinaya* ("gesture") allowed her to consciously adapt her subaltern position as a *devadāsī* banned from her traditional way of life into one of the most recognized subaltern performers in the world. In the conclusion, I extend these findings to suggest how illness and other forms of non-aesthetic affectivity are combined with performance traditions in the worship of the regional goddess Śītalā, the "Cooling Lady." As pandemics and epidemics are becoming a common concern for the entire world, I suggest this goddess's textual and performed embodiments suggest ways of radically reorienting social values and norms following a more interconnected, ecological view of the world we find ourselves in today.

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Introduction: Religious Studies, Performance Studies, and Affect Theories

The day of the conquest of Laṅkā is *vijayā-daśamī* (tenth day of the autumn Dūrga-*pūjā*); Prabhu with his *bhakta*s became the army of apes. Prabhu, in the *bhāva* of Hanumān, took a branch of a tree and climbed up on the fort of Laṅkā to break it down. "Where are you, Rāvaṇa?" Prabhu cried in a rage, "The evil one has stolen away the Mother of the World! I shall kill him with all his kin!" Seeing the possession of Gosvāmī, the people were astonished. And all the people said again and again, "*Jaya jaya*! (Victory!)"
-Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 2.15.32-36[1]

There used to be a beggar, a sort of maniac, who would jump up and dance like a monkey while singing '*tat tarigappa tei ta, tat tarigappa tei ta*.' Bala would imitate him, both dancing like monkeys…That was the real starting point for Bala's dancing mania.
-Thanjavure Shankara[2]

What makes a person want to dance? To feel like the rhythm tapped out or sung (*tat tarigappa tei ta, tat tarigappa tei ta*) compels the body to move? How can emotions or personalities from stories seemingly "possess" (*āveśa*) us? And how might the study of religion, performance, and culture gain from understanding these categories outside of Western epistemes? As a scholar of theater history and religion in South Asia, I have always sought out key categories to elucidate the shifting terrains of explicit theories on dancing, acting, costuming, and embodied performance that are used in texts, interviews, and gleaned from events themselves as implicit theories as well. Something about festivals (*melā*s), dramas (*nāṭaka*s, *līlā*s), and dancing (*nṛtta*) in particular seemed to have powerful connections with religious figures, rituals, and traditions in the sources I had examined. This dissertation is one attempt to map out the shifting terrain of understanding a term called *bhāva*, which appears in the earliest strata of texts on theater and dance and is still used as a category among contemporary performers.

Let me turn back to my epigraphs which span the late medieval to modern periods of South Asian history. What do the sixteenth-century Bengali devotional leader Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya (c. 1486-1533) and the twentieth-century Bharatanāṭyam dancer Thanjavure Balasaraswati

(1918-1984) have in common?[3] First, the two accounts are both *carita*s, "courses" of a religious or artistic figure in a lineage that recognizes these leaders as inspirations. While Caitanya's hagiographies multiplied in the decades after his passing, Balasaraswati's life was passed down in oral form among the holders of her *bāṇī,* "dance style" (Tamil, from Sanskrit *vāṇī*, "voice").[4] The early recollections of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas—Caitanya's followers who advocated for the supremacy of the god Kṛṣṇa and the textual emphasis on the tenth-century *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa*—most likely were orally collected until becoming compiled in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's 1581 magisterial hagiography, "The Ambrosial Course of Consciousness" (*Caitanya-carita-aṃrta*).[5] As the translators and editors Edward C. Dimock and Tony Stewart describe the community's view on Caitanya in the text, his life blurred the identities between human and divine figures.[6] Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya become articulated for the community as "the foremost container of *rasa*, our master, and in him is the rising of all *bhāva*s."[7] The devotional community of *bhakta*s therefore adapted strategies of understanding Caitanya's charismatic persona as an extension of a diffusive, permeating power of aesthetics known as *rasa*. Alongside this more erudite term, *bhāva* seems to function as a counterpart grounded in materiality as well as the role, mood, or persona itself such as Caitanya's assumption of Hanumān's ferocity. At the same time, Caitanya was affected by the celebration of Kṛṣṇa's birthday (*janma*) pervading the festival. When he reached out and grabbed a branch, he linked and extended his body in that gesture to a larger ecology of forces: the carnival floats, costumes, and music celebration Rāma's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa. Caitanya became possessed (*āveṣṭa*) by the force of this other personality that invested itself in his body. This presents a very different image than the controlled, stilled body of a *yogin* or *guru*.

This moment also connects well with the initial moment of Balasraswati's devotion to dancing. She herself on multiple occasions described her dedication as *bhakti* within a frame of reference to Tamil culture and music.[8] As the *New York Times* dance critic Anna Kisselgoff described after the South Indian dancer's death, Balasaraswati was "A tall, well-rounded woman who could move with both grace and forcefulness…a dancer of great concentration and radiance. She was able to move her audiences to what many considered a spiritual experience."[9] As the Tamil critic S.V. Shesadri commented in his *Shankar's Weekly* review of an August 18, 1963 performance she danced during the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland:

> In Balasaraswati, her *satvika* [*sic*] *abhinaya* takes over complete command from the beginning…In the white heat of her feelings, Bala has no need for the external trappings of movement and *mudra*s to convey those feelings. She becomes the vehicle of these feelings completely.[10]

Shesadri and Kisselgoff's reviews both link Balasaraswati's technical expertise in dancing with a range of affects. Moreover, the intensity of her performances held a "forcefulness" and "white heat" that arose from her *sattva* or "disposition." This infused the "gestures" (*abhinaya*) to override the audience's expectations and leave them speechless. Without even moving her hands in *mudra*s or her body (*āṅgika-abhinaya*), she could fully convey the affectivity of a character or persona in her dancing. While Shesadri also links this to a kind of possession in that "She becomes the vehicle of these feelings completely," Balasaraswati herself would claim this was always within her own control. As she noted to her translator and friend S. Guhan, "It is the music that is deceiving you."[11] While she linked her love of dancing to a childhood encounter with a beggar—as her brother and fellow musician Shankara recounted—she also framed it as a kind of madness transmitted via affect.[12] Through Balasaraswati's capacity to hide her agency within the music, she could improvise and utterly transfix an audience moving only her face. The animal *bhāva* she assumed with the beggar immediately suggested that this

term was more than a mere emotion and held similar capacities to that of the term affect gaining traction in critical studies.[13]

At a personal level, I have been involved with theater since high school when our director staged an adaption of S. Ansky's famous Yiddish play *The Dybbuk: or Between Two Worlds*. The protagonist's passionate love and longing allowed their love to continue after one dies and proceeds to possess his beloved. After studying Sanskrit farces such as Mahendravarman's seventh-century *Bhagavadajjuka* when a religious mendicant inadvertently swaps bodies with a courtesan to great hilarity, I began to realize that theater traditions around the world had recognized the permeability of our self-contained boundaries.[14] My experiences working with actors and dancers from around the world and exploring novel formulations of audience and performer relationships such as in the "Theater of the Oppressed' advocated by Brazilian director Augoto Boal suggested that the conventions of realistic and Aristotelian drama should not always be privileged. Local contexts always matter, and I began to attend to emic perspectives on performance when I could find theorists who had explored them in more detail.

At other times, my experiences with theater afforded me a perspective on the religious and cultural scripts we use to grapple with and cope with feelings before they become consciously known. One day when I was waiting to get a blood test done at a local hospital, I sat beside a middle-age woman. She began a conversation with me that I thought at first was an attempt at proselytizing—she gave me a card for a local Christian radio station. After this obligatory evangelizing gesture though, she began to ask me questions. I told her I was the oldest of three children and had been missing my parents while I dealt with the affer-effects of a stomach illness. She in turn told me about the Biblical saying that "To the first born shall

inherit double," and explained my siblings should be thankful I was setting a good example. During our conversation, I began to notice her hands shifting from her lap to hold one another. I realized at last that she had a red armband—the sign that she was having elective surgery. She was also sitting alone. I reached my own hand to her and thanked her, realizing she had been reassuring me while unaware of her own need for reassurance and human connection at a time of uncertainty. My dramaturgical training in locating the perceived intentions and affective states behind a character's choice of actions led me to a personal insight in that moment. Rather than reading the evangelizing script throughout our conversation, I attended intercorporeally to the "cues" she was giving me and responded in a mode of empathy.

The common feature that begins this exploration is *bhāva* which I shall argue requires a more general term than the individualistic feeling of "emotion" in post-Enlightenment Western thinking. I counter, tentatively, with an alternative translation: "affect." *Bhāva* is a polysemic referent but primarily entails "becoming" (from Sanskrit root √*bhū*, "to be," in a causative nominal form). Definitions link it to both actions and identities such as this traditional gloss in the sixth-century Sanskrit thesaurus *Amarakośa*: "*Bhāva* is found to be self-produced from one's real nature, (*svabhāva*), intention (*abhiprāya*), and behavior (*ceṣṭā*)."[15] Affects therefore appear to be linked to a substratum of the personality beyond control (*svabhāva*), within a person's control (*ceṣṭā*), and in an intermediate zone blurring the lines between the two (*abhiprāya*, also referring to "meaning"). *Bhāva*s therefore seem to implicate humans in a intersubjective milieu with others and to a shifting set of intrapersonal forces beyond conscious deliberation. Religious specialists in particular refer to *bhāva* to explain rapid transitions in temperament, action, and relation to others. In the Bengali cultural area of South Asia (what is today West Bengal, Bangladesh, Assam, and nearby areas), *bhāva* has become a principle

category to understand aesthetic, emotional, and interpersonal domains of human flourishing in "ecstatic" experiences of religious figures.[16] As such, this study falls into the emerging field of the study of religion and emotion as pioneered by recent scholars such as John Corrigan. The scholarly study of emotions and affects shows similarities between the two terms as feeling and socio-cultural forms.[17]

Affects as a category in the study of religion are also connected to cultural performances in recent works by Donovan Schaefer. In this material and historical analysis, *bhāva* aligns with affect in that both expand a sense of pride or self-satisfaction even when there is no rational reason for doing so. Affective force seems to extend beyond the individual to encompass relations with people, to events such as movies or plays, and to phenomenon such as the awe experienced in seeing a waterfall. As a feeling that traverses boundaries, that spills into the air with the force to wear away stone, affect and *bhāva* therefore cannot be contained in separate forms or categories. Schaefer's account therefore opens up the possibility that this also cannot function as merely emotion, but instead must be a more elemental force that mutually unites animals and humans into the "divine fabric of the cosmos" with its material aspects as well. Feminist and intersectional accounts on affectivity therefore have shaped the form of my study.[18] Recent work on affect suggests that it has the breadth needed to translate the Sanskrit term while also resonating with specific areas of performance, embodiment, and relationality it delineates. This study therefore attempts to chart a series of intertextual and interperformative strains of affect theory using emic terms and concepts integral to the episteme of the philosophical traditions that explore them.[19] Each chapter charts out a specific modulation of *bhāva*, while the conclusion will return to the question of the performative implications for embodiment of them together.

This process requires a project not only of philological, anthropological, and textual examination of concepts within aesthetics in South Asia. These terms have specific meanings within the ecology of practices that generate and shape emotion. Personality and mental substratum are interconnected as a function of the corporeal side of reality in Sanskrit theories.[20] To find common ground with theories of affectivity, I attempt to diagram a conceptual synthesis and translation of key terms involved in performances and in recent critical discourses on affectivity. The first step in this process is to find similar affordances within existing terminology and the assemblages at play.[21] I turn to Thanjavure Balasaraswati's work to exemplify a danced historical intervention into South Asian theories of affect that ground the body in corporeal terms.

Let me attend to the particular sources I shall engage now. South Asian theories of art begin with the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, a text attributed to the sage Bharata which most likely reached its present form sometime around 300 CE.[22] Chapter One explores more about the specifics of the dramaturgy involved in this process, but the text itself presents its mission as an accommodation of all forms of art, involving music, dance, architecture, costuming and makeup, model building, singing, recitation, declamation, and attendant rituals to establish the space.[23] While Bharata's declaration that he is composing a *prayoga-śāstra* would seem to put theory (*śāstra*) or "injunction, rule, command" into a dominating position to "practice, application, performance" (*prayoga*), the two are actually much more mutually imbricated.[24] In the system that Bharata envisions, the "rules" of performance are internal to the affective dynamics of a given event. While certain parameters are set out, with a specific goal in mind, these leave an unimaginably complex terrain of potential outcomes.

The stated goal of the text is to develop *rasa* through an aesthetic ecology.[25] This term denotes a large set of possibilities, including the six recognizable "tastes" of South Asian cuisine, "essence" as a substance that is pressed, extracted, or distilled, as well as the primary fluid in Āyurvedic medical systems produced when food is consumed and prior to being transformed via digestion into blood.[26] In Bharata's system, it comes to be the "goal" (*artha*) of all art.[27] In fact, *rasa* emerges from an assemblage (*sam-yoga*) of aesthetic features that I call an "ecology" as part of the ways affects can "dwell" (Greek *oikos*, "home, dwelling") in corporeal forms and relations. Affects enter the scene as a set of interlocking and mutually supportive *bhāva*s, which precede and follow along with an experience of the aesthetic force of a moment, a scene, or even an entire performance. However, Sanskrit theories do not seem to equate these aesthetic conditions to the terms for everyday feelings and emotions in many cases. For instance, while the most popular *rasa śṛṅgāra* is usually translated as the "erotic" mode, it is used to describe the high couture of elites as "splendid attire."[28] The relationship between *rasa* and *bhāva*s is refined over time, but a consensus emerged in aesthetics that both function on different register than normal emotions. The affects include involuntary phases: paralysis, illness, swooning, and even death.[29]

While some critical theories of artistic emotion have emerged from Western academic sources, the assumptions and terminology that they use do not match the South Asian examples in theoretical discourses nor in embodied performances. For instance, Charles Altieri offers a definition of affect that places it as embodied judgments.[30] *Bhāva*, on the other hand, is specifically argued to be cognized outside of the critical faculties of the self. Cognitivist theories of affect have relied on establishing a link between reason and emotion which subsumes the latter as a modulation of the former, as seen in thinkers like Martha Nussbaum's

work.[31] South Asian theorists use elaborate schemas but always place *bhāva* and *rasa* as features of unique sensory experiences alongside rational cognition. Features of aesthetic performances, such as the *way* we do something, are full of affective potentials rather than emotional judgments though.[32] Sanskrit theories on the other hand privilege sensations in larger aesthetic structures of intercorporeality. Protagonists are affected by landscapes, animals, and other people while audiences embody implicit social cues to judge whether this process of relishing is appropriate. Second, there is a difference in how affects are not only active but also potentialities which can lie dormant or manifest in various modes. Hence this study will argue for a more "elemental" approach to *bhāva*s rather than assume they are "natural states" to emphasize the *process* of affectivity.[33] While latent, they can activate the "fleshy" sides of our natures, which in turn become part of recognizable performances and gestures of art-making.

While emotions function to process beliefs or views on the world, affects are just as involved in the enactment of *how* a drama or dance is performed and hence appears in linguistic form as adverbial tendencies.[34] The manner of a performance is just as important in some cases as the content of its language. We are *affected*, in normal usage, rather than caused to do something. Artists and performers commonly feel both implicated in their process as well as directed or guided in some manner by the limitations of its material features.[35] Art offers potentials we do not normally experience, including ways to fashion our selves.[36] Our self-understanding is a function of the ways we are shaped by actions, relationships, and other immaterial forms of affectivity.[37] If our sense of self is made up as much by "line, shape, composition, and color" as by personal history, this would seem to bely the claim that performed affects are in a separate domain from everyday experience. Affects would seem to

live in their own world, one full of potentials waiting to be realized which philosophers call the virtual–not to be mistaken for the discrete worlds created as simulations or games.[38]

Artists frequently claim to have special access to forces that work alongside their normal sense of agency as part of the creative process.[39] While South Asian theories match this distributed sense of agency and co-embodiment for affective forces, this study does not attempt to reduce the phenomena under question to etic frameworks from psychology.[40] Damien Freeman's analysis of event states and dispositions that give rise to them, however, is valuable for showcasing tendencies in analyzing artistic emotions. We view both the "reaction" to a situation and our propensity to experience them in similar ways. Someone can be an "angry person"—prone to anger—while any one can "feel angry" in a given context. For Freeman, dispositions undergird a variety of affective phenomena which can be replicated figurally as formal characteristics while also manifesting in genuinely powerful expressions of one's being-in-relation to the world, to others, and one's self. Emotion occurs in the relation between disposition and occurrence, as a kind of script that becomes part of our ongoing lifeworld. This forms our "emotional economy," with various moving parts. As an assemblage, a *form* appears to the sense faculties starting with *rūpa*, the "forms" that differentiate into visibility, tactility, aurality, olfaction, and savor among others like proprioception. Activity and passivity are modulations of particular emotional economies at varies times and places. Emotions and affects can become "charged" in the *way* we experience them as promoting our own flourishing or destruction.[41] Varieties of experience give rise to emotions, and their forms dictate the affective contours of the experience. In this way, we can see that there are multiple modalities of affects that can shape experiences of the self along with the world as we affect others and in turn are affected by them.[42]

Affects can work simultaneously in multiple guises, as a surplus or "plenary" experience of power. Art can offer us both direct emotional stimulation or affective changes (we are "moved" by a play), can respond to the projective potential of a landscape (it "speaks to us"), and can reflect on our response to it (I search back for why a scene "touched me," and find a depth of feeling relating to a previous aspect of myself I had no other way of reaching). Likewise, the plenary experience dissolves notions of active and passive responses to affect: art can both "move us" and facilitate novel ways of acting which empower us as agents simultaneously.[43] Affects embrace the body from a distributive location in landscapes and features of the natural world in equal measure to other human beings. Our self-control and embodiment as corporeal beings becomes felt, tied into a network of natural and composed forms. A house or a temple can become a "body" in this way as we become affectively linked in performances.[44] Art is portrayed frequently in Sanskrit dramas, for instance, as standing out *against* the world or "jumping out" from the material plane. Artists capture these elements that require specialized knowledge or insight to detect.[45] Any theory that attempts to navigate this dense space of concepts will therefore have to reconcile the specific cultural features of *bhāva* with larger structures of human embodiment.

My own terminology therefore combines key terms from *rasa* theory as well as performance tradition such as Balasaraswati's Bharatanāṭyam with critical discourses. Key terms from theories of affect are deployed in this study to aid in this process of translation. By recognizing distinct links between various systems that impinge upon the body, we can recognize the overlapping affordances that cross Western conceptual domains that appear discrete.[46] We are more likely to be affected by a disease than by watching a play, for example, yet something about religion seems to have a "special" power of affectability.[47] By attending

to the ecological function of our experience of affectivity, we can see how the depths of our feelings implicate us in larger networks of embodied beings.[48] While I have relied upon theories of affectivity from the school of Giles Deleuze, most notably in the works of Brian Massumi, I attempt to put the more abstract processes of this line of affectivity into conversation with corporeality and embodiment in historical moments in which *bhāva* erupts onto the scene. I use the Deleuzian terminology of the "virtual" to suggest a latent, hidden dimension to reality that remains in material form. While abstracted as a reservoir of potential within bodies—which can include human, animal, and inorganic forms—the virtual at times will "jump out" of material forms to startle us with an awareness of its hidden presence. At times I refer to this as a "well of possibilities" in that the actions and motivations of human agents also contribute to what can become possible. While I refer at times to the affective ecology as an assemblage, this is to recognize the historically-contingent nature of these forms rather than associate them with organic or "natural" processes. Assemblages are always partially the result of human choices and agentive motivation.[49] As contingent, accidental, and intransigent, these forms tend to shift registers to the temporality and changing status of the self or body in performances. Since forms are abstracted constellations of qualities, they share an affordance: portability at each iteration.[50]

Similarly, James Gibson's term *affordance* also situates visual perception as a relationship between the human body and the environment. In line with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, this relationship is ecological as the material properties of both align to allow for a novel process ("sight") to emerge.[51] Gibson is the first theorist to attempts to bridge the divide between the perceiver and the world. Affordances function as this bridge: a concrete road affords durability, hardness, and speed in relation to wheels while also

encouraging grisly collisions. This "complementarity" between body and environment is performative in that it allows for the emergence of novel configurations.[52] Historical context also shapes our experience with these environments by rendering certain features more salient. A tree might appear ordinary to a secular individual while a pilgrim might see it as "touched" by a divine figure in the past. These embodied articulations between perception and environment therefore open up space and time to affectivity.[53] Affect as "the flow of forces through bodies outside of, prior to, or underneath language" carries these embodied meanings in our relationships to the environment.[54]

Relationality or relation also functions in a conceptual domain of its own. Embodiment does not just involve our relationship to ourselves and other human beings, but to lasting impressions, enduring forces, and unseen conditions that gently nudge us into new situations or sweep us along with gale-force winds to entirely new perspectives. These forces develop, shape, and inform our decision making, which leads to another set of considerations: how do affects *form* the body itself? Caroline Levine argues in her work that formal and social analysis should be complementary aspects of the same discussion rather than entirely separate domains of knowledge.[55] This study aligns with her assessment for form's heterogeneity and cross-disciplinary affordances, since the Sanskrit term most used for form (*rūpa*) has various strata ranging from aesthetics to sensory perception in epistemology.[56] Various forms of *bhāva* emerge and differentiate from it, all having their own constituent elements.[57] The relation of each form therefore becomes paramount as the *bhāva* takes on separate affordances in the local ecology in which it finds itself articulated. Relationality as a key term also reveals the vital performative features of forms. They constrain, differ, overlap and intersect, travel across cultural and spatio-temporal distances as well as crossing modalities of use (think Foucault's

monastic cell becoming a quarantine procedure, before expanding the repertoire of other European apparatuses of power), and work in historical-political contexts.[58]

Levine uses the concept of affordances to show how the material aspect of forms differentiates their use. The potential within an object as it is seen for instrumental development differs, for instance, between glass and wood.[59]. Someone can make a chair out of glass, for instance, but it won't be as durable due to the silica's brittle "nature." While this affordance reveal innate qualities within materials, it also suggests a relation.[60] Colors working together can bring together affordances that alone would not be seen; musical notes played simultaneously in chords create harmonic forms that in succession they would not sonically reveal. This abstract set of qualities therefore seems to be less of a "natural" feature but instead a function of a relational field effect, which allows certain common movements to contour the larger pattern of emergence.[61]

I use the general term "form" to translate *bhāva* into multiple phases for analysis. While Sanskrit terms such as *rūpa* and *prakṛti* are used in dramaturgical analysis to suggest the body's permeability, *bhāva*s also seem to adhere to the latent and potential side of embodiment. This theory of social and artistic forms working in tandem also offers potential for their relation to come into question, since constraints placed on individuals and groups from multiple forms can't be simultaneously enacted. This "collision" of forms reveals the ways forms are deployed together creates resonances that we can't anticipate.[62] The discussions around formal collisions can therefore open up possibilities for change, as well as analyzing the deeper intricacies of beliefs and practices as they are brought into performances where formal structures are put into play: "Things take forms, and forms organize things."[63] This makes forms particularly powerful, since they open up ways of analysis for oscillation: "Forms emerge from this

perspective as transhistorical, portable, and abstract, on the one hand, and material, situated, and political, on the other."[64] The two sides of this polarity suggest oscillation between the virtual and the actualized domains of reality.[65] Forms are not merely abstract nor only able to be understood within a particular historical context.[66] While artistic forms are recognizable, social and political forms have these same features. They do not occur in a vacuum: "no form, however seemingly powerful, causes, dominates, or organizes all others."[67]

One particular instance of affective forms arises in each of my following chapters. Susan Langer's term "commanding form" is central to the arguments made for certain clusters of affects which center around a single matrix. What makes this essential form of an artwork special, rather than put together as a Frankenstein-like monstrosity from disparate pieces, is that it exists as a seed for the artist, composer, or writer to develop. The form comes to the composer intact, whole, as an already-existing reality in some ways, and is "illuminated" or "shines forth" due to their sensitivity to these ephemeral dispositions. As an affective transformation governing the whole, the commanding form is the "measure of right and wrong, too much and too little, strong and weak" by which it is assessed. It lies implicit, latent, inside the inspiration or idea.[68] These forms are not static essences: instead, they are the *fundamental movement*" around which all themes, motifs, and counterpoints serve. Langer's category are not static entities but reservoirs, oceanic containers that can give and take without diminishing their contents. When the artist recognizes this as "an Idea," it becomes impersonalized, "a deep mine of musical resource. For the commanding form is not essentially restrictive, but fecund." The form provides essential limits, *tendencies*, from which it can develop.[69] Certain key affective clusters become the commanding forms in the theories I shall elaborate in the following chapters; at times certain social practices serve the same function; and finally key

works of art can also encompass a unique matrix that empowers related pieces with its latent power.

Furthermore, these forms are vital to the art-making process. Artists and religious practitioners do not consider their creativity to be self-derived. Instead, outside agencies and sovereign influences affect them. Langer's concept of the commanding form can help scholars in religious studies, dance history, and performance studies to analyze alternative theories of agency in art as an affective process. Considering artistic creation as a continuum, Langer argues—and to which I am calling an affective economy, transmuting performance modalities of composing to playing—"real performance is as creative an act as composition." This attention to the commanding form moves a step further in the flow of the affective event, from conception to utterance. It is this dedication to the commanding form, and not a sincerity-based paradigm of "self-expression," which matters in terms of performing a piece. However, this does not mean emotion is left out of the work, but merely that the performer does not locate the affect force as a "pressing-out" (*ex-pression*) of their feelings; instead, it is an investment, a giving room for the piece to emerge. In this way, the work requires a kind of taking center-stage, a descent from ideal or virtual space (or time in the semblance appropriate to music), and into mundane, experienced space-time. Feeling infuses the piece from not only the performer but from the matrix acting as the reservoir of potential for it to manifest.[70] Listening to the influences of these forms suggests that the self is more permeable than the subject-object dichotomy of practical experience assumes.[71]

Lastly, I also shift registers to the idea of economies of affect. In this sense I wish to highlight the social and infrapersonal levels that affects can take simultaneously. By attending to the circulation of forms and how affects function to generate, shape, and intersperse

themselves into them, we see movement playing a vital role in understanding how a performance can carry political weight. As affects afford change and stability, we can say that their movement creates an economy of relation.[72] To use a set of forms drawn from texts on the affective power of performances in South Asia, the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, we can see how affects transform and carry their values in various ways through four key forms: as *sattva*, "disposition;" as *līlā*, "semblance;" as *vṛtti*, "way of life" or "style;" and as *abhinaya*, "gesture" that leads. These forms all suggest mode, conduct, and becoming as forms of *bhāva* within the affective matrix of interrelated terminologies and verbal roots. They allow for bodies to become nodes along their paths as well as matrices from which new forms can emerge as their discrete elements are joined together in an aesthetic assemblage of circulation.[73] When stabilized, they create potential scripts which can reinforce hierarchies in aesthetic regimes.[74] We shall return to these key categories in each chapter to follow, but first we need to understand why affect has become a critical tool in understanding religions, performances, rituals, and how they influence bodies.

In Chapter One I examine the affective ecology of Bharata's theory in more detail, as well as its transformations in several key theorists. Falling into a hierarchy, *bhāva*s are frequently seen as the material counterpart to the transmundane experience of *rasa*.[75] This affective ecology includes "pervading affects" (*vibhāva*s) which link the performative moment to the larger context of the immediate past, "embracing affects" (*anubhāva*s) which delimit and force recognized social behavior of human agents into recognizable gestures and feelings, and "fluctuating affects" (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) which heighten and diversify the principle "stabilizing affect" (*sthāyi-bhāva*) of a performance. However, *bhāva*s do not possess bodies or corporeal forms themselves. Instead, they appear most often in latent potentials or

"dispositions" (*sattva*). As the qualities of certain emotions are transferred into the larger aesthetic assemblage of Bharata's theories, the material affordances become abstract qualities (*guṇa*s) within a larger psycho-physical matrix (*prakṛti*). *Sattva* in Bharata's usage functions appears in a unique dramaturgical mode to be the principle adding intensity to a performance. It can transform into both a set of gestures which revolve around socially-sanctioned roles (*bhūmikā*s) as well as affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) that require intense concentration to evoke in the body of a performer.

Next, I build off Bharata's aesthetic ecology to analyze the key disposition or "matrix" (*prakṛti*) undergirding affectivity in later Sanskrit theorists. I turn first to the eleventh-century Mewari king Bhoja's two major: the *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* ("Necklace for the Goddess of Language") finalized around 1025 and the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* ("Illumination of Passion") about 1050 CE.[76] Bhoja's formal theory places the *rasa*s into a hierarchy emerging from an expansion of the self (*ahaṃkāra*) in "passion" (*śṛṅgāra*). Next I explore the reception school of *rasa* aesthetics. In "The Ten Dramatic Forms" (*Daśa-rūpaka*) of Dhanaṃjaya (c. 975) and Dhanika's commentary, *Avaloka* dramaturgy adopted this novel hermeneutics.[77] I examine in detail the Kashmiri Śaiva theologian Abhinavagupta's theory in his "New Dramatic Art," *Abhinava-bhāratī* (c. 1000).[78] In this reconceptualization of Bharata, Abhinava analyzes the steps in which a performance event disengages normal affective habits in an audience to prepare them for a universalizing experience of *rasa*.

Finally, I examine a devotional aesthetics from the Gauḍīya community. In Rūpa Gosvāmin's "Immortal Ocean of Devotional *Rasa*," (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, 1541) *rasa* theory is used as a "practice" (*sādhana*) to inculcate a personal devotional relationship with Kṛṣṇa as the supreme deity.[79] Rūpa's theory also assumes a singular matrix of "pleasure" (*rati*)

undergirding all others in the affective ecology as it develops for Kṛṣṇa. From Bharata's aesthetic ecology of *rasa* onward, South Asian theories of affects therefore destabilizes individual autonomy, expands agency into a set of relationships in the context of action (via costumes, gestures, speech, and involuntary bodily changes). Performance itself becomes less a representational form and a more a vehicle for evoking, sustaining, and eliding certain constellations of affective forces. Authorship and inspiration also become part of the larger intersection of affectivity when linked to these larger networks of distributing agency, embodied feeling, and meaning.

In Chapter Two I build off these insights to introduce another theorist and playwright, the sixteenth-century Bengali devotee Kavikarṇapūra. In his aesthetic treatise, *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* ("Crown Jewel of Poetic Ornaments", c. 1572), he elaborates a theory of creativity from the poet's (*kavi*) position in the performance process. Affectivity is infused into an entire work due to this matrix within the mediating influence of the creator between a universal disposition and what I call a semblance. Two key Sanskrit terms are interrelated in my theory herein. The aesthetic term *ābhāsa* is usually used by the theorists in Chapter One to suggest a "dissemblance" from the normative ecologies given in the tradition. I revisit the main theorists on this term before examining the Andhran king Siṅghabhūpāla's *Rasārṇava-sudhākara* (c. 1400).[80] Siṅgha presents the first theory that *ābhāsa* can create novel configurations of *rasa*s, engendering emergent forms in the process. Using his insights, I turn to Kavikarṇapūra play *Caitanya-candrodaya*, "The Arising of the Moon of Caitanya" (1572) and his aesthetics to situate another Gauḍīya term: *līlā*.[81] *Līlā* functions more like a "resemblance" to suggest the mirroring process of mimesis in acting as well as a term denoting the episodes of a particular deity in a given environment and context. In this way, *līlā* embodies a relation which can also

translate *bhāva*. This term functions in theology to explain the unmotivated movement of a deity outside karmic causality. I argue that the two terms share affordances which allowed Gauḍīyas to develop elaborate visualization practices equating the landscapes of Caitanya's life with those of Kṛṣṇa. Semblances therefore allow for a conflation of worlds as the material and the hidden overlap, while Kavikarṇapūra's affective theories conjoin worldly and otherworldly affects via the medium of "adoration." Hence even artistic genius, our relationship to the world around us, and even our very identities become affected when intertwined with these textured encounters with the divine.

In Chapter Three I continue my examination of Kavikarṇapūra's play in relation to the perceived audience who might be participating in its dramatic actions. I start with the assumption that way audiences perceive a drama or dance renders them active members of the performative event. In the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, Kavikarṇapūra also stages a play within the play called an *upāṅkha* in the third act. This interior play allows him to formulate the dramatic experience for potential audiences using his characters. I turn to the idea of habit or style (*vṛtti*) to explain this intersubjective sharing of the performance. Using examples of *rāsa-līlā* performances in North India among Gauḍīya audiences, I suggest that a style allows for a distribution of agency across a shared embodiment in the play. In particular I examine the role of costumes and cosmetic gestures (*āhārya-abhinaya*) to facilitate possession-like features of acting. Possession (*āveśa*) I argue is one mode of "investing" the body with novel features and dispositions against the contours of its normal habits. Like an actor entering the stage costume, outside entities can possess and "weigh down" the body in performance like a heavy garment. *Vṛtti* also functions to link the body to larger social forces that hide the labor of performance. As a mode of living, it suggests an economy of affect shared between audience and performers

that becomes modulated by social, juridical, and material norms. Historical experiences can become weighted into the body via habits as the remainder of affectivity permeates material forms. I analyze how this process in the play-within-the-play of the *Caitanya-candrodaya* affects Caitanya and convinces him to modify his own mode of living.

Finally I turn to the dances and life of T. Balasaraswati to suggest how personal agency functions alongside these historically intransigent sets of affects. Balasaraswati's name itself has become Anglicized into a form that suggests she was divined as the "Force of Creativity" itself. In particular I focus on her prowess as a Bharatanāṭyam dancer in *abhinaya*, the gestures which "induce" change and feeling in an audience. I describe one of her most famous dances, *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō*, "Kṛṣṇa Come Soon," to showcase the improvisational flexibility of her creativity in dance. I then turn to the conflict with labelling her style "classical" versus the impingements of modernity on South Asian lifeworlds during the colonial period. I argue that Balasaraswati's survival became a way to protect the subaltern history of her community's dance practices as well as a feature that allowed the new Indian state to export her as a form of "soft-power" during the Cold War after 1947. However, Balasaraswati's radical style also resonated across linguistic, regional, and ethnic boundaries with modern dancers around the world as she travelled to Europe and the United States. I therefore argue that her dancing presented a formal critique to the supposedly secular Indian state by creating visions of alternative sovereignties for her audiences.

The reader might find my translations unique in that they diverge from a certain consensus among scholars. However, any deviations I have made from convention is due to the philosophical and epistemological weight of the terms in emic sources (Sanskrit, Bengali, Tamil). When I have attempted to argue for certain key terms such as *bhāva* to mean affect,

for instance, it is to help scholars understand the larger categories that can fall under its domain. While emotions are certainly one form of affect, other physiological stimuli such as paralysis, fainting, stuttering, or even disease can be presented onstage and actually felt at times by performers in rituals. In the conclusion I briefly turn to folk dramas in Bengal centered on the regional goddess Śītalā, "The Cooling Lady," to suggest how aesthetic and medical affectivity can be read together in the same performances. In lieu of a glossary, I offer Figure 0.1 as a guide to help map the upcoming arguments and suggest potential ways that affects can phase into one another, overlap or even diverge in performances onstage or in the imagination.
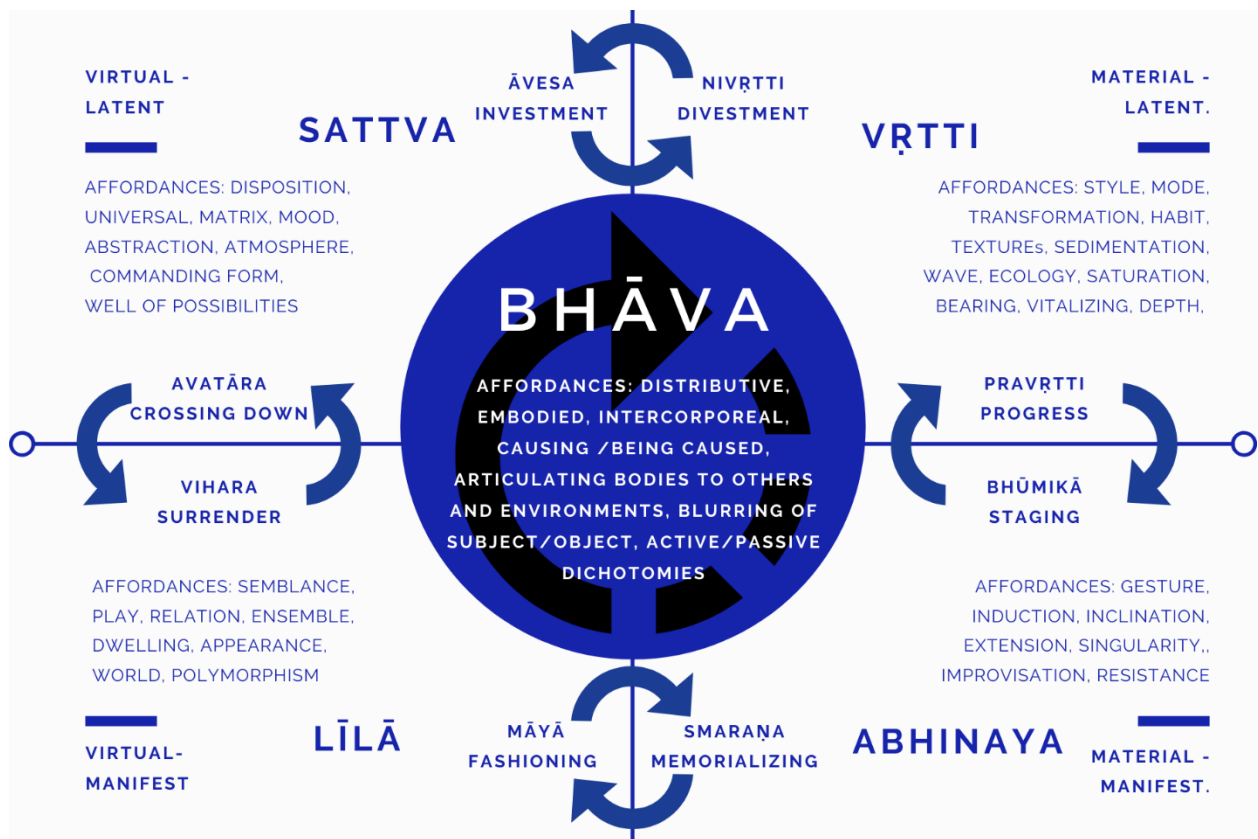
Figure 0.1: Affective Forms and Phases
Affective forms are modulations of *bhāva* along two axes: virtual-material and latent-manifest.
Affordances can be carried over between forms as they change phase BUT must transition between intermediate forms (e.g. *sattva*s must become either *līlā*s or *vṛtti*s before *abhinaya*s).

Chapter 1.1 Embodied Dispositions in *Rasa* Theory

"The ancient seers discovered in their hearts the articulation (*bandhu*) of the manifest (*sat*) and the unmanifest (*asat*)." Ṛg-Veda 1.129

"Therefore, the falling out of *rasa* is due to the conjunction of affects: pervading, embracing, and fluctuating." *tatra vibhāva-anubhāva-vyabhicāri-saṃyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ. Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.84

How do I know when someone is experiencing a feeling? Sitting in an audience at a theater, I experience a movie, play, or concert in unique ways. One person might love the event, while others claim it was lacking "something." In India, that something is called *rasa*. Yet these implicit assessments are not carried out dialogically or inductively. Instead, I have to work backward from my response to understand these implicit assessments. Feelings can appear natural and self-evident, yet historical studies of emotion show they are culturally conditioned, inflected by language, class, gender, and embodied logic of actions.[1] Moreover, I can feel things for invisible presences: fictional characters, mythological heroes, futures yet to come, and deities that show no signs of listening. How do I connect with things, people, and events that are not a part of our normal worlds? My starting assumptions as a scholar of religion and performance therefore have to show the materiality of affects as a part of the world (*prakṛti*), even when they are directed toward transcendent virtues, objects, or ideas.[2] Even personal, internalized concepts in the study of religion such as belief are attempts to affect the self via the intervention of physical movements, poses, and "scripts" even to an audience of one.[3] At times we believe through the affective force of a pivotal moment or event: rituals and performances therefore facilitate belief.

This chapter primarily attempts to answer the question: what are affects? I argue that the dramaturgical method of analyzing actions found in Sanskritic theories of *rasa* is a mode

of analyzing affects (*bhāva*s) which presuppose their own agendas. I therefore view textual theories of performance as implicit theories of affect that describe sets of embodied orientations engaging with *dis*-positions of self.[4] Each key theorist I discuss in this chapter brought features of ritual to light while attempting to find a dispositional matrix undergirding the body-in-performance. While the self in these texts is assumed to be an ideal masculine one–whether a connoisseur, actor, spectator, or devotee–certain features appear to present the self as constituted by its relations to material reality (*prakṛti*) and others living beings.[5] This contrasts affect theories from *dharma-śāstra* or philosophical systems (*darśana*s) that suggest its transcendence from materiality. These approaches are bridged by a common mode of understanding personality across the Sanskrit *episteme*: "disposition" (*sattva*).[6] This chapter interrogates how this is possible. What role does disposition play in each theory as a reservoir of hidden potentials for performance? Is it possible to reconcile *sattva* as both a thing and a relation (*bhāva*) or form of belonging when *rasa* is transcendent?

It is easy to assume emotions emerge in a spontaneous, "sincere" manner without attending to their external manifestations in actions. Like the Vedic seers, however, audiences too must look into their heart to scrutinize where invisible and visible forces come into play. This will help us make sense of the aesthetic ecology developed in Bharata's *Nāṭya-sāstra. Rasa*, the goal of performance, fluidly appears in the intertwining of affective forms. The primary forms that emerge in performance I argue are affective: *vibhāva*s ("pervading affects"), *anubhāva*s ("embracing affects") with a subset called *sāttvika-bhāva*s ("dispositional affects"), and lastly *vyabhicāri-bhāva*s ("fluctuating affects"). These forms continue to influence *rasa* theory after Bharata's treatise on drama. In my discussion of this principal text, I will introduce some brief theorizations on ritual in the work of Adam Seligman and his group.

Since Bharata's system privileges ritual conditioning over sincere emotion expression, I examine how we can reconcile affects apart from our modern paradigm of emotionality. I then examine three major divergences and elaborations on affect in Sanskrit discourses of aesthetics. The first is the eleventh-century Mewari king Bhoja's "Light on Passion" (*Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa*). In this pinnacle of the formalist tradition, Bhoja extols a dispositional matrix of the character as the centerpiece of affective engagement in a work of literature. The expansion of the character's self is at the heart of affectivity which eventually transcends the bounds of materiality. Next, the eleventh-century Kashmiri Tantric synthesizer Abhinavagupta inherited the vast knowledge of previous affect theorists up to that time, on the basis of which he created his own commentary on the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. In his "New Dramaturgy" (*Abhinava-bhāratī*), Abhinava offers the most detailed exploration of how *bhāva*s become abstracted and universalized, in order to affect the greatest number of people in the audience. His examination of the performance process argues that ritual conditions can allow anyone to access the heart of the aesthetic experience.[7] Lastly, Bhoja's theory would become adapted in the work of the sixteenth-century Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava theologian Rūpa Gosvāmin's "The Immortal Ocean of Devotional Rasa" (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*). This treatise on devotional (*bhakti*) *rasa* links Bhoja's dispositional framework to Kṛṣṇa as the Bhagavān–the supreme form of the divine as a personal figure–with his own "pure disposition." Devotees therefore used ritual actions to manifest these dispositional relations in order to become a part of his aesthetic entourage.

Briefly, I argue *bhāva* must be treated in aesthetic texts as affects rather than emotions. *Bhāva*s have been taken to correspond with hidden thoughts or feelings in modern psychology, as historical passions in philological studies, or a universal set of basic response networks in theories of affect.[8] This chapter will explore emic perspectives in South Asian affect theories

through the lens of literary and dramatic criticism, as well as how these theories were adapted into devotional practices to be used to develop particular dispositions. Objects, embedded memories, and hidden dimensions of materiality can bring out this hidden "sap" (*rasa*) that can feel like "some alien body" inhabiting our own when affects well up. This signals our first affective form as a well of possibilities remaining latent within the material assemblage of artistic performances.[9] Affects are involuntarily felt as a shudder, an excitement that elicits an uncontrollable response.[10] Straining between thinking and feeling, these shudders ooze from material bodies and forms uncontrollably. This affective form is called a "dispositional affect" (*sāttvika-bhāva*) in Sanskrit theories of drama and features to showcase how affects appear as "second-nature" to us. I shall return to this idea of *sattva* as a disposition which does not ground the self but instead changes over time, dis-positioning us in the process of ritual activity and performance.

To understand *bhāva*, I first map its relation to *rasa*, the poetic "flavor" of an art experience. Since the first disciplinary work in South Asia on dramaturgy,[11] the fourth-century *Nāṭya-śāstra* attributed to the sage Bharata, these two components of aesthetics have been intertwined. Each of the individual eight *rasa*s mentioned in the text is said to be "empowered" (*prabhāva*) or have its body/soul (*ātmaka*) founded in a stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*).[12] *Bhāva* has been translated as "emotional state" or "emotion,"[13] and is usually involved in the arising of *rasa*, "flavor, sap, essence." Sheldon Pollock suggests it emerged in a context of discourses synthesizing an ecology of performative techniques with the symbolic form of the Vedas.[14] The prestige of this ritual language led Bharata to refer to his text as the fifth or Nāṭya-Veda,[15] and later theorists developed alternative theories of *yoga*, Mīmāṃsā, Sāṃkhya, and *bhakti* to explain how performance functions. Each theory assumes connections between ritual

and performance, which shapes how the relationship of *rasa* and *bhāva* emerges in their respective systems. First then, this chapter attempts to lay out these assemblages from primary sources on their aesthetic components, and the different affordances each type of ritual adds to a performance's dispositional matrix.[16] What is the relation between *rasa* and *bhāva* in each theory? How do aesthetic experiences shape or reform our experience of self? How might the dispositions generated by performances bridge this gap which sets their aesthetics off from other types of ritual performances? And how do divine and non-human realities and beings experience or fit into this larger assemblage of affective forces?[17]

The dramaturgical tradition first encapsulated in *Nāṭya-śāstra* is the first affective theory in South Asian texts to make *bhāva*s a central feature. The affective body assumes different phases of this term, but principally *bhāva* is foremost "some-thing," an existing thing or *sattva*. In dramaturgy, *bhāva* contains "action words," whose "purpose is making (*bhāva*)."[18] Affect therefore is processual as it actualizes something into material form. The range of this term aligns it to affect as a "real-ity" (*sat-tva*, Sanskrit √*as*, "to be"). However, this "something" is not easy to define, as its force is felt in almost every other form used in performance: from costumes to makeup to vocal styles and movements, the *sattva* of a play appears to be invisibly present as a mood or atmosphere that couches itself in other forms. Like a mood, *sattva* "takes place, happens, or dwells" in the performance invisibly but present, never quite coming into visible form. Instead, it is suggested, enacted, and infused into every moment of the performance (*prayoga*). This reality is unmanifest (*aprakaṭa*) yet still real: critical theorists refer to this side of reality as the virtual.[19] To understand the heart of a theatrical event, therefore, I search out the conditions that shape it from this latent side. Rather than acting as a center in a character, it infuses the entire performance as its component parts are

brought together, and hence "belongs" inherently to each event. *Sattva*, therefore, exhibits the tendencies of affects to reach beyond and create affective bodies.

I use *bhāva* as a key term similar to the usage of *bandhu* in hermeneutics.[20] The "relation" of the affective body emerges in the process of performance from a material matrix that constantly shifts from the component bodies that constitute its foundations: performers, audience members, along with living and non-living material forms.[21] Rather than a "place" to begin, there is a constant *dis*-positioning of the performative matrix of an event as it shifts forms constantly. There can be no heart of the event without its relationality, planting seeds in bodies that will grow into future forms. This vitality is the central aspect of *sattva*'s force, as it distributes forms with distinct traits or "characteristics" (*guṇa*s) between the characters, who make up its matrix (*prakṛti*) or to other forms that ground the aesthetic process.[22] Hence while I will translate *sattva* at times as "character," due to its connection with separate personalities, it functions as a shifting "dispositional matrix" waiting to permeate and inflect performances with the unique traits bundled together with it.[23] A disposition acts as a matrix to encompass a variety of aesthetic concepts, strategies, and qualities—ranging from the early centuries of the common era to the early modern period—within a stable framework. For instance, "love" can be seen in a variety of features due to its durability in genetic history (matrix) while the particularities of its cultural history around a given word add to it, enhance, contradict, or even diverge completely from previous versions. It is still recognized as a disposition even when embodied in seemingly shifting, fleeting sensations. This durability allows such affects to be described in a stable manner by theologians and thinkers across centuries.[24] These are not necessarily essences but instead showcase a dynamic range of embodied forces at play within performance. While terms such as *rasa*, *sāra*, or *ātman* can be translated as "essence" in some

cases, *bhāva*'s causative form derived from the verbal root √*bhū*, "to be, become," suggests change as its primary tendency. Affects cause change, incite becoming while the matrices elaborated by theorists remain latent and invisibly powerful within the ecology of affects.[25]

If change rather than fixity is assumed over the *longue dureé* of South Asia performances traditions, how did a single set of theoretical terms come to encompass all the embodied techniques of dance, drama, and music?[26] How does drama itself retain something unchanging over such a long period of social change? Rather than assuming a "core" definition shared by all theorists, what would happen instead if each thinker was an artist, dancer, or innovator in his or her own right, playing with a hidden reservoir for potential in its key elements? Each uses particular religious imagery and hence historical techniques to access affects and empower our everyday lives with its potential for change. For instance, a disposition is not an unfixed "nature" (*prakṛti*) but a vital, transformative matrix unique to characters, persons, and the material bodies embodied beings carry.[27] A fictional persona played by an actor, a psycho-social set of characteristics, and the underlying latent form of materiality are all encompassed by *prakṛti*. Religious rituals show how affects can bind, relate, and embody these multiple, material forms.[28] Likewise, a delimited number of affects or modulations of this matrix are present, with specific movements, contours, and textures of feeling present in each assemblage of feeling.[29] Affects can have processual elements, rather than being fixed entities,[30] as well becoming *some-thing* that can be experienced as separate from ourselves yet which retains an amount of animate potency.[31] This hidden matrix from which change emerges as the foundation is not directly accessible to most forms of perception. Instead, it manifests in affective forms that reveal its latent presence.

Rasa arises from modifications of this latent stratum of the self, existing on a subtle level of bodies which can be brought to light by affects. It cannot be located solely within an individual nor is it seen outside of dramatic events. Performance study scholars such as Richard Schechner argue the body during special events can undergo a feeling of *communitas*[32] as well as a bifurcation of self into multiple roles.[33] If it were an individual's heart, it would not "belong" to an individual: instead an audience finds itself in the *heart of an event* such as a play, transfixed but moved. Likewise, beings find at their own affective center an undulating wave of potentials waiting to flow outward, not a fixed point.[34] These forces of potential (*śakti*s) can manifest from the deep residue of past experiences, embodying cultural norms about gender presentation (what it means to be a hero or a lover, for instance). Potentials also carry personal resonance that manifests at times as audiences are moved from this matrix.[35] I am not moved from a fixed place or center but instead due to a relation in which I have already found myself. This is the shared core of the event.

By analyzing actions in performance, I hope to elide the paradox of essentializing and reifying the self while attending to the straightforwardness of affective feelings. A tension immediately emerges from the terms "heart" and "emotion" which resonate with us in terms of sincerity. Emotions can be "heartfelt" without generating a positionality that establishes a fixed identity. Theater, for instance, allows us to play with our given or culturally imposed personas and temporarily expand the range of who we can be. Actors therefore do not need to "sincerely" feel the things they act out as characters. Nonetheless, the characters' affects are real and could be considered "heartfelt" when they emerge from a shared disposition in the bodies of performers, audience members. This framework has developed powerfully in Protestant countries that have less connections to ritual practices, as Adam Seligman, Robert

Weller, Michael Puett, and Bennet Simon argue in their theorization on ritual. They describe the "sincere" framework as locating emotion within the person while ritual would make performance an external factor to the self.[36] Meaning, however, is not the only gauge for ritual efficacy: "Most of the meanings read into ritual, after all, come into play outside the frame of the ritual itself. Ritual, I argue, is about *doing* more than about saying something."[37] Ritual gestures in fact "in-duce" (*abhinaya, abhi+√nī*, "to lead into") certain affective contours which are "framed" as culturally-sanctioned and immutable in most South Asian theories of affect.[38] Bharata's system is a theory of performative modulation of these specific affects that form a dense ecology of forces when enacted.

1.2 Bharata's Aesthetic Ecology: Affective Forms

To start, what is an affect? In standard definitions, *bhāva* is a noun, which in turn "signifies being," (*sattva*).[39] Affects are some-thing: even if they cannot quite appear without the mediation of a form, they are partially words in regular use. Mel Chen's discussion of linguistic forms of affect showcase implicit grammatical and hierarchical principles for the wholes seen as individuals with agency. For instance, substantives (nouns, adjectives) function as the agents of verbs.[40] Affects fall into the lower end of the linguistic animacy hierarchies below humans, animals, mobile, and corporeal objects.[41] This means that any affect delineated in language will fall into a category of language, while in reverse language itself will have affective forces at play.

Chen states that hierarchies in linguistics have "affective ontologies" of what *can* and *cannot* affect other things.[42] Positioning seems to be the key to understanding these relationships. "Subjects" in the higher registers tend to have affective force that the lower end "objects" receive. For instance, men tend to be seen as agents compared to women, who are

desired as socially-constructed "objects"; able-bodied individuals are seen to affect dis-abled persons in ways that deny the subject-potential of the latter (people in long-term comas or with reduced ability to communicate are called "vegetables)."[43] What makes affects (*bhāva*s) fascinating in this account is that they cut across the registers of this hierarchy, which Chen studies in terms of "leakages." Residues are left by affects crossing over bodies and environmental forces defined by the borders of individuality.[44] The "residues" therefore found between bodies will often take on affective weight, while affects in-form themselves into the residues to create manifest forms. I argue Bharata has a similar process at work. Since the "manifest" (*bhāva*) appears as a "residue" of a hidden reality, therefore the visible forms should reveal something of the unmanifest aspects. Hence Bharata's theory studies the ecology of affects as they take form and modulate the appearance of *rasa*. His system attempts to find the articulations between manifest and unmanifest forms.

If *bhāva*s articulate latent with visible realities, they cannot be located within a singular body as they reside in relation (*bandhu*).[45] Literary theorist Kapil Kapoor makes the blunt statement that *bhāva* cannot be translated as "emotion," since it would lose its connection to "being" (*sat*) in the process. In his theorization, affects are primarily subtle material phenomena on the mental plane as "persons and events constitute experience." These experiences in turn take the form of "turns" (*vṛtti*), which activate the mental assemblage.[46] Using Abhinavagupta's definition in the *Abhinava-bhāratī*, Kapoor argues that *bhāva*s can also be facilitators: "*Bhāva* is that which brings about a condition or which gets established (through what happens)…*bhāva* means an *instrument* of being."[47] For Kapoor, affects act instrumentally to bring about *rasa*s.[48]

Turning to the fourth-century text of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, its purported author Bharata would agree with Chen's assessment of affectability that guides this theory of *rasa*. The linguistic terms he uses are obscure but present a series of conditioning forms. All contain the root *bhāva* within them to signify the performative, interactive aspects of these techniques for analyzing dramas. Likewise, Kapoor's statement that *bhāva* involves various features of "being" and becoming will reveal why the techniques used to create dramas are not "emotions" per se but instead modulations of larger affective forms in play. Bharata's sixth chapter opens with a discussion of *rasa*, which also entails the necessary qualities of affects (*bhāva*s). The opening frame of each chapter involves the sages questioning the expert dramatist; they inquire why *rasa* belongs to dramas, and what the affects bring about or cause (*bhāvayanti*).[49] Patrick Olivelle makes a similar point about this causative form of √*bhū* in Aiteraya Upaniṣad 2.2, claiming it can mean "to nourish" as well as "to take care of."[50] In this sense, affects are nourishing to the end goal of the play (*rasa*).[51] *Bhāva*s, therefore, are able to nourish something that either leads or reveals *rasa*. *Bhāva*s are "affects" as they bring about, nourish, and condition the outcomes of theatrical events.

1.2.1 Aesthetic Matrix: *Rasa*s, *Sthāyi-bhāva*s, *Niṣpatti*

The first major *sūtra* of South Asian aesthetics (and hence affect theory) is in *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.84: "Therefore, the falling out of *rasa* is due to the conjunction of affects: pervading, embracing, and fluctuating." Bharata's system describes a unique phenomenon (*rasa*) that gives rise to or "falls out" from an ecology of affective forms conjoined in performance. Before his audience learns about the necessary qualities of these forms, Bharata immediately shifts into a discussion of the individual *rasa*s themselves. By chapter seven, he examines the other three varieties of affects in more detail. In the digest at the start of chapter six, however, Bharata

adds a term that is missing from the *rasa-sūtra*: the stabilizing affects. (*sthāyi-bhāva*s) These are listed immediately after the *rasa*s and continue into the thirty-three fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s, *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.16-21). Bharata's list therefore leaves us with an unmentioned or implicit concept at its center, hidden within the ecological niche of forms.[52] Why is there an unlisted category that Bharata suggests are paramount to this theory. By placing these stabilizing affects immediately after the *rasa*s, the two lists both number eight and seem to be articulated together. Hence the *rasa*s and *sthāyi-bhāva*s act as matrices, open systems by which their component parts can be interrelated and combined while retaining a degree of structural flexibility. This will allow later theorists to augment their total counts while retaining the basic affective structure.[53] Likewise, as a matrix, certain forms will be latently present without drawing attention to their ongoing workings.

Most people who study aesthetics learn of this set of correlations before reading the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. I start my affective orientation to this theory in a similar hermeneutic movement. This implicit link is important since the text itself was only recovered as a major theory of performance in the late nineteenth century before becoming pivotal to the nationalist construction of Indian history.[54] These lists were therefore most likely the distilled essence of Bharata's theorem as taken up by later commentators in the tradition. Bharata enumerates all the *rasa*s and their component *bhāva*s before describing how they interrelate from NS 6.15-22. The *rasa*s are not given any direct or unambiguous relationship to their stabilizing affects (*sthāyi-bhāva*s). Bharata provides his famous *rasa-sūtra* at the start of this chapter yet does not even mention the stabilizing affects. Before Bharata, no other texts provide this correlation between the two sets of matrices. Instead, a form of collocation or ecology between the two is

offered in chapter six (*rasa*) and chapter seven (*bhāva*s):[55]

RASAS

———

DECOROUS (ŚṚṄGĀRA)
COMIC (HĀSYA)
COMPASSION (KARUṆĀ)
FURIOUS (RAUDRA)
HEROIC (VĪRYA)
TERRIFYING (BHAYĀNAKA)
LOATHSOME (BĪBHATSA)
WONDROUS (ADBHUTA)

NŚ 6.15

STHĀYI-BHĀVAS

———

PLEASURE (RATI)
LAUGHTER (HĀSA)
GRIEF (ŚOKA
ANGER (KRODHA)
ENERGETIC (UTSĀHA)
FEAR (BHAYA)
DISGUST (JUGUPSĀ)
AMAZEMENT (VISMAYA)

NŚ 6.17

Figure 1.1 Bharata's list of *Rasa*s and *Sthāyi-bhāva*s

The succession of terms is linked for each as their equivalent emotional contours match. For example, the "decorous" *rasa* and the stabilizing affect of pleasure are given similar contexts (pleasurable seasons, garments, accessories, a nice house, and loved ones or "desired objects").[56] Others have linguistic parallels, such as the comic *rasa* (*hāsya*, "causing to laugh"), and the stabilizing affect laughter (*hāsa*). Immediately after these lists, the text shifts to discussing several other key affective forms, including the four gestural regimes (*abhinaya*), which act as assemblages for drama (*nāṭya-saṃśraya,* 6.23). Dramatic conventions and styles (*vṛtti*) are next brought to bear, (6.24), then local styles (*pravṛtti*) as well (6.25). Only after

going through this list does Bharata return to the topic at hand, which he begins by stating "If there is no *rasa*, the performance has no point in continuing."[57] By elevating *rasa* to the center of his affect theory, Bharata's next verse (*sūtra*) becomes the central argument for dramaturgy, poetics, and literature quoted by every author afterwards: *tatra vibhāva-anubhāva-vyabhicāri-saṃyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ*. The apparent subject (*rasa-niṣpatti*) arises from an assemblage (*saṃyoga*) of affective forms. Before investigating the complexities of the three specific forms that are identified here, let me bracket the translation so far: "Therefore, the falling (√*pat*) out (*niṣ+*) of *rasa* is due to the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of *vibhāva*s, *anubhāva*s, and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*s."

Now, setting aside for the moment the technical names for affective forms, the strangest word in this *sūtra* is "falling out," *niṣpatti*, which seems to mean either a process of becoming itself or arising. However, normally this would take the form of *utpatti*, "coming up." Instead, the prefix *niṣ-* adds a directional quality or enhances the verbal form itself, meaning this "outwardness" is an affordance built into the larger assemblage (*saṃyoga*) or intensifies the process of manifesting affects for the performance. The Sanskrit scholar of *rasa* theory C.M. Chaturvedi defines *niṣpatti* as "a modification (*pariṇati*) of something into *another form* on account of its association with some other favourable thing (*sahāyaka*)."[58] Mīmāṃsā uses of the term also suggest it is a "fulfillment" or completed phase of something that has already been "established," "arisen" (*utpatti*).[59] This matches the aesthetic usage: Bharata deploys the term again in an example (*upamā*) to show how the affects combine to create a larger whole. Just as condiments and spices (*vyañjana* and *oṣadhi*) work in tandem to produce the six flavors of food, using certain substances (*dravya*) with their affordances of sweetness, etc., the various affects work together to obtain larger affective forms called the "stabilizing affects" (*sthāyin*,

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*sthāyi-bhāva*s).[60] In this way, Bharata draws the parallel that affects sustain the life of the performance. The affects offer their affordances to "nourish" (*bhāvayanti*) and cause new "flavors" (*rasa*s) to emerge as a feature of their coming together. This kind of "fall-out" (*niṣpatti*) therefore creates larger sets of basic flavors, through which the stabilizing affects function to aggregate the individual aesthetic components into their sphere of influence.[61]

The *sthāyi-bhāva*s likewise appear in a strange relationship to *rasa*. Bharata's text does not make it clear whether one causes the other to arise, but instead are the "ingredients" (*vyañjana*) or basic templates to which the other affects add "spice."[62] The stabilizing affects therefore seem to function most like a rice or grain, to hold the entire meal that is the aesthetic event together. As its material condition, the stabilizing affects appear more directly or visibly than *rasa*s. Bharata explains that three ways they might be related (*sthāyi-bhāva*s cause the *rasa*s, *rasa*s cause the *sthāyi-bhāva*s, or the two are co-implicated) while seeming to favor *rasa*s as the root of the *bhāva*s. This gesture places the invisible as the foundation for the materiality of the performance.[63] Bharata, however, offers the idea that the two are mutually constitutive since they both emerge when performed in affective gestures (*abhinaya*).[64]

Bharata has an interlocutor ask why only the stabilizing affects become *rasa*s, if the other forms are necessary as well? In fact, he asks why do they "obtain a virtual form" (*rasatvam āpnuvanti*?). Here Bharata offers the first of several examples of a commanding form. While kings appear as normal humans, they are recognized by their deportment, wisdom, skill in the arts and rituals, endowing them with authority over others less skilled. In this way, the other affects become "subservient" to the stabilizing affects that become "masters" or "self-possessed." The diminutive affects therefore "take shelter" (*āśraya*) with the commanding forms. The other affects become secondary (*guṇībhūta*), since the dominant affects possess a

certain "quality" (*guṇavattayā*).[65] As I have already noted, the list of stabilizing affects is keyed to the list of the *rasa*s, starting with *śṛṅgāra* ("decorous") *rasa* that emerges alongside or from the stabilizing affect of *rati*, "pleasure."[66] Similar theories of aesthetics claim that there is a "commanding form" that remains virtual, acting to give rise to its expression from the potentials contained within the artist.[67] When my analysis turns to a consideration of ritual, this theory will come to the fore in indicating whence the affective force of the "command" issues, and how thinkers can understand something that is not the subject as containing a force to will things into being.

Here the *sthāyi-bhāva* is given preeminence on the analogy of a king, not because the king is essentially different from his fellow humans but because they defer to his authority. He exerts a gravitas, which the verse intimates since it also compares kings to "teachers among students." The *guru* has a "weightiness" in the form of spiritual potency.[68] This social parallel would externally fit the actors learning to depict royal characters to regal patrons. Internally, from a formal perspective, this relationship of dominion exerts a force from within the event as well. A dominant affect projects a will of its own into the event, taking shape as a principle that manifests an end (*artha*) that leads the event to fruition. The *rasa* of an event therefore is one of the "fruits" of this process as the stabilizing affect becomes the commanding form in its emergence. Like a tree carrying the sap (*rasa*) to its branches, which bloom into buds, leaves, and flowers, the *sthāyi-bhāva*s are the form of the tree from the range of its potential phases–from seedling to fully-grown trunk. They carry forward the ecology as a nested set of relationships even when still dormant and underground, waiting for a chance to take shape. This ecology appears from its latent matrix.

1.2.2 Ecological Conditions: *Vibhāva*s, *Anubhāva*s, *Vyabhicāri-bhāva*s

Why are affects so important to this process for Bharata? In chapter seven he links *bhāva* to the ongoing causal stem of √*bhū*, *bhāvati*. Affect is "the perfection of means" (*karaṇa-sādhana*), since the word in a participle form as *bhāvita* can mean "produced" alongside synonyms like "infused" (*vāsita*), and "cultivated" (*kṛta*).[69] In common usage, Bharata claims, one can say "Ah, everything is entirely infused (*bhāvita*) by the smell or flavor of something else," which he offers glosses with the synonym of *vyāpti*, "pervasion."[70] He follows this prose passage with three verses:

> "What is manifested by the *vibhāva*s, and understood by the *anubhāva*s is the goal (*artha*); that, and along with the vocal, bodily, and dispositional gestures, should be known as "affect." // Speech, body, face, and passion, along with gestures of the disposition, are called "affects" as they manifest the hidden disposition (*antargata bhāva*) of the poet. // Those who perform drama recognize affects as manifesting these *rasas* connecting with various gestures.[71]

This set of claims by Bharata therefore links the affordances of affects to pervade into the aesthetic forms used in performance, including the gestures here as well as styles, conventions, and other features of dramaturgy and design. These all work in tandem (*sambandha*) to assist in bringing *rasa* outward from a latent form from within the "inner disposition" of the playwright/poet.

For this reason, *bhāva* also seems to instill itself into the first member of its list in the *rasa-sūtra*. *Vibhāva*s stems from the root *vi-*√*bhū*. Related terms such as *vibhūti* contain divine powers within corporeal form as food or ash once it is offered to a deity. Theorists such as Sheldon Pollock and Manomohan Ghosh translate *vibhāva* as "factor" and "determinant" respectively.[72] These translations ignore the term's affective resonance as well as its difference from linear causes. The conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of the various affects includes a range of key features. In drama they are embodied while in poetry they are visualized imaginatively.

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Characters, settings, accompanying features such as objects, sound effects, the time of year, and weather all play into the pervasive atmosphere that creates the location where affects become a form of dwelling (*bhavana*). These *vibhāva*s are "pervasive affects" because they imbue the atmosphere with these details, elaborating the germ (*bīja*) of each matrix out into a wider array of forms.[73] This pluriformity engenders a sense of diffusion outward into the setting that then permeates or "infuses" the characters into a mood. Mood seems to fit this recognition, as the world itself changes when we are affected deeply. Lovers seeing a river notice a secret place for late-night trysts, while a mother in grief views a goddess overflowing with tears for her own lost child. We not only dwell within the landscape but are dwelled in by our affects that pervade out and blur the membrane between ourselves and our environments. This makes pervading affects recognized in retrospect mostly, as the mood of the characters gradually builds but does not cause them to feel one affective matrix. Instead, the matrix (e.g., the "decorous" *rasa*) changes a familiar locale into a new place wherein the person not only dwells but is felt to have the world shaped differently. They are affected.

This mood then becomes enacted through gesturing (*abhinaya*) in various ways, which can be considered a form of meditation as well (*bhāvanā*). This literally is an "actualization" of the virtual load of *sattva* into a semblance,[74] which them permeates and diffuses into the individual's core (*hṛdaya*, *citta*). While *vibhāva*s are equated to "discernment" (*vijñāna*) in Bharata's gloss, he also links them to similar words such as *kāraṇa*, "motive force," *nimitta*, "efficient cause," and *hetu*, "origin."[75] The emphasis is on the *vi-* prefix for this form, which can have two meanings. "Division, discrimination" *vi-jñāna*, the knowledge that separates by recognizing distinctions fits the first. *Vi-* also functions to intensify the stem, seen in the use of the *vibhūti* for divine powers, "effective, to make something change", referring to kingly

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power, pervading and omnipresent.[76] *Vibhāva* hence contains forces that intensify before diverging into material elements of the action. These include different plot structures, characters, and settings, which allow for the *vibhāva*s to flow through them with the innate force of the disposition within that moment of the performance or as a whole.[77] Hence pervading affects are seen to have retroactively predisposed us as the affective matrix is felt reaching into the past.

Next, the *anubhāva*s function in a complimentary manner as a causative form of "experience" (*anu-√bhū, anubhava*). Pollock calls these "reactions"[78] and Ghosh gives them the term "consequents."[79] While it is true that they follow after (*anu-gachanti*) the manifestation of the pervading affects, they do not merely attend on them as results or effects. They function proximately, "embracing" the larger forces that ran out from the disposition of an event and drawing them "toward" (*anu-*) one another. In this way, they act, according to Bharata, to "incline" the audience "to the gesture performed with vocal, bodily, and dispositional modes."[80] As inclinations, the *anubhāva*s reach out to us and shape experience into a more human form than the materially diffuse set of pervading affects. In this way, we become "wrapped up" into a play's actions. Bharata's verses present this angle on the event as a whole: "Since the meaning in the play is embraced by means of vocal and bodily gestures conjoined with the vocal, major and minor limbs: for that reason it is called an "embracing affect."[81] The meaning of an emotional reaction can be embraced only after the activity itself has changed us. At times we have to see the reactions of others to understand our own emotional situation. The *anubhāva*s afford futurity, looking forward to the expression of the matrix. Similarly, they delimit the possible matrices from the many potential emotions that can be felt. Returning to our example of the river, we know that a woman separated from her lover

(a "decorous" mode) and a grieving widow (*karuṇā*) can both shed tears at the riverbed. Only the widow can show fear though as she is left permanently alone while the lover still holds out a measure of hope for an eventual return of her beloved.[82]

A question came to mind as I read these terms of art in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*: why does the text not refer to them simply as conditions and effects? Bharata seems to disagree with his own scholarly apparatus in describing these two affective forms. While he argues they are straightforward comparisons, he never says that the embracing affects align with results (*phala, kārya*) as it would with pervading affects and causal terms. This would leave him with only causes and no effects. Likewise, Bharata's choice of affective terms makes their construction seem deliberately obfuscating. Kapoor, however, proffers the best way to read Bharata's idea that *vibhāva*s and *anubhāva*s function as affective forms for normal experiential conditions. Rather than being a cause, the pervading affects "take the form of instruments" (*kāraṇa-rūpa*), while embracing affects "take the form of outcomes" (*kārya-rūpa*).[83] This suggests that they are *not* in fact normally causes and effects, but instead work together with the other affects to modulate the total environment of a performance. In this way, they function as an assemblage (*saṃyoga*) with its contingent set of conditions rather than a linear form of causality.[84] Since performances are not governed by the same laws of everyday life, they are able to bypass the karmic theory of causality–specifically regarding acting and the way characters are to be portrayed. *Rasa*s are "to be fleshed out," (*ni-rūpya*) in an ecology of factors. While the *vibhāva*s pervade out into an environment, carrying the affective matrix in various ways, the *anubhāva*s delimit and humanely embrace the possible outcomes. Crying out of joy or humor can be felt to be different from crying over grief or terror. Bharata's theory therefore suggests the possibility of grasping the ecology as a whole: unlike in normal life, affective assessments

of an event are possible due the audience's distance from their everyday thoughts and feelings. The affective ecology functions analogously to normal emotional assessments but evokes novel reactions from involved parties as they share this eventful heart.[85]

Bharata's system sets up an ecology of forces without a linear set of causal factors. Instead, these two *bhāva*s function to take the commanding form of the *sthāyi-bhāva* as its hidden matrix and relate it to the temporal and spatial dimensions of a play. For instance, the pervading affects, which assume the "form of a cause," arise prior to the characters' awareness of an emotional change. Instead, the context, scenery, and non-human material beings all contribute to the latent seed of the stabilizing affect. The matrix becomes stabilized when the *vibhāva*s pervade out into the ecological network as well as dispersing the dominant mood into the duration before it congeals (as *rasa*) for the characters themselves. On the future-looking side of this process, the embracing affects work in a complimentary manner to delimit and filter the stabilizing affect into a particular set of human occurrences in their psychophysical form.[86] While laughter could technically follow several different *sthāyi-bhāva*s, the appropriateness of the situation narrows the potential fit. A character in love could laugh with anticipation and wonderment at their beloved's return while a character who has lost a loved one can laugh with grief-inspired madness. These are the actions which cause us to recognize how we are affected by a given event. Likewise, a unique class of *anubhāva*s I shall discuss below can appear in conjunction with several matrices of affectivity. These human responses to the stabilizing affect therefore allow audiences to register and relate to the events onstage and allows other characters to respond. Figure 1.2 maps out this eventful progression with the audience's common perception starting at the central point. This latent seed is the *sthāyi-bhāva* of the event, which remains dormant until activated by pervading outward into the environment

(through the *vibhāva*s) and becoming embodied in human gestures (*abhinaya*) when the characters are affected by its commanding force (through the *anubhāva*s). Our awareness of these affective forms extends both backwards and forwards, elongating the hidden atmosphere and delimiting the mood of the play as the human characters are swept up into its current. I have chosen to call this set of mutually-conditioning forms the play's ecology of affects as there is no guarantee the matrix will take hold. At times, it will revert to a more dormant phase and become overshadowed by another matrix, subordinated to its stronger contours. At times it can also become balanced between two different matrices, in which case a homeostatic tension is achieved. Chapter two will explore what happens when dispositional matrices become manifested against their own contours into novel forms in performance.

Figure 1.2: Bharata's Ecology of Affects

How does an audience recognize the various nodes in this affective ecology? Bharata's text for actors suggests all participants need to remove themselves from normal emotional patterns. In chapter seven the pervading and embracing affects are said to be recognized as

fully perfected by worldly self-dispositions (*svabhāva*). These are recognized through gestures "following the ways of the world."[87] Most Sanskrit scholars translate this term as "natural, self-nature, innate," which would suggest a prolixity of definition.[88] However, these terms only apply to drama, and hence seem to function as affective forms for creating the intended moods and characters for the event. Instead of being "natural" in themselves, as if performers would know what these terms mean innately, audiences recognize pervading and embracing affects through people's gestures–just as they would in everyday life. These emerge from a hidden side to our character, a "self-disposition" that is invisible in itself but which manifests in *how* we act. This is why Bharata–after explaining that there are additional stabilizing, fluctuating, and dispositional affects to make a total of forty-nine–suggests that they are imbued with a quality of universality (*sāmānya-guṇa-yogena*) when they lead to the falling out of *rasa*.[89] The verse also restates this position: "The affect is the arising (*udbhava*) of *rasa* which has a meaning that harmonizes with the heart. Affect pervades the body, like fire pervades dry wood."[90] In this way, the body becomes a receptacle, a deep well for affects to become stored in and remain latent, waiting to appear from its dispositional matrix through the affordances of its materiality. In this same way, fire remains latent in dry wood, as a function of its dis-position to burst into flames.

Turning back to the stabilizing affects, they are not always located within a person. *Sthāyi-bhāva*s were last mentioned in passing reference to *rasa*s, as a larger phenomenon arising from the ecology of aesthetic factors. Pollock seems to think that Bharata offers these three alternatives as part of the lineage of dramaturgy, without favoring one over the other.[91] However, the stabilizing affects have similar affordances to the *rasa*s, since each has a set of interrelated pervading and embracing affects. Each matrix seems to be linked to the other

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through this universal quality that develops from a latent disposition and is manifested in gestures. Yet these stabilizing matrices are also affects, which means they have less of this latent potential, remaining dormant until they can be activated by the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of the aesthetic attendants upon their commanding form. These matrices are able to enter multiple bodies and temporarily displace one's *svabhāva* or self-disposition through training. Bharata equates this to other forms of controlled possession:

> Just as a man renounces embodiment (*daihika*) in his self-disposition and flows into another body by producing another disposition (*para-bhāva*), so the wise actor, mentally recalling "I am he!" should perform the foreign affect with movements, garments, speech, gestures, and semblances.[92]

Compared to the previous injunction, now Bharata has shifted the terms to playing *against* the self's innate tendencies and accepted a separate affective matrix. This set of stabilizing features is similar in that the movements and particular qualities of the character overwrite the embodied disposition of the performer. In fact, both the tendency of one's normal personality and the character one plays are known as *prakṛti*s. The novel disposition is in fact materially produced (*pra-√kṛ*) and allows a set of foreign contours to "flow into" (*sam-ā-√car*) the affective body.

The fleeting nature of this takeover also leads to the final set of affects. The ruling *sthāyi-bhāva*s have their followers and retinue, according to Bharata, in the figures of the "fluctuating affects" (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s). These have two prefixes, *vi-* and *abhi-*, attached to the verbal root √*car*, meaning "to go, to course, to conduct." Hence the term "fluctuating" means "they course towards (*abhimukhyena*) the *rasa*s in various ways (*vividha*)."[93] These affects afford "carrying" (*nayanti*) in Ghosh's translation, which functions like *carati* as "conducting" similar to how gesture (*abhinaya*) is a combination of *abhi-* and √*nī*, the root used here. As glosses, these forms seem to "lead" in the way the sun is said to "lead the day." While

not "carried on the shoulders or arms," according to the text, these affects are commonly said to "carry" in this way.[94] This implies labor as well as a combination of movements or a constellation of forces. While minor, these affects modulate the overall key of the play.

The "fluctuating" affects work directly on the mood of the scene, subtly altering it in "various ways" to "face" a different direction than was possible before. Bharata's list moreover shows how these forces cannot fit into the normal list of "emotions" enumerated for *bhāva* by other theorists. Thirty-three *vyabhicārī*s are given, which include such affects as disease (*vyādhi*), epilepsy (*apasmāra*) and dying (*maraṇa*). These processual affects are not emotions in our normal classification of feelings but still affect the self in various ways. For example, diseases are modification of the body's natural humors (*tridoṣa*), according to Bharata usage of Āyurvedic theories.[95] Disease is no more of an emotion than sneezing can be an intentional gesture. Furthermore, if these are "states," this definition ignores the change present in "dying" (*maraṇa*, a present participle). A state like death would have a name of a god such as Yāma or Mṛtyu if it were permanent and fixed. The fluctuating affects therefore reveal a processual affordance at the heart of Bharata's theory, which can modulate the stabilizing affects in novel ways from their dispositional matrices.

The different aspects of Bharata's performance ecology therefore involves the stabilizing affect temporally expanding into two directions. A matrix reaches back into the past as the pervading affects (*vibhāva*s) condition the event as material elements and beings. Simultaneously, it pushes forward as the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) by delimiting emotional responses through the bodies of characters. Alongside this process, fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) go through a similar process at a micro-level of the performance to add saturation and color to the stabilizing affects' dominant form. One additional class of

affects functions in a unique manner in this process. These *bhāva*s stand out for their simultaneous simplicity and the difficulty in translating them since they involve the dispositions themselves (*sattva*s). While the other affective forms are revealed in gestures, dispositions appear also in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* as the latent potential within the play that can manifest itself in performance alone. Affects function to reveal a meaning that can't be divorced from its performance: In order to understand how this can be so, I turn to theories of ritual. As Seligman claims, "The meaning of ritual is the meaning produced through the ritual action itself."[96] There is a tension in dramaturgy between assuming another's disposition and "staying true" to one's own in disposition that becomes apparent in this theory.

1.3 The Broken World of Theater: Sacrifice, Ritual, and the Self

Theater and ritual are simultaneously similar and yet treated in vastly different ways. Actors have been some of the most famous celebrities of the premodern and modern eras. Possessing characteristics by proximity to power and prestige, they seem to project something inexplicable that draws others close while inspiring feelings of revulsion and intense envy.[97] Their remove from everyday life suggests a specialness to celebrity that borders on the religious.[98] Various religious traditions aspire to ultimate truths or descriptions of realities unmoored from everyday life while theater ostensibly works its magic by the imitation of everyday feelings, relationships, and characterizations of heroic figures. This unmanifest reality at the heart of religious theorizing would appear divorced from the daily concerns and preoccupations that drive theatrical narrative. Yet artists frequently feel compelled, as if a commanding force were enjoining them to become actors, dancers, or painters. For artists, the appearance of reality is not enough; nor is their usual way of acting in the world. They radically alter their lifestyle in response to their artistic calling—a theme I will return to in Chapter

Three. In this chapter, I take the position that art involves a worldview shared by ancient ritualists who see a world constantly in need of maintenance, repair, and human technical intervention. The world is broken, and it calls out to be recognized by artists.

South Asian theorists of "sacrifice" (*yajña*) inform most depictions of ritual activity by changing the world and keeping it from ending prematurely. Drama in the work of Bharata builds off these ideal traits and contours to shape an ephemeral world in performance (*prayoga*) that lasts only for the event of the drama. Different aspects of the material and divine worlds are linked through the "joints" (*bandhu*s) interconnecting them in performance, while the original creation (*pra-kṛti*) by this process requires "perfecting" (*sam-skṛti*) in rituals.[99] The affective links between the worlds are "articulations" that can be activated with the proper knowledge (*veda*) and application (*prayoga*) of this knowledge by ritual specialists. The *bandhu*s are etymologically "religious" relations since they create "affective ligatures" between levels of reality. They function as "accretions of form" in a dance between hidden and material layers of reality.[100] These linkages enabled sacrifice to be a "*constructive* activity, creating the human being (ontology), the afterlife (soteriology), and the cosmos as a whole (cosmology)."[101] The connections are not arbitrary nor are they premised on exact identity. Instead, they assume an overriding principle of "resemblance" (*sāmānya*) that becomes the leitmotif characterizing an ideal religious practice.[102] Bharata will adapt this framework to show the resonance between ideal affective traits and characters who embody them. This suggests acting is a method of finding similarities between the hidden side of a performer and the character without one becoming the other. Instead, they are articulated by these links connecting hidden to manifest.

These ligatures are affective since they work outside of structures but in-form them, shaping the emergent forces into material bodies "as an accretion of forms tied together by the ligatures of affect."[103] Performative actions link historical bodies and material forces in a movement of affects.[104] The performance of religion is emphasized in this account as the eventfulness of its affects can only occur when these relations are activated. Faith or belief is a secondary phenomenon after the event has fixed forms into new configurations. Religion seems more like an ecology or economy of affective forms in constellation in this framework than a creedal position.[105] Dance is an embodied manifestation of these affective links between bodies as much as it shapes the bodies that emerge *in moving*. This might be why ritual is valued so highly to help in-form and continue to shape cultures that value continuity, social cohesion, and which have accompanying developments in character that are conditioned by the repetition of these rituals. I am not the person I am born as, but the results of my ritual actions (*karman*) in this light.

The self I normally experience is also only one part of this unfinished or broken world. For Seligman, ritual is needed to create order through a "repertoire of patterns" but is always overwhelmed by the "constantly changing" ecology of forces.[106] The relations and behavior fostered in ritual settings develops over time into habits, which in turn shape the self toward a particular disposition.[107] Some of the most easily missed everyday practices fall into what Seligman and his fellow ritual scholars call the "as if" or subjunctive world of ritual, which enacts or performs its ideal world rather than assumes it exists. For instance, saying "Please" and "Thank you" creates a well-mannered, social disposition through repeated use. This world would not exist without these "niceties" creating a courteous disposition.[108] In fact, one doesn't need to believe that these gestures are *true*; you don't have to want or need to say "Please" or

"Thank you" since they hold no truth content on their own. They are utterly performative, creating a world that does not exist before their enactment.

Every culture recognizes that *the natural order is not always the case, and not even the tenable*: instead maintaining a world requires work, toil, rehearsal–in the original sense of a harrowing, blood-and-sweat-dripping exertion that gives life by piercing the boundaries of solid surfaces, keenly distressing our normal expectations by approaching death and disturbing expectations. Affectivity is key to this process as our gestures in performance shape the world by our choices, and likewise shape the self.[109] As we perform ritual gestures, our habits are shaped by them in both physical and mental directions. These become the habituated styles (*vṛtti*s) of our everyday life. In turn, after shaping our movements over a long period, these styles are the dominant material conditions that form our character. Disposition, while somewhat inherited, is still enacted when our habits shape it in the public space of social life.

These dispositions are neither static nor entirely fickle, however, but can shift—or, indeed, *dis-position*—old habits by using certain tendencies within the person or culture called forth to shape future activity. Ritualists therefore suggest a fundamental connection between *sattva*s and performances. [110] One can train dispositions to increase responsibility to others. In this way, ritual, following Robert Orsi's study of Italian Catholics interactions with saints, is not about meanings but "a set of relationships."[111] Ritual assumes a fragmented, painful world but can rehearse an ordered one, enacting it with others *as-if* it could be true by mobilizing possibility. Seligman calls this the subjunctive mode of ritual, rather than the subjective focus of sincerity as variations on approaching sociality, emotions, and our sense of self. Why would sincerity not function this way? The problem with sincerity is that I cannot know *for sure*: the quest for sincerity requires an interrogation of each and every gesture. Descartes' logical

progression of distrust for the world is one variety of this search yet without any hope for an originating foundation to the self. If emotions are locked in the black box of the self, and I cannot even fathom my own depths, how would I know the gestures of others were real expressions of their sincere feelings? Gesture in a ritual manner can elide this dilemma through bypassing the cause-and-effect logic of sincerity and revealing dispositional potential in its fullest sense.[112] Seligman and associates describe how ritual can somewhat circumvent this epistemological paradox by instead approaching by means of verisimilitude in shared feeling.[113]

Ritual therefore functions as a way to access the virtual share of the potential, the edge of the material where it is closest to the unknown, the emerging, and the chaotic matrix at the heart of experience. For Seligman and his contributors, ritual provides a "third space" between creativity and tradition wherein the back-and-forth movement between these poles allows for play to emerge.[114] Drama functions to establish a sense of self while allowing for a more pervasive sense of one's role(s) in society as we "play" the roles we are given, adopt, and seek out.[115] Play allows us to modulate our identities in relationship to others and our social roles rather than assuming they are merely opaque and inauthentic.[116] We phase into and out of certain relationships and roles all the time which shapes our character in the world. This focus on the phase changes of play helps us see how affects can change form and engender different behaviors. South Asian theorists for the most part all agree with this focus on grounding the self, with the caveat that this "Self" is a larger matrix than the individual's self-awareness is initially capable of experiencing.

In performance studies accounts using South Asian texts, these definitions of the self are embedded in a range of ritual forms. Art historian Kapila Vatsyayan's discussion of the

implicit assemblage of concepts in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* includes ritual (*yajña*) in the guise of the *puruṣa*, the cosmic "Person" that emanates from its members the material, divine, and human worlds.[117] As a figure that is "three quarters in heaven and one quarter on earth," he affords a play between the virtual and the actual.[118] Later theories of *yoga* assume the self and its relationship with the cosmos manifests in layers to these affordances, which in turn modulate the previous ritualization.[119] This process brings out the Upaniṣadic notion of *nāma-rūpa*, "name and form," or "identity and specificity of form" in Vatsyayan's words, which become affordances to revealing "what is beyond form or without form." The instruments used for this purpose become the senses and feelings themselves rather than the mental apparatus alone.[120] Ritual tension also permeates the text in its focus. Bharata concludes that performers must efface themselves in order to generate the "unseen but real center and point" which the text circles around in its discourse.[121] The virtual share of this process therefore overrides the material aspects that make it appear sensuous: "Exactly as in poetry, music, dance and the visual arts, the "unsaid" silence is almost more important than the "said" and "sung." Here also it is the most important implicit level, which is not explicated," in the virtual form of *rasa*.[122]

While Bharata's declaration that he is composing a *prayoga-śāstra* would seem to put theory (*śāstra*) as a set of "injunctions, rules, commands" (*codanā*s)[123] in a dominant position over "practice, application, performance" (*prayoga*), the two are more mutually coassembled.[124] In the system that Bharata envisions, the "rules" of performance are internal to the affective dynamics of a given event. While certain parameters are set out, with a specific goal in mind, these leave an unimaginably complex terrain of potential outcomes.[125] Moreover, a drama or concert's success is due to the bodily capacities they activate for performers and audience members alike. We don't find ourselves to be performers or audience members until

our mutual experience of *rasa*s and *bhāva*s affords a crossing of identity boundaries in the event. We have to find ourselves in a processual phase as affects transit across bodies in performances. Sreenath Nair describes the embodied impact and historical depth of the *Nāṭya-śāstra* in South Asia history as the first study of the transitive process of the body.[126] These transitive, embodied practices are ritually ephemeral but become configured and assembled with discursive repertoires to stabilize and endow them with longevity. As such, certain rituals appear to build up particular clusters of affects.

Ritual holds a certain tension in the affects it uses and develops, creating a lasting character (as virtue, power, and efficacy, *sattva*) in the process, dis-positioning our assumptions about ourselves and others in eventful encounters. Bharata's tradition lays out techniques for developing this kind of character in dramaturgy. The *Nāṭya-śāstra* offers the primary set of forces that congeal into the performance process, finding ways of activating the event's potential (*śakti*) while also opening the performer and audience members up to aspects of themselves that would not be possible without the "as-if" world of the play. In a yogic metaphor, Nair argues that the performers make their bodies into instruments, simultaneously dis-positioning the self's habits while becoming more deeply embedded in the process.[127] This ritualized depersonalization envelopes them in "process" like a fluid form that washes surrounds the affective self. This is a "transitive" manner of embodied encounter. Since each of these fluid forms in "the succession of transitions" acts to manifest different matrices of identity, they tentatively hold the bodies of all participants together in the event. This "whole relationship" envelops the body in a larger ensemble than its usual self-defined boundaries. In this reciprocal relationship, affects can move across bodies starting from techniques and habits.

These allow for ongoing gestures to emerge or can reverse course to their latent materiality as a style of performance when put into playful ensembles.[128]

Affects therefore function to dis-position the self and our normal experiences of the world. The time created in a performance is an expression of the event as well. We find ourselves watching a play or movie we enjoy and time passes by in the blink of an eye. Likewise, the event modulates space as bodies, persons, and landscapes are related in fluid ways. Only after the performance can the participants demarcate fixed identities: actors and audience members are poles of this process. The starting point of each participant will vary, with the corresponding affective form generating a different engagement from the variety of perspectives on the process. Each positioning allows for a constant affective flow to modulate the forms. Having one person at a comedy who laughs hard enough can make the entire audience laugh, for example. However, as part of an ensemble, each person involved also requires the other's position; every modulation is only affectively charged when its other poles resonate with it.[129] This involves a constant fluctuation of movement from manifest to unmanifest.[130] As the invisible form itself, *rasa* functions as a non-material dispositional matrix involved in the process of performance by linking spectators to characters/performers. Certain affects will also function in this way, forming a material matrix (*prakṛti*) at a latent level from which other *bhāva*s will be induced. Therefore spectators are moved within this matrix, through the differentiated body of the performance itself as it manifests potential (*śakti*).[131] The faculties (*indriya*s) are similarly empowered as audience members when the self becomes the stage for the divine to manifest playfully (*līlā*). For the audience, they must in turn become "potential artists: the artistic creation re-stimulates and energizes dormant

states."[132] In this way, a shared matrix involves all the participants and affects their bodily presence, with the lasting "residue" of experience felt as *rasa*.[133]

1.4 Dispositional Affects and Gestures: *Sattva, Sāttivka-Bhāva*s

Bharata's text has a peculiar absence when it comes to discussing affects. Rather than show a direct way of manifesting the *rasa*s or stabilizing affects, he elaborates a scenario wherein their dispositions can pervade an entire scene (with the *vibhāva*s) while likewise delimiting them by embracing or inclining the characters toward specific affective contours (*anubhāva*s). This strategy leaves out spontaneous emotion from the centers of analyzing performances. Emotions never appear solely as the property of a singular character or ideal audience member but instead manifest in relationships and desires to other persons and objects. Hence there is no central position but instead a relation or dis-position at the matrix of every affective event that mediates its latent and material properties.[134] Likewise, the abstractive tendencies of Bharata's manual also enables the process of turning the living world into a virtualized latent form as "types." In the same way, affects become abstracted, their "emotive particularity" crystallized and the individual reduced to its "characteristic" qualities (*sāttvika*) from what I call a dispositional matrix (*prakṛti*). These abstract forms act as "carriers of art" in the form of stabilizing affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) and dispositional gestures (*sāttvika-abhinaya*). By combining this dispositional matrix (potential) with an apparatus to manifest the stabilizing affects in gestural regimes (*abhinaya*), Bharata allows for performance (*prayoga*) to become the process of the eventful expression of the invisible.[135]

The *Nāṭya-śāstra* does mention a dispositional core to each performer (*svabhāva*) that is taken over by that of the character's "other disposition" (*para-bhāva*). How does Bharata's notion of self-disposition (*svabhāva*) link to the hidden matrix of the performance as a *sthāyi-*

bhāva or *rasa*? Drama can only function through gestures when the actor's innate dispositional matrix is contracted (*saṃhṛtya*) or renounced (*saṃtyajya*).[136] After all, an actor cannot have an impenetrable self-image if they wish to play a character. It must change somehow to fit the contours of a different personality within their embodied form. However, I'd argue the shifting boundaries of the self in ritual allow for a deeper disposition, a "full" or "pure" one to manifest (*pūrṇa-/śuddha-sattva*). The actor ceases re-acting (in the cycle of saṃsāric *karman*) and instead gestures (through *abhinaya*) from a place that can infinitely create forms (*ananta*) and produce them in novel fashions (*navina*).[137] Various theorists claim that a process of ritual purification is required to remove certain traces of the everyday self so a performer can manifest this deeper level of reality. The everyday self is not erased, only temporarily made dormant. To activate a new nature (*prakṛti*) for the performer, Bharata requires "character" (*sattva*) to be the foundation for the play.[138]

While Bharata's original definition in chapter seven renders *sattva* invisible, it remains the most powerful quality in a play as its affects reach directly into the heart of embodied life. "Dispositional affects" (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) are not the only forms to be imbued with affective force from one's "character" (*sattva*), but instead, require a concentration (*samāhita*) and a "power of the mind" (*manas-prabhāva*). A separate dispositional matrix (*para-bhāva*) is impossible to imitate without this concentration by the performer, since they tap into the virtual imitation (*anukaraṇatva*) of the world's self-dispositions. When the affects of pleasure and pain which appear in dramatic stage conventions turn out to be purely in line with their disposition (*sattva-viśuddha*), they properly assume their own forms (*yathāsvarūpa*). Since a person who isn't sad can't cry, the actor needs to tap into a deeper disposition from what they normally experience to perform the gesture of crying onstage. A dispositional matrix is a well

of possibilities that allow performers to go beyond the ongoing feelings (*pravṛtti*) that make up their normal everyday lives.[139] The eight dispositional affects, according to Bharata, are paralysis, sweating, goosebumps, stammering, trembling, changing color, weeping, and fainting.[140] Certain dispositional affects go with each *rasa,* but Bharata claims that they only appear in gestures among all of the *rasa*s, making them a potent way to manifest certain powerful forms in each.[141] The stabilizing affect can be identified due to an exuberance of its disposition (*sattva-atirekeṇa*) while the secondary affects should be "merely figures" (*ākāra-mātreṇa*) in performance.[142] In this way, dispositional affects mark out which characters, plotlines, and scenes will be invested with the most affective weight, carried in the gestures in various modalities.

Most definitions of *sattva* consider it a part of the Sāṃkhya *triguṇa* aspects of material reality (*prakṛti*).[143] I argue Bharata instead taps into an alternative dramaturgical lineage of *sattva* with antecedents found in epic literature (*itihāsa*). The *Mahābhārata* episode of the female ascetic Sulabhā and King Janaka of Mithila in the *Śāntiparvan* (book twelve) recounts one such alternate account. The aspect of the story in which I'm interested focuses on how the female ascetic begins her engagement in debate with the king. She assumes a glorious form and makes her way into his court. Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad translates this section as a form of yogic performance, which I have modified to accent the affective forms:

> Doubting whether he had really gained freedom in the midst of all his dharmic duties, Sulabhā used her knowledge of yoga and entered his disposition (*sattva*) with her disposition (*sattvaṃ sattveṇa yogajñā praviveśa*). Just as he was about to address her, she fused the rays of his eyes to the rays of her own two eyes, and bound him with the bonds of her yoga power (*yogabandhair babandha*). Janaka, the highest of kings, merely smiled, and, keeping his affect distinct from hers (*rājā bhāvam asya viśeṣayan*), he received her affect with his affect (*pratijagrāha bhāvena bhāvam asyā*).[144]

In this section, the dispositions and their affective matrix are separated for each person, although they can be bound by yogic techniques as well as transferred between the bodies of performers. This is most definitely a physical penetration of corporeal boundaries. The self which subsists in the body can be interrogated and overcome at times through this affective layer. Likewise, the distinctions between *sattva* and *bhāva* suggest a parallel but separate mingling of the two selves in a shared matrix. While their *sattva*s are separate, this did not prevent their identities from merging. Indeed, they shared a dispositional matrix for their encounter while the separate strains of affectivity remained in potential and differentiated.[145]

In other dramaturgical accounts of *sattva* and *prakṛti*s, these characteristics are inflected with more active "virtues." The actions a person takes, their continued habits, and eventual temperament are all inclined by the presence of different *sattva*s alongside their own. In this sense, dispositions also demonstrate "character" with similar resonances to English. It contains a "virtual" potency due to the strength of its "virtues" (*guṇa*s) such as desire toward a longed-for object.[146] *Sattva* therefore is a latent storehouse of these subtle material traces and can be affected by the actions and conditions in which the body takes part. A dense network of bodies, artifacts, material and cosmetic features of the landscape–as well as other nodes in the flows of the event, including the king's desires, Sulabhā's goal, and the presence of witnesses–all assist in modulating this text into a highly affective ecology between the two gazes of the speakers.[147] Through the gesture of looking, a powerful affective matrix engages to link them together at the level of their dispositions.[148] Sulabhā's desire to teach Janaka the error of his ways generates the drama of the scene and necessitates its action, as well as the fulfilling sense of its denouement. If anything, her *sattva* here is endowed with the virtual potential to not only up-end the gendered relation between female and male figures but

showcases the commanding force of her character. Her qualities therefore are not subservient but instead magisterial and override the king's feelings and societal expectations simultaneously.

This connection of character and quality is a key feature of Bharata's ecology of forms. Chapter twenty-four deals with *sāmānya-abhinaya*, "harmonious" (Ghosh) or "universal" gestures as the larger term of art including *sattva* in performance. This form of gesture is "born from speech, the body, and character" (*vāg-aṅga-sattva-ja*), where "dedication should be taken toward character."[149] Character in excess (*sattva-atireka*) is said to be best, with an average amount middling and only a small amount to be the worst.[150] Here Bharata remarks on the nature of *sattva* is similar to Sulabhā's definition: it has an unmanifest form (*avyakta-rūpa*), can be recognized by qualities (*guṇa*s) such as goosebumps (in its form as dispositional affects), is endowed with *rasa*s in their proper stages (*yathā-avasthāna-rasa-upeta*), and functions as common refuge of affects (*bhāva-saṃśraya*).[151] The higher degrees of *sattva* therefore afford a play with affective intensity, exhibited by an indexical amount of dispositional affects.

This final point is key: character is a latent assemblage of various affects, which can be filled with *rasa* at particular moments or places. At that moment, the audience recognize the dispositional matrix from its signs through the qualities it displays. These qualities will contour, shape, and texture each *rasa* differently, despite the actual physicality of each appearing similar. Crying in fear and crying while separated from a lover do look similar, after all, but audiences can understand from the larger aesthetic ecology that each contributes to the ecology in a novel fashion. These forms are all said to "vitalize the affects" (*bhāva-*

upavṛṃhitāḥ).[152] In this way affects become linked to particular cultural norms as "types" of characters, both called *prakṛti*s in drama.

The latency of *sattva* is not disembodied but remains attached to the "nature of the body" as "affect springs forth from character." In the differentiation Bharata presents between affect, which gives rise to "allure" (*hāva*), which in turn leads to "sport" (*helā*), all are said to be all determined by the various aspects of character.[153] However, each emerges from a position "situated in the primordial matrix/character (*prakṛti-sthitā*) within the body (*śarīre*).[154] In this way, the dispositional gestures manifest themselves from the body's matrix (*prakṛti*) or "type," which itself functions as a shorthand for "character" as the person an actor means to embody in the play. By linking *prakṛti* and *sattva*, Bharata draws similarities between one's disposition and "character" in the sense of an energy that develops into one's relationship with others, self-command, and also an exuberance of latent being (*sat-tva*). Affects emerge in the play through the registers of gesture, as they infuse the hidden disposition (*antargataṃ bhāva*) of the poet.[155] The poet's disposition can manifest into various affects and scenarios, since it functions to suppress the ordinary personality and release a primordial matrix (*prakṛti*) hidden within the body. Authors suggest this sentiment when they claim, "the character just *appeared* to me." Each scenario or event in performance demands certain kinds of characters (heroes, villains, sidekicks, messengers, etc.)

These character types therefore are dictated by cultural context, genre expectations, and social roles. For example, Bharata's chapter on universal gestures borrows from the *Kāma-sūtra* primarily to describe the varieties of "comportment" (*śīla*) used to categories women into types.[156] However, male characters are likewise categorized in chapter thirty-four, on the "varieties of character" (*prakṛti-vicāra*).[157] While these roles might seem to be the main focus

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of the chapter, they are meant to help delineate a set of features and contours for different persons, showing how they might respond within given tropes of the culture known at the time. While these seem to remain as dormant and unexamined, they are also potentially able to be modified, since these self-dispositions are recognized as coming from the world. While the gestures themselves might be stylized, they also involve a total fusion of the body, as the actor moves the hand, face, feet, thighs, sides, belly, and waist to achieve the intended effect.[158] The techniques of performance are what matters for this idea, however, since disposition cannot manifest itself without gestures (*abhinaya*) of verbal registers, bodily movement, as well as in its inimitable way in *sāttivka* forms.[159]

Sattva is a key concept that helps reveal the ritual and religious priorities of each aesthetic theorist. It is something latently real (*sat-tva*) that grounds the mimetic, fictitious circumstances of the play. As a theory of affect, Bharata's system allows other disciplines to influence into its ecology: literary theory, psychology, ontology, and even theology will greatly shape its reception through Sanskrit commentators and adaptors through the early modern period. The aestheticians who take up Bharata's mantle will likewise attempt to chart these performative techniques to various ends, with their own ritual framings to give them new meaning in various modes of performance. For Bharata's text, the individual *rasa*s have a corresponding stabilizing affect, which seems to emerge from a dispositional matrix that the performer cannot access until they force aside their dominant personality traits. This gives them access to a well of possibilities that can be manifested in gestures, vocal expressions, and even more fixed forms such as costumes, properties, and stage designs. The dispositional affects, however, allow the audience to see that the performers are drawing on this matrix to play the characters, showing a link between *prakṛti* as both "character" and the "characteristic"

way we see, feel, and move through the world. *Sattva* in this sense allows us to become part of the "as-if" world of ritual performance, taking on new characters, while also empowering us with a force, strength, or virtue of disposition.

1.5 Affective Dis-Positions: Bhoja, Abhinavagupta, and Rūpa Gosvāmin

While the history of *rasa* in Sanskrit theories of dramaturgy could be said to date back to Bharata's seminal text, the manuscript tradition for the *Nāṭya-śāstra* disappeared until Orientalist interest in the nineteenth century.[160] Sheldon Pollock's recent intellectual history of *rasa* discourse makes clear that aesthetics suffered more textual loses than any other classical tradition. His emphasis on two key eleventh-century figures in the intellectual trajectory of *rasa* theories highlights the knotted problems of adapting dramaturgy to poetics (Bhoja) as well as synthesizing a novel dramaturgy (Abhinavagupta).[161] Bhoja's theories were anachronistic as his approach was the culmination of formalist techniques of analysis that were quickly supplanted by the time of Mammaṭa's *Kāvya-Prakāśa* (1050). Mammaṭa's text would have thousands of manuscript copies while Bharata and Bhoja's seminal works lasted in only a handful of copies.[162] Abhinavagupta's work, meanwhile, built off the commentarial tradition of dramaturgy and therefore merits attention to the audience experience of performance. After this period of time, additional theorists would adapt *rasa* aesthetics to devotional literature as well.[163] In this chapter, I turn to Rūpa Gosvāmin's devotional theory of cultivating affects. This Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava playwright and ritual theorist used Bharata's formulation to adapt and subsume dramaturgy in order to generate divine love (*preman*) for Kṛṣṇa as the Godhead.

In this final section of my chapter, I rely on the translation and hermeneutic labor of Sanskritists and translators Neil Delmonico, David Haberman, and Pollock on these three key theorists. Each presents a unique node within the ongoing flow of *rasa* discourse, while also

accenting salient features of the aesthetic ecology. They are remarkably similar on how the ecology functions, keeping a latent matrix at the center of each affective event. Lastly, each theory retains a dispositional matrix–first suggested in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*–as a dramaturgical feature of the ecology of practices. The peculiar interests and theoretical systems of the aesthetic thinkers, along intervening centuries of commentaries, drew each of them to identity a particularly salient matrix (*ahaṃkāra*, *pratibhāna*, *śuddha-sattva*) as the central focus of the dramatic or meditative events. The ecology of affects therefore continue to manifest this invisible, latent matrix through the qualities it affords all other feelings and actions.[164]

I need to point out one of the pitfalls of reception history for aesthetic texts. Bhoja and Abhinavagupta were writing at the same time but formulating radically different positions due to the school of interpretation they assumed. These positions both drew inspiration from the *Nāṭya-śāstra* and commentaries utilizing the *rasa-sūtra* in literary analysis but diverged in fundamental assumptions. Formalists texts locate *rasa* as a feature of the text or performance, and hence become linked to creating the proper affects for characters. The reception school shifted the analytic focus to the audience's affective response, which required reinterpreting aesthetics from a different vantage. Many of the major theorists up until the late eleventh century were described in the great synthesizer Abhinavagupta's commentary on the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, enabling Bharata's text to emerge mostly in networked form within citations. Other lineages of interpretation, however, came into prominence before his "New Dramatic Art" (*Abhinava-bhāratī*) was written. Abhinava's theory of the text came after this watershed moment in hermeneutic history.[165] Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka repurposed hermeneutics in a new assemblage with aesthetic language as "the mechanism for experiencing literary emotions."[166] All former theorists before this point, including Ānandavardhana's "Light on Resonance"

(*Dhvanyāloka*), were reinterpreted after this point within reception theory. Abhinava's most prominent work is his commentary (*Locana*) on this text, which involved a major project of translating formalist to reception terminology. Ānandavardhana does not even have a term for audience in his work.[167] This presents a problem since most of our understanding of the history of Sanskrit aesthetics is a study of the formal characteristics of how affects are created in literature.[168] If the way those emotions are created, established, and in *whom* they manifest changes, then the paradigm for how affectivity functions will shift as well.

Returning briefly to Bharata's *rasa-sūtra*, the *rasa*s arise alongside or even cause the eight stabilizing affects. Only eight are delimited so as to make performing them possible: to facilitate "*making emotion*" comprehensible for a wide variety of audience members from every strata of society, Bharata claims these affective assemblages are the only ones easily shown onstage. An "invisible emotion" such as motherly love would require an enlarged scope beyond "literature meant to be seen," since it requires levels of nuance that couldn't be communicated in a direct, culturally sanctioned manner.[169] Here performance acts as the location for *rasa*, the event and analysis of its key characters taking precedence over a subjective experience of the audience in discussions until almost a millennium later.[170]

The transitions to other fields of literature, poetry, and only eventually back to theater change the trajectory of theorizing. Pollock shows that three major formal transformations occurred when *rasa* theory moved beyond dramaturgy to the larger domain of literary analysis. A discursive transformation occurred when rhetoric attempted to absorb *rasa*, creating problems. Next, a conceptual shift occurred since literature required a new "linguistic mode" (*śabda-vṛtti*) of analysis to discern *rasa* in narrative. Lastly, a categorical shift occurred as new emotions not directly visible in a performance medium could be described and hinted at in

literary language.[171] Two types of readings for *rasa* are possible. The first works under the assumption of a character's viewpoint in the story-world. The second premises the audience experiences *rasa*. Pollock points out the admixture of perspectives assumes a breakdown of the subject/object distinction much as the idea of "taste" does in the first example of *rasa* in Bharata's treatise.[172] An affective quality appears when *rasa* manifests, requiring a category of potency, potential, and characteristic force to analyze. This is the purpose of *sattva*, an assemblage of *guṇa*s, or dis-positioning of affects in an audience that aligns and articulates their feelings to those of the characters.[173]

1.6 Formalist Strain: Bhoja on The Pluriform Disposition of the Protagonist

The first major theorist, Bhoja, stands at the end of the formalist period, analyzing characters as the central focus of *rasa*s and their particular affects. As an eleventh-century king, Bhoja's œuvre appears in the period when the reception theory started by Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka had already taken hold, but he seems strangely unaffected by this development. Through commentaries on Sāṃkhya texts, his philosophical framework derives much of its impetus from the dualistic system between primordial matter (*prakṛti*), which contains all the aspects of the subtle mind and body complex, versus the "Self" (*puruṣa*) which stands outside materiality in a position of observation and inactivity.[174] As the culminating theorist of the formalist school, Bhoja's conceptual acumen and novelty made his theory hard to comment upon. Only two extant commentaries exist in a single manuscript.[175] Pollock dates his two major texts about twenty-five years apart, with the *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* ("Necklace for the Goddess of Language") finalized around 1025 and the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* ("Illumination of Passion") about 1050 CE.[176] Both texts take a similar approach to describing *rasa* involving its dispositional matrix.

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For Bhoja, the underlying ground of all aesthetic experience is the self-creative principle (*ahaṃkāra*) rather than what is negatively termed "egotism" (*asmitā*) in Sanskrit. At times he calls it *śṛṅgāra* as well, although he will differentiate this latent stage of *rasa* as separate from the partially manifested form known in Bharata's system. Bhoja will see similar aspects of disposition emerge in his theory, but which draw on the larger material matrix for affects to emerge. This principle from Sāṃkhya metaphysics is the first emergent form within the material matrix of *prakṛti*, and it manifests in various degrees the three qualities (*guṇa*). In most people, these are mixed, while an abundance of *sattva* or "sensitivity" predominates in those who feel deeply this principle of self. The "fathoming" of self-creativity here engenders a deeper affective experience, "a transformation borne of a special kind of untainted property" which not everyone possesses.[177] Bhoja takes Bharata's notion of *sāttvika*s and makes them more exclusive to those who can become connoisseurs (*rasika*s) of literature. For Bhoja, *bhāva*s are affects because they are "produced" through a process of "production" (*bhavanā*). They are secondary to this primordial affective ground: "what underlies them and hence exist beyond the "plane of production" is the true (and singular) *rasa*, the core nature of personality."[178] In a similar fashion, Bhoja's aesthetic theories are formalist: the main *rasika* is the protagonist of the drama or literary work (*nāyaka*).[179]

Bhoja modulates affect theory toward a psychophysical interpretation of the character. The *nāyaka* grounds the ecology of affects seen in desire (*śṛṅgāra*) as foundational to all other *rasa*s. In this way, "people are said to '*love* sex,' to '*love* quarreling,' or anger, or joking."[180] Bhoja equates this primordial level to the sense of self (*ahaṃkāra*) from ontology, quoting his own commentary on the subject.[181] He likewise links this sense of passion to the *triguṇa* theory, claiming that certain people with a high preponderance of *sattva*, "in whom sensitivity

predominates," can awaken a particular strong variety of aesthetic self-consciousness: "a transformation born of a special kind of untainted property."[182] This is seen in Bhoja as "the core nature of personality," since the *rasa* experience invokes this deepest self through "things produced" (*bhāva*s) of aesthetic discernment. Affects themselves work at a secondary or more immediately conscious level than the primordial level of the self–experienced as *śṛṅgāra*.[183]

Rasa manifests in a pluriform manner from this ecology of forces without being "produced" like the affects since it remains virtually latent in the self. In this way, Bhoja agrees with Bharata's second theory of the relationship between *rasa*s and *sthāyi-bhāva*s: the former becomes the root for the flourishing and manifestation of the latter.[184] For Bhoja, *rasa* arises for specific characters as a heightening of their sense of pride (*abhimāna*), which itself is a modulation of *ahaṃkāra*. In the dramatic context, the protagonist alone has this quality, which can only be actualized given a specific set of conditions:

> It is a transformation (*vikāra*) consisting of pride that awakens in the heart of those who have bodies/selves (*ātmanām*) in *sattva*, which is born from a special spotless quality (*amala-dharma-viśeṣa-janmā*), and which arises from the karmic propensities (*vāsanā*) formed by experiences in past lives.[185]

In this first stage, *rasa* is merely the "potential of tasting" (*ātma-śakti-rasanīyatayā*) and hence exists in its latent form (*rasatva*).[186] The second stage transforms this virtual aspect of the self, where form is latent, into a manifest transformation by modulating it with the pervading affects and others in an aesthetic assemblage (*vibhāva*). Through the affective ecology, the mind causes affects to arise and is affected by the senses into a delimited shape (*ākāra-pariṇata*). In this manner, the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) enfold the character into an aesthetic event and give it a concrete form as they become embodied in his gestures and uncontrollable bodily affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s). While Bhoja claims the embracing affects "overflow" (*palavante*) after the pervading affects modulate the stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*),[187] the pervading

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affects seem to jump into material forms (trees, water). The latent matrix only takes a defined form we can recognize as emotion with the gestures or growth into the embracing affects.[188]

However, at this stage the eight *rasa*s are still affects since they remain within the material domain of contemplation or manifestation (*bhāvanā*). As latent matrices (*prakṛti*s), they are still tinged with the color of affectivity rather than the pure reflective consciousness of *puruṣa*. *Rasa*s can progress to a third level more in line with this transcendent dimension. When a *rasa* reaches its highest intensity, it "steps beyond the path of manifestation (*bhāvanā-patha*), becomes transformed (*vivartamāna*), and is fully relished in the heart endowed with the I-maker" (*sāhaṃkṛtau hṛdi paraṃ svadate rasa asau*).[189] At this stage, *rasa* goes beyond the materiality indexed by *bhāva* and shifts to a transcendent dimension of reality. The modulations manifested in the stabilizing affects wash back into the latent reservoir and fill it completely with their "unique flavors" as a "homogenous" experience.[190] In order to make sense of this idea, Bhoja returns to the idea of *sattva* as a meditating principle between materiality (*prakṛti*) and consciousness (*puruṣa*), affectivity and passivity.

Going back to Bhoja's original definition of *rasa*, he claims it is an "indescribable transformation" of *prakṛti* that is awakened by the predominance of *sattva*. As it awakens, it manifests the entire range of the self's qualities.[191] By making these qualities appear, the elemental form of the self (*ahaṃkāra*) is not produced but instead revealed like a latent form fire hidden within flammable matter. Fire hence is not created *ex nihilo* but brought to light when "a mass of flames" augments it.[192] *Rasa* appears in a transfigured form (*siddha-rūpa*) *as the self*.[193] While it is unclear exactly how this process was experienced, Bhoja makes it clear that not everyone can attain this transfiguration. In this set of transformations, the dispositional matrix of the protagonist manifests itself as a fondness toward specific affects as potentials.

These predispositions in turn become triggered by pervading affects that expand it into the scene and with other characters (*vibhāva*s) then becomes shaped and defined by the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s). At this second phase, the eight *rasa*s in Bharata appear as unique and separate, hiding their common origin from a singular matrix. Lastly, however, they can become extremely heightened and reach a point where they again become reabsorbed into the dispositional matrix, now infused with the active contours of these affects. In other words, the protagonist uses the ecology of affects (including other people) to reach a transfigured phase of self-experience, thereby rendering all other characters in the drama to a subsidiary status. This final stage renders the entire play the experience of a singular character manifesting due to the predominance of his *sattva*.

Rasa therefore is only transcendent when it is fully relished by the protagonist. This was first argued by Neil Delmonico in his analysis of the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa*. For Bhoja, poetry is "indivisible" (*viyoga*) from *rasa*, suggesting the virtual latency of the term in any poem rather than as an ornament to further embellish its structure.[194] Delmonico is also one of the first to point out that the foundational sense of *śṛṅgāra* to Bhoja's threefold modulation of the dispositional matrix (*ahaṃkāra*) develops in its final stage into a "peak-being," according to one commentator.[195] Delmonico agrees that the affects and *rasa*s are all emanations of the dispositional matrix as the unified *rasa* of the self-creative principle (*ahaṃkāra*): "The forty-nine *bhāva*s, *rati*, etc., appear separately out of *śṛṅgāra*, the source of the various *bhāva*s. Surrounding it, they expand it like the rays of sunlight do the sun." These *rasa*s function on the level of actualization (*bhāvanā*), which Delmonico argues is a mental process for Bhoja.[196] He points out a divergence in Bhoja's theory that other scholars seemed to have skipped over: "As *preman*, [*rasa*'s] basic characteristic is the ability to conceive (*abhimāna*) things as

favorable to oneself. In this way, even misery can be seen as happiness."[197] The magnanimity

of this process allows the protagonist to feel a sense of reflective joy even when the affects are

tinged with pain or sorrow, which can only take place when he has accrued a surpluss of *sattva*.

Since Bhoja's formalist theory assumes *rasa* is present primarily in the characters, this means

their dispositions swell and allow for a magnanimity toward experiences that would normally

be negatively felt. In this case, suffering can be felt as positive once *abhimāna* transforms it

into a form capable of delectation even while the character experiences it. This final

transformation of *ahaṃkāra/śṛṅgāra* therefore has an affordance of magnanimity (*mahat*) that

expansively encompasses affects within its zone of pleasure.[198] This "special" latent

impression (*vāsanā*) therefore seems to function as a seed in Bhoja that can expand since its

affordance is inherently "great."[199] How then are the affects linked to this larger set of material

forces, and how does *rasa* differ from them?

In Bhoja's theory, affects arise from *rasa* since the latter acts as the dispositional matrix

for their "becoming" manifest, while the *bhāva*s in turn reach a culmination (*prakarṣa*) that

becomes actualized as the final phase of *rasa*: *preman*.[200] Bharata's ecology of affects therefore

becomes relegated to the manifested yet material elements of self-expansion that bookend the

eight.[201] Bhoja argues that not only are the stabilizing affects merely the manifestation of the

"special capacity of a person's ego" (*ahaṃkāra*),[202] they also express the latent affective forces

of *passion* (*śṛṅgāra*). For example, just as Silvan Tomkins argues affects can combine with

others,[203] Bhoja claims "given such expression as 'to love sex' or 'to love quarreling,' all

affects when fully developed turn out to be passion."[204]

As passion, *śṛṅgāra* likewise is polymorphically able to assume any affordances as a

stabilizing affect in its own right. Past lives leave latent impression (*vāsanā*, *saṃskāra*s) that

help this sense of self to arise, while *sattva* also needs to predominate as a kind of "virtue" in the character that transforms its matrix (*prakṛti*). This transformation is "born of a special untainted property," which generates all the attributes and range of the self.[205] In this sense, the different stabilizing affects are products of the dispositional matrix that becomes transformed when infused with *sattva*, which leads to the full ecology affects: "The forty-nine affects, desire and the rest, that arise from the various causal factors, *encompass* the element of passion and augment it so as to make it manifest, as a mass of flames augments the elemental form of fire to make it manifest."[206] In this way, the aesthetic assemblage *in toto* functions as encompassing affects to manifest the latent dispositional matrix at the transcendent level. *Rasa* is not produced, therefore, but *expressed* or manifested, since *śṛṅgāra* "transcends the plane of production and, in a transfigured state, is what is really savored in a heart with developed ego."[207] The aesthetic ecology functions to create an opening, a crossing place, for this transcendent plane to manifest.

Bhoja redirects Bharata's aesthetic ecology to the second phase of this process of manifesting passion. During an intricate performance, Bhoja claims that the mind of a character with a deeply *sāttvika* disposition is most disposed to achieve the desired affects. A stabilizing affect activates the sense of self (*abhimāna*) of said person and is shaped by the "limiting factor" of the *ālambana-vibhāva* or the foundational pervading affect. He argues that "the intellect and senses" (*buddhi*, *indriya*s) take on the shape of the foundational factor he has encountered." Bhoja here relates the subtle materiality of the psychophysical organism to *sattva* as the central thread of the narrative. Not only is the mind of the protagonist inherently pliable but itself is formally constituted by the senses. The pervading affects link mind-body-environment-other into a larger conjunction (*saṃyoga*) which causes the "culmination"

(*niṣpatti*) of the aesthetic experience as a *rasa*. [208] The *vibhāva*s, for instance, include two sets of affective forms: the main character or "foundational factor" (*ālambana*), and the "stimulating" factors such as the scenery, time of year, and other factors (*uddīpana*).

Alongside this direct shaping of the mind, stimulating pervading affects (*uddīpana-vibhāva*s) activate latent memories (*vāsanā*s, *saṃskāra*s) which enhance the stabilizing mood: "This happens in the same way that the ocean is agitated when the moon rises, or disease increases as a result of unhealthy behavior, or a good man is deeply pained by the presence of the wicked."[209] Here affects function as involuntary reminders of the process of manifesting *rasa*, which parallel the set of embodied metaphors that shape the body of the person experiencing them. The latent impressions in the psychophysical organism can no more be controlled than the moon told to redirect the tides, or a disease organism commanded to cease afflicting the body. The foundational factors include the sight of someone engendering pain or pleasure in the viewer, the experience of which "activates a latent impression." The *vāsanā*s lead to recollection whereas stimulating pervading affects such as flower garlands, scented creams, and environment activate the innate disposition directly.[210] In Bhoja's system, since these predispositions do not function to suggest a separate stabilizing affect, but instead the entire dispositional matrix becomes delimited by these pervading forces, *any affect can potentially become a stabilizing affect*. Since the entire ecology manifests in the second stage of *rasa*, they are all equally empowered to become manifestations.[211]

Fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) can likewise become the commanding forms of a work of art, for the "temperament" of the protagonist is the dispositional matrix from which they all emerge. The only common property of all *bhāva*s for Bhoja is their flexibility: they can be modulated, changed, and fit into different roles from the ones put forward by

standard interpretations of aesthetics. Bhoja even hints that any of the *bhāva*s can become

*sāttvika*s since "they all derive from the mind, and sensitivity [*sattva*] is nothing but an

unobscured mind."[212] Recall that *sattva* in particular is associated with reshaping the *buddhi*

into the objects it greatly desires.[213] While later theorists would reject this set of propositions,

it showcases how disposition functions as the centerpiece of Bhoja's theory. Where Bharata

compares the stabilizing affect to a king with his entourage of attendants, Bhoja makes the

central character of *rasa* the protagonist, who is the only *rasika* or person who can "savor" the

experience as the expansion of his own *ahaṃkāra*. All *bhāva*s therefore become secondary.

Each niche of affects functions differently in the ecology but can shift positions in a fluid

network of latent potentialities in assemblage.

Bhoja goes on to describe the fluctuating affects and dispositional affects as having

both internal and external aspects and function primarily as the route for performance: "Both

categories, when they are imitated, receive the technical name "acting," [*abhinaya*, gesturing

in my translation] whether psychophysical, physical, verbal, or costuming."[214] Expression still

takes precedence over imagination, although for him expression functions best in literature

rather than in drama. Bhoja goes on to argue that the singularity of *rasa* becomes pluriform in

order to be "tasted by the mind."[215] This sense of delectation returns *rasa* to its experiential

quality, but it is materially embedded in the formal structure of reality (*prakṛti*). It both

manifests *through* material affects (*bhāva*s) in the expanding self-conception of the protagonist

and since the protagonist is the primary focus of the experience as its matrix (*prakṛti*). Bhoja

uses *sattva* as the articulating form between disposition in Bharata and the "clarity" and

reflective quality linking materiality and consciousness in Sāṃkhya (*prakṛti-puruṣa*). While

aware of its dramaturgical usage, Bhoja as a Sāmkhya commentator has to reconcile it with the

normative tradition. The focus on individualist tendencies positions *sattva* as a quality of only the protagonist. It cannot be shared among the cast, since secondary characters only ever experience affects as an "undeveloped form of *rasa*" according to his theory.[216] The exponents of reception theory will reject this singular intensity of *sattva* for a more ecumenical distribution of the dispositional matrix.

1.7 Reception Strain: Abhinavagupta on the Dramaturgy of Audience Dispositions

While Bhoja's theory presents *rasa* as a manifestation of a disposition within the formal characteristics of a work of art, his contemporary–the eleventh-century Kashmiri Śaiva synthesizer and aesthetician Abhinavagupta–took an alternative hermeneutical route to dramaturgy. His commentary is the only extant record of many literary theorists in Sanskrit. Subsequently, scholars are shaped his vision of the *long dureé* of aesthetic history. The tenth-century Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's theory of *rasa*, which Abhinava recounts in his commentary the *Abhinava-bhāratī*, changed the face of aesthetics in South Asia from formal analysis of texts and their features (tropes, language usage, style, and characterization) to reception theory. I turn briefly to how this change altered dramaturgy before remaking on Abhinavagupta's contributions to analyzing performances from the audience's perspective. While his focus is on the movement of the audience member from everyday to performative time and space, he implicitly makes clear that there is a shared disposition with features of luminosity underpinning the reception theories of affectivity.

Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's audience-oriented aesthetics in the *Hṛdaya-darpaṇa* ("Mirror of the Heart," c. 900) was Copernican in its radicalness. He effectively terminated the formalist lineage of *rasa* theory and realigned the field toward a new vocabulary of psychological mechanisms. Novel discursive questions emerged: how could one subject feel something like

another's emotions? This process was called "communization," (*sādhāranīya-karaṇa*) and drew heavily on scriptural hermeneutics based on the performative (*bhāvanā*, "actualization") function of language to command. [217] This verbal force has three aspects: "every statement can be analyzed as indicating some *thing* to be produced by the action, by means of some *instrument,* and in some *manner*."[218] To take literary writing as an example, "experientialization" (*bhogī-kṛttva*) creates a state of absorption into the "thing" (*vastu*) of the text; the "instrument" (*karaṇa*) is the "capacity for actualization" (*bhāvanā*) (which differs from the performative nature of language since it "makes common" [*sādharanī-bhavana*] the literary emotions in the text to the reader's feelings); and lastly "literary language" (*kāvya*) or "expression" (*abhidhaiva*) is the manner in which this absorption is made possible.[219] Audience members are *actively* brought into the creative process in a way that no previous theorists had examined, in order to render the invisible visible.[220]

Pollock points out that the earlier formalist theories of *rasa* were all questioning epistemological nuances of aesthetics. However, they all agreed that *rasa* was the internal, ontological foundation of art. After discarding this assumption, all the epistemologies that were founded on it were superseded. Hence it should not be assumed that terms held in common by the exponents of the formalist and reception-theories schools function similarly. While reception in literary language functioned across disciplines, the "Ten Dramatic Forms" (*Daśa-rūpaka*) of Dhanaṃjaya (c. 975) and Dhanika's commentary, *Avaloka* from the same period brought this focus of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's theory to dramaturgy.[221] These dramaturgs argue, contra Bhoja, that audience members (*sāmājika*s) are the only true *rasika*s since their stabilizing affects become *rasa*s.[222] The audience's matrix therefore is manifested through the characters as the ecology draws forth the *rasa*s from their own virtual shares. Dhanaṃjaya and Dhanika's

positions on the aesthetic ecology aligns with the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, with an added distinction in Dhanika's commentary that "real-world" *rasa* (that of the story-world) and "dramatic rasa" (*nāṭyarasa*) have to be distinguished.[223] Unlike Bhoja's theorization that emphasizes the particularity of a character, Dhanika's commentary makes it clear that the process of "commonization" renders characters into abstract virtues or qualities (*guṇa*s) that can be accessed by anyone, rather than the royal pedigree required for the protagonist. For instance, the main characters do not even need to be real but must be "embodied in language (*śabda-upadhāna*) for those "actualizing the affects" (*bhāvaka*). In this way, the virtues become latent (virtual) while still being real.[224] Since the textual forms are not actual people but characteristic dispositions, they can pervade the body of an actor and reach the audience through the articulation of these latent forms in language. Affects for Dhanaṃjaya are glossed as providing for "the permeating of one's feelings [*tadbhāva*] by things such as pleasure or pain."[225] Dhanika likewise uses Bharata's language to argue that the affects pervade into the minds of the audience members.[226]

The two dramaturges also convey aspects of Bharata's theory on *sattva*, while passing over the Sāṃkhya framework of Bhoja. Dhanika's commentary on *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.4cd-5ab explains the dispositional affects (*sāttivka-bhāva*s in the reception assemblage similar to the act of "taking on another's disposition (*para-bhāva*) from the *Nāṭya-śāstra*:

> "Sensitivity" [*sattva*] is when one's heart is completely amenable to "actualizing" another's sorrow and joy. As Bharata says, "Psychic sensitivity as defined here is something that arises from the heart; it is said to be the heart in a state of heightened awareness." It is precisely because of one's sensitivity that weeping, horripilation, and the like are produced in the presence of sorrow or joy, and because they are produced by this sensitivity, these emotions are accordingly called "sensitivities" (*sāttvika-bhāva*s); they are affects since they likewise "permeate one's feelings." Insofar as they arise from this sensitivity, weeping and the like, physical though they may be, are considered affects; insofar as they are actual transformations that indicate affects, they are considered embracing affects (*anubhāva*s). Hence they have a dual nature.[227]

While Pollock translates this as "sensitivity," *sattva* functions as an empowering force causing the characters and audience to resonate together. For Dhanika, the dispositional affects function with two affordances. On the one hand, they permeate like the *vibhāva*s out from the dispositional matrix of the audience members, since this allows one to "actualize" (*bhāvanā*) the feelings of others. On the other hand, they also emerge as the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) that cannot merely be staged but must be intensely felt in the body and mind together. They introduce a measure of verisimilitude into the performance since they are "actual transformations" of the characters' bodies in gesture. While not directly related, they also seem to empower the fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) indirectly. Like "waves on the ocean" of stabilizing affects, the fluctuating affects emerge and submerge in their matrix as they cross from character to audience.[228]

In this strain of dramaturgy, characters and the event's dispositional matrix are separated since the latter is found in the audience. In order to activate this disposition, the performed figures must themselves become affective forms. Dhanaṃjaya argues that characters are abstract forms that serve to bundle qualities for aesthetic savoring, shifting the audience with their contours:

> What characters such as Rāma communicate is a particular typological form, such as being a protagonist of the "noble" variety. It therefore causes the stabilizing affects to pervade (*vibhāvayati*), which then are able to be savored by the *rasika*. Accordingly, it is such forms, emptied of all elements of particularity, that are the causes of rasa.[229]

The stabilizing affects are experienced directly, manifesting in forms the way children playing with clay elephants see them as real.[230] Moreover, each *rasa* also functions to give a particular contour or texture to experience. Dhanika claims these contours will shift the singular experience of *rasa* as "the bliss that is the self" to be savored to other registers in four different

mental grounds (*citta-bhūmi*). The mind becomes "fused" with the affects in the work of art, which allows the mind to become "enlarged," "expansive," "turbulent," or "agitated."[231] Hence affects carry the qualities of the characters and merge them into an ecological matrix with the audience's dispositions. This crossing of worlds allows the abstracted qualities to transform particular characters into their affective tonalities, contours, and forces. The spectators perceive these virtues rather than people, which removes the distinction between self and other in this process. The unique affordance of reception theory, unlike Bhoja's expansion of the self-making principle (*ahaṃkāra*), suggests dispositional matrices of audience and performer are shared yet distinct, reminiscent of Subalā and Janaka's merging of *sattva*s while their *bhāva*s remain separated yet mutually influenced.[232]

This is the dramaturgical legacy that Abhinavagupta inherited by the eleventh century in his commentary and compendium on the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. In this strain of aesthetics, Abhinavagupta's theorization adopted certain aspects from Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka as well as the reinterpretation of Bharata by dramaturges in this new style of analysis. Abhinava reshaped the formalist modality (*sabda-vrtti*) to a psychological modality (*citta-vrtti*) even in formalist texts such as Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, which specifically argues for a function of language, *dhvani*, to be the centerpiece of poetic analysis.[233] However, Abhinava went further than merely reiterating this lineage of ideas. While Pollock claims he was a traditionalist and less synthetic than in his Tantric writings, Abhinava's new approach to Bharata's system incorporated the "actualization" (*bhāvanā*) theory of Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka in unique ways.[234]

By the inception of the *Abhinava-bhāratī* (c. 1000 CE, several decades after his commentary on *Dhvanyāloka*) Abhinavagupta's theorizing had matured. No longer content with translating formalist theories into reception terminology, he developed dramaturgy along

new contours toward a separate theory of "surplus comprehension" (*adhikā pratipatti*) emerging in an audience. This form of knowledge projects its own importance even without contexts that involve the reader, like scriptural injunctions (*vidhi, codanā*). Abhinva calls this *anuvyavasāya*, which functions as a kind of meta-performative force (*anu-* having this same sense of "after").[235] This theory seems to replicate Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's overall reception framework, despite Abhinava's own protests to the contrary.[236] Abhinava's contribution to aesthetics is to democratize *rasa* by opening up its disposition. Rather than claim only a limited range of kingly, courtly, and erudite figures who could become *rasika*s by reading poetry, Abhinava reorients the aesthetic process back to performance. Drama "opens" the audience up by emptying their normal awareness from distractions in order to disclose its affective matrix.[237] In "The New Dramatic Art" (*Abhinava-bhāratī*), his theory presents a "penetrating accounts of aesthetic psychology available anywhere," hinting that *rasa* is not an object but a processual event.[238]

Abhinavagupta's theory of *rasa* functions to place both the field effect of the performance and the affects that make up its form as unique and non-material. First, he argues the "end" (*artha*) of *rasa* is "the process of relishing" (*āsvādya*).[239] *Rasa* cannot be an object, nor is it entirely able to be enumerated, and hence is a singular kind of experience.[240] The affects in this ecology (*bhāva*s) "refer to something supermundane that enables aesthetic relishing to take place…we find these elements nowhere else than in the theater…"[241] Theater therefore functions as an emergent space and time. In this domain, everyone can access this supermundane experience of reality that lies closely parallel to the experience of the divine (*brahma-āsvādya*). The savoring of *rasa* is "a complete, or whole, process" (*vyāpāra*) since it

requires total "identification with drama." He elaborates that for the spectator this requires becoming identical to the affects:

> The stabilizing affects, which are beyond the reach of thought as such, are "conjoined" with the aesthetic factors. Here "con-joined" (*sam-yoga*) means properly joined, that is, becoming identically grounded in the viewers who all enter gradually into a state of identification through the heart's concurrence.[242]

The proper joining assumes a form of "propriety" (*aucitya*) within the formal stage of creating a drama to ensure the emotions of the protagonist can activate those of the audience.[243] The feeling of appropriate fit between the actions on stage and the affects upwelling in the audience causes savoring in which "one feels virtually subjugated" by this disposition's commanding form. This creates the "heart's concurrence" (*saṃvāda*) which frees one from everyday distractions similar to yogic apprehension, yet without "repudiating" the savoring of objects in everyday life.[244]

Abhinava lays out the sequence of events in an aesthetic experience in *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.272. Two sets of audience members are described, one of whom has direct access to the relishing process while the other requires preliminary performances to prepare them for this experience.[245] The qualified individual has a heart "filled with uncontaminated sensibility," *pratibhāna*, that allows them to immediately be transported into a scene of poetry.[246] Hearing a literary verse, they first discern the literal meaning of the text. Next, a direct visualization occurs, and the characters and setting are removed from particularities by the literary setting of tropic usage and stock gestures. Due to this abstraction, a pure kind of emotion such as fear appears, without spatial or temporal markers to detract from the generalized nature.[247] The aesthetic experience derives from a common dispositional matrix available to everyone, and not specific to individual subjectivity. This drastically differs from Bhoja's system wherein the protagonist becomes the only one who experiences *rasa* fully. The

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lead character for Abhinava can be distilled down into a placeholder for the aesthetic experience since the character consists of "consciousness" of the insensate aesthetic forms. The "lead" (*nāyaka*) character can embody the stabilizing affects of the drama, but *not* of *rasa*.[248] Abhinava, like Bhoja, therefore separates the *sthāyī-bhāva*s from the dispositional matrix of the event through a separation of character and audience in his assemblage.

Drama, likewise, is the best vehicle in fostering this process. Abhinava glosses *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.31 where the *artha* of drama is introduced. He gives three primary definitions of *artha*. The first is as an "aesthetic element," which requires *rasa* to arise as a category for the mind. The second is as the *end* or "goal" of instruction. Finally, he also offers it as "entity" (*vastu*) which implies that no single "thing" is "achieved" (*pra-vartate*) or "individually present" to the minds of the audience, "because the whole class of aesthetic elements, all insensate themselves, appears as subsumed under the principle mental state, namely the stabilizing affect, which all other forms subserve."[249] The terminus (*artha*) of the aesthetic experience modulates the affective apparatus toward manifesting or "turning out" (*pra-vartana*) the *rasa* event as a process (*vyāpāra*).[250]

Abhinava argues that the audience should not see the aesthetic elements as possessing animacy on their own; only as enlivened by the power of our own conscious projection into them. However, our projection of personhood into dramatic characters is also a way of harnessing the mental contours of predictable patterns into verifiable and universal experiences that matter for us. A feeling such as motherly love, for instance, would invoke too many cultural particularities for Abhinava to become a *rasa*. According to him, not enough people could appreciate the affect for it to be considered universal, unlike say Bhoja or Gauḍīya theorists who claim it is powerful enough to become a dominant stabilizing affect in itself.

This abstracting process even makes the performers themselves into vehicles or receptacles for affectivity. Actors are "a means of savoring" since they become "vessels" (*pātra*) for the experience to manifest.

How do the *rasa*s and affects interrelate in this approach? Similar to Bhoja, Abhinavagupta sees all the *rasa*s as arising from a singular dispositional matrix. His approach differs in being accessible to anyone rather than just the protagonist. The character's stabilizing affect becomes *rasa* for the audience.[251] While Abhinava does not name this matrix, it seems to manifest as the "wow-factor" (*camat-kāra*) after a "mirror-like quality" of the self is ensured. Audience members who do not innately possess this trait can be brought to it through dancing and preliminary staging techniques which "loosen the knot of the viewer's heart."[252] The dispositional affect of rapture is vital to the affordance of drama as it removes ordinary obstacles to savoring the affects.[253] This suggests the "uncontaminated sensibility" (*pratibhāna*) as a luminous matrix similar to *sattva*. *Rasa* therefore require an undiluted luminosity to manifest through the affects.

Abhinava seems to suggest that *rasa*s fashion the affects when they are "lodged in the heart" by "bringing them into being" (*bhāvaya*).[254] This is unique to the process of performance rather than poetry: "Their production is mutually effected in the course of gesturing."[255] Abhinava argues, commenting on *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.39-45, that the eight *rasa*s are styles of "contours" of interrelationship, patterns of movement (*vṛtti*) that shape one another. For instance, Bharata claims that *hāsya*, the comic *rasa*, arises when there is imitation of the erotic *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra*). Abhinava generalizes this into a type of process rather than one unique to the erotic: "any rasa presented as a semblance (*ābhāsa*) is a cause of the comic."[256] However, he accents the importance of the affective ecology, which affords drama the ability to visualize

spectacles that would seem unable to take place on a small space in front of a temple.[257] The "predispositions" (*vāsanā*s) point toward a common matrix which everyone can access, and acts as a well of possibilities. Not every spectator will respond in equal measure to a performance but all have the potential to understand *how* it affects them since they have lived innumerable lifetimes, layering experiences into this well of possibilities–ready to be retrieved when called forth in drama.

Abhinava apophatically demonstrates that dramatic performance is a unique experience of apprehension in contrast to a range of cognitive and enacted series of misperception. All other affective states require emotional investment in action to engender pleasure or avoid pain. *Rasa* is unique in that audiences are moved *without being enjoined to act*.[258] Instead of emotionally reacting to people, Abhinava argues the characters portrayed are in fact generalizations with only a semblance of particularity gleaned from traditional accounts of them, not from "actual presence."[259] They are experienced as "roles" which in turn can be recognized through the "business" or "occupation" (*vyāpāra*) of the character. In other words, *sattva* appears to audiences not only as dispositions but also invoking particular historical patterns of movement, or *habitus*, in the viewers. This phase change allows *sattva* to become embodied as they transition from a latent, abstract aspect to a manifest, material process in styles of behavior.[260] Ritual behavior signals this liminal stage as musicians tune their instruments, actors make their way to the backstage area, and similar measures allow for a gradual process of moving from ordinary to extraordinary experience at the theater.

For the audience members who do not have access to *pratibhāna* innately, the apparatus of performance transitions them into a realm where *camatkāra* can be experienced. The preliminary rituals settle the audience into an expectation "to see and hear something

supermundane and precious because of its boundless rasa," which the music, singing, and dancing make equally possible by rendering "everyone's heart as spotless as a mirror."[261] Next Abhinava argues that the audience comes to identify with the affects via the gestural regime of acting: bodily, vocal, costuming and makeup, and the dispositional register. When other actors begin to relate to the protagonist, the audience then comes to a simple cognition of the character, for example "Rāma," without any judgment as to the content of the feeling. Next the predispositions (*vāsanā*s) become activated alongside this generalized feeling, which creates a feeling of "rapture" (*sacamatkāras*)[262] that is powerful enough to be "implanted into one's very heart."[263] Costumes are said to neutralize the particulars of perceiving the actors, and the forms of gesturing create a ritualized world whereby the viewer can impute a name to the experience of a character. Due to this abstracting process, the "actor's identities are concealed" and we are not caught in our expectations of liking and disliking the persons we see performing.[264]

Drama is meant to create a uniform audience in its performative sequence. Abhinava explains that audience members can have varying degrees of emotional porosity, or what he calls "sounding together" (*saṃvāda*). To transition an anxious or distracted audience member into a condition of aesthetic absorption, Abhinava argues that characteristics of performance called "coloration" (*uparañjana*) are needed.[265] These include poetry, vocal and instrumental music, "the enchanting theater itself, and the skilled actress…Thereby, the sensibilities of even an insensitive man, by virtue of his acquiring mental clarity, can be rendered completely receptive, so that he becomes a sensitive viewer."[266] This seems quite similar to the affordances of *sattva* in Bharata and Bhoja's theories. Audiences without mental-emotional blemishes can reflect this *rasa* experience more easily, while others require a democratizing procedure of music, singing, and dancing to make them receptive. Such performative procedures "loosen

the knot of the viewer's heart, hardened as it is by the anger, grief, and so on he bears inside."[267] This contradicts the previous statement that the affects do not have any power outside the mental stratum. Instead, it brings the viewer into an ecumenical experience through the shared ecology of affects onstage.

Instead, Abhinavagupta seems to insist that these habitual patterns *do* have a negative tendency to distract and redirect the heart away from the event. The remedy is to allow actors to appear on the stage without becoming unique people that activate the normal mental apparatus. By doing so, theater disengages the mind much in the way yoga is said to deactivate (*nirodha*) the "turnings of the mind" (*citta-vṛtti*).[268] The actors can function as cognizable objects since the aesthetic assemblage disguises their real forms, and by abstracting them into qualities adds them to the dispositional matrix. The actualization process of *bhāva* functions similar to methods of yogic concentration (*samādhi*), which allows for what Abhinava calls a "bare apprehension" to emerge.[269] This pure quality expresses a potentiality as *just* a character, not an actor. By hiding their own dispositions, actors tap into the well of possibilities and can manifest in their gestures the pure idea of characters as semblances.[270] The "enlivening force" of the aesthetic assemblage makes it possible for the drama to deactivate one's normal everyday responses, much as the actors must deactivate their self-dispositions (*svabhāva*s) in Bharata. For example, an affect like fear (*bhaya*) first appears directly, then becomes generalized by having its spatio-temporal context removed. Finally, it "penetrates the heart" and appears as *just* the terrifying (*bhayānaka*) *rasa*.[271]

Abhinava makes it clear that his system can render all affects onstage. Other formal systems would assign affects to specific characters delimited by class, gender, and physical status. Certain affects are reserved for kings versus peasants, while others have gradated forms

such as *hāsya*.[272] For instance, the terrifying *rasa* can be savored even by high class spectators, while its stabilizing affective counterpart fear should not be embodied by characters such as kings.[273] In other words, the nature of the affects is grounded not in the objects or forms that shape them, but in the well of possibilities that makes up the universalized experience. This is the dispositional matrix for Abhinavagupta and similar reception theorists, who will claim that the stabilizing affect is also *rasa*, but in such a manner that both are afforded supermundane characteristics. The quality of *pratibhāna* as uncontaminated luminosity is available to anyone as the supermundane undergirds the normative affects of everyday life. When experienced as *camatkāra*, the "rapture" of aesthetic events removes the obstacles to a universal affective moment that reaches beyond the individuality of audience members. One additional strand of theory that takes the other-worldly aspects of affect but invests them in special characters with a unique disposition.

1.8 Theological Strain: Rūpa Gosvāmin and Kṛṣṇa's Pure Disposition in Ritual

At first glance, the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava community founded by the ecstatic sixteenth-century figure of Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya seems an odd place to turn to theories of affect. Despite studying and memorizing Sanskrit texts as a teacher before undergoing a deep religious experience after his father's death, Caitanya was said to have written only six lines of poetry in his career. Instead he delegated this responsibility to his disciples, including Rūpa Gosvāmin, a member of the Bengali intelligentsia working under the Muslim ruler of the area. Following Caitanya's example, he renounced the world and retired to the northern area of Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa Gopāla, the supreme form of the deity as Bhagavān, was said to descend to earth. Rūpa's work of aesthetic theology "The Immortal Ocean of Devotional *Rasa*," (*Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*,

1541) maps an elaborate path to developing a personal connection to the divine using *rasa* theory.[274]

This text has a hybrid place in the two schools discussed so far. Rūpa is familiar not with Abhinavagupta but rather with a later text in the reception school, Viśvanātha's *Sahityā-darpaṇa* (c. 1350).[275] Frequent references to tropes from this text appear in Rūpa's accounts of *rasa* and *bhāva*s in which they are related like ocean to its waves.[276] On the formalist side, Neil Delmonico argues that Bhoja's aesthetic assemblage most likely reached the Gauḍīyas—seen in select quotations in Śrīnātha Pāṇḍita and Rūpa's work—through the Bengali *Agni-purāṇa*. This text was most likely compiled by Senā kings from the eleventh through thirteenth-centuries since the Gauḍa kingdoms had political and religious ties with Bhoja's kingdom in what is Rajasthan today.[277] Where Bhoja calls *rasa* a manifestation of the self-creative principle (*ahaṃkāra*), the *Agni-purāṇa*'s section on *alaṃkāra* uses the Upaniṣadic trope of bliss (*ānanda*) to describe *rasa* as a manifestation of consciousness (*caitanya*) in verse 1–2.[278] Furthermore, the major insistence of Rūpa's text that the primary character (*nāyaka*) Kṛṣṇa is the main focus of *rasa* aligns his approach within the formalist tradition as well. As theology, Rūpa's argument focuses on how devotion (*bhakti*) can develop using a practice (*sādhanā*) to allow emergent (*prākaṭya*) affects. The results manifest as *siddhi*s or the "successes" of discipline.[279]

What are affects and *rasa*s in Rūpa's devotional approach? He gives a definition in the eastern "quadrant" (book) of his treatise that links *bhāva*s to a very special dispositional matrix with the divine: "Affect is said to be a special form (*viśeṣa-ātmā*) of the pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*) like a beam of the sun of love (*preman*); its desirous rays soften the heart."[280] In his nephew Jīva Gosvāmin's commentary on this section, the power of *śuddha-sattva* is

linked to Kṛṣṇa's divine potency of bliss (*hlādinī-śakti*).[281] These traits are the virtual powers of Kṛṣṇa's ultimate form (*vigraha*), which exists without manifesting at times but can empower other forms as well. In Rūpa's theory, the stabilizing affect that underlies all others is pleasure (*rati*) for Kṛṣṇa.[282] This pleasure manifests in the turnings of the heart (*mano-vṛttau*) and takes on their own virtual form (*tat-svarūpatā*). As an empowered divine matrix, it is a self-manifesting form (*svayam-prakāśa-rūpa*) even though it appears to come to light by the mind.[283] By manifesting this divine, singular matrix, *rati* takes "the form of enjoyment itself" (*svayam-āsvāda-sarūpa*) while simultaneously becoming the cause of enjoying Kṛṣṇa and his companions' actions.[284] Similar to Bhoja, Rūpa's theory assumes a principle place for desire (similar to his emphasis on *śṛṅgāra* as affective matrix).

In this sense, affects are all empowered by Kṛṣṇa as the receptacle (*āśraya*) in which they dwell. His special disposition allows for an overflowing of potential to congeal in affective forms. *Rasa* emerges from this dispositional stabilizing affect when it "softens the heart completely and becomes very intense, and when it is marked by a high degree of "my-ness," (*mamatā*) it is called *preman*."[285] This is a distilled, thickened form (*sāndrātmā*) of the stabilizing affect, similar to Bhoja's literary system and Abhinavagupta's dramaturgy on stabilizing affects becoming *rasa*. Like Abhinava, the spectator or actor must have their self *dis*-positioned, their "heart melted completely" or their normal ongoing thoughts (*citta-vṛtti*) obscured. However, unlike the universalizing affordance of the reception theory, Rūpa's argument empowers the stabilizing affect to enhance a part of the self, similar to *ahaṃkāra* in Bhoja's theorization. This "my-ness" (*mamatā*) does not suggest a return to the grasping of the self in saṃsāric life. Instead Rūpa offers a virtual potency of connection, an affordance that

makes the divine seem attainable. Kṛṣṇa has the potential to become "mine," which makes this feeling a powerful technique to develop a relationship with the god.

Rūpa turns to the aesthetic ecology of Bharata's text in the southern quadrant (book two).[286] Kṛṣṇa-*rati* becomes the stabilizing affect for *bhakti-rasa* when it is brought to a virtual relishing (*svādyatva*) in the heart of devotees by means of the pervading, encompassing, dispositional, and fluctuating affects. Certain actions can facilitate this, including listening to stories about the Bhagavān.[287] This "taste for devotional *rasa*" only becomes manifest for someone inclined by predispositions to "true devotion" (*sad-bhakti-vāsanā*) from their current and past lives.[288] Devotion likewise can remove the faults of the person (*bhakti-nirdhūta-doṣa*), which creates a disposition in the mind that favors "purity and brightness," (*prasanna-uvvala-cetas*), of which Jīva comments that it has a pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*) not affected by material qualities (*prakṛti-guṇa*).[289] This stabilizing affect of *rati* is the form of bliss (*ānanda-rūpa*) that develops into the virtual form of *rasa* (*rasyatā*).[290] In this way, the stabilizing affect develops from a latent, divine source into the particular forms of *rasa*s, which take relational forms as *bhāva*s. Similar to Abhinavagupta then, Rūpa assumes a processual matrix that affords luminosity (*pratibhāna*) and is experienced as rapture (*camatkāra*) undergirding all affective moments with the divine.

Rūpa's theory has a unique twist. In contrast to Bhoja's focus on a range of primary characters, Kṛṣṇa is the main pervading affect, acting as the cause for savoring pleasure.[291] As the foundational (*ālambana*) *vibhāva*, Kṛṣṇa and his companions are described at great length in this section numbering hundreds of verses. He can appear as himself in manifest form, in disguise, or even in other forms as well.[292] Rather than argue Kṛṣṇa is one particular kind of protagonist, Rūpa claims he can fit into all the major categories of heroic leads (*nāyaka*s), even

though each form encompasses different *sattva*s for the role.[293] The embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) are likewise seen as indicating the affects situated in the heart (*citta-stha-bhāva avabodhaka*) in chiefly external changes (*bahir-vikriyā-prāyā*). These primarily have two affordances of being experienced as "cool" or "ecstatic" (*śīta, kṣepana*).[294] With these contours, the different embracing affects can modulate the "temperature" of a scene, mixing and mingling to form gradations of intensity. Lastly, the fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) provide the stabilizing affect with "special enhancement" (*viśeṣeṇa-abhimukhyena*) and appear primarily in the operations of the voice, body, and disposition. Rūpa explains in a verse that fluctuating affects are like waves (*ūrmi*) that emerge from and become submerged into (*unmajjanti, nimajjanti*) the stabilizing affect as an "immortal ocean" (*amṛta-vāridhi*), taking on its virtual form (*tad-rūpatā*).[295]

The stabilizing affects, as described before, are also somewhat unique in Rūpa's theorization. As the dispositional matrix, *rati* takes Kṛṣṇa as its subject (*viṣaya*) or "domain" and becomes polymorphic in the process, even as it can exert its commanding force (*vaśatā*) on both compatible and incompatible affects (*aviruddha, viruddha bhāva*) like a shining king (*surāja virāja*).[296] Two forms of pleasure for Kṛṣṇa emerge: primary and secondary. Primary pleasure has the highest yield of this pure disposition, one which supports itself and one which supports another in a contracted form.[297] The self-supporting pleasure takes five varieties: pure (non-distinct, *śuddha*), respect (*prīti*), friendship (*sakhya*), parental affection (*vātsalya*), and amorousness (*priya*).[298] These affects are less moods and more akin to relationships with the divine, where Kṛṣṇa is ranked according to the intensity of the affectivity prevalent in each. From lower to higher in the spectrum, the forms Kṛṣṇa assumes start with the undifferentiated reality of *brahman*; the king or superior figure due respect; the equal worthy of friendship; the

child who inspires parental love; and finally the beloved in an erotic relationship. Each person will develop a fondness for one of these forms of Kṛṣṇa, and a particular bond will become manifest in them based on their particularity (*vaiśiṣṭya*) as a vessel (*pātra*) for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure.[299] These forms develop without individual choice based on impressions from past lives (*vāsanā*).[300]

Secondary pleasures, on the other hand, emerge from the power of the pervading affects (specifically Kṛṣṇa and those close to him) when it can be nourished by the contracted form of a primary pleasure. All other forms of *rasa* besides *śṛṅgāra* therefore fall into this list. These lack the dispositional purity of the primary forms, but still remain empowered since they indirectly enhance *rati*.[301] While secondary *rati*s temporarily are able to become *rasa*s, they lack a reservoir (*ādhāra*) in which they can develop further. This reservoir is the dispositional matrix as *śuddha-sattva*. Therefore Kṛṣṇa's pure disposition always functions to empower the primary affects, since they cannot deviate from this reservoir which affords them their self-directed virtual form (*sva-svarūpatā*).[302] The inconceivable self-form of the divine is actually shared in pleasure, and embodies the play of great potentialities (*mahāśakti-vilāsa-ātmā*).[303] Similar to Bhoja's three-tiered disposition running from latent *rasa* to stabilizing affects to fully manifest *rasa*, Rūpa's ecology shows that the stabilizing affect of *rati* becomes a dispositional matrix in its own right. When directed to the supernal object of Kṛṣṇa, the Bhagavān, it expands itself by pervading into its aesthetic components then proceeds to overflow its boundaries like the ocean produces clouds which increase its self-same mass with rainwater.[304]

Finally, the two forms of *bhāva* and *rasa* are not said to be ontologically different. Quoting from Viśvanātha's *Sahitya-darpaṇa*, Rūpa argues that *rasa* passes beyond the process

of actualization (*bhāvanā*) and becomes a location for the weight of the wow-factor (*camatkāra-bhāra-bhū*) wherein the intensity of the dispositional matrix in the heart (*sattva-ujjvale*) is relished. Affects, on the other hand, are still within the process of actualization and are experienced in the heart by means of past impressions (*saṃskāraiḥ citte*) when one's intelligence is focused on nothing else (*ananya-buddhinā*).[305] The dispositional matrix actualizes or mediates the process whereby the mind becomes gradually able to enter into a relation with Kṛṣṇa.

This pure disposition imbues the mind with three varieties of affects, including dispositional affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) that appear in direct connection to this relationship. One can feel "affectionate" (*snigdhā*) affects to Kṛṣṇa, accumulated affects which manifest a love for Kṛṣṇa even without *rati* appearing directly (*dighda*), and harsh affects in persons who are close to becoming devotees even when they have yet to manifest love for Kṛṣṇa.[306] The *sāttvika-bhāva*s–including tears, horripilation, change of complexion, and paralysis–appear in the bodies of devotees who are invested with this pure disposition when it becomes established in the life breath (*prāṇa*). In other words, the disposition flows throughout the psychophysical organism with the breath and causes the dispositional affects to manifest by exciting the body (*deha vikṣobhayatyala*) from within its subtle layers.[307] The particular dispositional affects emerge when the vital breath carries the affective weight of the elements (*mahābhūta*).[308] The disposition can excite the breath and body (*prāṇa-tanu*) in greater and lesser degrees, leading to a gradation of the dispositional affects. In other words, the more *sāttvika-bhāva*s that appear, the stronger the affects tap into the well of possibilities. Rūpa's theory centers disposition as a conceptual key to all the affective forms. *Śuddha-sattva* permeates the body and reveals hidden

affordances to affects that manifest divine powers when approached correctly in the techniques of the tradition (*sādhanā*).

1.9 Dispositional Matrices

I can know say a few things about the affective body as it is treated in Bharata and the other three theorists. As a ritual-inflected dramaturgy, the *Nāṭya-śāstra* develops a theory of affects that extend beyond the psychophysical body of the performer to suggest its intricate connection to an ecology of forces. These permeated its boundaries (whether skin, normal feelings, or even character as the outcome of one's everyday decisions, *svabhāva*) while also influencing how the person is seen when acting as someone else (*para-bhāva*). The affects (*bhāva*s) are changes, phases, or other modes of becoming that shifts the person's nature (*prakṛti*) to another disposition. At the moment when both the character and audience members would normally perceive a feeling of some kind, Bharata lays out a system that instead heightens tension with a temporal dilation from a still point in the stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*). The pervading affects (*vibhāva*s) expand the feeling out from the singular psychophysical body to an ecology of other material forms and relationships preceding a feeling: an ensemble of human persons, animals, plants, and even landscapes are infused with affective intensity. Chapter two will explore this idea of the semblant nature of this ensemble, but for now I can say that it affords a set of relations which theorists such as Rūpa Gosvāmin will take to be the primary force of *bhāva*. Next, the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) extend focus forward in time to the human permutations as they open the psychophysical body to a latent, larger strata. In gestures like laughing, sickness, and even uncontrollable dispositional affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) such as crying and paralysis, the body is revealed to spin out of our volitional control. This set of affordances delimits the affective larger ecology to learned

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behaviors, habits, and tendencies from one's personal history, which scholars normally refer to as habitus. In chapter three I shall turn to the idea of *vṛtti*, or affective style, to explore how bodies are marked, inflected, and directed in similar manners by forces beyond individual control. Lastly, a set of contributing forces can augment the stabilizing affect as the fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) replicate its tenor while contributing a minor chord that modulates its key ever so slightly. By this process, the entire event of performance contributes to the falling out of a *rasa*, the purported end of aesthetic experience. *Rasa*s arise therefore from a mutual relation with their affective ecology by dilating the affective body and expanding its awareness of linear causality to a network of forces beyond our perceived control.

The key theorists of Bhoja, Abhinavagupta, and Rūpa Gosvāmin all directed their attention to Bharata's dramaturgy but layered additional features onto this dispositional matrix of performative activity. Bhoja's argument extends self-actualization (*ahaṃkāra*) as a force that permeates good performance into the heart of one's own character (*prakṛti*) itself. This feature of his formalist theory makes the protagonist (*nāyaka*) the central figure to experience a transmundane *rasa*, while the affective ecology acts as its material matrix. As *śṛṅgāra* or "desire" in a general, latent seed, the stabilizing affects give it its particular texture and then are all augmented to a transmundane phase as it exceeds the particular circumstances through an overwhelming amount of *sattva*. *Preman* or passion is the result, as it opens the self of the protagonist to its highest degree of potency or virtue (*sattva*). Abhinavagupta's dramaturgy, on the other hand, works on a premise of audience reception. His hermeneutics expanded affectivity from the world of the play into the everyday world in aesthetic rapture (*camatkāra*). Drama has the power to both simultaneously override our everyday concerns while activating a universal, latent disposition in every audience member. Abhinava's dramaturgy argues for a

matrix that is shared and does not require a protagonist alone to experience. Instead, a luminous quality to the performance's disposition (*pratibhāna*) is emphasized as it reveals the aesthetic rapture (*camtkāra*) at the heart of every performance which can be innate to audiences or developed through song, dance, and ritual. Affects, therefore, are both overcome and integral to this process of savoring.

Lastly, the power of affects is determined by the relation one wishes to have with others or with the divine. I have argued *bhāva* in Rūpa Gosvāmin's system is the relation in which one approaches Kṛṣṇa in his myriad forms. The latent force of his pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*) manifests as a commanding form–an embodied feeling that appears within the self, is inherently self-justifying, and gives a semblance of epistemological priority. In other words, a disposition *feels* natural (*sva-bhāva*) when it draws the person toward pleasing the divine due to their personal habits, tendencies, and hopes. At other times, a learned set of behaviors, embodied cognitions, and latent tendencies is developed over time through ritual enactment (*para-bhāva*).

This othered-disposition is in fact a dis-positioning of one's self-affective tendencies, which are overridden when playing a character. I cannot be myself on stage, according to Bharata, yet I must also possess *sattva* as this other set of affects overwhelms me to be a talented actor. This requires a set of other latent tendencies to become activated that go beyond my personal, historical experience. People inherit embedded personal tendencies (*vāsanā*s) from other lives which function to subtly direct them to a "proper fit" with one relation or another appearing self-evident. The relational force of affect emerges most strongly in Rūpa's case, while other theorists in the Gauḍīya tradition find other ways of relating the affects to one another and to *rasa*. While Abhinavagupta's theory shows *rasa* is able to reveal a common

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affective disposition open to all, Rūpa's theory enhances the magnification of self in Bhoja's earlier theory to develop a lasting, virtual attachment to the divine (*mamatā*). However, unlike Bhoja's materialistic rendering of *rasa*, Rūpa like Abhinava views the affects and *rasa* as a total field effect within a process. Both emphasize a singular *rasa* as the matrix transcending the materiality of *bhāva*s. Performance therefore reveals a latent disposition that can be differentially accessed by audience members and performers. Rūpa's theory uniquely highlights how affects are tied to *sattva* as infusions of *prāṇa*, the vital principle underlying all life. In this way, *sattva* can be seen as the empowering principle at the heart of all aesthetic events and processes.

By turning to these emic sources for *bhāva*, I have attempted to reveal similarities to recent trends in affect theory. Certain tendencies toward delimited sets of affects are countered at other times by a unifying affective regime that sees innumerable permutations or a process of tasting as central to the performance event. Likewise, there are hints that the dispositional matrix at the heart of each event goes beyond the person into a group, a larger sense of self, or a relational encounter with forces beyond our everyday experiences. The framework of *rasa* and stabilizing affects functions as a matrix which can manifest its dispositions through other affective forms. These include the non-causal structures of pervading, embracing, and fluctuating affects which all contribute to the ecology of the performance. I shall turn in the next three chapters to the ways these affects are deployed by playwrights, actors, and dancers as they develop, adapt, and fit their artistic visions into this economy of affects. How do these affective forms develop in drama? How do they use divine forms drawn from the well of possibility? How does their commanding force manifest? The other three modulations of the affective body reveal unique ways of manifesting or channeling *sattva* in various modes of

performance. This permutational affordance appears most vividly in the exploits and "plays" (*līlā*) of gods and goddesses, and there is no deity known more for his playful exploits and gestures than the child Kṛṣṇa.

Chapter 2.1 The Play of Semblances:
Kavikarṇapūra's Aesthetics and *the Arising of the Moon of Caitanya*

O Master of Performances, here is the same pervading Lord of the Blue Mountains (Puri), the same Cart Procession, and the same Guṇḍicā Temple! All these well-acting pilgrims come from each and every direction, these women longing to see the pleasure groves that cause the auspicious Gardens of Delight (Indra's world) to disappear! Yet all these things I consider empty without Lord Prabhu! -Kavikarṇapūra, *Caitanya-candrodaya* I.2[1]

When one considers me as Īśvara (the Lord) and himself as insignificant, I am not subject to control by his *prema*. For in whatever *bhāva* a *bhakta* worships me, I reciprocate to him in that same *bhāva*—for this is my disposition [*svabhāve*].
-Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 1.4.17-18[2]

*Bhāva*s are something I experience and which can overwhelm me at times. Yet these feelings take me out of myself. When an affect reaches these heights, I often find myself "within its" orbit or surrounded by its influence.[3] As ethnographer and affect theorist Kathleen Stewart writes, "Something throws itself together in a moment as an event and a sensation; a something both animated and inhabitable."[4] I am not the only thing involved either: the world around me changes. I find the same places on my morning walk brighter when I happen to be happy, while a bout of melancholy drains the color from the leaves and flowers.[5] I find myself embroiled in the ordinary affects of everyday life, "in impulses, sensations, expectations, daydreams, encounters, and habits of relating…in publics and social worlds of all kinds that catch people up in something that feels like *some*thing." These are both moments and locations for the extraordinary to burst forth or "bloom" into the ordinary.[6] As such, affects allow us to understand our ties to space are more open, permeable, and influential than we consciously recognize. In this chapter, I examine theories of place as they emerge in the Bengali playwright Kavikarṇapūra's hagiographical *nāṭaka*, *Caitanya-candrodaya* ("The Arising of the Moon of Caitanya," 1572).[7]

Kavikarṇapūra is the title for the seventeenth-century Gauḍīya devotee and poet Paramānandadāsa. Caitanya gave him the title Kavikarṇapūra, "filling the poets' ears," or one who inspires an audience to listen to the words of poets.[8] In Kavikarṇapūra's works, *bhāva*s manifest a range of forms that overlap hierarchically, with nested relationships linking the bodies that appear together by the "sticky" affordances of circulating affects.[9] Caitanya appears simultaneously as a historical figure and an eternal being in Kavikarṇapūra's theories and dramaturgy. The doubling of the divine likewise creates an opening for a doubled relation: *bhāva*s, in other words, multiply, mirror one another, and create shadows as we feel both *like* ourselves and like someone else. If, in Brian Massumi's words, "every affect is a doubling,"[10] their common dispositional matrix can manifest multitudes. The Gauḍīya thinkers agree: Kṛṣṇa's singular form (*svarūpa*) can phase into a plethora of forms (*viśvarūpa*).[11] In the play, a similar structure infuses the piece. The *nāṭaka* structure is fixed as a ten-act play with the full compliment of plot elements (*saṃdhi*). In the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, the first four acts introduce allegorical characters such as the Kali-Yuga, Irreligion (Adharma) as vices against its protagonist Viśvambhara as he attempts to become Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya, the embodiment of "the consciousness of Kṛṣṇa." Following his renunciation of householder life, he moves to Purī in Orissa to the Jagannātha Temple where he converts a Śaṅkaran Advaita-Vedāntin (non-dualist) named Sarvabhauma at the court of Pratāparudra. He wanders to the major temples in South India where he meets Rāmānanda Rāya, the court mystic who reveals his true identity. The last few acts see him returning to Northern India and Kṛṣṇa's homeland in the Braj area before establishing the ritual patterns of worship at Purī. Among his followers in the final act are Rūpa Gosvāmin and Svarūpa Damodara, the playwrights and aesthetic taste-setters for the community. The goal of the play is hence memorializing (*smaraṇa*) Caitanya's life for

devotees after his passing by recounting the episodes (*līlā*s) of greatest importance where they occurred. These *līlā*s tie together memory to landscapes in a way that blends past and present.

This locative sense of affectivity exists alongside its disposition (*sattva*) which I examined in chapter one. I argued that a disposition cannot be a fixed entity but must vary somehow when it becomes enacted or visible. How does a *bhāva* "make space" in performance? How does my way of being in the world influence how I feel? And what role does performance play when these locations become imbued with special significance? In this chapter I turn to a Bengal poet and playwright Kavikarṇapūra of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community to examine how identity and place become intertwined in performance spaces. The external body and locale are only one side to dwelling in the present moment of a play: I am just as enthralled by my imagination, expectations, and what I see *into* a work as what is materially present onstage. These moments link me to the larger space around me and of what could be: "The hinge between the actual and the potential can pop up as an object out of place, the sense of an absent-presence, a road block, a sticking point, or a barely audible whispering that something's up in the neighborhood."[12]

I shall explore here in chapter two the ways in which religion and performance become intertwined when affects cross over from divine sources into the human realm of material, historical reality. Section one recapitulates my arguments from chapter one on Bharata's affective ecology and how dispositions can vary as they are embodied in the pervading affects (*vibhāva*s). These material forms allow the hidden or latent forms of the divine to take place in a manner perceptible to human senses as "play" (*līlā*). In particular, the term has two usages that showcase its ties to pervading affects. First, it functions as a theological category that distributes agency across relations.[13] The divine cannot be said to "act" in normal terms

dictated by *karman*, the cause-and-effect sequence leading to rebirth. Hence figures in Vaiṣṇava cosmologies act "playfully" without intended consequences, but always *with* others.[14] Secondly, the dramaturgical use of *līlā* as a specific event or episode that can be performed suggests its processual nature. Play distributes agency into landscapes and bodies through the pervading affects, allowing unique places to exert their own form of agency in performance.[15] I contend scholars should view *līlā* as a form of semblance that engages with the world's potentials without the pejorative sense attributed to the English term. In section two, I shall examine the ways in which the *rasa* theorists from chapter one explored novelty and variations on the dispositions (*sattva*s) of recognized aesthetic categories. The term of art they used to gauge how a *rasa* developed is called *ābhāsa*, "semblance." I shall establish that these aesthetic categories and the theological category of *līlā* overlap considerably. While *ābhāsa*s in these traditions are primarily viewed as "deviations" from traditional norms through the agency of human actors, I argue divine sources are allowed to introduce novelty in *līlā*. Kavikarṇapūra and others introduced a mechanism for novelty to emerge in specific performative circumstances by fusing these two categories. In section three, I turn to Kavikarṇapūra's own aesthetic work, the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* ("Crown Jewel of Poetic Ornaments", c. 1572), to show how he synthesized poetic and theological categories of affects.[16] In brief, he delineates the primary character as the pervading affect (*vibhāva*) which colors the entire performance as either "worldly" (*laukika*) or "otherworldly" (*alaukika*) while the poet's stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*) absorbs and allows to flourish. Through an examination of an inherited definition of devotion (*bhakti*) as a semblance or deficient form of *rasa* as "adoration," I argue Kavikarṇapūra overlaps the affects of both ordinary and divine realms through the term *bhāva*.[17] After examining these preliminary features of aesthetics, I

shall turn to Kavikarṇapūra's play to examine how his dichotomy between worldly and otherworldly becomes localized and embodied onstage.

In section four I turn to the *Caitanya-candrodaya.* In Act Two, Kavikarṇapūra juxtaposes two major themes: the religious landscape of South Asia before Caitanya's historical impact was felt and Caitanya's identity among his devotees. I argue these two issues are innately connected for Kavikarṇapūra and his fellow Bengali devotees. I examine the two allegorical figures of Dispassion (Virāga) and Devotion (Bhakti) in regards to the infusion of affect into environments. As *sattva*s, these two characters undergo changes onstage as they map out the features of religious practices over and against Gauḍīya ritual and social performances. The two characters argue for the affective priority of Caitanya's birthplace in Bengal called Nabadwīp. I turn to Sukanya Sarbadhikary's ethnography of this area's landscape of practitioners to suggest a continuity of worship from Kavikarṇapūra's era to this day. Kavikarṇapūra's figures likewise were adapted into a religious text praising the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa* and in particular Kṛṣṇa's birthplace in the Braj area of Uttar Pradesh. Devotees in Braj today continue to embrace the landscape, enacting the *anubhāva*s as responses to Kṛṣṇa's lingering presence pervading the river Yamunā, the trees, rocks, and soil.[18] This continuity of dispositions therefore suggests a connection between the historical and divine affects engendered in these two places as "dwelling" (*dhāman*) sites for communal engagement. The location of this dwelling is called Vṛndāvana and appears "invisible" (*parokṣa*) within the everyday world where Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* continues eternally. This "hidden" (*gupta*) realm is accessible through the affective presence of the divine as Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya's relationships that flourished there. Devotees have developed visualizations, pilgrimages, dramas, and musical genres of performance extoling the virtues of these locales in both Uttar

Pradesh and West Bengal today. Hence, I propose that the pervading affects continue to manifest the dispositions central to the community as the divine crosses down (*avatāra*) into the mundane world at these liminal locations where both mundane and extraordinary realms overlap—if barriers exist between them at all. Kavikarṇapūra's dramaturgy suggests that our everyday relations are the roles we play while our innate dispositions reside in the eternal *līlā* of the hidden realm. These liminal domains allow for the material to manifest in the latent realm as semblances which "jump out" from the performative features of the landscape in relation to affective figures.[19]

In section five, I turn to the metatheatrical elements of affectivity as they are performed in the second instance of dramatically linking *bhāva* to devotion in the *Caitanya-candrodaya*. Kavikarṇapūra's next scene begins between Caitanya as a householder named Viśvambhara and his devotees. A renunciant named Advaita experiences a powerful semblance of one of Kṛṣṇa's forms and has to choose between this manifestation or his physical guru's image as the right form of the divine. Rather than argue over which is more theologically correct, Advaita advocates for which form affectively moves devotees the most. I argue Kavikarṇapūra uses his linguistic style (*vṛtti*) against the semantic meaning of his dialogue to carry the affective force of this dilemma in the "density and textures" as Advaita's affects "move through bodies, dreams, dramas, and social worldings of all kinds."[20] Caitanya's humorous mood becomes infectious as it disorients his followers and the audience as to his "real" identity. Kavikarṇapūra's dialogue therefore functions to leave the audience in suspense and hold these identities in tension in which resolution is not desired. Like lovers teasing one another, the point is not to win but to continue the play. Each devotee becomes an audience for a singular vision of the divine when these semblances play out in meditative forms while the social

community can experience these moments only when performed onstage. Kavikarṇapūra's

eventual conclusion is that the human side of the affective divide is more powerful than the

divine. Hence ordinary bodies and affects should be prioritized as they allow human beings a

unique approach as part of the affective ecology with the divine. In section six, I briefly

conclude this chapter by examining Kavikarṇapūra's finale to Act Two. Kṛṣṇa does appear

briefly in the semblance of verbal gestures enacted by Advaita as a poet in the moment his

vision ebbs. I argue that Kavikarṇapūra therefore uses language as a form of *anubhāva* or

"embracing affect" to display the disposition of an affected person that enters into relation with

the divine.

2.2 *Līlā* and Semblant Spaces

In this chapter, I build off the affective ecology of Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* to suggest

how *bhāva*s shift from "things" to forms of becoming. As I translated in chapter one, *bhāva*s

are enmeshed together to allow for the *rasa* or overall mood of a moment, scene, or the entire

performance to "fall out" (*niṣ-patti*). Bharata's system of performance (*prayoga*) involves the

physical and material movements of affects into forms of gesture (*abhinaya*), including bodily

(*āṅgika*), vocal (*vācika*), cosmetic (*āhārya*), and dispositional (*sāttvika*) varieties. These

function to take a stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*) and manifest it in performance through a

three-fold movement at the center of a performance. While an "emotion" is not named outright

or exclaimed, the feeling pervades outward from the moment of performance into a host of

material conditions called the "pervading affects" (*vibhāva*s). These draw the audience's

attention to the preceding events of the plot while expanding the stabilizing affect into the

environment and into a host of bodies (human, divine, and animal). I shall return to these

shortly. Next, the "embracing affects" (*anubhāva*s) condition the characters and audiences'

experience as the event unfolds forward in time. These appear as the embodied gestures associated with emotions including voluntary actions (dancing, looking askance) and involuntary responses (crying, fainting, disease). The subcategory of dispositional affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) falls under these embracing affects as they work to delimit the experience into culturally-recognizable forms of behavior or symptoms of particularly intense passions. These moments become aesthetically sanctioned by audience recognition which precipitates additional gestures such as clapping or cheering. Lastly, a set of "fluctuating affects" (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) can also be added to moments to expand, refine, and variegate the texture of a stabilizing affect. For example, jealousy, quarreling, and shame can appear as minor affects alongside the major affect of pleasure (*rati*) to imbue the decorous *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra*) with novel features. These function much the same with their own pervading and embracing affects as well. Overall, the ecology therefore works to expand the audience's focus temporally and spatially into the world (*bhava*) of a performance. Hence affects (*bhāva*) create and modulate the way I find myself in dwelling (*bhavana*) in a show or poem.

The *vibhāva*s accentuate the relationality of the ecology as certain combinations of bodies and locations are required to stimulate a particular stabilizing affect. I referred to this set of implicit cultural assumptions as the "matrix" (*prakṛti*) or character of the event as it remains latent and implicit until performed for an audience. Similarly, the foundational pervading affect (*ālambana-vibhāva*) is usually a protagonist or pair of protagonists that color the entire event with their unique characteristics (*guṇa*s). These function as the "dispositions" (*sattva*s) from which actors can draw through gestures and affects (*sāttivka*s) to manifest the intensity of a stabilizing affect. Certain theorists such as Bhoja and Rūpa Gosvāmin emphasize this "lead" (*nāyaka*) character as the central focus of affectivity. Particular characters become

established figures for specific *rasa*s and their stabilizing affects as they are reperformed and add the force or "virtue" of their qualities to the latent matrix. This can even occur with the performer enacting the character becomes ubiquitous with his or her role: Sir Lawrence Olivier *is* Shakespeare's Hamlet for audiences who have never seen the role.[21] On the other hand, certain actors view themselves as "vessels" (*pātra*s) for the character to inhabit temporarily or for long periods of time. Bharata's theory suggests that the actors should strive for this approach to performance. The actor should suppress his or her "innate disposition" (*svabhāva*) so the "other disposition" (*para-bhāva*) of the character can emerge onstage. Yet this is only possible if a shared matrix connects the two over time and place: somehow, the actor must embody the essential qualities of a heroic figure, deity, or spirit.

The religious implications of this process, I argue, forces us as scholars to reexamine the interplay between agency and volition when affects move freely between historical, material bodies of actors and the dispositions of revered figures of a culture. As my example of Janaka and Sulabhā in the *Mahābhārata* demonstrated, *bhāva*s can be separated even when a disposition (*sattva*) merges between two human beings. In this chapter, I examine the theories of performance and affectivity in devotional circles when the relationship is between a human and divine figure, merging. How does this affect the material body of a living teacher or religious founder? How do his or her followers see the leader's identity: as a role being performed by the divinity, or a mutuality or parallel set of qualities shared between human and divine? And in the example of actors imbuing the part with their own traits, how does a divinity change when the leader embodies this force for his or her followers?

Returning to the first epigraph above, I argue the playwright Kavikarṇapūra was invested in these same questions of affectivity and temporal relation in the devotional

community of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas after the passing of its leader. Kavikarṇapūra opens his play *Caitanya-candrodaya* with these words of the Orissan king Pratāparudra to the stage-manager (*sūtradhāra*):

> O Master of Performances, here is the same pervading Lord of the Blue Mountains (Puri), the same Cart Procession, and the same Guṇḍicā Temple! All these well-acting pilgrims come from each and every direction, these women longing to see the pleasure groves that cause the auspicious Gardens of Delight (Indra's world) to disappear! Yet all these things I consider empty without Lord Prabhu![22]

With the loss of his guru, the very deities in the temple, the pleasures of Indra's heavenly gardens, and the saintly works of pilgrims to the Jagannātha Temple are all devoid of meaning for the king. The affective ecology in Bharata's theory of *bhāva*s requires a direction or focus in performance to manifest. This side of the affective body is normally latent as a disposition until it is activated and pervades out into an ensemble of material relations. Through the affective ecology of Bharata's system, *vibhāva*s, *anubhāva*s, and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*s work in tandem to manifest the potential of the *sthāyi-bhāva* or to intensity it thereby transforming it to a *rasa*. This ensemble therefore manifests the hidden matrix of affects by taking over the material forms it requires to appear to the senses. Yet without this disposition, the forms remain empty. Kavikarṇapūra's play revels in the longing and memorializing of these earthly incarnations of the divine figure Caitanya, who is also simultaneously the deity Kṛṣṇa. As the pervading (*vibhāva*) lord of the area, then, how is the living figure related to the material form of the deity in the temple? Why would one's absence mar the feeling of seeing the other?

The second epigraph helps to place this feeling in context within the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community. Sub-branches of the larger group offer different interpretations of Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa's relation to one another and to his/their devotees. The king claims that his pain can only

be assuaged by his spiritual friends' words and "a play performed (*abhinitat*) which fully enacts his virtues (*guṇa-samprayogat*)."[23] How can one form of the divine not activate the same affects if the two are interconnected? Finally, how can affects "survive the coming and going of objects" which conduce us to feel them?[24] Each form of the divine is not felt to be the same for each devotee. In Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's magisterial hagiography above narrates, the deity himself assumes a polymorphic form to fit the needs of his human associates (*pārṣada*s) during Caitanya's life.

The divine manifests for the human worshiper *relationally*, by the force of the devotee's pure love (*preman*), which cannot appear except in intimate affective forms. The affects likewise shape where his forms appear. Rather than being an emotion locked into the membrane of an individual's body, re-acting to the world and others around it, *bhāva*s in this framework are relations that activate from a hidden well of possibilities. I cannot be who I am without others. And they in turn know me by the shared experiences we encounter in our longing together for what is gone, hidden, or no longer present. We need relationships to manifest these affects, and the only way to invoke them outside of the physical presence of our object of longing is in play (*līlā*). Hence the Gauḍīya community focuses on Caitanya's life as a series of playful events modeled on the activity of Kṛṣṇa himself, or mimetically reenacting (*anukaraṇa*) his affects for Kṛṣṇa. These are semblances as they open up the spaces perceived to be vital to play into a layered reality where absence can be transformed into latent presence.

Līlā is relational at its core: we always play with others by a form of self-veiling. We choose to see a different strata to the world.[25] Diverging somewhat from Bharata's aesthetic ecology, the devotional matrix does not require a direct physical presence to manifest *līlā*s. Longing (*rati*) calls forth a memory from the past that can appear just as vividly as the senses

can muster. As affective forms, these relationships allow for devotees (*bhakta*s) to experience the field effect of devotion (*bhakti-rasa*), which uses the relation as its dispositional matrix to manifest an entire world of the virtual side of the divine.[26] In Kavikarṇapūra's example of Pratāparudra shows, the ancillary pervading affects (*uddīpana-vibhāva*s) in place are not enough to fully manifest the stabilizing affect of the play (*rati*) without the principle focus (*ālambana-vibhāva*) of Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya in his many forms. *Rati*, the stabilizing affect of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, is said to surpass all the ends of life (*puruṣa-artha*s), including the religious goals of liberation (*mokṣa*)![27] Without access to this dispositional matrix, the devotees in the play (and presumably in our current age) are left helpless to access this powerful affective goal without bodies to ground it. It takes two to tango, or to partake in the *rāsa* dance with Kṛṣṇa.

Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetic genius lies in linking Bharata's system of affects to devotional framings of *bhāva* in theological works.[28] *Bhāva* as a dispositional matrix (*sattva*, *prakṛti*) functions to enliven performances, flowing across bodies or differentiating a common event into the bodies of performers, audience members, and material elements. As a relation, *bhāva*s function to link human performers to a pure dispositional matrix (*śuddha-sattva*) of the divine. Each matrix functions in this Gauḍīya framing to activate particular habits toward the divine. The supreme deity Kṛṣṇa changes to fit the peculiar disposition of his devotees (*bhakta*).[29] Hence the ultimate reality of the divine matrix is able to be shaped by the materiality and needs of human affective bodies. In order to do so, it requires not only relations but landscapes for these pervading affects to begin the process. Affects are therefore where we "dwell" (*bhavana*) as well as the feelings in which the world around us is shaped. *Līlā* functions to create these playful connections.

However, something special imbues these material forms or bodies with potency, allowing them to channel affects into other relationships. To activate the affective contours of a normal landscape, such as a hill, a well, or a tree, this devotional force has to be recognized within it. The process of recognizing a landscape as affective is laden with cultural configurations as well as the sensory details of the process. Once the imagined cultural importance is layered onto the sensory details ("this tree is where Kṛṣṇa was tied up by his mother Yaśodā after stealing butter"), the two form an interlaced dimension.[30] When I look at a painting, something similar occurs: the colors, lines, gradients of tone and brightness all work together to stimulate my senses. Yet alongside this process I have learned to recognize certain shapes *as-if* they were something else: a house, a butter-churn, a small boy and a calf. The objects depicted are not physically present but appear as the illusions of the flat surface. I cross over from seeing the pure sensory details and the imagined contours of the scene into a deeper dimension: the cowherd Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa standing before me. I take this process of seeing him emerge from the surface as a given, but it takes training to see. In the same manner, learning to find the affective contours of a landscape activates illusory powers (*māyā*) that can simultaneously veil the truth and reveal it within the sensory apparatus of the body. Yet this process is not entirely subjective: anyone can learn to see in this way and can recognize Kṛṣṇa in this configuration of lines, pigment, and tone. Audiences have a common experience due to the depersonalized nature of this process, as Abhinavagupta indicated in his commentary from chapter one. The universalization process of *līlā* allows these illusions to be shared. How can a seemingly subjective experience become shared?

I refer to these images created in the process of play as semblances. Space grounds the illusions of *līlā* into material forms—corporeal bodies or material containers. Affect

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participates in this constant give-and-take as the divine crosses down (*ava-√tṝ*) onto the stage

of the world. As scholars of religion and migration argue, religiosity is performative in creating

places where we can affectively dwell and cross over into new realms of possibility.[31] The

back and forth movement of these tendencies of *bhāva* therefore will shape the dispositional

matrix as its manifests in semblances. These semblances are part of an ongoing culture that

can shape the devotee at any time and place, regardless of distance from the original time in

which Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya walked the physical landscape of India. Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s are playful

episodes that extend the horizon of our temporal selves without regards to linear time or

causality. They link directly to the performer's gestures as they reach across the threshold of

potential into actual movement. Each *līlā* is likewise its own moment or stand-alone episode

which can be replicated to activate the dispositional matrix at its empty center. Like a musical

score, each semblance therefore can be re-invoked while subtly changed in each

performance.[32] Each participant in these plays both inherits the tradition and adds to its well

of possibilities.[33]

      Līlā as semblance would seem to overlap with a similar aesthetic term. I argue,

however, that its clear ties to dramatic presentation in Gauḍīya sources suggests its affective

potential. *Līlā* connects the disposition of a scene to the physical movements necessary for a

performer to manifest it in gestures. As Susan Langer explains in *Feeling and Form*, her work

on semblance, as is the imaginative fabrication of a composer or the channeled form directed

to an artist, the work

> may take place without any overt expression. This physically non-sensuous structure
> has a permanent existence and identity of its own; it is what can be "repeated" in many
> transient appearances, which are its "performances," and in a sense it is all the
> composer can really call *his* piece.[34]

The matrix of a work remains latent as a potential until it can be performed. When played, enacted, or danced, a work then becomes activated while still virtual. The artwork's "non-sensuous structure" exerts force as a seed for the composer or poet to develop. Kavikarṇapūra uses a similar logic in his aesthetic text, *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*. He defines a poet in verse 11 as "one who has a seed, (*sabīja*), and is learned in all scriptures (*āgama*s). If he has *rasa* and possesses imagination (*pratibhā*), then he is the best."[35] The form comes to artists intact, whole, as an already-existing reality in some ways, and is "illuminated" or "shines forth" (*pratibhā*) due to their sensitivity to these ephemeral appearances of dispositions.[36] The *sattva*, therefore, is "the *commanding form* of the work" since it sets the "measure of right and wrong, too much and too little, strong and weak" by which it is assessed.

This process seems to remove the human participant from the process of artmaking. I argue instead that personal emotion is indeed left out of the work. The performer does not relate to the affect as a "pressing-out" (*ex-pression*) of personal feelings of the ego; instead, affect is an investment, a giving room for the piece to emerge. In this way, the work requires a kind of taking center-stage, a descent from ideal or virtual space (or time in the semblance appropriate to music), and into mundane, experienced space-time.[37] Feeling infuses the piece not only from the performer but from the dispositional matrix acting as the reservoir of potential for its play. In some cases, as Bharata mentioned, the performer must act against his or her inclinations from a self-disposition (*svabhāva*) in favor of another-disposition (*para-bhāva*). Likewise, *līlā*s activate forces that are not strictly bound by human perception and emotions but escape our agency. A play or composition sometimes seems to find its own ending without human choice.[38] We are left to deal with the aftermath and find our own responses to it, but that does not remove the fact that we do not control the process as it

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happens. We are swept up in the tide of affectivity, according to Gauḍīyas, if the source of those *bhāva*s are strong enough to carry us away.

These waves of affectivity suggest hidden depths to the material reality inhabited during everyday life. The landscape of India is reshaped in Kavikarṇapūra's play in Act Two as Caitanya enters the world of religious divisions yet still seems to sweep over them like a tidal wave. Kavikarṇapūra suggests this is possible by linking Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa's homes together. One is seen as a *sattva* (eternal) from which the other derives its force as a playful form or *līlā*. Devotees simultaneously dwell within the affective landscape of the "hidden" (*gupta*) or virtual realm of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes while also helping to cross down into the world of their everyday lives.[39] These two levels of reality occupy the religious landscape of Gauḍīya theology which reveals a tiered set of stages for Kṛṣṇa's affective relations.

The first is an eternal (*nitya*), unmanifest (*adṛṣṭi*) realm of Kṛṣṇa's play (*līlā*). Each devotee has a personal relationship set by their *prakṛti* which informs Kṛṣṇa's manifestations to them. A devotee whose love for the divine is shaped by maternal love (*vātsalya*) will have Kṛṣṇa appear before them as a small baby or toddler. These paradigmatic individuals are the characters whose dispositions become matrices for enactment, ritually shaping the manifest, embodied beings with their affective power.[40] The landscape of this eternal area, called Vraja, seeps into the historical realm through a back-and-forth movement of roles. Devotees are simultaneously themselves and a paradigmatic character in Kṛṣṇa's ongoing story. This play of identities, like that of actors, requires them to draw from a well of possibility that makes their role "fit" properly. To test on these roles, they are first exposed to Kṛṣṇa's exploits and deeds in the forms of theatrical productions.

The theatrical forms of *līlā*s are the performed moments in which most Vaiṣṇavas experience the divine for the first time as audiences in our shared world, with gradual possibilities to enter the unmanifest world of these plays more deeply. Kṛṣṇa-*līlā*, therefore, offers one approach to developing affects in which we dwell or that cross over between these levels of reality. Actors are not even required to have dramatic skills in order to infuse the hidden world of Kṛṣṇa's play into the everyday when contemporary troupes of children perform. When audience and actors work as an ensemble, to manifest the virtual dimensions of Kṛṣṇa's *bhāva*s, either position can modulate the event to make it appear "proper."[41] The divine forms that appear in Caitanya's *līlā*s appear in a similar manner to open up spaces to a latent presence of the divine.

The realm where these bodies of the divine appear most often is the pastoral land of Vraja or Vṛndāvana, which is said to be both a location in north India (Uttar Pradesh) as well as the ultimate abode of the divine as Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman*, "abode" or "domain."[42] While this divine realm is always present yet invisible, Kṛṣṇa himself claims it is "inert" without the ongoing relationships to his *bhakta*s in affective forms such as *preman*. Only by engaging in the *līlā* of his devotees can it be playfully revealed in its ongoing intensity. Without the movement of play to activate the *bhāva*s as relations, there can be no divine affects.[43] By turning to Kavikarṇapūra's *nāṭaka*, the *Caitanya-candrodaya* (1576), I argue we can see the relationship between affects and performance depicted explicitly. Kavikarṇapūra seamlessly infused his theology into the style of his writing through verbal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*). In the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, affects are the medium for the audience to connect to the divine. As its title shows, they are controlled by "the arising of the moon" (*candra-udaya*) which infuses the performers and audiences' consciousness (*caitanya*) with the affects for Kṛṣṇa.

Simultaneously, they also allow for an arising of the knowledge of Caitanya's lifetime that flows sweetly like nectar (*amṛta*) from the moon.

Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetics offers an alternative interpretation of *rasa*s and *bhāva*s to the Gosvāmin's perspective among Gauḍīyas. In Karṇaūra's work, he reveals how human devotees relate to divine forms as both mundane and eternal realms are interconnected with affects. Like the performers who are considered *svarūpa*s of Kṛṣṇa and his eternal playmates, semblances allow "God and actors to show up simultaneously," as well as "an art object and a manifestation of divinity" to appear at the same time.[44] How does Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetics allow affects to bridge these two levels of reality in performances? How do landscapes, animals, and even imagined forms contribute to dwelling and crossing in affective ensembles? And how does the affective ecology of Bharata's system allow for novel changes in performance to be introduced as semblances?

Kavikarṇapūra's work reveals how affects become ensembles that allow for temporally distant events to be sites of "dwelling" in the present (*bhavana*). In chapter one, I examined how the pervading affects (*vibhāva*s) dilated time by flowing outward from a matrix of a stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*) into a networked ecology of material forms. Trees, animals, the weather, and landscapes all functioned as an ensemble to awaken an audience's predisposition toward this latent side of a performative event. Yet many of these forms in drama are not built as scenery or depicted realistically; instead they use what Bharata terms as "theatrical conventions" (*nāṭya-dharma*) rather than "common conventions" (*loka-dharma*).[45] Instead, playwrights use the imaginative capacities of their audience's participation in the event: a connoisseur therefore participates in the ensemble's "shared heart" (*sa-hṛdaya*). An audience member or performer can dwell within the event as it expands from a present moment

with its ongoingness into a shared ecology of forms. These forms are semblances when spoken aloud through verbal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*) or imagined in meditative practices of memorializing (*smaraṇa*). As the semblances appear out of the material forms, they link to a virtual matrix or latent form. Like a piece of music, each performance (*prayoga*) will play off the same script but will necessarily differ based on a host of factors conditioning its outcome. In the hands of a skilled musician, a song can be shaped within the confines of a score while adding personal touches of flair. Does this necessarily entail that each performance opens a unique matrix?

When performers and audience members access these virtual layers, their bodies—as one material form in the ensemble—act as a site for manifesting affects in each person differently.[46] Acting in Kavikarṇapūra's stage directions is an "em-bodying" (*ni-rūpya*) that in-forms through gestures.[47] Aesthetic affects are felt as "something *like* the body."[48] *Rasa* is felt to be intrinsic to the body yet audience members can disagree on the relative strength or success of a performance. Jumping out from the corporeal form, this "likeness" activates a semblance while the object remains itself in "varied repetitions" of its potential.[49] The body engages in the affective ecology but also registers from its own starting points. Audiences go into the theater expecting to sit, clap, cheer, boo, and *do* something in that role. Actors know they have to perform in the conventions of their genres and traditions.

Therefore, I argue that the shared event of a performance does not remove the later subjective position of persons from experiencing a splintering of the event. In fact, their respective affective baggage allows for them to share in the moment without regards to separating performers from audience members. *Līlā* can refer to distinct episodes in dramatic presentation as well as the necessary affective form to bring these two poles of a performance

together since each is performing in their own way. The "play" therefore appears in oscillation between these two dwelling places as they cross into a shared space dominated by semblance. Only after the shared semblance has reached its culmination do people decide they took on the role of an audience or an actor. Likewise, each individuated body will contain unique traces informed by their own dispositions. The shared moment will manifest a dispositional matrix in repeatable ways but will have to be accepted, passed over, or rejected as semblances by the persons involved. For instance, I might miss a small detail of a performance that changes its entire meaning on a first viewing, only to have its meaning expanded or its power sullied upon further performances. In the same way, we only realize after dwelling on a show that our identities and roles have been crossed over. We dwell in affects while they dwell in us. Hence we cannot differentiate distinct levels of reality that never interact; instead the manifest and latent cross over continuously as David Mason claims: "The audience member does not enter into the world of fiction, as much as the fiction enters into the world of the audience member…they are not so much inside the play as the play is inside them."[50] A theme of a drama might be so powerful that it calls us to question who we are at a deeper level than our normal social engagements would suppose. Kavikarṇapūra depicts this as one major event in Caitanya's life, which I will explore in further detail in chapter 3.

Kavikarṇapūra's theological texts and plays are deeply invested in exploring these concepts of relationality and semblance. I argue the affective form of *līlā* creates semblances as material bodies are infused with the latent force of a disposition in performance. These can take shape as entire worlds, such as Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman*, that stand in for his essential self as an ensemble. As Kṛṣṇa is want to declare, Vraja is the very body that allows devotees to access his affects hidden in the landscape as they circuit through the twelve forests.[51] Kavikarṇapūra's

work reveals the affects can become places where we can dwell, opening the present up to new worlds from the well of latent possibilities. In fact, his works elaborate didactic schemas of how to link religious subjects with material, historical bodies to Kṛṣṇa's eternal realm. The exemplary body of affectivity for this tradition is their founder Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya's polymorphic form, which appear in both the eternal Vraja and the historical realm of Bengal. The hidden realm is not material but can be seen, and to adequately describe how this virtual domain could be performatively experienced requires a theory of how an invisible and latent disposition appears. Chapter one explores how the dramaturgical use of *sattva* can function as a dispositional matrix that becomes revealed in performance via semblances (*līlā*s).

2.3 Formal Semblance (*Ābhāsa*) in Aesthetic Theories

> For God is without motive or ends to be attained…his art is without means and not really a making or becoming, but rather a self-illumined (*svaprakāśa*), reflected modality (*ābhāsa*), or play (*līlā*), in which the gratuitous character of art attains its ultimate perfection. -A.K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art*[52]

This chapter explores Kavikarṇapūra's notion of *līlā* as an affective form that manifests the virtual side of *sattva*. Another term of art from literary theory resonates with *līlā* in this manner. *Ābhāsa*s (*ā+√bhā*, "to illuminate, reflect, appear") function in aesthetics to create divergent forms of the ecology discussed in chapter one with new valences on their qualities. Both *bhāva*s and *rasa*s can have these variations.[53] These shift the registers of each conjunction of affective forms by altering them with a minor gesture.[54] Furthermore, *ābhāsa* and *līlā* appear as synonymous concepts in aesthetics and theology that resonate in performances. While *ābhāsa* appears as the static vision of the form, *līlā* acts as its expressive movement. Semblances "leap out" of artistic forms as virtual potencies without being merely reduced to their material substratum.[55] For example, were I to find an alien work of art, I would not have any access to

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its semblant side. I could identify the material traits, the overall shape, texture, and even the types of gestures used to shape it—and the potential bodies that could create such forms. Yet there would be no way I could access the reality it would carry for that culture's vision. Semblances are also universal since they create a shared world. Anyone who can learn the codes of such a culture can agree on the image depicted. In this way, the affective force of artistic gestures manifests a non-material but experiential form that mediates the corporeal and the virtual. Semblances allow a parallel way to access the divine through its affective force as a non-material presence in which one can dwell.

Semblances likewise allowed the Gauḍīyas access to Caitanya after his historical crossing out of the world. The ensemble of forms that memorialized him retain access to his affective presence through their semblant power. Performances therefore open up the lingering remnants of these connections, opening up to what Richard Schechner calls performance's "twice-done" structure.[56] The world is the stage upon which Kṛṣṇa appear as a "crossing down" (*avatāra*), a direct embodiment of the relational disposition of the ultimate form of the divine. Caitanya's body is connected in an oblique fashion to Kṛṣṇa's, yet he did not have access to the "pure disposition" (*śuddha-sattva*) that empowers all *bhāva*s. Instead, as a human being, he required relationships with others to manifest this disposition's potential. When he heard music describing Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (*līlā*s), it would send shivers down his spine, cause him to change color, or even faint. These are the *sāttvika-bhāva*s, the affects coming directly from a dispositional matrix. These forces were so strong that the tradition claims Caitanya's affects "washed over" those who came into contact with him.[57] Caitanya's later life as a *saṃnyāsin* was characterized by this peripatetic mission to inundate the world with Kṛṣṇa's *bhāva*s. As an affective body in corporeal and semblant forms, Caitanya manifests his semblances as they

continue to cross over from the latent world of his hidden character to the historical world of his time.

Kavikarṇapūra's hagiographical play engages in this process of memorializing Caitanya and hence continuing the community's linkage to Kṛṣṇa's pure disposition. In this chapter I examine the literary theories (*ābhāsa*) and theological discourses (*līlā*) around semblances first to show how it draws out the polymorphic potential of a disposition. For literary theorists, semblances only occur when something goes wrong or goes beyond the boundaries of a proper container (*pātra*) or character for the involved affects. On the other hand, theologians demonstrate semblance's potential to activate novel features of reality that remain dormant. Play allows for the illusory nature of reality as *māyā* to overwhelm the people within an affective ensemble and carry them off to another world. Gestures can also invoke semblances by a process of memorializing (*smaraṇa*) them in song, dance, and storytelling. This is the route taken by actors and dancers in Kavikarṇapūra's play as they personify the characters of affective dispositions and make them available to be replicated in religious texts. Virtues such as Devotion (*bhakti*), Dispassion (*virāga*), Friendship (*maitrī*), and Loving Devotion (*prema-bhakti*) are all portrayed by characters in the play while commenting outside the historical frame of the story. This frame allows the audience to dwell in the present moment of the play's time while engaging them at different affective intensities.[58] The different worlds or stages (*bhūmikā*s) of the play highlight the potential for affects to cross over bodies, landscapes, and even realities.

While I argue for *līlā*'s central importance for Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetics as semblance, another term called *ābhāsa* is often used in a slightly different way. In this section, I review the formalist aesthetics of Bhoja and the reception theories of Dhanaṃjaya and

Abhinvagupta on *ābhāsa* to situate the term in my previous chapter's discussions of affective ecologies. For both lineages, semblances function to conserve and demarcate acceptable boundaries for *rasa*s by limiting the characters central to each disposition. However, a later theorist named Siṅgabhūpāla develops *ābhāsa* into an analytic category capable of addressing novel ecologies. In Rūpa Gosvāmin's "Blazing Sapphire" (*Ujjvala-nilamāṇi*) theology of *mādhurya-bhāva*, the "sweet" erotic affect reserved for the *gopī*s, Rūpa appears to have borrowed extensively from Siṅgabhūpāla's dramaturgy.[59] I argue that Siṅga's theorization of *ābhāsa* was fostered among Gauḍīya theorists and helped develop an appreciation between their theological goals and his aesthetic ability to generate novelty onstage. As a dramaturgy, Siṅgabhūpāla's *Rasārṇava-sudhākara* ("Moon on the Ocean of Rasa") appears to have influenced Kavikarṇapūra's theorization in his own aesthetics and playwrighting. I argue that Siṅga's theorization allows for the valence or charge of intensity of an affective matrix to be reversed without changing identities. For instance, a form of love-in-separation can become a semblance of love without turning to grief as Bharata's system would require. *Ābhāsa* therefore inherits a similar set of affordances to *līlā*: it endows a performance with the ability to manifest many forms from a single disposition while also disorienting audience expectations like Kṛṣṇa's play.

 Ābhāsa is a term of art in South Asian literary analysis used to privilege the tradition's foundational themes and qualities. This prevents certain novel formulations of drama or poetry from creating novel affects. While Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* does not use *ābhāsa* directly, he inaugurates the tradition by ranking certain *bhāva*s based on social positions. For instance, Bharata relegates stabilizing affects to characters based on a hierarchy of status: the decorous and heroic *rasa*s (*śṛṅgāra*, *vīrya*) are for "characters of high status," while the comic (*hāsya*),

by contrast, "only to those of low or middling status." Likewise, a high-status hero cannot be shown experiencing the terrifying *rasa* (*bhayānaka*). When they do, this can only be a spurious form of fear.[60] Hence for Bharata *ābhāsa*s are meant to be "dis-semblances" or distorted reflections of the "true" *rasa*s and *bhāva*s accepted by tradition. Several key literary analysts developed *ābhāsa* as a category to reinforce these hierarchies of social meaning and relationship. The term can mean "reflection, appearance, color, likeness" (from *ā+√bhā*). A "semblance" of a *rasa* (*rasa-ābhāsa*) was also frequently used to suggest similarity without equivalence (a painting of a horse being one example) or of a counterfeit nature. Semblance therefore partakes of the illusory potency of material reality called *māyā-śakti*. I distinguish between *ābhāsa* as a "formal semblance" versus *līlā* since the latter does not have the negative connotations of the term as "dis-semblance" while retaining its ability to link with other forms as "re-semblance." After I examine a short history of the aesthetic lineage of *ābhāsa*, I argue that the two terms are mutually related. Since *līlā* does not have a positive or negative valuation, it functions as the more encompassing or general term in my discussion that follows.

In Sanskrit aesthetics, *ābhāsa* first referenced notions of social propriety (*aucitya*) in how certain features of Bharata's affective ecology were deployed in practice.[61] Semblances arise when an audience of cultured spectators (*rasika*s) notice discrepancies in key affordances of an event. For example, the decorous *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra*) requires a mutually-acceptable heteroromantic encounter but cannot directly or crassly describe the sexual act. It retains its highest form by only insinuating or alluding to sexual advances. A semblance of the decorous *rasa* would arise were two characters to be directly engaged in coitus or if it their coupling were described directly. At other times, the status of the characters as "vessels" (*pātra*) for the affects is paramount. The leading man (*nāyaka*) and woman (*nāyikā*) need to fit particular

stations (kings, deities, or heroes for men; queens, educated courtesans, or goddesses for women). *Śṛṅgāra* would revert to an *ābhāsa* were the two lovers to be country bumpkins or even non-human creatures. Finally, the love felt between the two parties must be consensual. A frequent example of a semblance of the decorous *rasa* is Rāvaṇa's attempts to seduce Sītā after her abduction in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Any of these divergences from etiquette create an aesthetic disorientation for the audience. They might not notice these discrepancies but on later reflection the flavor of the performance "turns" or curdles. The audience's disorientation distracts from the pedagogic intent of the playwright, according to the idea that *nāṭya* was a function educating the populace at large, and in such a manner blemishes the overall tenor of a work.[62]

As a formal characteristic of a work of literature, *ābhāsa* functions alongside the work as a whole (*rasa*) or any of the niches in the affective ecology. Returning to Bhoja's tripartite modulation schema, *rasa* arises as the modification of a singular stabilizing affect in the protagonist (*ahaṃkāra*), which variegates into the eight stabilizing affects and *rasa*s in Bharata, which finally can become *śṛṅgāra* or "passion" as a culminating form encompassing the differences of the seemingly separated *rasa*s. The protagonist's innate disposition can only fully manifest itself in the third tier of *rasa* according to this theory.[63] Hence the object of the pervading affects (*vibhāva*) which dominates all others colors the entire ecological niche. As *rati* ("pleasure") expands the self of the character from a latent form into a particular stabilizing affect, it can progress to a final stage called *preman* or "passion." At this heightened, transmundane tier, the materiality of the *nāyaka*'s affects are surpassed. If there is any hint social impropriety (*anaucitya*), however, this final stage cannot progress. Social propriety authorizes the transformation from material to virtual in this process. Furthermore, secondary

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characters who accompany the *nāyaka* can only develop *bhāva*s, while semblances are left to others: "We understand "semblance" to be the presence of *rasa* in characters of low status, animals, antagonists, or entities referenced in a merely metaphorical manner."[64] Bhoja offers an example of a mixture of semblances of *rasa* (*raudra* and *vipralambha-śṛṅgāra*) in a bird's gestures.[65] Animals are not proper containers for *rasa*: their gestures and *bhāva*s must be semblances due to their ontological status. Hence the formalist theory delimits the proper vessel for *rasa* according to a nested hierarchy of animacy in its *vibhāva*s. Human characters ranked highest (with their own social hierarchies and in relation to the plot) at the top to animals, spirits, and "metaphorical entities" at the bottom.[66]

Turning to the reception school of dramaturgy, semblances become important as they reference the audience's ability to have a proper experience of *rasa*. Dhanika's commentary on Dhanaṃjaya's *Daśarūpaka* (c. 975) also sets out semblances as part of the normal operations of the pervading affects (*vibhāva*s): "Here a semblance is invoked overlapping mundane perception of a person to tropes making a person seem as if they were the god of love, or had a face like the moon."[67] The *vibhāva*s compare real entities (people) to linguistic usages such as "He had a face like the moon." If understood literally, this would appear ridiculous. As a tropic usage suggesting the abstracted qualities of the moon (including its ability to attract attention, to soothe the heat of a separated lover from their beloved, and to watch over midnight trysts), these verbal gestures help to create a set of relations. A world appears where faces can be *like* the moon by carrying the valences and contours associated with the former. Semblance, therefore, helps to create the affects of a play as they are embodied in language.[68] This layers one world (mundane perception) with another (poetic expression). *Ābhāsa*, like *līlā*, therefore permeates spaces at liminal junctures, affording the ability to cross

over from normal expression to poetic fancy. This modulates audience expectations and can help to translate them into a rapturous experience.

Abhinavagupta's dramaturgy (*Abhinava-bhāratī*) continues to address audience expectations as a feature of *ābhāsa*s. Commenting on *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.39-41, in which Bharata argues that the comic *rasa* (*hāsya*) arises from imitation of the decorous (*śṛṅgāra-anukṛti*),[69] Abhinava extends this feature of imitation as a general category of semblance. Imitation of a *rasa* always engenders the comic since a semblance of *rasa* emerges.[70] Every part of the ecology therefore becomes a semblance when the dispositional matrix itself is afforded semblant force. The comic is always present in "improper or out-of-character usage" (*anaucitya*).[71] This is a principle that pertains to the genre of farce (*prahāsana*), which he singles out for its moral instructiveness.[72] Farce layers proper language with improper behavior of the characters to create semblances of religiosity or the "peaceful" (*śānta*) *rasa.* Kavikarṇapūra likewise deploys humor and punning language to layer meanings that can contradict or expand audience awareness of a line of dialogue. This creates a discrepancy between the character's affects and actions, which are genuine in the play, with the audience's affects which view them as laughable.[73] Unlike the formalist tradition, however, Abhinava's school extended the range of proper aesthetic experience to non-humans.[74]

The dramatic process itself is also one of layering semblance onto corporeal forms. Acting presents a feature of doubleness in Abhinava's *Abhinava-bhāratī*. Characters seen on stage are actually imaginary because "the upshot of assuming the character is merely to conceal the real form of the actor."[75] Acting *occludes* material bodies in order to reveal abstract bodies. Since the disposition is not seen in the details of a character played by an actor, it does not appear as false; instead it appears *seemingly* as real as if the deity were standing before an

audience involved in meditation (*bhāvanā*), as well as invoking the commanding force of ritual pronouncements.[76] For instance, the semblance of Rāma appears vividly onstage thanks to the "physical medium" of the actor's body while the performer gestures him to life. This actualization (*bhāvanā*) is conflated with meditation as both involve a process of bringing forth this commanding form into a visible medium.

However, *līlā* as an overall category of semblance does not have these particular conservative traits. At times its power to shift registers, modulate keys, and activate novel, emergent patterns from a dispositional matrix even carries over into *ābhāsa*. These semblances can be revolutionary in their ability to project a matrix's novel qualities into material forms with the same ecologies of affect. Siṅghabhūpala, a king and aesthetic theorist from western Andhra Pradesh, offers one of the most erudite reconsiderations of semblance in his *Rasārṇava-sudhākara* (c. 1400).[77] This text was a major influence on Rūpa's theorizing on the love of Kṛṣṇa for married women.[78] In verse 265cd-266ab Siṅga argues: "The principle *rasa* becomes a 'semblance' (*ābhāsa*) when a subsidiary *rasa* is amplified by willfulness, just as a king becomes a semblance of a king because of an undisciplined minister."[79] Siṅga uses the metaphor likening *rasa* to a king last seen in Bharata's discussion of the aesthetic assemblage in *Nāṭya-śāstra* 6.6-7, where the stabilizing affects alone are capable of rising above the others to become a commanding form.[80] However, in Siṅga's example the original *rasa* becomes downgraded in a sense to a semblance by the "amplification" of another aesthetic factor in the assemblage. Hence two competing *rasa*s will create a tumultuous situation that disorients audience expectations, leaving a power vacuum within the event itself. While agonistic, this type of semblance offers competition as a space for novel strategies to emerge in the course of play.

Four primary modes of phasing into semblance are possible, according to Siṅgabhūpāla's text: "The erotic *rasa*…becomes predominantly a semblance in four different ways: [1] from unrequited passion; [2] from passion for more than one person; [3] from passion being represented between animals; [4] or from its being represented between the uncultured."[81]

Siṅga's most nuanced analysis is on the first case: a lack of reciprocal feeling in love creates the semblance of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*. While the traditional position argues that only a lack of reciprocation in the female protagonist (*nāyikā*) leads to an *ābhāsa*—such as Sītā refusing Rāvaṇa in the *Rāmāyaṇa* or Rukminī's rejection of Śiśupāla's advances in the *Mahābhārata*—he offers a Prakrit verse describing a husband who has ceased to love his wife:

> The bond of love is broken, the respect due to affection has trickled away,
> trust has come to an end, and he passes strangely before me like a stranger.
> I think about this over and over, my friend, and all the days gone by,
> and I can't see why my heart doesn't break into a hundred pieces.[82]

Siṅga does not judge the propriety of the wife's emotions in his analysis while others in the tradition might reject this as *śṛṅgāra* outright. Instead, the lack of reciprocal play in the relationship causes *śṛṅgāra* to become a semblance.[83] The expected trope is that the female lover will lose interest temporarily and love-in-separation (*vipralambha-śṛṅgāra*) will be evoked. The poet disorients the audience instead by eroding the husband's affections over time. The wife offers no indiscretion, no fight that would explain her husband's behavior or coldness. All she is left with is a lingering regret for what has passed. This jilted expectation actually creates a beautiful moment the poet's audience could not have expected. Something new emerges which resembles *śṛṅgāra* but diverges from its primary qualities up until that point.

The difference in the *direction* of this feeling, in the *vector* of the event's coming-to-be, is felt due to the conditions that are induced in this minor gesture. Like a minor chord, these

gestures inflect the feeling of a performance toward an unforeseen valence.[84] In the literary tradition, lovers need to express reciprocity: going against this condition allows for a difference in the overall modulation of the decorous to take place. The character's investment in the affective matrix of the event is featured like any other erotic situation, yet the audience is left without closure. This induces a feeling of niggling doubt to creep into the overall tenor of the poem. The *sattva* of this female lover manifests here, but this semblance alters the disposition by creating a different key. The audience feels this modulation as it inaugurates a new register incongruous with the cultural expectations and tropes of amorous literature. In this moment, the back-and-forth of love cannot be returned; there is no oscillation in the responses which we see with lovers. Without reciprocity, the affect is real but the *rasa* cannot be the "purely" decorous matrix of Bharata's system. Something creeps in that disjoints the entire sequence unless the audience becomes willing to let this new expression clear its own cultural space. Crossings like this moment do not have to accepted, but they can be cultivated and dwelled upon when there is room. Semblances are too similar to be outside the system but different enough to eschew its taken-for-grantedness. In other words, *ābhāsa*s put expectations and audiences into play in the liminal spaces between forms. This gives them their revolutionary potential at the threshold of what is expected-acceptable and what is fortuitous-ruinous. The outcome is left "up in the air" until the *rasa* "falls out" for the audience.

Siṅgabhūpāla's other three varieties of difference-in-similarity for semblances offer less revolutionary methods of modulating the primary affects. Yet they too are potentially novel ways for movement of affect to be rhythmically altered. In his second scenario, having more than one partner of either gender also sets off a change in the dynamics of the decorous. This altered ensemble affects the composition of the relationship and hence the expectations

of what could occur, whether two women or two men are vying for a single partner.[85] In traditional theorization, the *intensity* of the *rasa* is diminished because the event cannot coalesce around the two in a recognizable fashion. Instead, as Siṅgabhūpāla writes about "playboy" characters, there is a difference in the affect ("passion") being spread between multiple objects, rather than a kind of "comportment" which they feign.[86] However, there are accepted characters with multiple spouses in traditional Hindu narratives, including Draupadī, the heroine of the *Mahābhārata* married to the five Pāṇḍava brothers. A poet with the talents to explore her relations and feelings as she rotated among her five husbands could convey a range of emotions while using a socially accepted narrative context. The possible scenarios that could develop in their relationship has not been fully explored in Sanskrit drama or poetry to the best of my knowledge.

The last two options are grounded in hierarchies, which assume that passions cannot exist in animals despite being figuratively the *stuff* of which poetic metaphor is built. In the third scenario, Siṅgābhūpala argues animals cannot engage in human practices of "making brilliant," "purifying," and "beautifying" themselves which are a requirement in Bharata's system for the foundational pervading affects (*ālambana-vibhāva*s).[87] He explicitly states that "discernment of propriety" (*aucitya-vivekana*) is a requirement for the *rasa* experience, which animals cannot possess. Yet animals become affective in the poetic tropes that inflect the overall tenor of the ecologies: would the *Rāmāyaṇa* or Kālīdāsa's *Śakuntalā* feel different if not for the deer which incites key episodes of the plot? And for his fourth and final case human hierarchies emerge. He classifies the "uncultured" as the lowest examples, since they have no knowledge of the aesthetic apparatus necessary to generate *rasa*. In his example a "rube" sees his partner sleeping after having an orgasm and mistakes her for dead. We can see why this

semblance of the erotic leads naturally to the comic *rasa*. An imagined opponent objects that it could still be śṛṅgāra, yet Siṅga claims his opponent is trying to rescue this verse like "a rutting elephant sinking in the mud!"[88] For Siṅga, the dispositional matrix of each character is set, with only slight variations allowed. The example of the wife whose husband's affections have vanished offers a nuanced form of the decorous *rasa* which must be a semblance since it does not fit the other categories of loss (*karuṇā-rasa*); her husband is alive, nor are they separated as in *vipralambha-śṛṅgāra* since they are estranged.[89] In this way, the semblance reveals something about its dispositional matrix (*sattva*) which the codes of the traditions could not predict. Audiences had to be willing to accept novelties and changes, otherwise they would insist poetic conventions be retained to exacting specifications.[90] The unique qualities that emerge offers a new tenor to the work while only changing a slight detail: the husband's passion will never return. The destruction of hope leaves this matrix totally transformed.

Semblances, moreover, are shown to manifest these matrices in novel ways. Siṅgabhūpala gives us the most direct statement of how *sattva*s function in the context of drama to turn real or historic personalities from lived experience or stories into collections of qualities, rather than particular narratives of their lives.[91] Characters are an ecology of "properties" or "qualities" (*guṇa*). As I showed in chapter one, Abhinava and other reception theorists argued these abstract the character as a separate function apart from the actor's physical body. Moreover, these qualities are material affordances of primordial reality (*prakṛti-guṇa*) which endows the world with its energetic contours. Only when audiences can discern these qualities can the various factors become conditions of *this* specific event in *rasa* experiences. Earlier Siṅgabhūpāla argues that our discernment activates the affects in novel ways: "there is no set number of distinctions; they are what enable us to register the strong points in the entity in

question, and are not mutually exclusive either."[92] He seems to agree with Bhoja that *any* set of qualities can be activated, but that only certain combinations have traditionally been accepted as the "correct" conditions for their respective *rasa*s. Semblances can reveal these qualities in visible form, at a remove from habitual experience that offers a way to experiment with the contours of our perception of the world. In a dramatic moment, I can experience the goosebumps (*romānca*, a *sāttvika-bhāva*) as positive when a beloved's side-long glance dances over a protagonist's skin; I thrill at the fear when feeling a hidden presence staring at a character from the shadows; or I am unmoved when I notice the coldness of the air makes a character in the mountains shiver.[93] Each activates a different contour through the same gesture; by modulating the overall ecology of affects, they can add a single "spice" which gives a unique flavor to the experience.

In this way art helps to shape life in a ritual manner: as Susan Langer writes in *Form and Feeling*, "Life is incoherent unless we give it form."[94] Art offers up forms in ongoing characters, qualities, and dispositions which remain in cultural memory to be accessed and vitalized as semblances.[95] Art resonates with the "broken world" of ritualism by attempting to give coherent frameworks to the chaos of unfiltered experience. Yet these patterns can become stagnant when taken as proscriptive. This occurred when literary analysis focused on the formal characteristics of poetic ornament (*alaṃkāra*), before undergoing a paradigm shift with the reception school. At times the "decorous" (*śṛṅgāra*) *rasa* in particular becomes stale since it features repetition, patterning, and "the infinite play of iteration" within heteronormative, cisgender relationships at its core.[96] Form can constrain when our temporary dwelling within it becomes mistaken for permanence. It can open up possibilities from the dis-positioning of

its own qualities, rendering spaces where novel formations can cross over from the potential space of *sattva* into the actual world of performers, audiences, and their cultural assumptions.

Kavikarṇapūra's style is similarly criticized for ritualistic usage of ornamentation to craft theologically affective forms rather than present them as content-based argumentation. While it would not be fair to assume all semblances create this set of iterative loops outside of narrative, they do all activate a "formal play" which takes narrative apart, abstracts its pieces, and shifts it into a virtual realm where it can be performed, "twice-done," (*anu-kṛti*).[97] If this process of mimesis is the virtualization of narrative, therefore *līlā* and *ābhāsa* work in tandem as forms that divorce a willing audience from normal time and space into a novel, emergent moment. The qualities enter a novel arrangement with only slight tweaks, yet these changes alter the tradition entirely if accepted. Kavikarṇapūra offers theories that these moments can cross over into supernal experiences as well as reach the heights of mundane feeling. The ritual theories of the Gauḍīya theorists and aestheticians are explicitly concerned with how to achieve this process in the devotee's living experience of the divine through the polymorphic matrix of Kṛṣṇa.

*Sattva*s can be broken down into collections of *guṇa*s, and hence manifested in various ways through semblances which do not always bring the entirety of each's respective assemblage with them. Similarly, Gauḍīya theorists adapted *rasa* frameworks to see *līlā* as a soteriological force for change beyond the "dis-semblance" of *ābhāsa*. For a non-Vaiṣṇava audience, Kṛṣṇa's dalliance with the untold number of *gopī*s could be considered under Siṅgabhūpāla's second category of *ābhāsa* (taking more than one partner). When Kṛṣṇa appears among them all equally at the *rāsa-līlā* dance, they would view the scene as containing a semblance of the erotic *rasa*.[98] Gauḍīya theologians and aesthetes bypass this more objection

in two ways. The first involves Kṛṣṇa's connection to a specific singular dispositional matrix. Within him the entirety of affective dispositions and therefore semblances are only created when directed by *the wrong containers* or actors in his play (*līlā*). He manifests different forms as *avatāra*s while himself remaining the same. Second, audience members must become participants in the process by crossing over through the performer's gestures into a liminal phase with Kṛṣṇa. This requires them to have specific dispositional tendencies deactivated before they can access his pure disposition onstage. They can only dwell in the proper mood when their everyday tendencies are dis-oriented.

2.4 *Bhāva* as Mediating Semblance in Kavikarṇapūra's *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*

Kavikarṇapūra's theory of *rasa* in his *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha,* "Crown Jewel of Ornaments/Tropes" (1550)[99] is a *mélange* of previous interpretations, straining his aesthetic forebearers through the sieve of his teacher Śrīnātha Cakravartī's theology. Kavikarṇapūra's text focuses on the playwright or poet (*kavi*) as the source of *rasa* and hence offers an analysis of past theories for a working writer. He locates the stabilizing affect of an entire work within the writer, diverging from both formalist and reception lineages of theorizing. Kavikarṇapūra also frames semblances and affects as similarly liminal categories in several ways. He introduces *ābhāsa* as a liminal category between "worldly" (*laukika*) *rasa*s of conventional literature versus the "otherworldly" (*alaukika*) *rasa*s of devotional literature. *Ābhāsa*s therefore function as an indeterminate or overlapping zone where the various "roles" or "stages" (*bhūmikā*) of affectivity disorient and blur distinctions between these categories. Next, Kavikarṇapūra also adopts a formalist interpretation of *bhakti* as only a material affect (*bhāva*) called "adoration." This *bhāva* as a term of art is incapable of fully developing into a *rasa* according to reception theorists such as Mammaṭa in his *Kāvya-prakāśa*, "The Light on

Poetry" (1050).[100] While this might seem to limit the range of powerful moods a devotional poet could use, Kavikarṇapūra deploys the same commentarial strategies as his predecessors to expand the range of acceptable stabilizing affects to devotional "adoration." I argue Kavikarṇapūra links this form of *bhāva* as "adoration" to articulate literary theory to his teacher Śrīnātha's theory of devotional *rasa* from the commentary on the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa*. By joining the two lists of affordances, Kavikarṇapūra allows for a set of overlapping realms of affectivity and devotion which do not have to be mutually present. When the two do exist in the same work, devotional audiences can have a culturally-sanctioned engagement of the divine with the intensity of drama. Lastly, I return to the question of why Kavikarṇapūra suggests several "singular" stabilizing affects (*sthāyi-bhāva*s) similar to Bhoja's theories from chapter one. I contend that he offers *bhāva* as "adoration" for the stabilizing affect of audience members while *rati* for Kṛṣṇa is the stabilizing affect for the playwright and characters. Kṛṣṇa's ability to manifest a proper form for each devotee individually therefore extends into the affective relation of playwriting. Each of his bodies allows for a polymorphic proliferation of other affective forms as a latent matrix for the other specific affects to manifest.

Kavikarṇapūra commits his text to all previous lineages of literary theory, including the formalist focus on literary ornaments (*alaṃkāra*) or tropes as pivotal forms containing *rasa*. He borrows from Ānandavardhana, Viśvanātha, Bhoja, and Mammaṭa to a large extent on his framing of the aesthetic ecology,[101] but also draws on Vāmana's early theory of styles (*rīti*) to distinguish his own unique take on the form.[102] Kavikarṇapūra's theory of *rasa* is therefore more complex than most. Unlike Rūpa Gosvāmin's aesthetic theology, the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* is also a working text to be used by poets and audiences for literary analysis, rather than oriented toward developing a religious set of practices (*sādhanā*).[103] He makes this clear

as his text focuses on what "should be the business (*vyavaharaṇīya*) of poetry: sound and meaning due to its utmost self being *rasa*, and hence sound and meaning caused by its utmost self being *rasa* is the business (*vyavaharaṇa*) of poetry."[104] *Rasa* infuses the very words and meaning of a work of art and form its "business" or manner of proceeding and often functions as the form of "litigation" in a trial.[105] Poetry and therefore drama functions for the playwright as craft with vocal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*) as the primary means of conveying the poet's meaning. I turn briefly to the general features of Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetic ecology to understand how his theory diverges from the theorists mentioned in chapter one.

Rembert Lutjeharms argues in his recent study *A Vaiṣṇava Poet in Early Modern Bengal* that Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetics privileges the stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*) within the playwright or poet. Karnapura's system builds on Bhoja and Viśvanātha by locating this latent matrix as "the bulb from which relish sprouts (*āsvāda-aṇkura-kanda*), as a form containing *rasa* latently, that experience in its potential." He also sees it as belonging virtually to the audience (*sāmājikatā*), that is, not as their property but as an abstracted potential that unfolds alongside their participation in performance. However, Kavikarṇapūra adds a key term that Rūpa also deploys to *bhāva* in his definition of the stabilizing affects: "it is an indeterminate quality (*kaścana dharma*) of consciousness, possessing a pure, virtual disposition (*śuddha-sattvatā*) free of *rajas* and *tamas*."[106] The Gauḍīyas' theorizing seems to view the stabilizing affect itself as a dormant property waiting to be particularized in the event. The *sthāyi-bhāva* individual's affective habits (*citta-vṛtti*) but a pure quality (*dharma*) of consciousness itself (*cetas*), suggesting it permeates the mental strata of a person but goes beyond individuated bodies.

From this dispositional matrix, varieties of aesthetic forms can emerge. Kavikarṇapūra demarcates three aesthetic categories to qualify *rasa*s as either "latent" or "patent" (*parokṣa*, *pratyakṣa*) as well as "ordinary" and "extraordinary" (*prākṛta, aprākṛta*). A meditating principle of "semblance" (*ābhāsa*) occurs when one of the other two categories fails to cohere due to "impropriety" (*anaucitya*).[107] Kavikarṇapūra assumes a hierarchy based on semblances encroaching into both domains of theorizing on *bhakti*: theology and aesthetics, both of which have their own principles and assumptions.[108] The "manifest" (*prākṛta*) is related to a divergence between a person's ego in the material realm while the "unmanifest" (*aprākṛta*) stands in for the blissful principle of Kṛṣṇa's self-disposition (*svarūpa*). This latent aspect for Kavikarṇapūra reaches into the pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*) undergirding all affects when Kṛṣṇa is their principle pervading affect (*vibhāva*). This articulation creates resonances across disciplines that can't be reconciled without attention to a third term to mediate them. *Sattva* acts as a matrix assembling qualities (*guṇa*s) that can be read as "character" in both senses: a "role" for which an actor plays and the pervasive sense of one's potential. Kavikarṇapūra attempts to cross over these separate domains:

> There is a particular quality of the mind free from volatility and stolidity and endowed with sensitivity that is the root of the sprout of savoring [quoting the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.174].[109] The learned call this the stabilizing affect. It is single, but it becomes multiple given the multiplicity of the objective factors [*vibhāva*s]. And this mental property belongs to the audience members.[110]

Kavikarṇapūra here links the *sattva* as a dispositional matrix to the qualities of primordial reality (*prakṛti-guṇa*s) but also to Bhoja's triple-layered expansion of the self-making principle (*ahaṃkāra*) as the stabilizing affect. As a *citta-vṛtti* or "mental property" it also functions to draw in audience members to the character's affective transformations. This dispositional

matrix therefore is vital to understanding how Kavikarṇapūra can reconcile the formal and reception schools of theory in his synthetic treatment of *rasa*.

Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetic ecology also works to create a lacuna at the center of his system. If *rasa* is a potential waiting to be actualized ("the root" that "sprouts"), the aesthetic conditions do not create it but instead only allow for its semblance to manifest. Each of the elements "while manifesting *rasa* are not *rasa*" (*rasa-abhivyakter eva, na tu rasasya*), or belong *only* to the potential as it appears in performance; they do *not* belong to any form essentially. Each trait can be fitted into other affective ecologies. Only as an entire ensemble can the specific *rasa* be judged. Since *rasa* is the self (*ātmaka*) of poetry, it can infuse the entire corpus of a work (its "sound and sense" being the "body," *śarīra*). *Rasa* does not arise from the words and meaning of a work but instead infuses it with the potential for it to come alive. Instead, the material conditions create tension by indirectly relating together, fitting into a kind of geodesic form where they do not touch:

> These (pervading affects, *vibhāva*s) and the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) are not the causes (*karaṇa*) and effects (*kārya*) of *rasa*. Instead, the pervading affect is the instrument (*karaṇa*) of what is to be performed (*kārya*) consisting of the embracing affect. The fluctuating affect (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*) is the accompanying enaction (*kārin*) of the enclosing affect.[111]

For Kavikarṇapūra the material cause of *rasa* is the singular stabilizing affect; its pervading affects function as efficient cause; and the transformations into particular stabilizing affects (*vikāra-viśeṣa*) are accidental causes like the colors of a cloth.[112] He does not argue that these particular affects always exist in the mind; they appear in appropriate persons who are shaped by their affective dispositions. Since *rasa* is always felt to be wondrous (*camatkāra*), though, this limits its ability to virtually manifest to certain situations of performance: poetry and drama. The latent disposition or *sthāyi-bhāva*, however, does act as a "hook" (*grāhaka*) to pull

*rasa*s into manifest forms. Similar to Abhinavagupta's theorization of the extraordinary nature of *rasa*. the "virtual *rasa*" (*rasatā*) can only create a semblance to be felt in this world, being unworldly (*alaukika*) in its form. For Kavikarṇapūra, certain dispositions are only pleasurable (a key feature of *rasa* being its ability to be savored) when in virtual form. For example, horror and disgust (*bhayānaka-bībhatsa*) would not be acceptable to someone experiencing them *personally* and materially in the world but could be felt as semblances of worldly *rasa*s.

Kavikarṇapūra goes a step further, explicitly claiming that the aesthetic ecology itself is unreal (*kṛtrima*) although it functions as if real (*akṛtrimavat*). The audience is enveloped in the latent *sthāyi-bhāva* with its features as "a special quality of the mind." It manifests due to being attuned to the false world of playacting or imagined scenes of poetry, which Kavikarṇapūra calls a "special conviction" (*pratyaya-viśeṣa*).[113] Since *rasa* has the virtual quality (*dharmatva*) of bliss, it is singular; only its affects (*bhāva*), owing to differences in limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*), are multiple. This parallels Bhoja's formulation from the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* analyzed in chapter one. The limiting adjuncts include the virtual multiplicity (*nānātva*) of affects including the traditional list from Bharata of stabilizing affects starting with *rati* experienced by characters.[114]

The latent *sthāyi-bhāva* is different from the traditional list of eight or nine stabilizing affects since Kavikarṇapūra combined multiple perspectives on *rasa*. The characters' stabilizing affects are important since they function as dispositions for *rasa* in the world of the play. Without a *sattva* to manifest, the characters cannot relate to one another and cause the affects to shift forms. Similarly, the audience cannot affect characters directly while being affected by them: it is a one-way mirror, whereas certain affects such as the decorous (*śṛṅgāra*) require mutual affective sharing.[115] In this manner the affective disposition lies dormant or

imperceptible (*parokṣa*) in the character (*prakṛte*), while the performance makes it evident (*pratyakṣa*) or manifest for the audience.[116] Each persona in the drama therefore carries with them a latent disposition which can activate given the proper conditions in performance. Kavikarṇapūra will show this process at work in Act Two and Three as certain forms of the divine bring out novel identities within the devotees.

Dispositions can only occur in the material gestures of an embodied being during performance though. How do *bhāva*s transition from their latent, potential phase as *sattva* into material, manifest forms? Kavikarṇapūra refers to characters variously as "those who are to be imitated" (*anukārya*) or "those who are to be gestured" (*abhineya*). Actors are "those who cause the gestures" (*abhināyaka*).[117] The characters emerge *through* gesturing with *līlā* or semblances as a mediating form between the two. As semblances they are invoked through *abhinaya*'s movement, speech, costuming, and dispositions. While the audience members can stand somewhat at a remove to experience this virtual reserve—as if disembodied or liberated beings (*siddha*s) apart from the action—actors function like those liberated while living (*jīvanmukta*). They continue acting only by the commanding force (*vaśa*) of their proclivities (*saṃskāra*s) continuing with the life of the body while experiencing *rasa*.[118] Hence any actions they take, like deities, must be play (*līlā*), or semblances of activity. This allows for a manifestation of the latent form while still remaining in the virtual space of potentials. When *līlā*s transition into *abhinaya* as gestures, they require the actor to be involved in the "magic" (*māyā*) of the moment in the drama. Actions can be taken *as if* they were true while the actor's reflective self stands at a remove much like the audience.[119]

However, Kavikarṇapūra argues that both these groups stand at a remove from the action and one another, with a foot in another world (virtual) while their dispositional matrix

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remains undifferentiated. The characters, unable to peer beyond this distinction, cannot access a matrix other than through their form-of-life (*vṛtti*), which becomes a stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*). When they become "absorbed," "possessed," or "invested" by a powerful emotion (*āveśa*), the emotion overtakes their corporeal form and assumes a place in their bodies.[120] This prevents novel forms of disposition to emerge, unlike from *līlā* since the characters are more limited by their embodied habitual tendencies. *Vṛtti*s tend to stabilize behavior over time yet can express a surprisingly "varied manner" (*nānā-vidhā*) of fixed dispositions in a single corporeal body or form.[121] Like a stone that retains the history of its formation while still being chiseled into a *mūrti*, human bodies retain the contours and patterns of their lifetimes as *vṛtti*s engage them over and over. However, these invasive affects are most often the result of ritual practices. They occur simultaneously with the acting of a separate world onstage or in a crowded procession, yet do not fit in entirely. The semblances meanwhile reside in multiple bodies simultaneously. In this way, the characters' dispositions are a primordial matrix (*prakṛti*) for each to manifest the latent (*parokṣa*) aspect of their potentials.

Several aesthetic theorists who preceded Kavikarṇapūra placed devotion (*bhakti*) as merely an affect (*bhāva*). This relegates devotion to a material or lesser status than actual *rasa*s since it lacks a unique stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*), rather acting as a *permutation* on other affects. For instance Mammaṭa in the *Kāvya-prakāśa*—the primary model for Kavikarṇapūra's *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*[122]—claims the material dimension of affects prevents devotion from pervading an entire work of art since it cannot achieve the virtual element of *rasa* (*rasatva*) and therefore can only function as a kind of fluctuating affect in the virtual domain.[123] At best, commentators such as Viśvanātha in his *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* (1350)[124] claim a devotional affect can tentatively be grasped as the semblance of a *rasa* (*bhāva-tad-ābhāsādayo 'pi gṛhyante*) in

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an aesthetic ecology but will fail to take full force due to improprieties.[125] Kavikarṇapūra manages to suppress this feature of impropriety implicit in previous definitions by shifting devotion from a range of foci for attachments (*viṣaya*) to an emphasison the "different ontological nature of the excitant" among the pervading affects: Kṛṣṇa.[126] Semblances that appear from Kṛṣṇa' pure disposition cannot be "improper" since they are by nature pure; all their continual transformations therefore become authorized for a devotionally-inclined audience.

By focusing on a divine form—which itself is able to multiply, diverge, and create vast networks of embodied forms pervading from his full dispositional matrix (*śuddha-sattva*)—Kavikarṇapūra can use dramatic techniques and theological tools to demonstrate an affective hierarchy within the polymorphic matrix of the divine. For instance, each form that deviates from the prototypical body of the divine (*vigraha*) becomes uniquely qualified, just as each modulation of the dispositional matrix takes on its own contours as a stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*). In turn, these can flow back into the reservoir of potentials (*sattva*) which infuse the divine with new potentials it could not access without articulating to another individuated soul (*jīva*). Thus, an *avatāra* such as Narasiṃha, the "Man-Lion" *avatāra*, returns to the latent pool of affective forms that others can perceive in Kṛṣṇa even as he stands atop the hierarchy. This is why Caitanya, while ostensibly focusing all his attention on Kṛṣṇa in the affective form as his own devotee (*svayaṃ bhakta rūpa*) can also be overtaken by the *avatāra* forms, since each is accessible to the higher form in the hierarchy.[127] For example, Caitanya's status is explained as the full embodiment of Kṛṣṇa's reality, his entire "golden domain" (Gaura-*dhāman*).[128] As the *avatārin*, the "possessor of the crossings," Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya can access any form's affordances and affects as they move from *sattva* into form as *līlā*s. Since each is a semblant

manifestation of his pure dispositional matrix, each is thus part of the well of possibilities available to him.[129]

These theories derive from Gauḍīya readings of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, which was the key text analyzed in Kavikarṇapūra's lineage by his teacher Śrīnātha Cakravartīn in his commentary *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā*. Śrīnātha's theory of devotional *rasa*, unlike other aesthetic theorists, centers on *bhakti* by claiming devotion functions as a different style of the heart (*mano-vṛtti*) which is "knowledge of the worshipable" (*upāsyatva-jñāna*). The style layers experience by being placed in conjunction (*samyuktā*) with a stabilizing affect to become "devotional *rasa*" or devotion with *rasa* (*sarasā-bhakti*). These two do not occur simultaneously; instead a rhythmic counterpoint occurs as they modulate in turn. One should see both in devotion with *rasa*: the bodily members (*aṅga*) in latent devotion (*bhaktitve*) and the constituents (*sāmagrīti*) of *rasa* in latent *rasa* (*rasatve*). In devotion devoid of *rasa* (*nīrasa*), however, "only the members of devotion are found."[130] Śrīnātha adapts Mammaṭa's definition of *bhāva* as "love is an attachment to a god, etc." (*ratir devādi-viṣayā bhāva*) to make *bhāva* a stabilizing affect.

Śrīnātha distinguishes between two types of dispositions. One virtual form of devotion (*bhaktatva*) becomes manifest due to the influence of time (*kāla-kṛta*), such as the fearful *rasa* when Arjuna sees Kṛṣṇa's Viśvarūpa ("All-Pervading-Form") in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This functions as a contingent form of devotion since it responds to the manifestation of the divinity. The other form, however, remains particular to the individual as his or her default affective relation: the individual's "self-disposition" (*svābhāvika*), which for Arjuna is friendship (*sakhya*) with Kṛṣṇa's two-armed adult self. These possibilities become manifest since the stabilizing affect remains latently present even without the aesthetic ecology (*vibhāvādi-virahe*

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'pi yas tiṣṭhati, sa khalu sthāyī). In fact, the "surrender" of a manifested form of the divine (the contingent devotion) becomes absorbed into the self-disposition as Kṛṣṇa *prefers* to manifest according to his devotee's proclivities. This *sthāyi-bhāva* arises as a specialized texture of the heart (*mano-vṛtti-viśeṣa*) that combines with the arising of the virtual force of *rasa* (*rasatva-āpatti-yogena*) but still remains distinct from the ecology as a whole. Devotees carry these possibilities as permutations of their latent dispositions or performances (*vidhānatva*): "Devotion does not have a single *rasa*, nor does a devotee have one (form of) devotion. Whatever the devotee's disposition/performance, that (*rasa*) is declared as taught by tradition."[131] Each devotee's emotional habits (*mano-vṛtti*) therefore are coterminous with their character or self-disposition and can give rise to unique *rasa*s.

Śrīnātha's theorization, like Rūpa's, bifurcates *rasa* into primary and secondary forms for the characters of devotional narratives.[132] Śrīnātha argues the audience is also able to take in these affects. The "experts in meditation (*bhāvanā*) are compared to "those wishing to be affected" (*bhāvuka*) and those "already affected" (*bhāvaka*s) who will "drink the Lordly *rasa*/*rasa* of the *Bhāgavata*, the *rasa* of the *gopī*s!"[133] The exemplars of this process are the *gopī*s whose stabilizing affect is "possessiveness" (*mamakāra*, "creating mine"). This "mineness" develops into the *rasa* called *preman*. Śrīnātha claims this functions differently from *śṛṅgāra* since it develops by means of "a singular affect" (*kevalena hi bhāvena*) on the part of the *gopī*s, which is devoid of desire (*kāma*).[134] *Preman* functions similarly to Bhoja's third transformation of *ahaṃkāra* or the latent *śṛṅgāra* as "passion." As a dispositional reservoir, it manifests a *svabhāva* through semblances that only appear to change its essential nature:

> Partial bliss enters into complete bliss from the self-disposition; thus all *rasa*s certainly become contained within *prema-rasa*. All affects, and even all *rasas* emerge from and merge back into the dense bliss that is *prema-rasa*, like waves in the ocean.[135]

Śrīnātha's imagery and affective matrix will become the basis for Kavikarṇapūra's system in the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* and his hagiographies of Caitanya. However, Kavikarṇapūra mentions a different stabilizing affect for *preman* while assigning possessiveness to "parental love" (*vatsala*).[136] Instead *prema-rasa* has "melting of the mental faculty" (*citta-drava*) as its foundation.[137] *Bhāva* as a particular affect in the aesthetic ecology of love (*rati*) becomes hard to define, since Kavikarṇapūra uses three different definitions for it.[138]

Kavikarṇapūra follows Bhoja's universalizing impetus for the individual affects to step out of their ecological niches and become stabilizing matrices of their own alongside the delimited form of *bhāva* as "adoration." Mammaṭa argued first in the *Kāvya-prakāśa* that *nirveda*, "indifference," the first of the fluctuating affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s), becomes the stabilizing affect for the peaceful (*śānta*) *rasa*. Kavikarṇapūra follows with Mammaṭa's definition of adoration (*bhāva*) as "love in relation to a god, etc." as a potential stabilizing affect to develop into its own *rasa*.[139] *Bhāva* contains its own ecology of affects including a modified form of *nirveda* which Kavikarṇapūra glosses as "self-loathing" (*sva-jugupsā*).[140] From this point, adoration can transform when it dwells on Kṛṣṇa (*āśraya*) by becoming "ten-fold" (*daśa-vidha*) and differentiates into the other stabilizing affects.[141] In this manner Karnapura demonstrates that Mammaṭa's definition of *bhāva* can function as a *sattva* or dispositional matrix. Like Bhoja's claim that any affect in the ecology can become magnified into a stabilizing form, Kavikarṇapūra uses Mammaṭa's expansion of indifference to afford adoration with this same power. In turn, it expands into the other *rasa*s including the peaceful and parental love

Later in the *Alaṁkāra-kaustubha* all *rasa*s take a three-fold form. They may appear onstage or in a poem as manifest (*prākṛta*), virtual (*aprākṛta*), or in a liminal semblance (*ābhāsa*). This scheme allows Kavikarṇapūra to encompass multiple other aesthetic theories of *rasa* since the non-worldly (*alaukika*) definition of *rasa* only applies to affective foci that are extraordinary. These foci include Kṛṣṇa and the *gopī*s in his eternal play (*nitya-līlā*). On the other hand, human characters as the pervading zone of affective investments are considered worldly (*laukika*). Lastly, *ābhāsa*s allow modifications of the rules of propriety (*aucitya*) in poetic and dramatic conventions to alter the aesthetic ecologies and relations. For instance, *śṛṅgāra-ābhāsa* appears when an antagonist loves the protagonist's beloved; this secondary transformation accents the primary relationship by opening up the ensemble to alternative potentials. *Rasa*'s matrix can support devotion as one modulation while devotional *rasa* itself also contains in polymorphic latency: all its differentiated forms retain their unique ontogenetic force (*śakti*) as "waves" on the ocean.[142]

With Kṛṣṇa as its object, Kavikarṇapūra further creates a multiplicity of options for *rati*, the stabilizing affect that develops into the decorous (*śṛṅgāra*) *rasa*: "Desire (*rati*) is a mental state of delight that inclines one to the enjoyment of pleasure. It comprises three additional emotions: affection, friendship, and companionship."[143] If this formal hierarchy identifies common features of these affects, then the common contour can be found in multiple relationships. Kavikarṇapūra seems to have created a variation of the primary loves (*mukhyā ratis*) in Rūpa's system. Friendship is listed directly, as well as motherly love in the list of previous stabilizing affects found in Bhoja. Moreover, indirect forms of relation that have no kinship tied to them such as acquaintances through a spouse are recognized, along with a relation of primary to secondary figures that resembles the mood of servitude (*dāsya*). And

lastly, *bhāva* as "adoration for a deity," Kavikarṇapūra is given as a subsidiary of *rati*.[144] This might seem confusing as both appeared as the singular latent matrix, but it also makes sense if placed alongside Rūpa Gosvāmins's bifurcation of *sādhanā* practices into "scriptural" (*vaidhika*) and "passionate imitation" (*rāgānuga*).[145] The commentary claims that this applies mostly to Kṛṣṇa as "the supreme lord (Īśvara), who is characterized by such traits as omnipresence."[146] Yet Kavikarṇapūra states that adoration also functions to open the way toward the pure love (*preman*) at the heart of Kṛṣṇa's opposite pole: *mādhurya*.

Kavikarṇapūra's theory aligns affects with the two modes Kṛṣṇa employs for manifesting his presence to devotees: "magisterial" (*aiśvarya*) and "sweet" (*mādhurya*). These various modes are only invoked because of limitations within the disposition of the devotee: "Because *rasa* consists only of bliss, it must be singular; it is in fact that one stable emotion. *Rasa seems* to be multiple only because of the multiplicity of its conditioning factors, which are desire, amusement, grief, and so on."[147] The layering and unfolding of affective textures creates a zone of indistinction within Kavikarṇapūra and Śrīnātha's theories that can be read in different ways. In one option, they allow for an ecumenical approach to relations with the divine to multiply under a banner of stemming from a single dispositional matrix. This undifferentiated *sattva* is always present in the aesthetic ecology within its parts and can only be recognized through them. "Adoration" (*bhāva*) functions as this matrix since all other forms require an emptying of the contingent affects to reach one's *svabhāva* in relation to Kṛṣṇa. In the other direction, the force of love (*preman*) subsumes other affects and creates a hierarchy which constantly modulate from its singular matrix like waves on the ocean. *Preman* takes various forms such as decorous love (*śṛṅgāra*), parental love (*vatsala*), or other "partial fragments of bliss" (*khaṇḍa-ānanda*) which are likened to "limbs" (*aṅga*) of a whole body

(*aṅgin*).[148] If every manifestation of affect is merely a modulation of this all-encompassing love, each nevertheless resonates with a self-disposition (*svabhāva*) that colors the experience.

I argue these two approaches are due to Kavikarṇapūra's starting point of analysis. *Bhāva* as "adoration" functions as the singular matrix for audience members of Gauḍīya poetry and dramas since they require a basic quality of "self-disgust." This is the prerequisite (*adhikāra*) necessary to gain access to Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s. Any remaining self-interest must be extirpated to activate the pure disposition in performance. Even the story of the *gopī*s in the *rāsa-līlā* episode of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* shows that their pride (*abhimāna*) renders them unable to experience Kṛṣṇa fully. Only after they move through gestures into *līlā*s in his absence can they "memorialize" (*smaraṇa*) their feelings into a virtual form.[149] Then they finally approach Kṛṣṇa's latent side via longing-in-separation (*viraha*) in order to access his pure disposition once more. At that point, he appears to them and thanks them for achieving the impossible.[150] *Bhāva* in Kavikarṇapūra's adaptation of Mammaṭa therefore functions to link the *laukika* and self-evident (*pratyakṣa*) world of everyday life to the *alaukika* and unmanifest (*parokṣa*) of the divine. *Preman* on the other hand starts from the experience of the divine and unfurls itself as "crossing-downs" (*avatāra*s) from its pure dispositional matrix into semblances. These can manifest a range of potential forms as each fits the particular devotee's *svabhāva* and manifests in *līlā*s. The divine can then fashion gestures as his *māyā-śakti* sets the scene by taking refuge in his own illusory power.[151]Analogously, these two positions can also fit the starting point of audiences ("adoration") and performers (*preman*) to the process of connecting in a performance. They can meet due to the semblant back-and-forth motion of the affects as they modulate, which is part of play's affordance as *līlā*. In this way, *bhāva* functions to mediate the two dramaturgical poles of performance. Certain affects also function as

singular dispositions, awarding qualities that color the entire ensemble of *bhāva*s. Out of all the *rasa*s, however, the awesome (*adbhuta*) seems to have the most polymorphic priority for Kavikarṇapūra since it gives the others *rasa*s a "wow-factor" (*camat-kāra*) affordance.[152] However, Kavikarṇapūra suggests that *bhāva* instead functions due to the focus of its object. Formal semblances complicate this picture since they modulate the stabilizing affects like a minor chord modulating a major key.[153]

Kavikarṇapūra goes into greater length on the "social impropriety" that give rise to formal semblances of *rasa*. These are subdivided into three kinds: "commonly acknowledged, artificial, and axiomatic."[154] Two characters who have a relationship that becomes impossible to maintain have a "socially acknowledged" semblance of *rasa*. Kavikarṇapūra claims this failed romance usually enhances the main *rasa* (i.e. relationship), including that between Śiśupāla and Rukmiṇī, which makes her love Kṛṣṇa all the more in the *Mahābhārata*.[155] The second variety is created "artificially" when characters attempt to steer one another's motives through deception and "mind-games"—such as disguising themselves as others to influence their paramours—rather than allowing the affects to engender themselves in due course.[156] The "axiomatic" version of semblance is directly caused by impropriety, a principle that Kavikarṇapūra illustrates with the example of a woman having multiple lovers.[157] Kavikarṇapūra's tripartite structure encompasses examples such as Siṅghabhūpala's heroine for the "commonly acknowledged," the theatricality of contingent forms of affectivity seen in the situations that deviate from a *svabhāva* response, and the socially stigmatized behavior that hierarchies afford the privileged but prohibit among subalterns. Kavikarṇapūra seems to rank these three types in order of potential for change: axiomatic *ābhāsa* is most likely to succeed for a cultured audience member, with the possibility of inciting change to the system overall.

Artificial *ābhāsa* tends to only work for a scene while axiomatic *ābhāsa*s reinforce hierarchies of difference.

These semblances, however, work on affordances among ordinary *rasas* in strictly literary texts. The rules of *laukika* ecologies do not necessarily apply to *alaukika* forms, hence the outcome of *līlā*s cannot be anticipated.[158] Extraordinary *rasa*, which is specifically Caitanya-Vaiṣṇava in orientation, entails that married women do in fact consort with the deity, an axiomatic *ābhāsa* in Kavikarṇapūra's system. Gauḍīya theorists allayed this issue using the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*'s narrative. Before the events of the *rāsa-līlā*, the *gopī*s of Vraja never interacted with their husbands. The men only interacted with shadow-simulacra (*chāyā*) created through Kṛṣṇa's power of illusion (*līlāmāyā*) which sets the stage for the *rāsa-līlā*'s five-chapter structure as well.[159] Illusion engages the divine in this moment to take polymorphic shape for his devotees while *līlā* helps them access his pure disposition through *viraha*. Hence extraordinary *rasa*s all seem to congregate in this virtual side of affectivity since play shifts back-and-forth between forms.

The *alaukika* affordances of affectivity carry over from the divine into the mundane world through *bhāva*. For example, Kavikarṇapūra seems to be invoking Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* by claiming every aesthetic experience has an element of the fantastic *rasa* (*adbhuta*) as a prerequisite, which leads to "a special kind of apprehension separate from any that can be said to be either true, false, doubtful, or similar."[160] These require latent aspects of a person's or character's disposition, since only some can manifest at a singular moment in a performance while many remain latently possible.[161] Characters retain the latent forms of *rasa*s in plays and poetry, since they are not immediately visible as such. For instance, Kavikarṇapūra claims Kṛṣṇa as a character's heroic (*vīrya*) *rasa* is latent while it becomes patent for the audience

savoring it.[162] In this way, characters have to bear the virtual latency of affect in a seed form, which then becomes a "sprout" when carried over to the audience members' heart.[163] Lokanātha Cakravartīn's 1690 commentary (*vyākhyā*) on the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* takes this a step further by arguing that the semblances of Kṛṣṇa's play are latent (*līlā*s) and "occluded from our view" despite their eternal continuance in Vraja. The audience's stabilizing affect manifests the play and becomes a way of activating the latency in a material form in a borderline between hidden and visible.[164] A semblance rides this wave of virtuality as it cuts into the actual.[165]

Kavikarṇapūra mediates the worldly and non-worldly sides of *rasa* with the stabilizing affect of *bhāva*, the "adoration for a deity." It engenders and "sprouts" into *bhakti-rasa*, or the devotional mood, which he claims can also fuse with the other ten *rasa*s to provide infusions of various affects into the relationship.[166] As a separate mood, "adoration" simultaneously can transform affects in the ordinary matrix of *rasa* to the extraordinary for audiences. That does not mean the extraordinary is the only set of *rasa*s, however. While Kavikarṇapūra does place the stabilizing affect colored by a "pure disposition" (*śuddha-sattva*) at the foundation of all aesthetic experience, certain worldly affects that other Gauḍīyas deem "disgusting" can still be savored as *rasa*s.[167] However, Kavikarṇapūra claims that certain *rasa*s are impossible as aesthetic experiences since they carry affective valences regardless of whether they unfold as material or non-material. Disgust (*bibhātsa*), for example, cannot be a material *rasa* since the audience needs to be at a remove from it to experience it as pleasurable. Only when the actor's process (*naṭa-vyāpāra*) is transforms disgust into bliss can an audience savor it.[168] Kṛṣṇa's presence in any scene gives it its non-worldly character as play (*līlā*), turning even this affective matrix into "self-disgust" (*sva-jugupsā*). The process of performance introduces the semblant

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aspect to the audience which can make these objectionable affects enjoyable while maintaining the intensity of their ordinary textures. The semblances afford the disorientation seen in Caitanya's own life events as a "course" (*carita*) that carries affective currents to the larger set of relations he engendered. As a well of possibilities for the divine pure disposition, Caitanya allowed the force of his affectivity to wash over others in relation with him. Dwelling on his form, like that of Kṛṣṇa, therefore allows one to experience the powerful emotive force of his full disposition.

2.5 Metatheatrical *Līlā*s: Audiences and Actors in Play

Kavikarṇapūra's play creates scenarios where this dwelling can manifest Vṛndāvana through the entangled affective bodies of its performers. This process reorients the now scrambled audience members toward the liminal spaces where worlds overlap. In this new space, the religious leader enters with his followers and starts a new dramatic event as Virāga and Bhakti depart the stage. I argue that audiences' expectations and proclivities (*vāsanā*s) function to shape this encounter as the divine's pure matrix shifts forms to adjust to the contours of their needs. I shall examine this section closely as previous translators have ignored the performative style of Kavikarṇapūra's writing. His devotional disposition infuses not only the content of the characters' dialogue but also the style and moods in which they speak. In fact, Caitanya creates a scenario for his devotee Advaita much like Sarbadhikary's informants wish to experience. Advaita is gifted with "affective eyes" (*bhāva-cakṣus*) to see his guru's divine form. Yet Kavikarṇapūra's choice of humorous tone and punning language suggests that the community views this as a crisis rather than a blessing. The devotees cannot reconcile which vision of their leader is the "true" one and have to create their own criterion to determine the proper form of their devotion. Should the living figure before them be the object of their

veneration, or the deity as imagined and depicted in various media? Are the ordinary ties to a human body preferable or the supernatural body of a multi-armed deity for developing devotion? Can they both be seen in the same figure?

While Kavikarṇapūra suggests that the two overlap considerably, I argue he sides with the human equation. He favors the historical Caitanya as the identity of their leader over the eternal Kṛṣṇa of the *Bhāgavaṭa*. This also seems to match the Gauḍīyas in Bengal who also prefer Caitanya's birthplace to Kṛṣṇa's in Uttar Pradesh. This suggests that the ensemble also includes both actors and audience members in the shared semblance of a performance event. Hence, I argue that due to Kṛṣṇa's pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*), he can manifest any form in order to create the most intense affective experience in a specific audience. I shall argue in the concluding section that Kavikarṇapūra therefore suggests the everyday world is the "role" in which we play while the divine drama is the uninhibited arena of our self-dispositions.

First, I should return to the discussion of semblances as locative. How does Karnapura progress from ordinary (*laukika*) locations to the extraordinary (*alaukika*)? Both performers and audiences have to learn *how* to dwell in Vṛndāvana, since its virtual, eternal side is sealed off. Poets, theologians, scholars, and visionaries worked sometimes in tandem, at other times at cross purposes, to shape perceptions over this eternal *līlā* when it comes to Kṛṣṇa. As a matrix for potential visions, the cultural and social obstacles are frequently overcome when entire communities accept their places as liminal spots for the overlapping of worlds. These places include Braj in Uttar Pradesh and Nabadwīp in West Bengal. Each locale's history contributes to the affective well that make up what the hidden (*gupta*) Vṛndāvana could be.

The spectrum of affect embedding participants in its reality links these two physical locations to the semblant spaces that "jump out" from them. In Bengal, Sarbadhikary's

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informants told her that becoming engaged in the imagination of these places there since the *manas* is a "potential *gupta*-Vrindavan, a Rās-stage."[169] The heart and mind are not distinguished in the body. The devotee's affective body acts as a stage/level (*bhūmi*) which coalesces as affects create space amidst the everyday concerns of life. Before reaching this point, the injunction practices (*vaidhi-bhakti*) clear the space, and induce a mind favorable to savoring the *rasa*s.[170] As an emergent property of performance, however, this space cannot be located within an individual's heart alone. The stage has to spontaneously occur before *rāgānuga-bhakti* can manifest as the "following of the passions" leads one to this performance.[171] At times the agency of the landscape, other creatures, and even invisible beings seems to take over that of human actors. The *līlā* oscillates not only between worlds but across a spectrum of performers as well. Even a "singular" person has a doubled agency: one's guru helps to reveal a hidden relationship between a devotee's self-disposition (*svabhāva*) and a *sattva* in the eternal *līlā*. During performances, this also unites the event of a performance ensemble and can encourage anyone to participate. People will feel drawn toward one of the two poles of affectivity, which manifest in various transitional phases before approaching a shared semblance. The first pole appears as an audience, which can respond receptively or choose not to attend. The opposite end appears as the expressive potential manifesting as the semblance having its own "will" as characters take over from the actors. In this way, it is truly a "play" (*līlā*), a back-and-forth movement with the body mediating as the site of affective dwelling.[172]

The two levels are complicated in one another: timeless truth would be inaccessible without historical form. Hence the Gauḍīya community's ongoing hagiographic projects take Caitanya's factual history as a jumping off point for affective dwelling.[173] For instance, in the

magisterial account accepted by the community in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, his "course" of life (*carita*) is dedicated to creating rituals and moments revealing links between devotees in the community who had deeper identities in an ongoing storyline. These include the characters of Kavikarṇapūra's play (Viśvambhara, Śucī, Śrīvāsa, Advaita, Nityānanda prominently in Act Two). Kavikarṇapūra elaborates on their "hidden" *sattva*s explicitly in the framework of his genealogy, the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*. Other Gauḍiya authors created accounts of historical figures due to their own affective ligatures to the events in Caitanya's life. These accounts continue to resonate with *bhāva* across temporal distance, allowing for the longing-in-separation (*viraha*) at the heart of the commemorative project to be relished fully as "ligaments" connecting historical reality to potential variations.[174] Gauḍīya authors are not writing fiction—the *carita* genre instead records the "true" nature of the founder's life as an "ambrosial" (*amṛta*) history. The text envisions Caitanya's life as an affective history of *prema-rasa* becoming accessible in the Kali-*yuga*. It is the history of Caitanya's engagement in time that drives the force of his *līlā* as they hope their audiences will feel it themselves.[175] Like waves on an ocean, this movement of tidal force surges to wash over an audience in other temporalities than those of the characters. As arbiters of a historical sense of taste, likewise, Gauḍīya theologians and aesthetes had to discern the propriety of poetic ornamentation as well as doctrine to modulate this experience for the right mood. The experience of *prema-rasa* becomes impossible if the "tools" of poetics are not applied correctly.[176] This requires an audience knowledgeable in the rules of poetry and drama to recognize the playwright's affective goals.

The Gauḍīyas do not always exactly map the relationship between Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa; the two identities are permeable at times between the latent and historical forms of bodies. This

confusion deliberately disorients audience expectations and thrills devotees when they find novel configurations of resemblance. Kavikarṇapūra's particular genius is that all of his theological and aesthetic works revel in the *līlā* or playful aspect of Kṛṣṇa's deluding power of *māyā-śakti*, which shifts identities constantly and renders us unable to experience the world as we habitually experience it. Instead, audiences are constantly affected by the forces around them. Kavikarṇapūra's knowledge of the truth (*tattva*) behind this shimmering, fluid web or net of illusions reveals the world is one of Kṛṣṇa's forms. Hence the material world partakes of the polymorphic nature of the ultimate reality. If Kṛṣṇa is the dispositional matrix—as he argues similarly to Rūpa Gosvāmin—for this affective body of the world in which we dwell, then audience members can also access this hidden reality only by modulating the semblances it creates in playful profusion for them. Kavikarṇapūra's ingenious theory reveals these truths by linking the semblances to the dispositional matrices of key figures in the Gauḍīya community.

Affects take form for Kavikarṇapūra in the associates of Caitanya, including his own father, whom he calls "an embodiment (*śarīra*) of the most merciful Gauracandra's *rasa* of love (*praṇaya-rasa*)" in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta-mahākāvya*.[177] From the central hub of Bengal, Kavikarṇapūra and his family interacted with the Vṛndāvana community as well as the Orissan Gauḍīyas as they led the pilgrimage to Puri every year. Rembert Lutjeharms links the ecumenical spirit found in Kavikarṇapūra's approach in a theological "family tree," *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*. In it, Kavikarṇapūra lays out a particular mood or spirit to each group's disposition toward Caitanya and sees each as coequal branches on the "tree of *bhakti*."[178] This affective history of the community potentially stemmed from its discrete shoots across northern and eastern India, which grew into numerous factions with different standards of practice.

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The main affect spurring Kavikarṇapūra's writing was the love-in-separation (*viraha*) after Caitanya's passing. During Kavikarṇapūra's lifetime the political struggle over Bengal between Mughal and Afghan forces made life uncertain after Caitanya's passing in 1533.[179] The impetus was therefore on finding ways of linking the overall feeling of the guru's presence to an ever-expanding network of persons and locales without direct access to his form or a personal memory of his lifetime. Kavikarṇapūra must have seen people much like King Pratāparudra in Act One as the future of his lineage. The play itself therefore functions as one way to articulate the community's early history for future memorialization (*smaraṇa*). Lutjeharms places the composition of the *Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka* in 1572 when Kavikarṇapūra was in his fifties,[180] and the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* must have been written afterwards around 1576.[181] Why was memorialization necessary for the historical Caitanya though if Kavikarṇapūra and his fellow devotees could cherish their memories of their leader? The community's grief at losing their beloved lord took his example of separated, exuberant dancing and singing of the name (*saṃkīrtana*) as models for dealing with this loss. Kavikarṇapūra himself seems worried about his text's reception after those others who had known the master left the world as well.[182] In the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, Kavikarṇapūra thus attempts to stabilize these memories as semblances into a well of possibilities that can last outside of individual consciousness for later members of the group. He worries that without a way to materialize and perform these affects, the relationship and intensity of Caitanya's presence will gradually disappear from the world.

Caitanya himself was also seen in Kavikarṇapūra's work as one aspect of the "tree of devotion" among several interrelated persons in the ensemble. In Act One of the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, Kavikarṇapūra has two allegorical figures at war with the *bhakta*s: Kali and

Adharma. These two symbolize the forces of entropy and irreligious or amoral behavior. Kali worries that Caitanya has not arrived alone but is preceded by a multitude of his "dear associates" (*priya-pārṣada*). These attendants are the Vraja-loka or "eternal" people that attend to Kṛṣṇa's play:

> Advaita, the best of spiritual guides, most exalted of the followers of the Bhagavān, is the visible dwelling (*dhāma*) of Sambhava, Śiva. The renunciant Nityānanda, whose glory is celebrated throughout the world, is who (is the dwelling of) Saṃkarṣaṇa, Balarāma. The distinguishing mark (*tilaka*) of the brahmin clan named Śrīvāsa—who is accompanied by the brothers Śrīkanta and Śrīpati who conquer with Rāma—is the fierce energy (*tejas*) of the sage Nārada himself!

> Ācāryaratna, Haridāsa, Murāri, Gaṅgādāsa, Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Vidyānidhi and many others; Vāsudevācārya, the devotees headed by Mukunda and others; Vakreśvara, Nṛsiṃha, Suklāmbara, Damodāra, Śaṅkara, and Jagadānanda situated at their head: this host (*gaṇa*) of devotees are reservoirs of divine love (*prema-āspada*), connoisseurs (*rasika*s) of the delightful dances of various affects (*nānā-bhāva-vilāsa-lāsya*), are his friends since childhood. This host has come to earth (*bhūmi*) to save the world.[183]

Kavikarṇapūra enumerates additional devotees than those who appear in Act Two and Three but all are part of this host of followers (*gaṇa*) who supported someone since his childhood. I argue this reference to childhood (*bālya*) suggests Kṛṣṇa since many of these devotees did not appear in Caitanya's historical lifetime until he was an adult. Their characteristics are that they possess the potential dispositions for *preman* (as wells of possibilities, *āspada*), have relished the various affects of the divine as graceful dances and pastimes (*lāsya* and *vilāsa*) or as a particularly charming dance (*vilāsa-lāsya*). Lastly, while starting with the "dwelling" (*dhāman*) of Śiva as Advaita, they each bring some force or power to the physical stage of the world (*bhūmi*). This suggests that they cross-down onto the world (*avatāra*) alongside the hidden reality.

Kavikarṇapūra later extends this idea in his *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* written several years after the play. Certain key dispositions match those he enumerates in the *Caitanya-*

candrodaya. In his explanation of the *pañca-tattva* doctrine of "five truths," the presence of the divine in the world as a force of devotional affectivity requires its dispositional matrix to take a polymorphic form. As in his drama, the affective semblances manifest themselves to reveal the *śuddha-sattva* of Kṛṣṇa. This pure disposition undergirds reality itself but requires an activation of its latent potentials or *śakti*s to influence the material world. Kṛṣṇa is said to be the "sole element" yet he takes form as five distinct elements: "Those who are different from Kṛṣṇa, must in this situation be considered non-different from Kṛṣṇa, because by Kṛṣṇa's own *icchā-śakti* (will-potential) such identities have been brought about."[184] In this text the stabilizing affect that manifests from the dispositional matrix is *dāsya-bhāva*, and each of the forms Kṛṣṇa takes is a matrix (*sattva*) and a historical person (*bhakta*) that modulates from this "service relation:"

> I make obeisance to Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who is the first (*tattva*), the essential form of a devotee (*svayaṃ bhakta rūpa*); the second is the self-disposition of the devotee (*bhakta svarūpa*); the third is the form of the devotee as a crossing to earth (*bhaktāvatāra rūpa*); the fourth constitutes the group of devotees (*bhakta*); while the fifth is the potential of devotion (*bhakti śakti*). These five principles constitute the self-disposition of Kṛṣṇa Caitanya…he who was Nandananandana (Kṛṣṇa) has assumed the form of the devotee Gauracandra; he who was Halāyudha (Balarāma) has assumed the form of the devotee Nityānanda; he who was Sadāśiva has the crossing-form of the proper devotee (*bhaktāvatāra*) Advaitācārya; Śrīvāsa and the rest of the many followers have taken the forms of the devotees (*bhakta*); and the great *brāhmaṇa* Gadādhara Paṇḍita has assumed the figure of the potential of devotional love (*bhakti śakti*).[185]

Kavikarṇapūra's equivalencies were developed over time and came from within the community.[186] This was not a deliberate self-creation for devotees but a communal unveiling of relations that created an ensemble of the group's myriad moods and relations to Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa. Like the "wish-fulfilling tree" (*kalpa-druma*) of Act One, the ensemble emerges as a single form that spans multiple corporeal bodies and epochs.

Each of the five *tattva*s contributed a set of hierarchical affects, with Caitanya being the first emanation of the disposition prior to the others and containing them all. Each of his followers meanwhile developed separate moods which could be expressed and diffused to their disciples to enable them to develop identities continuing their relational affects to his virtual side as Kṛṣṇa. For instance, Nityānanda related to Caitanya in the friendly affect (*sakhya bhāva*). This revealed his eternal *sattva* as Kṛṣṇa's brother Balarāma, the "Plow-Bearer," who was equally mischievous and assumed the same *bhāva*.[187] The discovery of this hidden identity rendered Nityānanda the historical embodiment for the timeless semblance, making him and Caitanya effectively equals (either as brothers or friends). Nityānanda himself was the branch to his individual followers, who are visualized as "leaves" that took on Balarāma's traits and qualities. In Nityānanda's lineage, their eternal *līlā* identities are *gopa*s, the young friends who tended the cows of Vraja, and hence in rituals his followers all wore the clothes of cowherds (*gopāla*s). This allowed their habitual tendencies to be overridden by their semblant identities as their costumes shaped their embodied experiences of the world.[188]

Each of the historical companions was seen in reverse as a semblance of the eternal personas of Kṛṣṇa's associates in the ongoing play of phenomenal reality (*nitya-līlā*). This connection between historical persons and eternal associates (*pārṣada*s) reveals why Kavikarṇapūra can claim "those who performed the eternal sports in the company of Viśvambhara were the greatest of Vaiṣṇavas," for they lived in Caitanya's historical birthplace in Bengal, Nabadwīp, as opposed to Kṛṣṇa's birthplace in historical Braj.[189] The two places, seemingly separated by an entire historical epoch (*yuga*), are semblance and matrix, respectively active/manifested and hidden/latent: "Glory be to the most wonderful and majestic Navadvīpa, which is Vṛndāvana for those knowledgeable of *rasa*."[190] Kavikarṇapūra's

affective ligature encompasses both historical locations as semblances of the eternal *līlā*—just as Caitanya encompasses the semblances of his fellows in the *pañca-tattva* theory. Additionally, by linking historical persons to eternal characters, affect appears most fully as a relation. These two places as "dwellings" (*dhāman*s) allow Caitanya-Kṛṣṇa to fully manifest in the historical world through a material base in the embodied presence of his followers. One can go to Braj or Nabadwīpa to experience Kṛṣṇa, since both access the *gupta*-Vṛndāvana. Each then becomes a crossing point for the divine to reach down into the historical world and affect the devotees as audiences.

However, not all audiences had similar tastes. In order to be drawn into this series of plays, therefore, Caitanya had to find the right "keys" to particular devotee's bodies through the affective matrix of each relation. In this connection, Rūpa Gosvāmin's aesthetic theology and Kavikarṇapūra's devotional aesthetics both use *bhāva* as "relation" rather than "emotion." Caitanya was not just overwhelmed by *his* particular emotions. He experienced the entire realm of Vraja appearing before his very eyes in all its splendor with attendant features and living beings: people, animals, plants, and spirits. To call one of them "divine" over and against the other does a disservice to this experience, since the vines on the ground and the dirt itself were seen as spiritually empowering. The "ground" (*bhūmi*) becomes the stage where these relations can be played out as each person takes on a role or "guise" (*bhūmikā*).[191] The semblances overtake audience's normal perception as dramatic illusion (*māyā*) creates a world that jumps out from the material one of the senses. Identity becomes not only obscured by this layering of the theatrical illusion but likewise shaped, redirected, and "fashioned" anew (√*mā*, "to make).

Kavikarṇapūra's mentor Śrīnātha argues in his commentary on the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* that affective knowledge of the divine is tempered and shaped by the proclivities within the

individual receptors of the Vedas, who filtered its meaning due to their innate predispositions (*vāsanā*s).[192] Among the characters of the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, the Vedānta scholar Sarvabhauma and his conversion in Act Five reveals how this process works. Kavikarṇapūra stresses how Sarvabhauma becomes converted to Caitanya's cause by manifesting dispositional affects: "Emotion and grace, not intellectual argument, led to his devotional awakening."[193] While arguing with Caitanya using theories from rhetoric and scripture fails to convince either side, the Vedāntin becomes deeply moved after several days in the leader's presence. At this point, the scholar becomes a fountainhead for Puranic citations in support of the Gauḍīya positions. Sarvabhauma argues using citations from the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* that bliss occurs in both bodied (*mūrta*) and unembodied forms (*amūrta*). It follows that Kṛṣṇa can be the supreme bliss since his *vigraha* acts as the embodied "foundation of the unembodied."[194] His argument therefore implies that favoring the unembodied is a result of how one's dispositional strata (*vāsanā*s) color one's preference for viewing one or the other as more foundational:[195]

> Those satisfied in the self attempt to almost silence their senses, but those satisfied in Love want to fully immerse themselves only in the form of the Lord (*premārāmā api bhagavato rūpamātraika-magnāḥ*). If they become situated in their own bliss, how are they then different from God? Ah, I see! The Lord's bliss is dependent, the living being is dependent on bliss.[196]

Kavikarṇapūra claims that this blissful embodied form is without material traits (*nirguṇa*) but acts as a singular reservoir of pure qualities (*puṇya-guṇa-eka-nidhi*).[197] The dispositional matrix of the divine, while unmanifested, manifests forms in order to draw in beings based on the karmic tendencies swirling within their individual matrices. This reveals a range of forms which the Gosvāmins call *līlā-avatāra*s that can appear indefinitely from the matrix of Kṛṣṇa.[198]

Other Gauḍīya theorists tend to see these forms ranked according to gradations of affective potential (*śakti*). For instance, Rūpa Gosvāmin divides this group into a structured hierarchy based on resemblance to Kṛṣṇa's *vigraha* or "undivided" form (*svayam rūpa*). This creates a structure based on resemblance to the prototype of Kṛṣṇa as Gopāla at its center. Half of the categories include "portions" (*aṃśa*) of Kṛṣṇa's own power manifesting as these forms, while others are divine beings who he "enters" or "invests" (*āveśa*) with power briefly.[199] The Bengali Gauḍīya aesthetes work on a similar principle of hierarchy within Kṛṣṇa's polymorphic form. Citing Śrīnātha's arguments from the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, Kavikarṇapūra claims that the supreme lord can manifest a four-armed form when he so desires, but his innate disposition (*svabhāvika*) contains a two-armed form (*dvibhujatva*).[200]

Kavikarṇapūra's play returns to these two forms of the divine in the following scene of Act Two. Virāga and Bhaktidevi begin to depart from Caitanya's new homeland. Answering Dispassion's third question, "Will he be my shelter? (*āśraya*)," she replies: "Yes, He is Bliss, he is embodied, pervading and in a delimited form as well (*vyāpī ca tathā paricchinaḥ*), engaged in such eternal delights, Bhagavān will be the shelter of dispassion."[201] Caitanya is paired with Kṛṣṇa as the Bhagavān—the divine matrix that takes a form and exist as bliss—and hence he transmits his pure affective delight. Caitanya appears directly as the disposition of Kṛṣṇa himself, simultaneously pervading the universe and all its forms, while taking one particularized semblance that appears to be "cut off" (*pari-√chid*) from the rest. Paradoxically, the passionate aspect of the divine allows space for Dispassion.[202] Kavikarṇapūra leaves the exact nature of Caitanya's relationship to Kṛṣṇa indeterminate. How are the two personas related in the drama? Which is the pervading force, which is embodied, and if "cut off" and delimited, do they still share a kinship?

2.6 Affective Dwelling (*Dhāman*) and Embodying the Ensemble

Kavikarṇapūra's ten-act play (*nāṭaka*) "The Arising of the Moon of Caitanya" is likewise a liminal zone for the divine to cross down into the material world and a place for dwelling on the relation of devotees to the divine to happen. I first examine how Kavikarṇapūra gained his name and became a central figure of devotional poetry and drama for Gauḍīyas. Next, I argue Kavikarṇapūra continues his project of linking the ordinary and extraordinary through the characters of his drama to their latent dispositions in Kṛṣṇa's eternal play (*nitya-līlā*). He charts these relationships in a devotional genealogy called the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, "The Lamp Elucidating the Company of the Golden/Fair One" (1576) completed after the *Caitanya-candrodaya*.[203] I argue that Kavikarṇapūra's play is an act of memorialization (*smaraṇa*) common as a practice among Gauḍīyas to develop links with Kṛṣṇa. As *smaraṇa*, Kavikarṇapūra's play participates in the rituals of dedicated attention and dwelling on religious figures in tandem with the labor as a *sādhana*.[204] I argue that this affective labor allows the performative gestures (*abhinaya*) of the actors to "reveal" a hidden dimension of the landscape where Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa both dwelled. This "domain" is the dwelling or location (*dhāman*) in which religious experience occurs. Act Two begins with a depiction of the religious landscape of *sādhana*s by the virtue-character Virāga, "Dispassion," as he prepares the way for another, Bhakti. The two *sattva*s reconcile this turn to practice by revealing Bengal to be the current affective hub of both salvific and devotional practice due to Caitanya's presence in the landscape.

However, he himself also is affected by Kṛṣṇa's latent presence in the landscape as it continually reveals itself to him as Vṛndāvana, the forest of Kṛṣṇa's childhood narrated in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*. Bhakti and Virāga eventually migrate to a religious text extolling the

virtues of this text and the historical area said to be the location of Vṛndāvana, yet this text completely ignores Bengal. I therefore turn to Sukanya Sarbadhikary's ethnography into Caitanya's birthplace in West Bengal, Nabadwīp. Religious practitioners from multiple communities practice there to reveal the "hidden" (*gupta*) realm of Vṛndāvana. I argue that the meditative and dramatic performances of Gauḍīyas mutually participate in memorializing Caitanya while creating a topographical overlap between Bengal and Vṛndāvana, manifest and unmanifest. Just as Kavikarṇapūra's *bhāva* of "adoration" creates a liminal zone of feeling, practices that align an audience with Caitanya's *dhāman* allow for an affective dwelling where worlds overlap and dis-orient expectations. The body becomes one such location, acting as a "stage" (*bhūmikā*) for the characters of the eternal drama to unfold before the self. Hence the landscape allows one to enter into semblances as part of the affective ecology appearing in an ensemble.

Kavikarṇapūra's play follows the Gauḍīya leader through his early career starting in Bengal and through his perambulating pilgrimages throughout India. The devotees who were inspired by him congregated around important places in the course of his lifetime, passing along his *bhāva*s to others. The poet's circle of associates therefore were heavily invested in the Gauḍīya communities' different views on their inspired leader, which caused a natural curiosity to explore his life in hagiographies.[205] Kavikarṇapūra himself claims his theological ideas came from "imbibing his teacher's mood" in this lineage. Śrīnātha Cakravartī lived in the poet's hometown of Kumārahaṭṭa where he installed and worshipped a form (*mūrti*) he called Kṛṣṇadeva.[206] Kavikarṇapūra likewise mentions his father Śivānanda Sena as inspiration. Sena was a wealthy patron of the community who financed and led the annual pilgrimage of the Bengali devotees to visit Caitanya in Puri, Orissa alongside devotees from

the Braj region.[207] Kavikarṇapūra was born Paramānandadāsa, Śivānanda's youngest of three

sons, sometime around 1524 CE. A friend of the family, Raghunāthadāsa Gosvāmī lived with

Caitanya in Puri during his later years and most likely contributed the stories where Caitanya

interacted with the young poet to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's hagiography, the *Caitanya-*

caritāmṛta's last section (*anyta-līlā*).[208] Kṛṣṇadāsa lived near Kavikarṇapūra's family home in

Kumārahaṭṭa and the two were personally acquainted.[209]

The magisterial hagiography claims Kavikarṇapūra gained his title from his affective

connection to the saint. In his first meeting with Caitanya in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's hagiography,

Caitanya-caritāmṛta 3.12.44-49, the enraptured leader gave Kavikarṇapūra a favored name of

Purīdāsa after Paramānanda Purī, one of his close associates, as well as his given name

Paramānandadāsa. Caitanya gifts him with poet ability through a strange gesture: "When

Śivānanda introduced the child, Mahāprabhu put his toe in the child's mouth."[210] A few years

later, Caitanya asked the young boy to speak, after Paramānandadāsa refused to say Kṛṣṇa's

name out loud—as Svarūpa Dāmodara argued Caitanya had given him the name of Kṛṣṇa as a

guru-mantra which cannot be spoken in public. Instead, the young poet extemporized a

Sanskrit verse.[211] While the commentator Viśvanātha Cakravartī claims this is the reason

Caitanya gave him the name Kavikarṇapūra, evidence from his later works suggest the poet

earned the title based on the memory of this incident and his poetic legacy in the community

late in life.[212] As a receptacle for compassionate grace (*kṛpa-amṛta*), the embodied form of

Caitanya passed on the "nectar" of Kavikarṇapūra's affective talents in multiple accounts

among the Gauḍīyas. The devotee's haptic logic of proximity equates the ability to affect others

in literary terms with the guru's touch.[213] This embodied affect appears to flow back toward

the virtual as "a true poem's disposition" (*sat-kāvyatā*). By transferring this potential into the

young boy, Caitanya "invested" him with this power that took several years to fully manifest.[214] Caitanya seems to have imbued him with the "seeds" of his poetic talent as it would later develop into devotional *rasa*. As mentioned above, Kavikarṇapūra defines a poet as one who gains "a seed" which sprouts into the fully developed body of the poem.

Kavikarṇapūra himself becomes one in a line of affectively-infused devotees, who carries on the dispositions necessary to manifest loving relations with the deity as Bhagavān. An eighteenth-century Bengali poet Uddhavadāsa praises Kavikarṇapūra as the "moon among poets" (*kavi-candra*). He agrees that Caitanya's toe in the young boy's mouth "thus invested him with his potency" (Bengali *sei yoge śakti sañcārilā*). Here the term for a contagious form of a "wandering" affect (*saṃcāri-bhāva*) signals that the potential passed from Caitanya's form into Kavikarṇapūra's disposition, where it waited to "blossom as a poet" (*kavitva vikāśa*).[215] Later hagiographers likewise made Kavikarṇapūra the judge of Rūpa Gosvāmin's work. When the Gosvāmin displayed *sāttvika-bhāva*s during an assembly of devotees, Kavikarṇapūra was one of the skilled *bhakta*s entitled to ascertain whether the literary and theological merits of Rūpa's work fit the standards of the community. When meeting with the other narrator of Caitanya's life, the two burst out in dispositional affects simultaneously.[216] By sharing in the ensemble of affectivity with this major scholar, Kavikarṇapūra becomes a commanding figure due to his poetic talents as channels for the affective force of Caitanya.

The connection between Kavikarṇapūra's theology of Nabadwīp and the Gosvāmin's "rediscovery" of Vraja in historical South Asia likewise seem to be linked to places where Caitanya perceived semblances of Kṛṣṇa's hidden reality. In a similar manner to how the Gosvāmins equated Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman* in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* to the historical, material reality of the Braj region in North India, Bengali devotees are compelled by the same impulse to

replicate Vṛndāvana's affective force in Caitanya's home area of Nabadwīp, now in West Bengal.[217] This process was facilitated since the major leaders of the community came to be "non-different from the body of Caitanya" (*caitanya-abhinna-vigraha*) to showcase that his affective presence lingers in their actions. Kavikarṇapūra in fact invented the genealogical genre of text which inaugurated this articulatory process of "discovering" identities from the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa* for historical figures in the Gauḍīya community.[218] As the guru was envisioned as a tree, each of the major disciples became likened to a limb stemming from the main trunk. In Act One of the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, the stage-manager (*sūtra-dhāra*) describes Caitanya in this metaphor:

> Its wonderful root the great sage Mādhavendra Purī, the crew jewel of *saṃnyāsī*s, its new sprout Śrila Advaita, who is famous in the three worlds, its first branch Avadhūta Nityānanda, its other branches Śrimān Vakreśvara Paṇḍita and other sweet devotees, its flower blossoming devotional *yoga*, its fruit *preman*, its highest branches breaking through the boundaries of the material worlds and providing a place for the nest of the two playful birds Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to stay without ever being separated, and its shade a resting-place for they who travel on the path of repeated birth and death, the Caitanya *kalpa-druma* (wish-granting tree) grows on this earth to fulfill the devotees' desires.[219]

Note that Caitanya allows for the dwelling of the two "birds" in his highest boughs as well as for a resting place beneath his branches while his embodied form as the tree crosses the boundary between worlds. Hence the "sap" (*rasa*) that flowed from the body of the tradition continued to reach each person as it runs down the tree from its liminal space between worlds.

In a similar fashion, Kavikarṇapūra sees the Gosvāmins as exemplars of devotion since they embody in both affect and form the example of Caitanya. In particular he singles out Rūpa to play off the punning in his name, such as in act ten of the *Caitanya-candrodaya*:

> *Priya-**svarūpe** dayita-**svarūpe**, prema-**svarūpe** sahaj**ābhirūp**e / nijā**nurūp**e prabhur eka-*
> **rūpe***, tatāna **rūpe** sva-**vilāsa-rūpe***

To the dear friend of **Svarūpa** (Dāmodara), his (Caitanya's) **most beloved**, the naturally handsome **true form** of *preman* like unto his own **form**—to that unique **Rūpa** the Lord revealed his own **embodied play** and **form**.[220]

In offering a stylistic and etymological link between Rūpa and the dispositional matrix (*sattva*) of Caitanya through his disciple Svarūpa, Kavikarṇapūra can reveal aspects of their relation to one another in ensembles. Caitanya's disposition therefore becomes all-pervasive, infusing each of his devotees uniquely while being shaped in novel ways. Kavikarṇapūra's playful links between identities leads his audience to see Caitanya in various ways, as their affective dwelling places (*vāsanā*s) shifted the polymorphic form of the divine.

Turning to Act Two of Kavikarṇapūra's *Caitanya-candrodaya,* its affective currents are modulated by the saint's form as a "rising moon" and the various phases it takes. Performance is central to Kavikarṇapūra's soteriology and aesthetics. His teacher Śrīnātha argues the path of wisdom (*jñāna*) only removes the physical and subtle bodies from the affective ecology, the path of devotion creates a pure body fit (*anukūla*) for play (*līlā*) with the Bhagavān.[221] Relating to the divine becomes possible through the intercession of habituated patterns in the fluctuations of the mind, which emerge as styles or mannerisms: "one who does not desire obtains, by the affective style (*vṛttyā*) that takes the form of Love (*prema-ākārayā*), only a pure body (*viśuddha-tanu*) of a companion of the lord."[222] This play, according to Kavikarṇapūra's definition as belonging to Kṛṣṇa, is "everlasting" (*nitya-līlo*), must be a performance of the latent before it encroaches into actualized form.[223] Kavikarṇapūra's final image in Act Ten of his drama gives a hint of the future path for devotees after this lifetime: a virtual play where their dispositions toward the divine can fully manifest as *relations*.[224] This goal is ostensibly to fix the problem Kavikarṇapūra describes motivating the creation of the play, as its pervading affect (*vibhāva*): the king Pratāparudra's longing to see Caitanya after he

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has passed out of the world.[225] In order to accomplish this task, the entirety of the *nāṭaka* functions as a memorializing gesture (*smaraṇa*) to bring Caitanya back before one's eyes. This technique derives from the root √*smṛ*, "to remember," and functions as one of the performative practices to engender devotion to the divine.[226]

"Memorializing" how one can discover this affective relation to the divine requires bodily and mental concentration, a form of dwelling or "brooding" which can become a form of austerity (*tapas*).[227] The place functions as a means to mentally "dwell" in the world with Caitanya, opening the way to the dispositional matrix of his affective presence. Rāmānanda Rāya in Act Seven describes how asceticism purifies the mind to its full dispositional potential:

> If the mind remains unconquered, what is the point of austerity? How is that mind conquered if it does not contemplate Mādhava? Oh, what is that contemplation, if it does not melt the mind (*ceto-drava*)? And oh, how will that happen if proclivities (*vāsanā*) are not washed away?[228]

Kavikarṇapūra claims in his aesthetic work that this "melting of the heart" (*citta-drava*) is the stabilizing affect for *prema-rasa*.[229] While everyday people tend to "dwell" (√*vas*) in their habitual proclivities, these also open up the relationship with Kṛṣṇa to manifest fully. Hence the style taken by these styles (*vṛtti*) of the heart are not destroyed but melted, reshaped, and put into play. I shall return to style in more detail in chapter 3.

Śrīnātha makes style so pivotal that he claims it as a foundational stratum for *bhakti* itself. He defines devotion as "a changing style of the mind (*mano-vṛtti*) (that arises) when there is the cognition that someone is worshipable."[230] *Bhakti* facilitates this process of recognizing a person or object as worthy of being distinguished. Love, on the other hand, requires a sense of participation to be drawn into engagement, otherwise the magisterial affordances (*aiśvarya*) of the divine will overpower any potential emotions with awe and servitude at best (*dāsya-bhāva*). In Act One the stage-manager claims the goal of life that

eclipses all others in *bhakti* is *rati*, the stabilizing affect of "pleasure" taken in Kṛṣṇa. By removing the commanding form of "the host of material desires," austerities purify the limited sight of everyday life and allow one to see the eternal *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa in Caitanya's actions.[231] Hence semblances allow a crossing over of worlds even in normal perception, which Caitanya in Act Two will call "the eyes of affect" (*bhāva-cakṣu*s).[232]

In order to facilitate this crossing of normal affectivity to the extraordinary, as Kavikarṇapūra claims, a back-and-forth motion is necessary that brings a semblance between the virtual and the actual. Kavikarṇapūra's unique description of Kṛṣṇa's affective style in *campū* poem, the *Ānanda-vṛndāvana* offers one way to bridge this divide in the "the charm of his non-worldly worldly play" (*tad-alaukika-laukika-līlā-lāvaṇya*).[233] Kavikarṇapūra signals a paradoxical insight, as play crosses over from the unmanifest to the manifest through the affective charm of semblance. The place of Vṛndāvana creates resonances between the bodies found in it in orbit as Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman* or special "sphere," wherein his power manifests most forcefully.[234] Facets of practices become "sites" which line up habitus and expectation with paradigmatic models in the hidden realm. David Haberman goes into greater detail on this as the *gopī*s and other associates of Kṛṣṇa (the Vrajaloka) become the "embodiments of passion" (*rāgātmika*s) which are then imitated in ritual practice through *rāgānuga*.[235] These people and places act as pervading affects (*vibhāva*s) providing the devotee access to "jumping off points" in the material realm as hidden linkages form together into a world ensemble.[236]

Devotional *rasa* can arise when these physical locations allow it to "fall-out" as one enters the hidden (*gupta*) or occluded (*parokṣa*) realm of the play. Caitanya's hagiographies narrate multiple accounts of his experiences finding rabbit holes into the Vrajaloka, "tumbling

down" and exhibiting other *sāttvika-bhāva*s in the process. Finally arriving in Vṛndāvana, Caitanya is warmly greeted by the current Vrakaloka, the plants and animals:

> When they saw Prabhu, all the things of Vṛndāvana, moving and unmoving, were joyful, as friends when they see a friend. Seeing the love of all of these, Prabhu was overcome with *bhāva*, and he played with them all, controlled by them.

Embracing the plants and animals, his touch brought on the *sāttvika-bhāva*s in their bodies.[237] Likewise stories and musical lyrics also allowed him access: dwelling on them in the present caused him to manifest the dispositional affects of *preman* to show their tie to the divine matrix.[238] Each in turn activated the affective ecology and became a dwelling place, while allowing Caitanya to cross over into the dispositional side of his affective body. Only by a corresponding overlap of the two worlds was this possible: *līlā* was the movement of affect that facilitates both the dwelling and crossing in this process.

These locations are tangible yet virtual as well. I can reach, plunge into, and experience them in memories like physical places or in vivid descriptions from masterful storytellers and singers. Semblances render the virtual into a haptic domain for access.[239] The logic of this process treats the guru as a conduit, a protagonist who can "channel" in his gestures and material form the latent potential (*śakti*) of the other realm. Hence devotees develop strong desires to come into contact with him and feel these affects wash over their own corporeal bodies.[240] The gods and goddesses of sacred geography and time do not just play anywhere though. They fashion a field or domain for their manifestation (*dhāman*).[241] In *India: A Sacred Geography*, Diana Eck explores the empowered places which appear as these *dhāman*s, oftentimes linked to the bodies of deities. This locative sense is semblant since it creates counterparts, places that are not only unique (Gaṅgā, Yamunā) but also can multiply and diverge across regions (Gaṅgā of the South, the Vṛndāvana within the heart) when feelings are

found there. Affects ground this process in gestures that become semblances when bodies become linked to the power of these places.[242]

I return now to the *Caitanya-candroday* to show Kavikarṇapūra's interest in this affective process at its height. At the start of Act Two, the allegorical *sattva*s of Virāga ("Dispassion") and Bhaktidevi ("Devotion") enter onstage one after the other. They personify the struggles of specific forms of ritual, knowledge, and accidents of history within the larger cosmological struggle that Act One sets up between the evil king Kali-yuga and the forces of *dharma*, whose victory is assured with Caitanya's entrance into the contest.[243] They also function to bridge the historical bodies of Caitanya and his followers to a hidden realm the guru reveals in a playful manner later in the following scene. I argue Virāga's journey later becomes a template for a eulogy of place (*māhātmya*) that likewise extols the hidden realm of Vṛndāvana in the *Bhāgavaṭa-māhātmya*.

In Act Two of the *Caitanya-candrodaya*, Dispassion takes the stage while attempting to find his allies and friends dispersed by Kali's forces due to the world being "turned to face outward things" (*bahir-mukha-bahulaṃ jagat*).[244] After searching, he finds a series of proponents of the six *darśana* schools who accept Vedic authority.[245] Turning to the south, he becomes terrified and runs away at the sight of heteropractic groups. These reject or dismiss Vedic authority, including the Jains (Ārhats), Buddhists (Saugatas), and Śaiva ascetics (Kāpālikas, Pāśupatas) as "flaming fraudsters" (*pracaṇḍā pākhaṇḍāḥ*). A *yogī* practicing austerities appears to be a Vaiṣṇava at first but Virāga eventually exclaims in disgust, "His asceticism is merely acting (*nāṭya*) in order to fill his belly."[246] Next Virāga stumbles upon a pilgrimage-seeking wanderer (*thairtika*) without a family. While this individual seems to have gone to a range of holy sites, to the point that his attention will not be distracted from its own

salvation.[247] Finally, he runs into a person practicing *tapas*, the "heating" austerities to develop religious powers (*siddhi*s). However, this individual is too frightening to attract others, performing ill-deeds (*duṣkṛtin*). These practices are all rendered useless without devotion to Viṣṇu, becoming like the "various figures" (*nānā-ākārā*) of "actors" (*śailuṣa*s): "no matter how distinguished by a preponderance of skill and acumen, they are just ways (*prakārā*) of filling one's own pot-belly (*jaṭhara-peṭhara*)."[248]

On the brink of despair, considering giving up the fight against Kali-yuga, Virāga cries out in desperation, "When should I behold the Vaiṣṇavas, equal in appearance and interiority, going along with their hairs standing on end and weeping, worshiping Kṛṣṇa and singing his praises?"[249] Hearing a voice offstage, he believes it to be the Goddess of Devotion approaching since *bhakta*s can only be found near her. At this news, he bursts into verse linking her presence in everybody to the cities of Bengal, centered on Caitanya's birthplace of Nabadwīp as the place of the Lord's crossing (*aiśvarasya-avatāra*). The countryside is "garlanded" with *tīrtha*s, pilgrimage sites, and glows with the golden-colored "treasure" of the lord, (Gaurāṅga, "He whose body is gold") as Bhakti herself becomes embodied (*mūrtā*) in the landscape.[250] Here Caitanya's physical presence transforms the otherwise frightening and contentious religious marketplace into an affective one where he will go to "sell his wares."[251] The world becomes an ensemble accompanying him as he "bears" its weight (Viśvāmbhara).

This overlapping of worlds is accompanied by an oscillation in languages. Speaking in Prakrit, the Goddess of Devotion informs Dispassion that the "Fair Moon" (Gauracandra) whose course of deeds will cut off the fetters of worldly existence has "crossed over" into the world. While the Kali-yuga appears impossible to conquer—"Nothing is stable, all is mere decoration (*alaṃkaroti*)"—Caitanya's crossing opens up new potentials even for outcastes to

overcome the former lack of *dharma*. He has transformed Devotion into a goddess by his actions. As she eulogizes Caitanya in verse, she switches over to Sanskrit. Her goal is the purification of all people, severing the *saṃskāra*s or mental formations in the heart, and allowing her presence to affect them: "when the Goddess Mercy displays her sidelong glances, then she lead some of the affects of *rasa* (*rasa-bhāva*) to spread among them."[252] This back-and-forth signals Caitanya's appeal among both educated and everyday people while simultaneously standing in for the divine and material worlds. She can reach into both with her language infused with the affects of Caitanya's presence in the landscape.

This affective attunement is possible through the gestures he takes for his audiences. Virāga's second question, "What is Caitanya seeking?", she answers after describing the community's image worship as being infused with dispositional affects:

> Singing among his sweetly dear companions, heated with sweating, shedding tears, paralysis, and his bodily hairs standing on end, the god dances and dances every day while becoming affected by the densest bliss (*sāndra-ānandamayībhavan*).[253]

Caitanya therefore converts his followers through performance rather than the "dry discourse" of logical reasoning. His divine bliss spills over in waves to the people around his corporeal form. Dispassion seems confused as to why Caitanya only displays the habits of a devotee. After all, isn't he the Bhagavān, the embodiment of the supreme deity's magisterial side (*aiśvarya*)? Bhakti replies that "Hari's play is alluring, but his ordinary play is greater than his extraordinary play. The Gaṅgā goes joyfully amidst the earth stretching from the head of Maheśa."[254]

The different forms of the lord are implicated in this process. Kavikarṇapūra plays on the double meaning of Caitanya's householder name as "Bearer of the Universe,"

(Viśvambhara) to suggest that the two emerge from the same dispositional matrix regardless of the person experiencing this relation. Bhaktidevi claims that

> The lord's form is just bliss (*ānanda eva bhagavatas rūpam*). The greatest joy happens through this form. By abstractly considering 'that bliss alone is his form,' there emerge iterations of his forms of bliss. Depending on the gradation in perceiving his form, there are gradations in the bliss.[255]

The latent matrix of the divine is a "pure" form of bliss (*śuddha-sattva*). Certain forms that come closest to matchings its total amount of qualities (*guṇa*s) therefore have the most access to this reservoir of potential. The "iterations of his forms" are the *avatāra*s that "cross over" into the material world as semblances. These only match in certain features to the prototype (*prakṛti*) and become "variations." The closer one form approaches to the dispositional matrix, the more bliss it can activate. The *avatāra*s function as semblances to manifest this primordial *sattva*.

In this sense, the dispositional form of Caitanya is the greatest in terms of its potential to fill devotees with bliss since it comes closest to the true form of the divine. Each semblance therefore becomes hierarchically able to manifest its blissful potentials as they closely correlate to its formal characteristics.[256] These semblances appear most often in Vaiṣṇava discussions of the *avatāra*s, the "entrances" of the deity onto the stage of the world. Devotion recounts how he appeared as Balarāma and then as other *avatāra*s: the Buddha, Varaha the Boar, Nārāyaṇa, Nara-Siṃha the Man-Lion, as well as a six-armed form that put his devotee Nityānanda into a catatonic shock of overwhelming bliss.[257] The *avatāra*s are ranked according to a logic of formal proximity to Caitanya-Kṛṣṇa. Human forms that closely resemble him are considered "more blissful." Balarāma is nearly Kṛṣṇa's mirror image in white so his form inspires the most bliss while the others progressively lose certain traits and shift into demihuman and animal forms.

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These six semblances are ranked according to formal traits of similarity to Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya. Balarāma has the closest bodily form, differing only in his coloration (white complexion versus Kṛṣṇa dark) and drunken demeanor from Kṛṣṇa align with comic moods (*hasa-rasa*) in Kavikarṇapūra's system of devotional affects.[258] The Buddha is the next human form, whose magisterial presence invokes the calming mood (*śama-rasa*). The next jump to Varaha could be closer to Kṛṣṇa in two ways. I believe it is affectively closer since it too "plays" in the waters of the world with its feminine companions as it saves the goddess Earth (Bhūdevī) from submerging. This erotic mood (*ujjvala-rasa*) fits the conjunction of male and female deities working in tandem and even functions as one of the earliest uses of *līlā* as erotic sport.[259] Nārāyaṇa and Nara-Siṃha both seem to embody a martial ethos at times that would seem further from Caitanya's disposition. However, the six-armed form beloved by Nityānanda most definitely is equated with the wonderous mood (*adbhuta-rasa*), leaving only friendship (*preyas*) and parental affection as moods (*vatsala-rasa*).[260] Caitanya as Viśvambhara, however, contains these multitudes of forms just as a disposition can manifest an array of semblances or a score of music acts as a matrix for a variety of performers to make it audible.

The hidden universe Caitanya bears within these forms thus draws us out of the moonlit story of Kavikarṇapūra's drama and into other storytelling sources. As the abode of Caitanya, Bengal and specifically Nabadwīp became the central site of his manifesting divine forms and their affective forces for others. However, Karnapura's characters, the *sattva*s Virāga and Bhakti, went on to have their own career outside of Bengal advocating for Kṛṣṇa devotion. In the seventh chapter of the *Padma-purāṇa* is a standalone text by the name of the *Bhāgavata-māhātmya*, "the magnanimousness of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*,"[261] finalized sometime around

1675-1725 according to John Stratton Hawley.[262] This text recounts a similar journey that empowers Bhakti through the presence of Kṛṣṇa in the region of Uttar Pradesh known as Braj today. Caitanya's birthplace in the *Candrodaya* is entirely ignored in 1.48-50:

> I was born in Dravida (Tamil, south),
> > grew mature in Karnataka,
> Went here and there in Maharashtra,
> > then in Gujarat became old and worn.
> For long I went about in this weakened condition,
> > accompanied in lethargy by my sons [Jnana and Vairagya],
> But on reaching Vrindaban I was renewed,
> > I became lovely once again,
> So that now I go about as I ought;
> > a young woman of superb appearance.[263]

It seems to have been absorbed into Braj as the prototype while Nabadwīp becomes one of its semblances—or even a semblance of a semblance, metatheatricality twice-removed from the eternal Vṛndāvana of the *Bhāgavaṭa*'s *līlā*. This earthly career of the goddess of devotion therefore suggested a recurrence back into the historical era which paradoxically removes Caitanya from the picture. Moreover, the *Bhāgavata* as a narrative fits the affect contours of the landscape of Vraja. This force is most engagingly presented as a power of love and humility in Gauḍīya techniques derived from the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa*'s scenes of the *gopī*s as they move in the affective flow of *preman* for Kṛṣṇa.[264]

Kṛṣṇa's disposition is further distributed as a semblance into the very landscape itself, making it his *dhāman* or sphere of manifestation. It functions similarly to how the pervading affects pull the seed of a disposition out from a latent, dormant form into the ecology of relationships with material elements and living beings in a drama. An account of the "forest pilgrimage" (*vana-yātrā*) in Vraja by another of the Gosvāmins, Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, visualizes the sequence of sites as various bodily parts (*aṅga*) of Kṛṣṇa.[265] The pilgrimage is not an attempt to return to a hidden world beyond appearance but instead "worships forms and

caresses surfaces."[266] *Līlā*s as plays come together in the area of Braj today as "playful and loving relationships of Krishna" with its people.[267] In this sense, play requires a "leveling" of the playing-field where the two can meet. Relations *cross* levels, since the things connected do not stop existing but instead appear together as an ensemble.[268]

The overlapping of these worlds in virtual diagrams suggests the ecologies layer into historical time as well.[269] In Sukanya Sarbadhikary's ethnographic study of contemporary Nabadwīp near the border of West Bengal and Bangladesh charts two competing narratives of Caitanya's birthplace in the Nadia District lay across the Gaṅgā from one another: Navadvip and Mayapur.[270] While seeking to research two separate inquiries, her informants revealed that their devotional lives and the sense of place were intimately related as a set of both physical and imaginative rituals.[271] Vṛndāvana in its form as the "celestial abode" of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, as well as the site of their plays (*līlā*s), became the goal of each groups' practices. This location was "hidden" (*gupta*) until becoming accessible through the gestures of memorializing (*smaraṇa*). Whether listening to particular musical notes, serving devotees, visualizing the *dhāman* in meditation, or practicing interior bodily transformations involving "erotic heightening that Radha-Krishna experiences in Vrindavan," each became ways of linking the sensory and the affective ties of the body to an ongoing, hidden world. Devotees could thus claim it as both eternal and earthly semblance since it was also known as Goloka, the "world (*loka*) of the senses (*go*, "the goers" in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*)."[272]

A Mayapur informant in the rural area around Dol (Holi) told Sarbadhikary that progressing through the physical landscape would reveal its aspect as the hidden Vṛndāvan. Another said: "'Even today Gour [Caitanya] does the same *lila*s, which only lucky ones can witness.' You are seeing only the physical lands. If you listen carefully to the stories (Bengali

kahini) with an honest heart, the lands will reveal themselves to you—you will *see the shadow of eternal Vrindavan*." Here the plays and shadows work for both informants as the manifestation of the eternal, virtual share of the divine semblance. The storytelling practices shape perception of reality and its many layers in Navadvip. Notice that this is not a guaranteed practice either; the lands "will reveal themselves," meaning the affective form choses when and if to manifest itself. The place allows one to dwell there and have the potential access to "Caitanya's ongoing *līlā*s."[273] Imaging the hidden Vṛndāvana is not the same as fabricating (Bengali *kolpona*) a vision, according to one of Sarbadhikary's informants.[274] The heart-mind (*manas*) becomes a place where affects are invested. Sarbadhikary shifts the registers of this "imaging" of the virtual toward dwelling since she shows the contouring of experience as well as its sitedness in the body. She explains why this "becoming manifest" (Bengali *prakat hoy*) differs from a delimited visual metaphor. Instead, an ecological relational is called forth:

> *an entire ensemble which would be called a place*, that is, the deities, the celestial space in which they are located, and the devotee's selves as handmaidens serving them during their erotic moments, together becomes manifest or present in the mind-heart.[275]

This allows us to see that while a meditative absorption (*bhāvanā*) is being developed, the affects also permeate the mind-heart. The dwelling makes absence people and places present.

The body that acts as this "jumping off" point is the *antaś-cintita deha* ("inner-felt-thought body")—the affective form within the inner Vṛndāvan where one can manifest one's own true relation (*bhāva*) with the divine. In this model, three layers of place overlap: the physical Navadvip, the eternal (and hence virtual) Vṛndāvana, and the jumping off point tentatively held to the psychophysical body in the heart-mind.[276] This final aspect I refer to as the semblant form of the affective body. This layered body acts as the stage for the "performative utterance" in a "somatic mode of awareness" with the play of the affective body

within the imaging site of Vṛndāvana still an embodied form.[277] The "mind" at work in *manas* is a material form (*prākaṭa*) which incorporates both physical and mental strata, as well as possessing both cognitive and affective levels. The heart-mind, as Sarbadhikary argues, creates the place *as* itself, suggesting an affective relation between the material and virtual domains in its performance. While becoming embodied through gestures, one can choose to participate in this place within the affective body. The hidden Vṛndāvana is a semblance (*līlā*) since it cannot be controlled but only conditioned, invited and asked to dwell within the heart.[278] The pilgrimage place becomes an affective space if it proceeds from the embodied self as it memorializes (*smaraṇa*) the relation from gestures and meets the divine half-way in semblance. Otherwise, even recognized places will have no affective power: they become merely a stage to be assumed and a part or costume to be donned (*bhūmikā*), or a role to be assumed due to training in a style.[279]

By grounding his aesthetics in *bhāva*, Kavikarṇapūra shifts the focus to manifesting dispositions in the landscape. The manner in which different traditions relate implicit hierarchies of social, cultural, and even religious identity as affects emerge. Recall that the commandments (*vidhi*s) of ritualism are combined with a new sense of devotional love (*bhakti-rasa*, *preman*) which amalgamates the formal dimension of acting and performance through the affective relation to the divine. This key idea in Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* was explored in the previous chapter.[280] Here a parallel formation becomes apparent in the work of Kavikarṇapūra, and in his teacher Śrīnātha Cakravartī's *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā*, an undated text that offers one of the earliest commentaries on the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*. Śrīnātha explicitly states his mission is to elaborate the text through Caitanya's "thought" (*mata*) through worshipping Kṛṣṇa as the young cowherd whose *dhāman* is Vṛndāvana.[281] This set of

devotional features would combine with Kavikarṇapūra's interest in *rasa* theory to create a wide-ranging series of affective forms. By focusing on Kṛṣṇa as the primary *vibhāva* in an ensemble, this allows the entire ecology to be infused with his pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*).[282] Like the *avatāra*s manifesting from this latent matrix, any semblances that appear will have access by degrees to its total potential.

This set of features, however, was predicated on a devotionally shared world. The playwright enters this ahead of his audience through the affective forms themselves. Kavikarṇapūra's theory suggests that our current selves are merely assumed roles while our true identities appear as semblances mediated by devotional figures in the Gauḍīya community. The associates of Caitanya, for instance, mirror the king's lament in Act One that the landscape of Puri is empty of pleasure without him there: "Still, my eyes burn as if consumed by a bilious fever; my mind is cut as if by the words of rascals; my body is tormented as if by a wound to the heart."[283] The landscape is missing the proper *vibhāva* for their emotions to manifest properly. They can only dwell in his absence unless the proper affective ecology can manifest his absent presence for them in memory or in a virtual form. These differences in the semblances matter as they open the way for each devotee's own proclivities to emerge in the ensemble.

2.7 Affects to Dwell In: Kṛṣṇa's Dark Play

I turn now to Caitanya's dialogue in Act Two to see how this process of relating semblance to disposition, manifestation and latent potential, appears in the dramatic action of the text. While other translators have focused on the devotional aspects of the scene (Kuśakranthadāsa) or the theological doctrines underpinning the dialogue (Gerald Carney), I argue that Kavikarṇapūra's dramaturgical techniques reveal the affective goals of the

characters. After the departure of Dispassion and Bhaktidevī, the following scene begins with Advaita, Śrīvāsa, and Nityānanda entering the scene with Caitanya.[284] He jokingly speaks (*sa-parihāsam*) to Advaita, "Hail Sītā's husband, whose fame destroys the impurities of the world!" This immediately confuses Advaita, since they see Viśvambhara as Kṛṣṇa and not Rāma, the "Lord of the Rāghus."[285] Caitanya replies to this statement with a line full of alliteration indicating distinction (*pari-√chid* "to cut"):

> Bhagavān: Advaita, *tava vi**ccheda-ccheda**-kara u**pāyo** pira**pāyo nir**avadhi mayā cinta**ye, ye**na **nirantarā nirantarā**yā saha-vasatiḥ syāt.*[286]

Depending on how an audience member wished to read this line, the content conveys two separate meanings. Kuśakrathadāsa's translation captures the sentiment of a Gaudīya perspective, where the lord wishes to assure his devotees of his continued presence in their lives: "Advaita, I always worry how to stay in your company and never be separated from you."[287] Carney's translation, on the other hand, encourages the theological subtleties of the Gosvāmins: "Advaita, you conceive only distinction and limitation. I see a way that is imperishable and without limitation. Through it there shall be the conjunction of incarnate revelation and true non-duality."[288] Both, however, fail to attend to what Mary Oliver calls "the rules of the dance" in Kavikarṇapūra's masterful use of alliteration (*vṛtta*). [289] These repetitive sounds run throughout the Sanskrit to suggest endings (*nir-antara*), cutting off ties (*vi-ccheda/ccheda-kara*), and subterfuge (*upāyo/pirāpayo*). Rāma acts as an affective disjuncture as well. As an *avatāra* famous for ending his relationships over necessary duties (*dharma*) as a king, he implies heartbreak, longing, and severing ties to one's closest friends. Coming from the mouth of their *guru*, even in a playful moment, this would have had a tinge of resignation, abandonment, and an echo (*dhvani*) of the king Pratāparudra's initial loss of Caitanya's presence from Act One.

A Gauḍiya audience therefore would dramatically feel Caitanya's lines to be a playful reminder of his physical limitations and eventual separation from his followers. While the ties Caitanya had with his community during this period of his life were powerful, he had yet to become a renunciant and remained a married householder (*gṛhastha*). Act Four explicitly details his final decision to cut off his material life, which is always treated in Sanskrit aesthetics as a kind of death. His mother's grief in that scene is foreshadowed in the hidden, affective contours of this scene in Act Two. Kavikarṇapūra's style as a poet becomes directly linked with the trial that Caitanya will give to test his devotees. Advaita, Nityānanda, and Śrīvāsa are some of his most loyal followers yet have these hidden identities dwelling within them. Caitanya therefore attempts to evoke each follower's devotional disposition by threatening to cut off their relation to himself. Like the *gopīs* in the *rāsa-pañcadhyāya* ("5 chapters on the *rāsa*" dance of the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa*), Caitanya disappears for a time in order to activate their longing-in-separation (*viraha*) and bring them closer to his disposition.[290]

I offer my interpretation based on Kavikarṇapūra's tendency to layer meanings into his text as well as the ensemble as an affective form in their own right. Advaita, as his name suggests, is a renunciant (*saṃnyāsin*) and prone to theological argumentation. Therefore the line might be read in a playful manner, along with the other two translations layered into it as *śleṣa*, punning meanings: "O Nondual, I always worry (√*cint*) about your "infallible way" of splitting hairs (*viccheda-ccheda*), since you endlessly and without ceasing (*nirantarā nirantarāyā*) dwell on it (*saha-vasatiḥ syāt*)." Caitanya acts to reassure, teach, and tease his *bhakta*s simultaneously. In fact, dialogue suggests theological traits that accrue with their names. Advaita as "non-dual" would seem to mistake forms with the formless, the "distinct" with the "limitless." Hence Caitanya's resonant meaning (*dhvani*), the "life-breath" (*prāṇa*) of

poetry, "do not worry about trying to have the perfect argument, Advaita; after all, what good will it do when you try to dwell on me after I'm dead?"[291] Instead of endlessly quibbling over theological niceties, Advaita should be "dwelling without ceasing" on him, the source of their devotion.

Nor is Advaita the only one to be singled out for light-hearted ridicule. Śrīvāsa, whose name literally means "the abode of Śrī," the goddess of wealth, prosperity, and good fortune, claims "Śrī has just disappeared" (*tirobhūta eva*). Śrivāsa misses the joking mood that Advaita understands and builds upon in his responses. Since Caitanya dwells in his hometown of Nabadwīp, Advaita and Nityanānda always dwell there now, despite having a home in Śāntipura. Caitanya then goes on to claim "Devotion to Viṣṇu is fortune [Śrī], she continues to be among you all" (*sā bhavatsu satsu vartata eva*).[292] Advaita, however, steps in to adduce her presence as if Kavikarṇapūra were continuing his project in the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*: "Now Śrī is Viṣṇupriyā," Caitanya's current wife. The Bhagavān jokingly teaches that "Among all the paths starting with gnosis, devotion alone is most dear to Viṣṇu (*bhaktir eva viṣṇoḥ priyā*). In this way, the affective force of devotion makes it a proper abode of the deity.[293] Caitanya goes a step further. Since Advaita's name means "non-dual," this phrase also signals an encompassing hierarchy which would have Vedāntic figures such as Sarvabhauma convert to Gauḍīya theology.[294] Since "The Bhagavān has made her into his own body (*aṅgī-cakāra*)," or even "fashioned her a body," affective forces are enough to turn these innate potentials (*śakti*s) into manifestations or "forms of the semblances" that were formerly latent within the divine matrix.

Śacī, Viśvambhara's mother, calls the group of *bhakta*s to dinner. Advaita's lines suggest how he decides to join in Caitanya's playful use of words. Since *bhakta*s are "those

who enjoy or eat," Caitanya's presence provides the sustenance to his devotees in the form of *bhāva*. For example, the pervading affects (*vibhāva*) can enter any material form, including food, as they become linked to the disposition of an event. Like *prasāda* offered to a deity, the affects are shared and distributed after coming into contact with the form of the divine. Advaita states, "This body of mine (*ayaṃ deha*) has become somnolent from joy due to the burden of he who bears the world (*viśvambhareṇa bhareṇa harśasya*)."[295] Advaita at face value could mean an everyday laziness (*manthara*) that can overcome due to fatigue or overeating, since the host has a "burden" or duty to feed his guests. On another level, Advaita also suggests an excess of satiation from the weight of his guru's affective presence. When Caitanya tells Śrīvāsa "It will be taxing for him (*asya*), owing to the great deal of cooking (*pākasya*) that is happening," Advaita becomes confused, saying "Why does he say "of him?" (*asya*) Should he not say "of hers?" (*asyā*) since Śacī is preparing the food (*pāka*). Here the female body performs the affective "weight" of laboring to care for the community, which Advaita recognizes but Śrīvāsa neglects in favor of his own enjoyment. Caitanya might be seen as teasing the lack of "development" in his devotees' humility to others, as maturity is also equated with the "ripening" (*pāka*) of fruit, using the same term for cooking. Hence the "taste" (*rasa*) of the scene links deceptive language, shifting forms, and attention to affects in the ensemble before Caitanya presents the inciting dilemma to Nityanānda.

Instigated by Śrīvāsa's greediness in the preceding section, Caitanya puts his devotees to a theological test. Advaita whispers to Śrīvāsa that their lord (*deva*) agreed (*aṅgī-kṛtaṃ*) to show his own dispositional form (*svarūpa-darśanāya*) to the latter. Śrīvāsa equates the promise with the "body" (*aṅga*) to be seen. Advaita, as the semblance of the nondual, seems to be acting as a go-between much as the Gauḍīyas view the non-qualified (*nirguṇa*) aspect of *brahman* as

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a lower part of Kṛṣṇa's dispositional matrix, which contains all qualities (*sarva-guṇa*).[296] As I have mentioned elsewhere, Kavikarṇapūra argues that, in its most concentrated affective form within the hierarchy of divine bodies, Kṛṣṇa's self-dispositional form (*svarūpa*) is two-armed.[297] However, in this scene Śrīvāsa is upset that Caitanya reveals his form to Nityānanda as a six-armed body (*ṣaḍ-bhujaṃ rūpam*).[298] The stage directions make it clear that Caitanya is teasing them.[299]

Advaita is forced to confront the theological point of whether Nityānanda's desired form (six-armed depiction of Kṛṣṇa) is what he truly desires. Caitanya lays out the bait by repeating Śrīvāsa's assurance that "This alone is my self-form (*svarūpa idam eva*). It is the character/vessel (*pātra*) of Advaita's *preman*." By claiming it as the "vessel" for the divinely-empowered love (*preman*) of "non-dualism," we can read Caitanya as offering a form of the divine which seems to transcend form and qualities (*nirguṇa*).[300] Seeing Caitanya as the non-dual *brahman* would be true to Advaita's "nature" (*prakṛti*). However, the Gauḍīya theologians and aestheticians do not see any form but that of Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa as the most appropriate for developing affective intensity to its highest pitch. In Kavikarṇapūra's drama, Advaita dwells on this dilemma in an aside: "If I say, 'Yes, this is your self-disposition,' then my desire to see the *vigraha* of Śyāmasundara (the "Beautiful Black" child Kṛṣṇa) will be destroyed. If I say 'That is your self-disposition' (i.e. as Kṛṣṇa), then I will be deprived of the *preman* of this form (*asmin,* as Caitanya)!"[301] One translator offers this last half of the dilemma in stark terms: "then to see this one is to make a mockery of love."[302] Lutjeharms argues that Kavikarṇapūra forces the characters into this dilemma of dealing with non-dualism for the school. Caitanya therefore presents his followers with a unique difficulty in how to arrange and sort the bodies of the divine alongside his own form.[303]

Śrīvāsa attempts to hedge the community's bets by refusing to use a direct object, instead playing with vague pronouns: "This alone is the vessel of our love, your lordship's beautiful body (*bhavad-vapus*). He is asking because you said, 'I will show that (form) to you.'" Caitanya responds, "What won't someone on the edge of madness (*unmāda-daśāyām*) say?" Śrīvāsa replies:

> Normal madness is a disease (*vyādhi*), but your madness uproots the disease of existence (*bhava-vyādhi*) when one sees and hears it. A normal living being surely loses their wits and becomes senseless when a small bit of bliss happens. But when it is due to the virtual blissful form (*ānanda-rūpatvāt*) and self-disposition of gnosis of His Majesty (*īśvarasya*), what could stop it?"

Śrīvāsa appears to fix the problem his thoughtlessness began earlier, since Caitanya smiles (*sa-smitam*) and manifests (*āvirbhāvayati*) his self-disposition in Advaita's consciousness (*antaḥ-karaṇe*): "What I am about to show you is not dependent on me. It reveals itself to those with affective eyes (*bhāva-cakṣuṣā*)."[304] This clause has no subject, which Kavikarṇapūra therefore leaves deliberately open as to who is seeing and who is being seen. In one sense, the problematic of seeing/being seen is magnified since the affective engagement via the eyes is not externally manifested but takes place on the "inner stage" of Advaita's heart. By seeing with "eyes of affect" (*bhāva-cakṣu*), Caitanya is asking his devotees to see the semblance that goes beyond his material form. Like a painting's depiction, the physical contours of his body can carry or convey the hidden dimension of his identity. How does Kavikarṇapūra intend his audience to interpret this aspect of *bhāva*? What does it mean for these devotees to go beyond "mundane disease" when enthralled by Caitanya's otherworldly "madness?" I argue Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetic position casts *bhāva* as a liminal form connecting divine and human worlds. In this way, *bhāva* is a religious affect since it is the mode of connecting the divine and human realities that were once united. Religion emerges as the structured practices

intended to generate these affective relations to the divine as material and virtual sides of reality are brought together.[305]

I now return to my exploration of Act Two's final scene in Kavikarṇapūra's *Caitanya-candrodaya.* We left the *bhakta*s and Caitanya as he was beginning to test their resolve, hinting that they lacked the audience's humility and self-distancing to experience his full potential. Caitanya manifests his form invisibly in the scene. Hence the audience must experience it in the same way that the modern residents of Nabadwīp recall his *dhāman* to mind. Advaita exhibits the proper reactions as part of his immersion in the space created by Caitanya's self-dispositional form. While the audience is not privy to the pervading affects (*vibhāva*s) that condition it, Śrīvāsa describes the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) including his meditative posture that stops the "turning of his external sense faculties (*bhāhya-indirya-vṛttayaḥ galitāḥ*)." Dispositional affects (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) attest to the strength of this moment: Advaita's "heart indeed is greatly trembling, his beautiful body stilled, his bodily hairs exhilarated."[306] Caitanya states that this is due to his immersion in the "relishing" (*āsvāda*) of this form's affective bliss. He also puts this relishing in compound with the term *saṃvāda*, which one can as "dialogue" or "symptoms." Both have a resonance with words (*vāda*) and a sense of absorption into the "fullness" (*sam-*) of the affective event. In fact, Caitanya suggests that words can touch on the surface of this experience or submerge an audience in its depths.

Śrīvāsa interrupts due to his impatience: only one devotee can experience this personal staging of *bhāva* directly (*pratyakṣa*).[307] He requests that the Bhagavān remove this image from Advaita's heart or he will remain in a meditative calm (*samādhi-samā*) which will prohibit him from coming back to external consciousness and describing what he sees. Advaita replies in verse, coming to his senses slowly "as if dreaming or possessed by a spirit" (*graha-*

grasta iva). The range of imagery he provides invites one to see the *dhāman* of Kṛṣṇa along with his form, covered in the "blossoms" (*unmīlan-nava-kuvalaya*) of his eyes opening like waterlilies at night, beautiful rain clouds (*ghana-śreṇī-snigdha*), dark as *tamāla* trees, and brilliant as sapphires (*nīla-aśma*). He asks in the final foot of the verse, "What is the flood of splendor that courses through the paths of seeing? (*mahā-pūraḥ ko ayaṃ nayana-padayīm corayti naḥ*)." While √*cur* can mean "to rob," this verbal form appears close to √*car* in the affective ecology, affording a flowing motion that "carries away" anything caught in its current.[308]

This moment functions to introduce the audience to Kṛṣṇa's disposition through the semblance. Advaita describes the form he saw with his "affective eyes" (*bhāva-cakṣu*s) although there is no mention of how many arms it possesses. Instead, these "adoring eyes" seem to become a bridge from the mundane realm of his fellow devotees (and by proxy the audience) and the hidden realm in which Caitanya offers access:

> Appearing from within every limb is an aura (*maṇḍala*) of darkest blue rays of consciousness; filled with a flood (*pūra-pūrṇam*) of sweetest (*madhurimā*) nectar; cannily virtuosic at playing the vibrant notes of his flute, (*vaṃśī-kala-kvaṇita-keli-kalā-vidaghdam*); the First, the Great, having the same womb (brother) as the clouds, manifests itself.[309]

Advaita's verse acts as a *vācika-abhinaya*, beginning the process of memorializing (*smaraṇa*) into the semblance. Rather than directly describing Kṛṣṇa's young, handsome form, Śrīvāsa claims that Advaita is speaking "due to the ongoing performance" (*varamāna-prayogāt*) as if it were still before his eyes. Caitanya claims the blissful affective force is continuing in the present, which leads to Advaita's last two verses describing Kṛṣṇa's long, curled hair, eyebrows like vines, restless eyes, and full lips. This ecology of qualities reveals the divine matrix as a sweet (*mādhurya*) disposition. The final verse, however, shifts registers into the

aiśvarya or magisterial mode, showing his Śrīvatsa mark and Kaustubha gems, the goddess Lakṣmī (Ramā) on his chest, with garlands of forest flowers offered to his feet in worship, and with arms like staves (*daṇḍa*): stout, on the long side, and well-rounded (*sad-vṛtta*). The *mādhurya* qualities would normally be canceled out by *aiśvarya* traits in a mundane *rasa*: only in an *alaukika* mood can they be sustained in a paradoxical tension. This is the realm of *līlā* as it oscillates back and forth between potential poles.

Kavikarṇapūra's last line also suggests a play on words, as the alliteration (*vṛtta*) present (*sat*) in the passage enfolds it like a pair of arms or tall, thick punctuation marks (*daṇḍa*).[310] Kṛṣṇa appears in the verse *in the form of words*, coursing (*carayati*) through the sounds of his skill in the arts of playing. Kavikarṇapūra's verses therefore seems to carry *bhāva* along the same lines as music. Music carries passion (*rāga*) in its very notes (*kala*) as the vibrations (*kvaṇita*) affect bodies. Lastly, we see how Kavikarṇapūra even offers a hint at glossing his own name as the "one who ears are flooded (*pūra-pūrṇa*) by the Poet," suggesting the supreme deity of Bhagavān as the artist in question. This closes the loop that Śrīvāsa attempts to reopen by asking whether Advaita's vision is a memory or ongoing, yet which does not have to be seen if Kṛṣṇa himself is appearing in the very words of his vocal performance.[311] Kṛṣṇa assumes the semblant form of Advaita's empowered verse, just as Caitanya's grace was said to pass into Kavikarṇapūra's corporeal body when the future-poet sucked on the guru's toe.[312]

This presence of the divine only occurs because the affective form of the Bhagavān encompasses multiple bodies in the ensemble. As a semblant form, it manifests in the relation between the material forms in its affective ecology rather than being located solely in one place. The stage directions for Advaita suggest he becomes aware of externalities, "as if

surfacing from an ocean of bliss." Karṇaūra's previous lines were part of this current flowing

through Advaita's body. As if waking from a deep sleep or meditative trance, Advaita claims

> an exceedingly-great darkness emerged from this Pervader (*vibhoḥ*), entered my heart
> (*antaḥ mama aviśat*), and in the blink of an eye disappeared. My mind under great
> distress, my vision renewed, I see that it again has submerged (*nimagnam*) into here/this
> body (Caitanya).[313]

The semblances as affective forms course, flow, dive, and surface as if the body is a fluid

matrix capable of supporting secrets within its depths. Caitanya teases his disciple by claiming

his vision "is a mistake due to drowsiness" and "a waking dream." Advaita insists that the

semblance appeared before him: "He is a radiant youth, dark (*śyāma*) like a new garland of

blue lotuses, with his left leg crossing his right. He is like you, you are like him (*tvam iva sa

sa iva tvam*). To my experience, there is no difference at all. Tell me: is this a waking

dream?"[314] Caitanya explains that Advaita alone perceived him due to the deluding power of

his latent impressions (*vāsanā*s) that act as a dispositional matrix for this particular form. In

this moment, Advaita becomes a metatheatrical double for Kavikarṇapūra's own "sprout of

relishing." As the poet of this singular vision, he becomes host to the stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-

bhāva*) as it appears in semblances. His vocal expressions (*vācika-abhinaya*) therefore function

to embrace this feeling and transform it into gestures as *anubhāva*s. Kavikarṇapūra lays the

groundwork for Act Three when another devotee will be overtaken by a playwright to create a

full-fledged drama within his *nāṭaka*.

This moment is a personal semblance that only Advaita can see while the devotional

community longs to participate. Śrīvāsa yearns to experience this form for himself. Caitanya

chides him for wishing to fall onto "the pathway of non-dual delusion" (*advaita-patha-patita*)

or the course of Advaita's delusion. Not to be dissuaded, however, Śrīvāsa fulfills his role as

the embodiment of the devotee when claims that non-duality is true when it equates Kṛṣṇa and

Caitanya, rather than seeing the ultimate form of the divine as formless and featureless. Caitanya tries to turn this claim back on Śrīvāsa, joking that the *bhakta* too would be non-different from Kṛṣṇa. The guru tries one final time to theologically joke "Why do you attribute (*āropayasi*) this to me?"[315] Śrīvāsa claims there is no "super-imposition" (*āropa*) or projection of an illusion onto reality by suggesting the two are the same: "One cannot deny the self-disposition (*svabhāva*) nor one's affect (*bhāva*)." Śrīvāsa places the dispositional matrix and affect above even his guru's warnings! "You are at fault." An offstage voice declares Śrīvāsa the winner in the contest between the Bhagavān and his devotee. The devotee proclaims, "If this was like a divine voice, then it was a gesture meant for humans" (*nara-iṅgitam*), one of the signs meant to reveal the secretive motives of a ruler.[316] In this manner Kavikarṇapūra shows the theological play is a game for major stakes, with the discussion featuring a joking point-and-counterpoint that leaves the outcome in tension until an outside judge rules against the figure in authority. All play, after all, can only be play when its outcome is unknown.[317]

Another aspect of play, however, can be seen when Kṛṣṇa's darkness is brought to the forefront with the opacity of this vision. The semblances seen through Advaita's empowered vision are affective due to their paradoxical brilliance and deep color. Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* is not only the dark god's dramas, but the "dark" play his disposition affords to the practices. His playmates become initiates without others realizing they are entering a playfield. Seduction and an elision of expectations are central features of this affectivity.[318] This type of play puts lives on the line, can leave social reputations in tatters, and risks everything for a few stolen moments of unattainable joy. Like the *gopīs* who abandon all their normal duties for a supreme duty to the divine, dark play requires a level of wonder and potential that can be disorienting or even frightening. Only by accepting the self-effacement of Kṛṣṇa's call are the audience

members able to step outside the constraints of normal affectivity for a deeper connection to their potential.[319] Therefore Kavikarṇapūra sets a form of dark play deeply within the structure of his narrative, with each layer revealing something important just as the metadisursive levels of layered framings in South Asian epics and *purāṇa*s emphasize and heighten inner stories.[320] Likewise, *līlā* "subverts order, dissolves frames, and breaks its own rules-so much so that the playing itself is in danger of being destroyed."[321]

Caitanya's true identity is nearly revealed in the following act in such a dangerous manner. In Act Three, the personification of Preman goads Viśvambhara into becoming a renunciant, inciting him to "rise as the moon" giving *rasa* fully to his followers. This play therefore embodies his Caitanya-*bhāva*, "becoming" conscious (*caitanya*) of his connection to the world in order to spread *bhakti*. Before this moment, Viśvambhara remains an everyday householder (*gṛhastha*) who can only temporarily reveal these semblant connections to a deeper dispositional matrix. The events of Act Three therefore lead Caitanya to perform a ritual of full renunciation from householder life and become a *saṃnyāsin* in Act Four. This would appear to set him apart from his followers, yet paradoxically it allows him to affectively reach even more people. Viśvambhara, and by extension Kavikarṇapūra, are dancing on edges of revelations and ultimate realities hidden behind everyday life.[322] Moreover, these hidden depths suggest the shadowed side of material reality that lurks within affective forms. *Bhāva*s can unearth deep pain, structures of oppression, and even embodied trauma as they rehearse buried histories.

To reiterate the main points of this chapter, *līlā* functions to bring *bhāva*s into a performative mode while remaining virtual. As I mapped out in Figure 0.1 to show the transitional phases between these forms, *līlā* allows a disposition (*sattva*) to emerge from a

latent potential in the well of possibilities. Affects "cross down" (*avatāra*) into ensembles as they infuse an author or playwright's mind as a commanding form. However, just as Kṛṣṇa in the epigraph starting this chapter from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* claims, this force also shapes the divine toward the proclivities of his devotee-audience. The divine's polymorphic affordance allows the playwright to shape the semblance into an illusion (*māyā*) fashioned for the stage. The dramatic illusion allows the ensemble of Kavikarṇapūra's visualizations or imagination to become embodied gestures (*abhinaya*s), whether written, spoken aloud, or enacted otherwise. These gestures become the *anubhāva*s or "embracing affects" which are enacted for an audience. If I were a devotional author, I might describe these moments as a form of revelation even as the writing is being transcribed by my own physical gestures. I become a "channel" or vessel (*pātra*) like the characters for these liquid affects to wash over my audience.

For performers or audience members on the other hand, this process works in reverse. The actors' skills and talents in gesturing give them access to the characters as part of the ecology of pervading affects (*vibhāva*s). The lead characters (*nāyaka*s) and the environmental features condition the gestures into a process of concentration and "memorializing" (*smaraṇa*). This allows the material affordances of the bodies, costumes, and properties onstage to "carry" (√*nī*) the affects "into" (*abhi-*) a virtual register. After becoming linked to other forms at this moment in a performance, the affects appear to "jump out" of the materiality as they stimulate a movement towards the dispositional potential of a scene. In other words, the audience can feel like they are drawn into a world hidden behind the everyday location of their own. The final stage also becomes possible when performers adopt a mode of full "surrender" (*vihara*) to separate themselves from their normal social selves into emotional excess. At this moment,

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the ego becomes forgotten and there remains no separation between performer and disposition. The *sāttvika-bhāva*s emerge together to signal the intensity of these moments, which act as embodied evaluations on the propriety and fit of a performance to the *sattva* itself. Hence this feedback loop allows for a haptic logic of judging a ritual or dramatic performance's validity for a devotional audience. When Kavikarṇapūra and Rūpa Gosvāmin mutually manifested *sāttvika-bhāva*s while listening to each other's writing, this process became enmeshed into the larger doxic practices of Gauḍīya communities.[323] As an audience member, I don't have to explain why I feel like something moves or does not move me, it does not "sit right." I cannot dwell in it without finding the fit uncomfortable. When a drama becomes powerfully moving, it "touches" me and I feel like I cannot move without breaking the pristine clarity of the moment.[324]

Līlā as a form of the affective body therefore functions to foster relationships in "play." The oscillation movement between multiple realities, identities, and dispositions that can manifest affords it the ability to express a *sattva* in novel configurations. As a *sthāyi-bhāva* becomes enacted in the affective ecology of a play, I have argued that Kavikarṇapūra shows how the pervading affects shape it with their unique features. Like formal semblances (*ābhāsa*), *līlā*s shape the matrix of a character (*prakṛti*) as it becomes embodied and performed. Kavikarṇapūra likewise introduces *ābhāsa*s and the category of "adoration" to link worldly and otherworldly affects to the domain of aesthetics and literature respectively. These liminal features in turn disorient the audience and allow the divine to exert a force that overrides individual agency and conditioning. In Act Two of the "Arising of the Moon of Caitanya," Kavikarṇapūra's characters dramatize this liminal space as Caitanya's birth inaugurates a new liminal zone for the divine to cross over into the material, historical world. When these same

characters go on to eulogize Kṛṣṇa's homeplace of Vṛndāvana in the *Bhāgavaṭa-māhātyma*, Bengal is left out of their itinerary. I claim this absent presence reveals that the latent or "hidden" (*gupta*) aspect of the divine acts like a disposition waiting to be manifested in semblances. Devotees in Nabadwīp today still practice with Caitanya as the central figure of their devotional focus as his material presence allows the hidden play of Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman* to "jump out" of the landscape. Similarly, Caitanya's associates in Act Two of the *Caitanya-candrodaya* assume a metatheatrical game of shifting identities and semblances to determine whether to worship their living guru or his divine persona. While Advaita tells Caitanya "He is like you, you are like him. I see no difference between the two," he sees Caitanya's embodied form as the material matrix for this semblance to "enter" (*ā-√viś*) and in which it becomes "submerged" (*ni-√majj*) when dormant as a well of possibilities. Meanwhile the community of *bhakta*s in the person of Śrīvāsa picks their living leader while vocally agreeing with Advaita's "non-dual" stance on the sameness of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya. Śrīvāsa therefore can claim, "This is a play you have staged…Your form is our greatest treasure."[325] In spite of the disorientation and proliferation of semblances, the community grounds its affective focus on the affective body they see every day. Caitanya's body therefore acts as its own crossing place for worldly and otherworldly affects, allows a devotee to dwell in the hidden world of Kṛṣṇa's eternal play or the historical exploits of his own course of life. The relationality inherent in *līlā* can only take place when these outcomes are spontaneous yet can still be encouraged with favorable conditions. Only the ordinary affordances of the material world can create a space for a religious audience to encounter the hidden side of reality.

While I have translated *bhāva* as disposition and relation primarily in Kavikarṇapūra's drama, these terms are only the virtual side of the affective body. When a *sattva* is put into

performance, it can activate a semblance (*līlā*) that plays back and forth across identities, shifting potentials as they become latched onto larger ensembles of material artifacts, embodied persons and animals, and environments as a whole. In this way, the disposition can manifest itself as an entire space in which I can feel myself "dwelling." This does not require a physical location but can overwhelm me at any time. Passing by a landmark with a powerful memory triggers a process of *smaraṇa* for me: remembering the event can similarly bring me back to that time and place like I am really there in the present. This reversibility of *līlā* suggests that we dwell in semblances as they are *en-sembles* or relations in which we live. As part of a larger ecology of bodily forces, Caitanya himself embodies theses affects as they stream in from a common social space. These *līlā*s therefore connect to a larger, historical set of affordances in the *way* they are enacted and embodied in styles of living (*vṛtti*). As affective forms, these "habits" embody the depth of affects in corporeality, as well as the manner in which performance shapes bodies over time. By turning to the ways in which we invest or are invested by *bhāva*s, I argue that affects can cross over from the virtual side of the affective body to its material side. When they do, *bhāva*s become historical, social forces felt across bodies as well.

3.1 Style on the Fringe:
Affective Economies of Performance and Embodied Investment

And *in that way* you will fill the Brahmā-world as before. For as Raghunātha took all of Ayodhyā and went to Vaikuṇṭha, and Ayodhyā was filled with other *jīva*s, now you have appeared *and spread out a market, and no one understands this profound play*.
-Kṛṣnadāsa Kavirāja, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. 3.3.75-77[1]

I noted then that they were all in black, Hawkins in a black suit, Amy in a black dress and, like Corrine, a veil of mourning, though less ornate. Standing there, Corrine's staff seemed extensions of her deeper mood, ethereal projections of her widow grief.
-Ta-Nahisi Coates, *The Water Dancer*[2]

*Bhāva*s are something we cannot normally experience with the senses in their latent forms as dispositions (*sattva*s). Similarly, when we turn to the semblances (*līlā*s) in performance, affects take on a form that appears to take place. This seems far removed from the normal course of embodied life for most people however. This chapter therefore maps out a new terrain that infuses affects with the qualities of an ecology of forces at play. Like a wine that develops a particular *terroir* from the landscape, weather, and cultivation of a particular way of life, *bhāva*s are influenced by the mode of living (*vṛtti*) that becomes embedded in the bodies of performers and audience members. At times, these corporeal relationships between human beings and others are even fashioned *by* performances as they develop latent inclinations, tendencies, and potentials in persons to follow alternative paths in life outside of theatrical, ritual, or "specially marked" events.[3] However, this also means that certain bodies can become accessories to others, as the quote from Ta-Nahisi Coates's historical fiction set in the antebellum United States suggests. When the abolitionists in hiding are led by Corrine posing as a Southern slave-holding widow, her African-American staff ornament her and "extender her deeper modo" as "ethereal projections" of her affect. By attending to how bodies are both shaped and subjugated by these forms of affectivity, scholars of religion can begin to attend to historical contexts as local situations change the affordances of dispositions and semblances.

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While Chapter Two deals with *līlā* as the playful interaction in the affective ecology of historical figures in the Gauḍīya community, I turn here to the way they came to embody and invest themselves with the special potency of religious characters. These inadvertently revealed or reshaped their identities by shifting the parameters of identity within a separate gestural regime: *āhārya-abhinaya*, which contains costuming, makeup, and scenic design. Act Three in particular explores the nuances of actors and characters who are not "playing" a part but appear different due to the affective contouring that *āhārya* affords. How is the body shaped by costumes in performance? In what ways are these "gestures" infused with affectivity? And how does a playwright such as Kavikarṇapūra uses these techniques to in-form an audience of his meaning? I argue that the dramaturgical concept of *vṛtti* as habit can help make sense of these forces on the bodies of performers.

*Vṛtti*s are not only practices that are dictated by one's position and economic situation in a given society but also the expected behaviors, conduct, and temperament that one can embody. Like the religious garb of monastics, a "habit" is also a set of conventions or styles of presenting the body with others that identifies one's position and identity in a group. Clothing and cosmetic features are paramount to these practices of everyday affectivity—I react differently when wearing a costume based on the social qualities associated with its role.[4] Moreover, habits are said to generate character or disposition, suggesting the links between *vṛtti*s as they "turn" into *sattva*s or "induce" gestures. In particular, *vṛtti*s stress the movement, transformation, and flow of affect between bodies in a shared material world. While it might seem counterintuitive to link habit with the fleeting tendency of emotions, affect opens up habits to their capacity as gradual change that affords stability over time. Over time, my habits form "me" as they add to an embodied repertoire of possible movements.[5] Attending to *vṛtti*

allows me to ask questions about the manner or "style" in which a *bhāva* comes to be, as well as how it develops or becomes a "transformation." Originally derived from the Sanskrit root √*vṛt*, "to turn," this verbal form has similar grammatical uses to *sattva* but on a more present and on-going level. Strengthened, it can mean both "news" (*vārtā*) as well as how a story or way of "going about" things (*pravṛtti*) "turns out" (*vṛttānta*).[6] As a way of living in the world, it also includes the "livelihood" or animating activity in which one gains a "living."[7] Similar to how Āyurvedic texts discuss a "regime" (*vṛtta*) for healthy life, this presupposes moral and ethical norms of behavior as the habitus of this particular lifeworld.[8] Prescribing a regime requires recognition of the person's psychophysical disposition (*sattva*) before administering diet, exercise, and rules to ensure their continued longevity. Texts that stress these norms follow with "means" of living which constitute the social-economic ways of sustaining the self, including farming and trade. Certain patterns of behavior for one group can be beneficial while impeding others.

Medical regimes suggest that health and economic-social prosperity are seen as correlates in normative discourses, which draws attention to the "somatic stresses" on the bodies that labor.[9] Positive manners of living develop life (*pravṛtti*) while certain religious practices, including austerities (*tapas*) focus on extricating oneself from these norms by "turning back" (*nivṛtti*) this process of ecological affectivity on the self.[10] At times, "possession" over the body is even contested when an outside disposition "in-vades" (*āveśa*) and contests the self's control. In fact, mastery of the self is said to be a form of "self-possession" or self-investment (*svāmin*) over the "property" (*sva*) that belongs to the self, i.e. the body. Proper social and ritual behavior is equated to control over the body against outside forces while select regimes of practice can also modulate or share control with other dispositions.[11] The direct link between

economic, ethical, and affective prosperity: "Conduct (*śīla*) in one's self-disposition (*svabhāve*) is one's true livelihood (*sadvṛtte*), for he whose reward is in the enactment of one's motives."[12] How, then, do *bhāva*s manifest in styles and manners? Are the normal and specially-marked areas of life connected? And how do performances create links with these regimes of everyday life to enact novel transformations? In other words, can religious drama change our way of life after the show ends and we return home once more?

Bharata uses *vṛtti*s as aesthetic styles which carry particular traits. In Chapter Twenty-Two of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, the sage relates the story when Viṣṇu condenses the world into a single primordial ocean. After being challenged by two *asura*s named Madhu and Kaiṭabha, the martial forms of movement and ways of speaking engendered four primary styles (*vṛtti*s). The most vocal style is the "weighty" (*bharatī*) since Viṣṇu's movements "created a great burden (*bhāra*) on the earth (*bhūmi*)." This likewise can be read as carrying an affective "weight" on the "stage."[13] The power and virtue (*sattva*) of Viṣṇu's Śārṅga bow echoes to give the "grand" style (*sāttvatī vṛtti*) its name; the "graceful" (*kaiśikī*) style when he acted playfully and tied up his hair (*keśa*); and the "energetic" (*ārabhaṭī*) emerged from personal combat and passionate contact (*sam-√rabha*). The god Brahmā fashioned these actions into their verbal components by carrying over the contours and textures which made them unique.[14] Besides the "weighty" style that is used by all actors (*bharata*s), each has particular *rasa*s which fit its mood. The chart below shows Bharata's links between *rasa*s and *vṛtti*s from *Nāṭya-śāstra* 22.63-64:

Vṛtti	*Rasa*s
Graceful (*kaiśikī*)	Decorous (*śṛngāra*)
	Comic (*hāsya*)
Grand (*sāttvatī*)	Heroic (*vīrya*)
	Wondrous (*adbhuta*)
Energetic (*ārabhaṭī*)	Terrifying (*bhayānaka*)
	Loathsome (*bībhatsa*)
	Furious (*raudra*)

Weighty (*bhāratī*)	Compassionate (*karuṇā*)
	Wondrous (*adbhuta*)

Figure 3.1: Textures of Style and their Corresponding *Rasa*s

Bharata's next chapter links these styles directly to costuming as a discussion of "cosmetic gestures" (*āhārya-abhinaya*). He includes garments, ornaments, and pigmentation to create a first impression of the character's natures (*prakṛti*s) yet paradoxically help shape the actors to fit their roles against their own innate proclivities as unique persons.[15] Makeup (*nepathya*) in particular allows actors to "assume the nature of the person whose character he is to" play. Bharata insists that this involves transmigration or magic:

> Just as the soul of a man assumes another disposition (*para-bhāva*) related to the body of another animal [by using *mantra*s] after renouncing his own self-disposition (*svabhāva*) proper to his body, so a person adopts the behavior connected with the guise (*veṣa*) he wears after having his color and costume changed.[16]

The self can assume various bodies in a similar way as if they were outfits, yet here Bharata suggests that one can invite in a foreign disposition (*para-bhāva*) by literally walking in their shoes and applying makeup. Far from being merely surface features, these "cosmetic gestures" therefore allow an actor access to the embodied feeling of another's life.

I argue that *vṛtti*s can layer multiple dispositions or characters (*sattva*s) into a single corporeal body. Like costumes and other "cosmetic gestures," these forms augment the body and give it its social meaning and place. Furthermore, I argue that the *vṛtti*s are the most important aspect of an artist's craft; they embody the technicity, a pool of skills or habitus from which they can create the proper illusions onstage. While *līlā*s are the principle focus of the audience—the "dramatic illusion" that enraptures an audience by drawing them towards the characters' world—the actors must always have a foot in the technical realm of performance and cannot be "moved" entirely.[17] Their conduct onstage is therefore fashioned over time from

a long discipleship with the tradition. I examine the ways that Kavikarṇapūra's sixteenth century drama is invested by the shared conduct and habits of devotional audiences.

Various scholars in the study of religion, performance, and anthropology have focused on *habitus* or conduct alongside its ties to aesthetics and performance, this chapter also elaborates on the embodied manner in which affects become deeply felt and engrained in the very tissues of the corporeal body.[18] As a form of practice that develops affective tendencies into fully-embodied habits, *vṛtti* allows for the sedimentation of *bhāva*s into corporeal behavior without a single "leading" figure emerging from a collective to direct the movement.[19] However, dispositions that are unfamiliar to the body can also become entrenched within its affective matrix. For example, when Dalits in William Sax's study of Himalayan Gahrwali communities worship a form of the terrifying deity Bhairav, the community recognizes the deity's presence in the *way* they move during a positive form of possession (*āveśa*).[20] In other contexts of possession, spirits or deities can "weigh" (Bengali *bharā*)[21] down the body as the force of the deity comes to situate itself into a corporeal form.[22] Both *āveśa* and *bharā* can refer in Bengali to forms of this entrance into the body by *bhāva*s which afford a confusion of boundaries. Like Sulabhā's possession of Janaka in the *Śānti-parvan*, affects can confuse the lines between dispositions as a matrix for the self and others.[23] Particularly powerful affects, meanwhile, can develop that seem to sink into and immerse the body into their own inductive field.[24]

The body in this sense is not just a passive container but also a flexible node in the ecological network of a corporeal world. This material matrix (*prakṛti*) acts to distribute affectivity and identity across bodies, species, and even times. By attending to the body as a potential field of depth, we can see how the immaterial bodies of spirits, gods, and even

characters can carry their affordances into material elements as well.[25] The body itself develops its organs through "turning" in growth, such as when the stomach lining develops two uneven sides of connected tissues or hides its features which can only be seen when alive. The corporeal side of affectivity affords both the self and other dispositions the space to materially enter the world via the movement transmitted in a shared "flesh."[26] As both the nexus and material of self-fashioning, the body affords ways of changing the world as well. A society takes for granted the ways it fashions and shapes its members using clothing, which in dramatic terms is a "cosmetic" form of gesturing (*āhārya-abhinaya*). These performative forms bring us closer together" (*ā-√hṛ*) especially as they engender similar "embracing affects" (*anubhāva*s) in audiences. A spectacular performance elicits shared appreciation via gestures of dancing, clapping, shouting, or noise-making. A change in surface from a cosmetic gesture in this sense activates potential for depths as it moves. By folding, contorting, and giving texture and shape to our experience of our own bodies, costumes and makeup in performance shift the registers of our sense of self.

This idea of donning and shedding layers of the body is consistent with the way the unembodied self (*ātman*) shifts corporeal forms as if discarding old garments.[27] The body not only shapes our experience of the world but itself becomes a site for investment: the matrix of my very person houses itself (albeit temporarily) and resorts to a body while developing its powers, using them wisely, and eventually hoping for a positive outcome to its journey in the world. A religious mendicant, for example, might cut off affective ties to others (*pravṛtti*) in order to divest from normal habits (*nivṛtti*) and thereby remove attachment to the bodily ego. This would allow access to a deeper level of reality, including divine vision or experiences and might culminate in an expansion into pure consciousness or other realms altogether. Similarly,

the qualities (*guṇa*) that I develop through social conduct or a medical regime (*vṛtta*) engender a new style of habit (*vṛtti*). These fixed forms of conduct eventually mold my person, experience, and inclinations into a lasting temperament or disposition (*sattva*) or can likewise attempt to purge non-characteristic traits which appear against the grain of my normal disposition.

*Vṛtti*s as habits therefore incline us toward shared bodily experience: performances are one of the central vehicles for these affective forms to induce change and stability in a society. Any given audience aware of the social, cultural, and aesthetic norms of a genre of acting, dancing, recitation, or music can assess whether a performance succeeds or fails without being told by an outside authority or judge. Yet paradoxically each person "takes away" something unique from a given iteration of a play, score, or dance of which no one else might have been aware. Each performance therefore has different roles or "levels" (*bhūmikā*s) which feature vantage points to its larger matrix. An audience member sitting in the front row will have a vastly different experience than someone forced to stand at the very fringe of a performance space. I was almost run over at times while watching performances in India as space for spectators spilled over into municipal roads! Each *vṛtti* therefore offers multiple ways into a performance while waves of feeling "churn" within a single body in an economy of affects.[28]

In this scene of corporeal coverings and layers, an economy of affects emerges that modulates between levels of materiality and immateriality. *Bhāva*s will shift registers, both hiding and disguising fixed positions while revealing latent ones hiding beneath surfaces or just around the corner waiting to be turned over. Performances that engage *vṛtti*s therefore function to "dig up" these things through repetition as each "rehearsal" uncovers new ground, "turning" the soil of our bodies to allow for new potentials to grow even after harrowing

experiences. This can be onerous work at times as the embodied labor of performance will weigh us down with the affective force of these seismic shifts.[29] As habitual patterns that can modulate our behavior and dispositions, rituals function to change this set of affordances as we develop new ways of going about the "business" of our dispositions.[30] Continuing in my analysis from chapter two of Kavikarṇapūra's play the *Caitanya-candrodya*, I turn now to examine the stylistic and cosmetic gestures encoded in his affective habits. In particular, Act Three revolves around an *upāṅkha*, a dramatic play-within-the-play staged by Caitanya and his devotees in Bengal. Kavikarṇapūra offers an imaginative exercise in performance for his audience as he demonstrates the transformational capacities afforded by costuming. The bodies of historical figures become filled or uncovered with different *vṛtti*s that are not considered "acting" or "playing at" in the drama yet go on to radically affect certain people's livelihoods.[31] The plot of the inset play also deals with an episode of jurisprudence over possession of the forests of Vṛndāvana in a playful manner that treats the circulation of affect as a courtroom battle of the sexes.

First I examine the theater historian David Mason's ethnographies of *rāsa-līlā* performances in Braj to model a potential way audiences in Bengal might have responded to the shared *vṛtti* of Kavikarṇapūra's play in Act Three. I shall elaborate on Kavikarṇapūra's style as he introduces his characters and their relationships to their perceived costumes and guises in the play. Next I turn to the introduction and internal framing of the *upāṅkha* to see how the characters use dramaturgical conventions or break from them in novel ways. The roles established for the play are described as precipitated by a goddess acting as the playwright named Yogamāyā, who herself takes the role of a crone in its drama. Following this introduction, I turn to the innermost nested frame of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā's storyline in the

upāṅkha proper, which is called the "Play of the Toll" (*dāna-vinoda*). I argue the roles themselves, while sharing in the pure dispositional matrix of Kṛṣṇa's ultimate form, are corporeally shaped by the clothing choices of the characters played by Caitanya and his devotees. In this way the stage is "seized" by these forces despite going against the natural proclivities of the actors. In the following section I turn to the "business" of the plot's conflict: the territorial rights over the forest, which become enacted in a judicial argument between the young men and women of the cowherd community. In a somewhat carnivalesque manner, the *gopī*s and *gopa*s argue for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's supremacy over one another without resolving the tension. In the final section I argue the inner play's abrupt and unsatisfying conclusion creates an affective gap similar to the social death instigated by renunciation from society. Due to this disjuncture, Caitanya's future career as an ascetic renouncer is foreshadowed and dramaturgically connected to the end of the inset play. I argue as a conclusion that these waves of affectivity overwhelm the everyday individuality of our corporeal forms to encompass audiences in a larger feeling as both a form of investment and possession. Affects come to dwell in our corporeal forms and transform them in various ways through the *vṛtti*s that we embody and become inhabited by over time.

3.2 Invading the Stage in Style: Bodily Investment, Possession, and Habit

Continuing my discussion of the "Arising of the Moon of Caitanya" (1572) from chapter two, the play's ten-act structure is centrally involved with the separation and "surrender" (*viraha*) of affectivity to Kṛṣṇa in the guise of Caitanya. Kavikarṇapūra, the Bengali aesthetic theorist and playwright, wrote this play toward the end of his life.[32] The longing felt by the Bengali community acts as its dispositional matrix with each act creating a semblance to resonate with multiple compelling forms to the central hub of this stabilizing

affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*). Both Act One and Two introduce allegorical characters who exhibit virtues or vices in Brahminic orthodoxy, including the degrading current age (Kali-yuga) and Irreligion (Adharma) in Act One while Act Two is populated by Dispassion (Virāga) and Devotion (Bhakti). Act Three continues this trend with two additional virtues of Friendship (Maitrī) and Passionate Devotion (Premabhakti). They in turn introduce a new stylistic feature to Kavikarṇapūra's text: an internal audience and play called an *upāṅkha*. This functions to align the audience of devotees within the play with Caitanya as a householder named Viśvambhara, the "World-Bearing" lord before he decides to permanently focus on his missionizing efforts to spread Kṛṣṇa-*bhakti*. Act Three is a turning point in that the play is followed by the announcement of Caitanya's decision to become a religious renunciant (*saṃnyāsin*) to his mother Śuci. His hagriographic career as a renunciant continues throughout the next six acts but without the framing device of the allegorical figures. Act Ten results in a final dance of the community at the Jagannātha temple in Puri for the king Pratāparudra, whose grief at the loss of his guru necessitated Kavikarṇapūra to compose the *nāṭaka*.[33]

The characters in the internal play are performed by *bhakta*s in the community around Caitanya in Navadvip, his Bengali home. Before turning to Act Three proper, I focus on several related performance traditions in this chapter among other Gauḍīya groups who portray Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s to suggest how the Bengali audience might have become co-participants in the performance. As such, they would have responded to Kavikarṇapūra's style (*vṛtti*) within the given performance expectations of Bengali dramas such as the *jātra* format.[34] This relationality extends beyond the characters as vessels for affectivity: the audience itself takes part in the ecology. As devotees (*bhakta*s) to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, participants "share" (*bhaj*) in the relation with the divine in this game of back-and-forth, constantly shifting roles as their affective

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engagement modulates based on the form manifested by the divine. A person susceptible to parental feelings (*vātsalya-rasa*) will conjure a toddler form of Kṛṣṇa, for instance. Śrīvāsa's claim that Caitanya is performing a *nāṭya*, a "play," fits into this series of hierarchical forms and affects. Without stating his theological goals, Kavikarṇapūra's dramaturgy reveals that his audience has to participate in order to understand the action onstage.

The relationship between performer and audience is usually said to be weighted toward the actor's side of the equation, to make the semblance "real" or skillful enough to be deemed a proper performance. Theatre scholars have contested this assumption in terms of the living traditions of Kṛṣṇa dramas. As an ethnographer of theatrical practices, David Mason's study examines the North Indian area of Braj as a field for Kṛṣṇa dramas called *rāsa-līlā.* This genre principally involves young Brahmin boys led by an experienced adult troupe leader performing episodes from the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa* and devotional stories at a mostly amateurish level of skill. Yet somehow audiences can be moved to tears by the sight of these actors, who are called *svarūp*s or "self-forms" of Kṛṣṇa and his cowherding companions. These plays work on the same register as Kavikarṇapūra's drama, as Mason argues in his working definition of performance: "theatre is religion by making the unmanifest manifest—the fundamental thing that both theatre and religion try to do."[35] In both cases, manifesting Kṛṣṇa's plays (*līlā*s) is the central semblance. Theatre in Braj, however, is not seen as a mode of ritual enactment but a mood set by those who actively make up its audience.[36] Since Kṛṣṇa as a mischievous participant in "dark play" acts to fool us, he can be both himself *and* an actor, "Kṛṣṇa playing Kṛṣṇa" onstage while himself being a *svarūpa*.[37] The actors as "self-forms" of the divine are not representations.[38] Like temple images, they are *mūrti*s, embodied versions of the divine: "the image, be it of clay, wood, stone, or other material, not only *represents* Krishna, but *is*

Krishna."[39] In a similar manner, the actors activate latent structures within the audience members who are already familiar with Kṛṣṇa's antics and are prone to seeing them as a form worthy of envisioning, regardless of the actual skills of the performers onstage.

Turning briefly to my previous discussions in chapter one and two, I should emphasize the new direction this chapter takes. So far I have mapped out a path of virtual or potential forms of affective transformation. *Sattva*s are dispositions which reside outside of any given form or body yet infuse them with their presence. When an audience invokes them in a present moment of *bhavana* or "dwelling," they allow for affects to "take place" and gain form, a kind of field or receptacle where stable bodies can help channel fluid affects into shape. Gestures (*abhinaya*) become semblances (*līlā*) along this route. Gestures travel from a performer's body as they transition into the "jumping out" of semblance from material forms. A landscape painting is not there unless I can see the contours of the water in its brushstrokes lingering in the material medium. We catch the memorializing (*smaraṇa*) after its inception but can return to its traces when caught in this fashion. From there, affects abstractly awaken a dormant potential (*sattva*) as I recognize what that landscape denotes within personal or cultural memory. I "surrender" myself to this potential of the forms to move me as I "relinquish" (*viraha*) control. In this route, my analysis starts with the performer's body and ends in an atmosphere or matrix diffused into a set of potentials throughout the affective ecology.

An alternate route exists to reach the disposition moving in performances from the virtual to manifest: in this form of analysis, an affective economy circulates vital substances (*doṣa*s) and qualities (*guṇa*s) throughout corporeal forms as they are encoded from the latent domain of materiality (*prakṛti*).[40] What makes this different for each artform is the duration of the material basis; a gesture in dance has no lasting impact as it becomes inscribed onto air;

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the same movement lasts while the pigments on a brush stroke are transferred to a a canvas; a chisel can mark stone for ages. Each gesture transforms material reality via human intention as it in-duces (*abhi-√nī*) new forms to emerge. These new domains (*dhāman*s) are likewise the favored places where memories dwell: monuments retain history in the textures of stone and wood, the style of fashioning by the artisans and craftspeople, and the forms of language etched into its surfaces. Cosmetic gestures like these become inscribed with the unique contours and traits denoting a particular style, whether marking a single artist or influencing an entire empire's artforms. These styles are also the transformations of affectivity from a group dynamic into a shared world of personal choice. A single artist's style can offer new avenues for developing dispositions as it becomes a commanding form among others. Artists will find themselves unconsciously borrowing a vocal technique, a method of shading, or a turn of the head from these recognized artists even as they attempt to fight the hegemony of a single performer over their genre.[41]

Performances therefore retain this reservoir of techniques and affects in their given genre. In chapter one, I described *sattva*s as dis-positions, containing a host of qualities (*guṇa*s) held in abeyance as potential (*śakti*). This energy is not static but instead a well of possibility with movement underneath its calm surface. *Bhāva*s can shift this disposition into a material form that remains latent: the contours shift power as they "inhabit" (*āveśa*) a performance's "style" (*vṛtti*). While memorializing shifts the affect from the bodied nexus of the performer into a more diffuse domain of the virtual—where it can exist outside the body for others to engage as expressive remnant while grounded on another material form—style is materially present but harder to locate precisely. I can tell you my favorite poem "feels" a certain way without knowing the exact the figures of speech that characterizes it. This side of affectivity

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opens up in the manner or "way" things are performed across bodies. I am "caught up" in a poet's style even as it infuses me with emotive force. It covers me and "in-vests" (*ā-veśa*) me with its particularities or qualities (*guṇa*s). At times, I might even be "possessed" by a particularly strong feeling I had never experienced myself in everyday life. The depth of these feelings belies the techniques that only appear to obtain on the surface of materials: after all, why would seeing an actor in heavy stage makeup render a feeling more "real" for an audience? Yet somehow these surface features are the key component to engendering affectivity in audience members. Audiences will watch a play or dance even knowing the exact story about to be enacted and still find it incredibly moving. The shared textures of the performance seem more important at times than the didactic message. The actor's body becomes the "vessel" (*pātra*) for these fluid affects, containing them while allowing a fluid movement like a wave in the stillness of *sattva*.

This plays out most noticeably in the devotional relationships elaborated by the Gauḍīya theorists on *bhāva*s. When an actor "plays" a particular character (*prakṛti*), they temporarily embody the affects and feelings of that specific person regardless of their own dispositional matrix (*svabhāva*). Unlike Bharata's systemization in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* however, Rūpa Gosvāmin and Kavikarṇapūra see the actor-character relationship as simultaneous rather than assuming another's disposition (*para-bhāva*). Instead, in order to access these hidden layers of their *sattva* actors "un-wind" (*ni-vṛtti*) themselves from their everyday or ongoing (*pravṛtti*) styles of living.[42] Style (*vṛtti*) encroaches into gestures when they become habits, instilled into the corporeal forms and waiting for the proper moment to be activated. Multiple dispositions can be activated by skilled actors as they contour and shape experience by assuming these collective traits onstage. Actors today still use this definition: when playing a

king, the role is said to be a "kingly" *bhāva*. These "roles" are often called *bhūmikā*s as well to differentiate from the performers as "vessels" (*pātra*s) who "contain" them within their bodily contours. As *bhūmikā*s or "levels, small places" for a larger force to encompass, the characters portrayed in a drama or dance temporarily reside in the body of the actor or dancer. Likewise they are a small accomplishment of "step" along a path toward a full realization of the powers of the performative body. In mastering a *vṛtti* or set of movement and acting repertories, a performer gains access to a set of capacities and techniques that expand their bodily control. Their relationship with the audience therefore becomes a voluntary method of exerting force or conducting a novel set of transactions. Humans connect to one another through gestures into a shared habit as audience-performers enliven a style in each iteration of a performance.

A different set of relationships is encoded when the divine takes over and manifests itself in human bodies without agentive control from the person. This process is explained as the person "bearing" the weight (Bengali *bharā*) of the deity in question and is framed in terms of the clothing or costumes (*veṣa*) worn during a performance. The body "weighed down" by a deity role is said to "bear" ($\sqrt{dhṛ}$) the role such as in "female guise" (*strīveṣadhārī*).[43] This combination of inhabiting and weighing down fits the costuming requirements of most elaborate South Asian dramas. Multiple layers of clothing, makeup, and accessories are required to fully take on a character besides the self. Harshita Kamath's studies on "female guising" have treated the social and gender implications of men portraying women onstage.[44] These techniques involve not only costuming but also bearing and linguistic styles of presentation as a form of labor. When this latent set of material affects becomes the focus of aesthetic or ritual means, it opens up deeper strata within the body than individuals normally

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experience. Hence a distributed kind of embodiment is awakened and actualized in a "sharing" (*bhakti*) between divine and human.[45] By "implanting" a separate personality through cosmetic gestures into the external contours of the body, it shifts the potential for movement in gestures (*āṅgika-abhinaya*) as well as delimiting the range of vocal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*). Thick clothing prevent certain freer forms of movement and layers of makeup can prohibit subtle facial expressions while conveying a smaller range of stock emotional parameters. These conventions therefore come to take over the body of the performer, rendering them into a dividual person sharing in the textures and contours of an inherited set of characteristic tropes and features across social groups and permitting changes across bodily membranes of otherwise invisible forces.[46]

Costumes also offer the opportunity to turn illusions (*māyā*) into formal staging conventions. When an actor performs in an ensemble, seen in chapter two for instance, the ongoing relationships help to shape their gestures. This keeps the illusion of *līlā* alive and can further translate to new forms of assuming a character. These become "stages" (*bhūmikās*) as the roles are absorbed into cultural memory associated with the particular person who performed them.[47] For the Gauḍīyas, Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa's relationship might seem to be the assumed as coequal. However, because of Kavikarṇapūra's focus on artistry, deception, and playful frivolity as reoccurring motifs, Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s did not fit the contour of Caitanya's hagiography (*carita*). Kavikarṇapūra subverts his audience's expectations much like in Act Two by bringing Caitanya's identity in question through the relationship of characters. Relationality shapes the experience of *bhāva*s as the forms of the divine slip into new costumes and bodies—whether through supernatural means or dramatic gestures.

Let me now examine one such conventional system of performance in a Gauḍīya locale to suggest how Kavikarṇapūra's audience might expect his inset play to be performed when reading or seeing the *Caitanya-candrodaya* performed. Two structural aspects of the *rāsa-līlā* performances are important to show how Kṛṣṇa manifests himself in performance, and hence can help us understand Act Three. In Kavikarṇapūra's inset play (*upāṅkha*), Caitanya and his followers play characters in an episode from Kṛṣṇa's teenage antics with Rādhā and his friends. The central episode is the *maharās* dance, where the child actors perform with *kathak*-inspired percussive footwork the eponymous *līlā* from the tenth book of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*.[48] Kṛṣṇa plays his flute to entrance the *gopī*s, who come to him but become inflamed with pride. He disappears, and they wander Vṛndāvana bemoaning their love-in-separation (*viraha*) until he reappears. They proceed to perform the circle-dance that gives this *līlā* its name. In the second half of the genre, the *līlā* portion of the performances, dramatic episodes are strategically chosen for the audience and situation. Traditional or novel episodes can be added to the repertoire, showcasing the buffoonery and comic thievery between Krishna and the *gopī*s.[49]

While the formal dimensions of the affects in *rāsa-lila* performances seem "wooden" compared to the Stansislavskian system of emotional memory triggering actions, the audiences respond to these formal characteristics in a powerful way.[50] Mason argues that the affective investment in the *sattva*s of Kṛṣṇa, the *gopī*s, and other characters is so real as to become even *more real* than normal mundane existence. The eventfulness of Vṛndāvan can be seen as a *rehearsal*, playful but not always fun, and still painfully opening and revealing in the *dark-play* of Kṛṣṇa-*līlā*. As a form that mixes the layers of reality—virtual/material, historical/timeless—this process "churns" the affects of the audience into a material affordance that can be shared.[51] This description of *bhāva* as material accords with the idea of *rasa* as

"taste," or something that can be substantially digested and enjoyed.[52] *Bhāva*, according to *rāsa-līlā* troupe directors interviewed by Mason, is most pure and full in young children.[53] As children play Kṛṣṇa and his associates in performance, they infuse the audience with a devotional affect that permeates every action.

Mason argues that the performative force of imaging brought by spectators is just as much acting as the "performers" on the *rāsa-līlā* stage. Dispositions (*sattva*s) are activated and cultivated through the style (*vṛtti*) from the well of possibilities to create a depth of affect. [54] When the imagined/illusory nature of semblance (*līlā*) is overridden by the materiality of costuming, the *vṛtti* takes over. We can feel the weight of an actor's clothing as they move through a palace or forest through their *manner* of movement.[55] The emotional economy between performer and audience is tilted heavily toward investment by the audience in this case.[56] For instance, the performance is not tailored toward precision and highly-technical mastery. The style of *rāsa-līlā svarūp*s is highly, affectively *uninteresting*.[57] Instead, "the patrons' own devotional investment combine to easily overshadow the performers' (mis)steps."[58]

Audience members can invest so much devotional energy into the performance they effectively become performers: even off-stage, "patrons develop and play characters of their own."[59] This can be seen in how parents, for example, can take pleasure in watching their children perform while still learning an instrument; the technical skill is less important than the audience's expectations for the performance. Parents are already playing a "role" and hence assuming an internal relational in their identity with their children.[60] These roles are personae (*sattva*) or characters involved with Kṛṣṇa that audience members don in everyday life. The milieu of Braj itself trains the performers (child-actor-*svarūp*s and adult-audience-*bhakta*s) by

using "day-to-day living" in Vṛndāvan to habituate Kṛṣṇa's theatricality into their bodies and gestures.[61] Hence the "play affects the devotee through the mechanism of the character he or she has adopted and brought to the performance."[62]

Bhāva in Braj comes to mean not only powerful emotions but "one's particular *character*, either natural or developed."[63] *Bhāva* is deployed in ways analogous to *sattva,* inherent to a particular person's disposition as an affective palette of moods. Likewise, it is not just *internal* or subjective but instead an aspect of the role, or set of relationships, one engages in with others in affective bonds. Certain roles can even absorb the traces of individual style of the persons taking them on and manifesting them onstage.[64] Devotees wish a similar "coloring" by the deity in their own lives and actions to infuse the very world around them.[65] Agency enters the mix when the human actors, even when constrained "as" the deity in question by the audience's expectations, have the freedom to fight these embodied expectations.[66] This is only possible as the human choices and characteristics of the person become gradually latent in their actions, creating a mold or silhouette in the way they perform. A self-disposition (*sva-bhāva*) emerges as a *vṛtti* when our affective habits are placed into a social context. Angry people might make bad judges but good warriors, for instance, dictating the economic and social roles that fit them. Their personal "style" (*vṛtti*) is fashioned by the sedimentation of gestures and movements which become habituated in the choices and aspects of their personality that emerge as proper with others. Hence I can say someone is an "angry" person or a "cheerful" one when I mean their disposition appears *in the way* they engage in their everyday business (*pravṛtti*), or as a form of practice.[67] Going against one's everyday habits (*nivṛtti*) is used when one wants to dis-engage from the world as a career or at a later stage of life.

These temperaments or "styles" of living are always engaged with others though. Turning back to the Gauḍīyas, even the deity and his associates are actors playing "roles" as an *ensemble* that occurs simultaneously in a single body or across multiple corporeal forms. John Stratton Hawley's discussion of the *rās-līlā*s centers on Kṛṣṇa's metatheatricality since "every play is a play-within-a-play."[68] Why is this metatheatrical event so central to the overall structure of the *Caitanya-candrodaya*? Kṛṣṇa's presence onstage as a *svarūpa* can be considered metatheatrical, a deity playing at imitating another who himself plays Kṛṣṇa (playing himself) in the supreme realm of the unmanifest Vṛndāvana as I examined in chapter two. This disorientation is a feature of Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s as the relative and the absolute are blended. This chapter's new lens of *vṛtti* adds the idea of dimensionality to the performance process as well. If the character-persona draws on Kṛṣṇa's "pure disposition" (*śuddha-sattva,*) then the "roles" being played onstage are real and true, ontologically indistinguishable from the supreme reality only by degree.[69] Rather than stressing a linear model of mimesis, audiences draw on their knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's disposition as a trickster, a cunning master of disguise, wit, and verbal wordplay, to see the actors onstage. Even children can appear to fit this when they rebel against the conventions of *rāsa-līlā*—audiences see "just" Kṛṣṇa in such acts! Hence the texture or depth of a performance's affects as they go with the grain of expectations or against it suggest how well the affective economy. I distinguish Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s as episodic events onstage involving ensembles and the affective forms that take over the bodies of devotees or actors stemming from the transformation of this disposition into a *vṛtti*. While audiences experience the semblances as their central focus, performers are often drawn into the style to allow for the disposition to possess their bodies or invest them with its affective circulation of force.

While episodes in Kavikarṇapūra's play are shown to be playful, his interior play (*upāṅkha*) in Act Three involves a constant reminder that the actual deities appear onstage in spite of the limited budget of the actor's costumes. However, the roles enacted onstage are discarded at key moments. In Kavikarṇapūra's play-within-the-play, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa can pretend at being a judge and an advocate respectively yet remain themselves. In the end, these roles are a means to continuing their play. Yet this moment also causes a change in the lives of the devotional community. In Caitanya's hagiography, Kavikarṇapūra's next episode involves a change in his everyday habits from the householder life (*pravṛtti*) to that of a renunciant *saṃnyāsin* (the epitome of *nivṛtti* habits). I turn now to the details of this interior drama to examine how theatrical ritual can change—for participants on the stage and in the audience alike—the experience of the world they inhabit. More, it can even transform their physical bodies.

3.3 Styling the Divine: *Dramatis Personae* & their Guises in *Caitanya-candrodaya* Act III

Kavikarṇapūra's interior play in Act Three of the *Caitanya-candrodaya* has parallels in the work of other Vaiṣṇava authors of his time, although the device on which it hinges, that of the "toll-taking pastime" (*dāna-vinodaḥ*),[70] appears to have few literary antecedents. There is no mention of this *līlā* in the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*'s tenth book on Kṛṣṇa's childhood, although it does appear to have been known in folklore. Two Gauḍīyas anticipated Kavikarṇapūra in writing on the matter: Raghunāthadāsa with his poem *Dāna-keli-cintāmaṇi* and none other than Rūpa Gosvāmin with a one-act *bhānika* play, *Dāna-keli-kaumudī*.[71] Let me turn briefly to Rūpa's play, in which his theatrical goals are aligned with those mentioned in Act Two of the *Caityana-candoraya* (albeit directed now at Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes). In the *prastava* (prologue), the *sūtradhāra* recites two benedictory verses (*nandī-śloka*s) that extol Rādhā's

compact manifestation of all the *sāttvika-bhāva*s, as well as affects particular to the disposition (*sattva*) of the female protagonist (*nāyikā*) called *kila-kiñcita* in Rūpa's system.[72] Rādhā's *sattva* is recognized as the most intense concentration of all the affects (*mahābhāva*) which not only ornament her body but manifest the deepest relation with Kṛṣṇa. In the second verse, however, Rūpa emphasizes the play of identity taking form as it suggests new semblances for their disposition to manifest:

> All glories to Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the demon Mura. Although it is all-pervading, it tends to increase at every moment. Although it is important, it is devoid of pride. And although it is pure, it is always beset with duplicity.[73]

Three main affordances appear from semblance in this section. First, Rādhā knows Kṛṣṇa by his deeds or exploits (*līlā*s), his gestes which bear the enemy's name inside his own (Murāri, "Mura's Foe"). Hence Kṛṣṇa himself is given relation to others with each name. Second, Rādhā's love (*preman*) for him involves an affective economy similar to that seen Bharata's ecology of forms. Its *vibhāva*s fill the world ("all-pervading"), blocks other affects by delimiting her response through *anubhāva*s ("devoid of pride"), and activates a pure matrix like a stabilizing affect. Lastly, in order to manifest properly, Rādhā's love requires costumes as disguises ("it is always beset with duplicity"). For Rūpa, the relation between the two lovers is play (*līlā*), ongoing role-taking and role-discarding in equal measure. The theatrical artifice (*māyā*) required for this duplicity helps to keep the ensemble fresh by offering various costumes and "characters" for them to assume. The illusion is central to maintain the semblance.

Kavikarṇapūra's interior play presents a contrast. In an utter departure from the duplicity over an audience seen in Rūpa's text, the style of certain characters overrides the ensemble and disrupts the process. Kavikarṇapūra's choice to break up the illusion showcases

the disparate affordances of the virtual movement in *līlā* to the costuming and corporeal form

of movement in *vṛtti*. The style of Kavikarṇapūra's language constantly embodies these themes

in word choice, punning double-entendres (*śleṣa*), and theological investments. In

Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetics, the words themselves make up the "body" of poetry (*śarīra*) while

poetic style (*rīti*) forms his corporeal beauty.[74] All three of these features accrue in the

interpolated one-act play. To spoil the end, the inset play has no culmination—it seems to

seduce the audience and immediately disorient them from the expected outcome. I argue this

choice of breaking the stylistic conventions allows for Kavikarṇapūra to transition Caitanya

into the next role in his career. Hence Kavikarṇapūra's style, not the worldly expectations of

his audience, foreshadows Caitanya's return to the "spread a market" of his affective goods as

part of his "profound play."[75]

Act Three of the *Caitanya-candrodaya* begins with two personas similarly to its

predecessor. The *upāṅkha* is introduced following a short prelude scene with allegorical figures

taking center stage. Maitrī (Friendship) appears alone onstage looking for her companion

Dispassion, speaking in Prakrit dialogue. The scene shifts suddenly to Sanskrit as she

anticipates the figure of Premabhakti (Loving Devotion).[76] Friendship's description of her

companion continues Virāga and Advaita's speeches. Premabhakti is filled with a liquid grace

that overflows as embodied bliss (*ānanda-mūrti*).[77] She enters and claims Maitrī is family in

the lineage of Self-Disposition and Purity: "I am your grandmother's sister."[78] This begins a

family tree of the affects to certain religious and social virtues:[79]

> Your father is the Bhagavān's Mercy (*anugraha*), your mother Attachment to the
> Bhagavān's People. Many children were born to them in time. One was a son,
> Discernment (*viveka*), and many daughters who were all named Devotion. Discernment
> and his wife Thought (*mati*) had a daughter, Free from Jealousy (*anasūyā*). She married
> Even-Tempered (*samabhāva*) and after giving birth to Self-Disposition (*svabhāva*) and
> Purity (*śuddha*), she had a daughter, you, Friendship, who brings me joy. These

daughters (*bhakti*s), depending on whether their dispositions (*bhāva*) had *rasa* or did not (*sarasa-nirasa*), turned into two virtual divisions (*dvi-vidhatām*); the first lacking *rasa* (*nīrasa*) were divided in manifold ways due to union with the qualities of primordial matter (*guṇa-yogāt*); the others were divided into ten by sharing in *rasa*. The enflamed (*ujjvāla*), wonder (*adbhuta*), tranquility (*śama*), laughter (*hasa*), divine love (*preman*), and maternal affection (*vatsala*) these are the six *rasa*s, the ultimate (*uttamā*). The six devotions who share a dwelling in *rasa* (*tad-āśraya-bhājaḥ*) are proper for desire (*rati-yogyāḥ*).[80]

This passage is dense with allusions to personified theological virtues (*sattva*), as well as the affective qualities needed to experience drama (including *svabhāva* and *śuddha*, two key concepts required for Gauḍīyas). The forms of *bhakti* that emerge from this lineage become abstracted into two sets of qualities themselves (*dvi-vidhatā*). The first lack *rasa*, and hence cannot be "extraordinary" (*alaukika*) forms of *rasa* for Kavikarṇapūra, since they form a union (*yoga*) with the material qualities of *prakṛti*, the dispositional matrix of the world instead.[81] However, a different set of qualities appears as "proper for desire" for Kṛṣṇa, (*rati-yogya*). This term indicates a "fit" between the affective matrices and devotional service as seen in the community's ideals, as they become objects or "dwellings" (*āśraya*) in which one can partake. This suggests that the daughters are affectively charged by their presence within a human body infused with *rasa*. Devotees therefore have a two-fold process of training their habits. By investing in the non-material forms associated with Kṛṣṇa, *bhakti* becomes "perfumed" (*vāsanā*) with their proclivities necessary to reach this level. Likewise, divesting from the material allows them easier access to the dispositional side of Kṛṣṇa's affects. The *sattva*s necessary for this process therefore refashion an economy of affects into a new shape for proper devotion as they "adhere" to certain bodies in circulation.[82] Accessing these forms of devotion is therefore possible only by divesting from other interests in the world (*nivṛtti*) and investing in Kṛṣṇa's self-disposition and purity.

The Premabhakti character's genealogy creates a lacuna in that the four remaining *rasa*s are abandoned without explanation, although Kavikarṇapūra in his aesthetics also cites ten devotional *rasa*s.[83] In similar ways to the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*, Kavikarṇapūra attempts to reconcile multiple frameworks for *rasa* in Bhoja, Mammaṭa, and Viśvanāstha's theories, working different forms of devotion as aspects of *rati* (desire). However, their examples all provide *bhāva*s, without any corresponding *rasa* to which they can be developed.[84] Instead, the ten seem to be an encapsulation of his teacher Śrīnātha's formulation in the *Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā*. This commentary on *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* 11.12.8 aligns with Premabhakti's description of the devotional family of forms. Śrīnātha's system, however, offers the idea that *bhakti* and *rasa* are two separate structures and can overlap, since *rasa* can exist without devotion. He claims *bhakti* is "a mental style (*mano-vṛtti*) developed when there is the awareness of something worshipable (*upāsyatva-jñāne sati*)."[85] The ten in his list, which Kavikarṇapūra seems to assume, include the eight from the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, plus *śānta* and *preman*, which Śrīnātha claims subsumes *vatsalya*. In this section, however, Śrīnātha argues that *bhāva* can arise for "adoration toward a god, guru, etc." This affect can be raised to *rasa* when it is directed toward "extraordinary excitants" (*vibhāvair utkaṭaiḥ*) including Kṛṣṇa.[86] In Chapter Two, I argued that this form of *bhāva* as "adoration" functions as a liminal concept to link the ordinary and extraordinary affects (*a/laukika*) together in semblances. As a set of parallel hierarchies, adoration links the worldly and otherworldly *rasa*s in aesthetics using *bhāva* as a connective tissue while *rati* or *adbhuta* function as the latent matrix for all other specific affects to take form. Each works from a certain dispositional matrix (one unique *sthāyi-bhāva*) and unfurls into the variegated forms known in Bharata's list and beyond. I argue in Act Three that Kavikarṇapūra deploys these two tropes in separate ways for characters

in the inset play and for his audience. These hierarchies are grounded in the affective body as either *rati* (for Kṛṣṇa) for the characters while *adbhuta* ("wonder") colors all the others with its affordances for his audience. Hence the *līlā* appearing in this episode appears playful and amorous to the characters while for audiences they experience it as part of Kṛṣṇa's wonderous disposition permeating all of their lives. All of Kṛṣṇa's affects emerge for actors as they unfurl from a common love for the divine, while an audience experiences all affects as "wonderous" when they apply to Kṛṣṇa in an affective ecology.

Kavikarṇapūra's allegorical *sattva*s introduce a third potential matrix as the foundational stabilizing affect of all others. The character Maitrī (Friendship) asks whether her interlocutor, Premabhakti, is the "best/final" (*caramā*) among them. The splendorous semblance replies with two additional verses that encapsulate the entire play's theme, as well as Kavikarṇapūra's assessment of *rasa* in relationships to the divine:

> *sarve rasāś ca bhāvāś ca / taraṅgā iva varidhau*
> **unmajj**anti **nimajj**anti / yatra sa prema-saṃjñakaḥ
> **khaṇḍānand**ā rasāḥ sarve / so'**khaṇḍānanda** ucyate
> **akhaṇḍe khaṇḍa**-dharmā hi / pṛthak pṛthak ivāsate

> All *rasa*s and affects are like waves on the ocean,
> emerging and submerging in that known as *preman*.
> All *rasa*s are portions of bliss, *preman* is said to be the whole of bliss.
> The qualities of the portions manifest in the whole as if each exists for itself. [87]

Kavikarṇapūra's style here is evident in the textures of his word choice and their liquid affordances.[88] The matrix (*preman*) works as an ocean of possibilities from which its waves (semblances) temporarily arise. The ocean is said to be self-fulfilling literally in this metaphor: by creating clouds which appear temporarily separate from itself, it overflows as the separate traits return to it as a reservoir of potential. *Preman* works as a dispositional matrix similar to *ahaṃkāra* in the character-centric formal theory of Bhoja. It unfolds into manifest *rasas* and

*bhāva*s of Bharata's aesthetic ecology from its unmanifest, latent form (*sattva*). Lastly, it is renewed as a singular container filled with all the particularized qualities as the affects are performed in an ensemble. This is only possible through the means of embodied, living beings to manifest away from the virtual side of the equation though. *Vṛtti* again offers a different pattern: it acts as the waves to the still ocean of *sattva* while the "emerging and submerging" of *līlā* acts in a different manner to bring the matrix to light onstage.

Kavikarṇapūra, moreover, has adopted and inverted Śrīnātha's argument that *preman* emerges from a "pure affect alone." Along the lines of Bhoja's theory (as discussed in Chapter One), *preman* here manifests itself as a particular *rasa* (at the second level) with its stabilizing affect as "possessiveness" (*mamakāra*). While it would seem to contain elements familiar to *śṛṅgāra-rasa* as well, *preman* is nourished by its connection to "solely a pure affect" (*kevalena hi bhāvena*). Śrīnātha explains the *gopī*s did not experience desire (*kāma*) for Kṛṣṇa since *bhāva* alone is without corporeal desire.[89] This suggests that *preman*, as a polymorphic semblance, can encompass the other similarly to how Kṛṣṇa's two-armed form pervades others with its affective intensity. Kavikarṇapūra, on the other hand, claims *preman* has a stabilizing affect in "the melting of the heart" (*citta-drava*),[90] while parental love (*vatsala*) as a *rasa* has its stabilizing affect in possessiveness. Kavikarṇapūra's system therefore makes the fluid transformation of *preman* even more prominent than that of his teacher. *Preman* in their systems must have an element of self-effacement to afford access to Kṛṣṇa. For both theorists, however, the imagery of the ocean and the partial (*khaṇḍa*) and non-partial (*akhaṇḍa*) work to illustrate *preman*'s potential matrix to manifest other *rasa*s as semblances: "Partial bliss enters from the self-disposition (*svabhāvataḥ*) into complete bliss: thus all *rasa*s are contained in the *rasa* of *preman*."[91] Briefly, these dispositional matrices are more accessible to specific *rasa*s

depending on the person involved, while they can also exhibit other affective forces toward Kṛṣṇa.[92] By this process, certain roles or relations with the divine can be temporarily maintained but require greater affective labor to circulate. *Preman* manifests through Caitanya's social labor as he "spreads out a marketplace" of affective goods all containing the same substance.[93]

Maitrī and Premabhakti introduce Kavikarṇapūra's interior play staged by the devotees and Caitanya. The latter replies that she intends to purify the hearts of all embodied beings (*sakala-loka*) by Caitanya's orders as he wishes to "follow in the footsteps" of Vṛndāvana's queen. Who this important person is and what her affects are is held in abeyance—something which most translators of the next passage have ignored. While an erudite audience anticipates and relishes the upcoming revelation, Maitrī seems to be working as an audience surrogate in suggesting she does not know what is going to happen: "Where are you going?"

> Prema: *yatra khalu tad-**bhāva**-**bhāvuka**-subhagam-**bhāvukatayā** sarva-**bhuvana**-priyam-**bhāvukasya** tasya tan-**nṛtya**-anukaraṇaṃ bhaviṣyati*[94]

Premabhakti's message is much more coy in this line than translations usually present.[95] First, there is no gendered pronoun to suggest a female subject in this line; only after two additional questions does Maitrī inquire why the lordly Caitanya would perform with a woman's affect, and her question is couched in Prakrit and hence would not be immediately understandable to a general audience either. Premabhakti answers her, "O child, you don't know." Instead, this current line accents the affectivity infusing Caitanya's performance, without referencing him directly. While he is supplied as the subject (*tasya*), this pronoun can be neuter or masculine. Further complicating this phrase is the ostensible "performance" (*anu-cikīrṣor*, *anukaraṇam*), a "doing after," or twice-done action that also has the drama (*nṛtya*) as its object.[96] The scene sets up a nested, iterative series of affective forms, which Stewart calls a "play within the play

within the play."[97] For a first-time audience member, Kavikarṇapūra's use of compounds and pronouns and the lack of a clear subject make this passage especially difficult to parse:

> Where the performing of someone's drama will happen, who becomes fondly disposed to the entire world due to the virtual affectivity that fosters the good-fortune of those who can relish this someone's prosperity (*bhāvuka*).

The possessor of this drama is left ambiguous but his or her presence accrues "good-fortune" (*su-bhaga*) through the mediation of repeated affective terms: *bhāva*, *bhāvuka*, *priya*, and *bhaviṣyati*. Their presence onstage will be relishable for those "wishing to be affected" (*bhāvuka*) who are simultaneously prosperous. Hence change and affectability are considered auspicious.[98] The performance likewise creates a space for this relishing to take place (*bhuvana*) by rendering everyone within the cosmos fondly disposed (*priya*) to this person. This can only occur since the performance attempts to transform this desire into a latent form (*bhavukatā*). Other translators construe these phrases together without delving into the thicket of each individual term's relation to the others and thereby rendering certain ones more dominant. The iterations of identity are so blurred even a knowledgeable audience that understands Sanskrit can barely follow the meshing of forms, which layer abstraction into abstraction in the multiple genitives and undefined pronouns. This shifts the affectivity fully to a virtual space: the audience is left with no clues to who this performance is *for* or who will enact it.

Due to this hiatus, Kavikarṇapūra reveals how drama can approach the invisible reality of the divine in its pure disposition. Each "stage" (*bhūmikā*) of reality functions as a world in its own fashion. A *sattva* manifests its semblances not *against* the illusions of the world but *through them* as these levels are connected via divine or affective sight.[99] This works because the world of the *garbha-aṅkha* play (inner reality) about to be revealed is nested within a

historical world of the *nāṭaka* drama. The personified dispositions in Kavikarṇapūra's allegorical level of narration are engaged in a cosmic contest for the entire universe at the most "external" iteration. A performance facilitates the audience's access as the affects draw or pull them across these barriers. Each individual stage or world has its own style or manner (*vṛtti*) yet they seem to be similarly nested within a single dispositional matrix (*sattva*).

The crossing affords the "dizzying and profundity" while the audience holds these different worlds together. This disorientation is the affordance of drama (*nāṭya*), in which identities shift constantly and no single form seems to remain stable. Kavikarṇapūra's language facilitates this this disorientation, shifting the potentials within Caitanya's *dis*-position to suggest new potential forms he can manifest as his *vṛtti* layers relations at different strata.[100] Premabhakti will claim that the characters are actual *avatāra*s "crossing over" into material forms as self-dispositions (*svarūpa*s) of the divine characters as they take center stage.[101] For an initiate audience member, this might be the first encounter with the secrets at the heart of Gauḍīya theology. Premabhakti's frequent exclamation, "Child, you don't understand," is the main affective clue for how an audience would encounter this scene.[102]

The secret hinted at in Kavikarṇapūra's outermost layer of the play[103] is succinctly encapsulated in the *bīja* or "seed" of Maitrī's next question: "Considering he is so magisterial (*tāvad īśvara*), how can he perform with a female affect (*strī-bhāvena*)?"[104] The masculinity that would seem to dominant Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya as a commanding form would prohibit him from taking on a feminine semblance. Maitrī's question suggests Kavikarṇapūra's *upāṅkha* will engage in a formal semblance (*ābhāsa*). Premabhakti heads off this discussion. This is intended for the audience's benefit:

> Īśvara indeed contains all *rasa*s! He enacts a variegated play due to the entreaties of all the devotees' hearts (*āśaya*). By following each of their particular latent impressions

(*sva-svavāsanā*), the devotees enact the proper play. Hence he will perform someone's play of reenacting (*tad-anukāra-līlā*), the utmost among all, in order to invest (*āveśayitum*) that person's affect (*tad-bhāva*) in the hearts of certain secretive Vaiṣṇavas (*bhāgavata*s). What could have more *rasa* than this?[105]

Kavikarṇapūra continues the game of delaying the identity of who Caitanya is playing here with pronouns (*tad*) that have no direct referent, making it even harder to determine whether a character like Caitanya or Īśvara is doing the performing. The magisterial side of the deity (Īśvara) is polymorphic since it can encompass the feminine register as well as the masculine. Furthermore, like in previous theorizations the devotees enact particular *līlā*s with their corresponding affects based on their innate karmic impressions (*vāsanā*s) that continue to dwell in them from previous lives.[106] These impressions invest (*ā-√viś*) them with a proper affect from the disposition (*sattva*) that facilitates *preman*. In other words, since each actor will relate to the emerging character in their own manner of loving, the relations they assume will shift who they can become. The embodied history of each devotee layers their identities together across different strata which *preman* unearths in rehearsal. The oblique phrasing therefore allows one to see multiple potential identities in this "re-enactment" (*anu-kāra*). As a semblant form (*līlā*), moreover, these interwoven identities help to carry and "in-vest" these affects into the hearts of certain audiences with the textured style in which they are clothed.

Who is the audience to this play? Kavikarṇapūra's characters refer to receptive audience members (*sāmajika*s) as the "privileged" (*adhikārin*) according to Premabhakti; Caitanya tells the doorman Śrīvāsa to only allow those "suitable" (*yogya*) into the performing space.[107] This also refers to persons possessing a form of a "super-intending" (*adhi-kārin*) affect: in other words, a commanding form. The audience needs to have a resonance with the material to be presented and to have their self-deluding affects for the world neutralized. This would seem to limit those "ready" or "fit" to be shown the secret the devotees will reveal

onstage. Yet this commanding form is likewise not a strict adherence to the letter of regulations. As a habit or style, *vṛtti* would allow for a permissible range of affects while also screening out certain events, gestures, or combinations of *bhāva*s much like a bouncer or doorkeeper maintains order.[108]

Playing the stage-manager (*sūtradhāra*), Haridāsa recites the benedictory verse of the *aṅga-rūpa* play to begin it officially. Premabhakti continues to comment interspersing her thoughts throughout the show while he begins reciting off-stage. Maitrī claims this is not allowed in the path of the regulations (*śāstrīya mārga*) but her counterpart claims an alternate path of "following passion" (*anurāga mārga*) is available. One follows rules, the other participates in the unregulated. The formal "role-playing" (*bhūmikā*) of actors moves from a learned style (*vṛtti*) into gestures as a set of techniques to be employed onstage. The passionate route meanwhile crosses from semblance into gestures as the illusory fashioning onstage (*māyā*). Hence the two paths function as the rules and the play of games, later extending and developing over time as the former delimits its possibilities.[109] Learning to play *with* the rules of the game renders play into an interactive level. Players must recognize the potential for relating to others not *as* their roles but bringing out latent potentials within them.[110] The semblances allow for dispositions to manifest new relations that were not possible when delimited by the rules while the *vṛtti*s of performers overlap with that of characters to create a hybrid body.[111] I argue that this focus on roles showcases how multiple *sattva*s can envelope a body and are revealed through the embracing affects (*anubhāva*) in particular.

Premabhakti therefore turns to the cast to see which characters will be played by select actors. The audience must "audition" in the same way since they too perform. The two sets of bodies partaking in the ensemble are not discrete. Much like Mason's audience members in

Braj, those "watching" the performance sometimes contribute as much affective energy as the actors onstage. Friendship asks, "Who will take which roles/costumes?" (*bhūmikā*). Premabhakti again refrains from naming a subject until offering "the god" (*deva*) and the role he shall play. The text then switches from prose to verse:

> (prose): Listen closely dear. Considering that Advaita is virtually Rudra (*rudratvena*) and the Self (*ātmakatvaṃ*), and it being unsuitable (*ayogyaṃ*) due to being the supreme secret (*parama-rahasyatvena*), it is impossible for other persons. Hence that one, assuming the innate-form (*svarūpa*) of Śrī-Rādhā,

> (verse): He transformed Advaita into the guise of the Lord (*īśa*, i.e. Kṛṣṇa), and he assumed the aspect of Rādhā himself/herself. It appears so, but in reality that god alone became two-fold.

> With only the mere guise, Advaita has ensured the virtual success of his actions (*carita-arthatā*), for there in his body Hari himself had manifested (*āvirbhūta*).

> Haridāsa will be the stage-manager (*sūtra-dhāra*), Mukunda the assistant (*pāripārsvaka*). Vāsudeva Ācarya will handle the green room and makeup.

> She who arranges for the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of Śrī-Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as Jaratī, the Lady Yogamāyā has settled into the body (*tanu*) of Nityānanda.[112]

The audience in Maitrī's question therefore must see themselves entangled in the illusion as much as the cast of characters. Audience member or actors, each entails taking a role (*bhūmikā*) to ensure the group's success in performance. For instance, a costume or "guise" would normally be assumed yet the act of appropriating this identity in *āhārya-abhinaya* (the "cosmetic gesture") reveals Hari himself in Advaita's corporeal form. *Vṛtti* here entails a combination of body, garment, and social cue to shape not only audience understanding of the character but also the experience within the performer's affective self. On the other side, these divine and unmanifest forces appear in multiple bodies of devotees while stemming from a singular disposition. Kavikarṇapūra's choice of verb as "investment" (*āveśa*) as a form of "take-over" from the affective economy normally maintained within a bounded body.[113] If

Caitanya can somehow "remote control" multiple actors' bodies while simultaneously performing in the scene, this facility is due to his investment in Rādhā's self-form (*svarūpa*) when costumed for the part. Her affective labor is so great it generates its own gravitational field, pulling the other roles into its orbit.

Rādhā's appearance in Ācaryaratna's courtyard signals the gravity of the secret held in abeyance for multiple pages of dialogue: "Śrī-Rādhā ought to become manifested (*vyakta āvirbhavitrī*) due to her *rasa*."[114] Premabhakti finalizes the casting by assigning Śrīvāsa the part of the devotional sage Nārada, Śuklāmbara his assistant the doorkeeper (*snātaka*), and the chorus of singers led by Śrīrāma and Śrīvāsa's brothers along with Ācāryaratna and Vidyānidhi. The audience, meanwhile, is limited to the devotee's family members, including wives and brothers as well as friends who were already in attendance having proven their suitability.[115] Nityānanda's character Yogamāyā has an important role in this drama: to arrange (*kārinī*) for the secret and public trysts (*saṃyoga*) between the two lovers in Vṛndāvana as the ostensible author of the play-within-the-play.[116] The essential is manifested again in the "radiating" corona of *bhāva* surrounding its external form.[117] Rādhā's affects are so potent they become "hyper" (*mahat*) as they possess the most readily-accesible route to the disposition of *preman*.

The facilitation of others allows Caitanya—and hence Kṛṣṇa—to access Rādhā's affects by crossing over bodily traits. Caitanya himself is called Gaurāṅga, the "golden bodied," since he is said to be Kṛṣṇa's *svarūpa* experiencing Rādhā's body. The next verse deliberately carries the fluid "crossing" into the material world from the virtual: "Out of desire to discover this, Hari the Moon, rich in *bhāva* for her, was born in the river of the womb of Śacī."[118] As the moon (*candra*), Kṛṣṇa therefore modulates the waves on this ocean, which acts

as the reservoir of potentials that break into a series of rivers and streams to carry the current

of this affective force down into the world. Advaita's role as *māyā* therefore allows Kṛṣṇa to

displace his magisterial side and to be controlled by his devotees.[119] To perform this, the deity

requires a go-between to bring his entire disposition down as an ensemble with him, as only

certain environments accompany their particular forms and affects:

> Those kinds of *līlā* which are not known even in Vaikuṇṭha I shall perform, and in these
> will be my wonder. In relation to myself, I shall be in the *bhāva* of the lover of the
> *gopī*s, and *yoga-māyā* will cause this to be by her own power. But I will not know that
> it is (only) *yoga-māyā*, nor will the *gopī*s know; the forms and qualities of each of us
> will steal eternally the minds of the others.[120]

Vaikuṇṭha is the abode of Kṛṣṇa's magisterial side that would prohibit *preman* from developing

to its highest pitch. The disposition (*preman*) is transmitted through the "forms and qualities"

as the contours of a style (*vṛtti*) crossing over between the worlds. As these roles are "staged,"

they also accrue the material traits of the world in which they began. Hence each realm (*bhūmi*)

inflects the mode of enactment (*bhūmikā*) that transforms into the characteristic gestures of

this space. These gestures then go on to carry the affective weight into the performer's

delimited bodies. The dramatic "illusions" created by this dispositional figure continue from

gestures into the roles staged for the audience. On the other hand, the affects move from style

(*vṛtti*) through *abhinaya* for the performers since the disguises carry the *sattva*'s affective

contours ("forms and qualities") instead of "crossing down" (*avatāra*) into an ensemble

directly. The performer's bodies mediate the corporeal style for audiences who may then carry

it forward into semblances.

This realm of disguise is not the proper place for the *gopī*s, however, who instead dwell

in Kṛṣṇa's abode (*dhāman*) of Vraja. This aspect of his ensemble provides the other essential

*vibhāva*s for his dispositional matrix to manifest including the forest setting, deer, birds, trees,

vines, and flowers, rivers: "An *aṃśa* of the essence of *sandhinī* (energy of being, *sat-śakti*) is called pure *sattva*, and the reality of Bhagavān has his refuge in this; and his place, bed, home, father and mother-all these are aspects of pure *sattva*."[121] The Bengali commentator Rādhāgovinda Nātha explains that this *sattva* is not an aspect of primordial materiality (*prakṛti*) but instead the container (*ādhāra*) for Kṛṣṇa's essential being, taking a portion of himself (*aṃśa*) and manifesting it as his *dhāman* ("home, place"), the eternal Vraja.[122] Nityānanda and the other *bhakta*s are included among these associates within this pure matrix.[123]

As embodied contours of this disposition manifesting in material forms, the devotees share a common layer. Their latent bodily habits (*vāsanā*s) can radiate outward like petrichor, the smell after a strong rain, revealing fragrant potentials waiting to be experienced in the environment. In particular, we see Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja focus on Nityānanda as he is the closest in form to Caitanya since "all are in potential in Kṛṣṇa."[124] The "parts" (*khaṇḍa*) and the "whole" (*akhaṇḍa*) related to the divine allow these individuals to treat Caitanya as a student, a friend, or a master since the virtual, eternal play contains all three affects. In the same manner, Yogamāyā-Nityānanda takes on an aspect of Kṛṣṇa potencies (*śakti*) to arrange for the play. The forms held as "potential in Kṛṣṇa" become semblances when they manifest from his dispositional matrix.

Therefore, the actors transform their qualities as historical persons into a disposition by developing a style (*vṛtti*) appropriate to their temperament and to the audience who will share in the performance. Performances allow for exchanges with the divine as human bodies take turns in the receptive pole (audience) and the active pole (actor). The latent disposition takes place in Vṛndāvana as this is the *dhāman*'s semblance that manifests as each different particular relationship ("in all three *bhāva*s"). Yet the other two forms involved shift to the corporeal

register of *vṛtti* as the actors labor to transform these *bhāva*s for the audience. The shifting

identities between character and performer are felt as human beings become vessels for the

liquid affordances of *vṛtti* to overcome them. For the audience members the semblances are

featured as dramatic relationships between the characters and the scenery as the pervading

affects (*vibhāva*s). For actors, the embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) take central importance as

they delimit their bodily movement and transform it into an enduring historical legacy, a

repertoire of techniques, and a way of living as performers (*vṛtti*). These habits are innately

economies containing multiple layers and currents of forces held in reserve until enacted. Each

unique performer becomes filled with the particularities of the style's history and the

generalized nature of the affective economy in their habits. These *vṛtti*s emerge as a new form:

material like gestures but latent like *sattva*s. Each style is a unique "mode of living," with its

attendant business and way of relating to others.[125] A *vṛtti* endows the actor with textures that

interlace and cross over their dividualized bodies to form a whole within the affective economy

of the play.[126]

3.4 Affective Roles (*Bhūmikā*s) in Narrative Framing: Act III, *Upāṅkha*

So far *vṛtti*s seem to be the connective thread between audience members and

performers necessary to engage in an affecting performance. While semblances can appear to

an audience of one, habitual styles are always shared or distributed. As I mentioned in Chapter

One and Two, Bharata in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* though recommends only a partial fit between actor

and character. An actor's innate disposition (*svabhāva*) has to be overridden at times by

"another's dispositon" (*para-bhāva*) to be called "acting." Why are these roles allotted to

actors if they do not match the *svabhāva* or innate tendencies that will be appearing onstage?

How does Kavikarṇapūra address this maxim in the play? And can more than one disposition

infuse multiple styles or vice versa in a given performance? How do the different layers of a "role" (*bhūmikā*) reveal the hidden labor and history of past performances? Bharata describes the use of actors who only act as themselves (*svabhāva*) rather than impersonate another. The actors instead are chosen for their *bhūmikā* or role due to their style of movement, conduct, (*śīla*) and potential to play a certain temperament. They must be the proper "vessels" as actors (*pātra*s) chosen by experts to carry the affective contours of a character's *vṛtti* onto the stage. There has to be a proper "fit" between performer and audience expectation without resorting to the actors playing themselves.[127] The affective economy of the drama functions on the material currency of *bhāva*: it needs to sustain the audience's interest and feed the actor's intensity. Roles (*bhūmikā*s) therefore function as one type of this conveyance.

The internal play formally begins with the Stage-Manager (played by Haridāsa) reciting auspicious verses as a preliminary rite of worship to the stage (*pūrvaraṅga*).[128] The first verse is *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* 10.90.48 with the subject "the god of love" (*kāma-deva*) and a second figure invoked: "may Śrī-Rādhā graciously bestow upon us a mesmerizing drama on the sports of Vṛndāvana!"[129] This opening section sets the tone of the play by planting the seed (*bīja*) of the plot (*itivṛtta*, "what occurs") as well as activating the dispositions necessary to appreciate the plays to come. The poet sets the characters in motion for "what they must turn out" (*iti-vṛtta*) or the regime of their actions which leads to a desired culmination (*phala*).[130] Haridāsa offers the benedictory verses (*nandī*s) as "the secret of acting" (*nāṭya-rahasa*). These concentrate the affects from the form of the Lord (feet) making it "a place of prodigious contentment" (*proddāma-saṃtoṣa-bhūḥ*).[131] By reciting these words, Haridāsa appears like an embodied form of the Goddess of Drama (*nāṭya-laksmyā mūrtaḥ*) whose outward manifestation (*pratīka*) carries the weight of luminous energy (*tejo-bhara*).[132] While a

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semblance appears alongside his material body, it is the corporeal weight of affectivity which externally manifests the disposition of a goddess. Dramas, after all, require living actors to perform them. This *tejas* seems to radiate like the corona of *bhāva* around Kṛṣṇa's body; hence the goddess appears to share his form temporarily while he is still dressed like the Stage-Manager (his *bhūmikā*). The *vṛtti* therefore allows for a semblance to emerge but is not the principle focus of the actor; the audience members are more interested in seeing it than in attending to the craft of his vocalizations.

Shifting back to the instigation for the performance, the Stage-Manager claims Nārada (the devotion-obsessed sage) has unreasonably requested him "to fervently enact (*narīnṛtyamānā*) the delightful play (*keli-kaumudī*) of the lord that enraptures the goddess Vṛndāvana herself."[133] His Assistant (*pāripārśvaka*) comes on stage to ask why the sage wished to hear a play when he is already engaged in the deep delight of experiencing *brahman*. While the Stage-Manager's questions point toward devotional service, they do not explain the affective engagement an audience might take in seeing a play. This question seems to have unwarranted assumptions for the Stage-Manager, as he rebukes the Assistant and claims in similar terms to Kavikarṇapūra's other works:

> Hari's ordinary play courses virtually in *rasa* (*rasa-ayanatvam*) more than his extraordinary play (*alaukikī itas kila laukikī iyaṃ līlām*). Even second-hand stories (*anukathā*) of his playful crossings (*līlā-avatāra*) are much sweeter than some old tale of the universe's creation and all that jazz (*viśvasya sṛṣṭy-ādi kathā paliknī*).[134]

Kṛṣṇa's exploits have affordances different from other stories of "antiquity" (*paliknī*, "hoary, grey-haired"). Instead of focusing on the creation accounts of the universe (*sṛṣṭi*), the *sūtra-dhāra* advocates for *līlā*s in the world (*laukikī*) which are sweeter than the heavenly exploits (*alaukikī līlā*) of deities such as Viṣṇu, Brahmā, or Śiva. In the exact manner, the audience is

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not encouraged to attend to the backstage labor (its makeup, costumes, and *vṛtti*s) of the play but only to its semblances.

Jumping ahead, the Stage-Manager refers to the *upāṅkha*'s central episode as Rādha and Mukunda's "Toll-Play" (*dāna-līlā*). The playwright is said to be Yogamāyā who became embodied as Jaratī, Rādhā's grandmother, in the course of its plotlines.[135] This places Nityānanda's *sattva* (Yogamāyā) and *bhūmikā* (Jaratī) as the central author of the *rasa*, making her the mediator similar to other go-between characters. The mediating roles can shift registers of the story at times while also playing multiple characters, breaking the "fourth wall" to speak directly to the audience, and parodying the norms of the principals.[136] Yogamāyā's "illusory" power envelops the play as the Stage-Manager searches for actors to play the characters. His daughters have the necessary skills but they too become gradually subsumed into their roles as the *gopī*s. The Assistant claims they are unable to perform as they have gone to Vṛndāvana to worship a form of Śiva called Gopeśvara (Lord of the Gopīs).[137] This upsets the Stage-Manager to no end as the threats of the road worry him—foreshadowing the deceitful play of Kṛṣṇa:

> Those girls are unfamiliar with the way, who among them is suitable (*upayukta*) be a friend to guide the others? Gape-mouthed (*karāla*), with his hands overflowing with others wealth and property (*dāna-drava-utsika*), he is lurking, an elephant (*stamberamas*) at his abode of clouds (*megha-dhāmā*).[138]

Kavikarṇapūra layers a series of double-entendres and cultural references in this verse. Audiences would be drawn to Kṛṣṇa in the natural landscape as one of the forest's attendant dangers by these references. Kṛṣṇa's name literally means "dark," so his domain (*dhāman*) or power in the colors of rainclouds matches this texture.

The Stage-Manager's vocal semblance in this passage creates resonances with Kṛṣṇa's body and the environment as both fascinating and dangerous. His frantic laughter suggests the *kṛṣṇa-līlā* enacted by the character Yogamāyā-Jaratī is already under way. Paradoxically, this

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character is also the one who ends Kṛṣṇa's earthly pastimes altogether as the hunter Jarā in the *Mahābhārata* slays him with an arrow to the foot.[139] The danger implied by this power, even to the protagonist behind each play, therefore encompasses the aspects of both the creation and destruction of the performance. Yogamāyā-Jaratī is not to be taken lightly: "She is certainly a *yoginī* of great power, we should not assume age (*vṛddhā*) has diminished her faculties. As it grows fuller (*vṛddhā*) the circle of the moon does not gradually weaken; it can shine on its own as it desires (*kāmam*)."[140] Yogamāyā's powers create a dense ecology of forms which link bodies to the landscape through the particular feelings these places evoke, sedimenting affects into the body. Kṛṣṇa's death, the *rāsa-līlā*, and the toll play are all linked through her mediating influence as she sets the stage when Kṛṣna "fully takes refuge" in her illusive powers.[141]

Nor is place the only feature of this ecology. The moon, in fact, *does* grow less bright after reaching its zenith at the *pūrṇamāsa* or "full of the month." This monthly ritual usually marks celebratory times of renewal but signals the waning moon's "dark fortnight," *kṛṣṇa-pakṣa*. Like the fluctuating affects that encompass the bodies in play, the effulgence suggests one additional player: Time. As Kāla, or the "flowing circle" of *samsāra* itself, Time functions as an important antagonist in the story in a latent form. Time is out to get everyone in the progressive mode of becoming (*pravṛtti*). There is a right time and place for every stage of one's social and economic life in the *varṇāśrama* system of Brahminical thought encapsulating the social world of Bengal at Caitanya and Kavikarṇapūra's era. Time moreover prevents one from seeing the *gupta*-Vṛndāvana hiding in an adjacent level of reality. There is a proper time and place for every performance to occur; hence time functions like an adverb by modifying the moon and Jaratī through desire (*kāma*). In order to overcome this obstacle in the path toward the play's goal (*phala*), therefore, time needs to be transformed, converted, or defeated

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in its ultimate embodiment as Caitanya's antagonist, the Kali-yuga or "Dark-age" in Act One. This is the ostensible reason for the entire ten act *nāṭaka*: activate the longing in separation (*viraha*) for Caitanya felt by his historical associates in others to continue the process of memorializing (*smaraṇa*) him.[142] In order to overcome time and bring Caitanya's absent presence to the forefront though, he has to be removed from the time-bound world itself. A hidden reservoir or depth of techniques are possible to remove one's historical progress in the cycle of *samsara* and was an alternative to the householder lifestyle (*gṛhastha*) Caitanya followed up to this point in Act Three. The renunciant lifestyle (*saṃnyāsī-vṛtti*) paradoxically embraces a social form of death in order to overcome Time altogether. Viśvambhara the householder will *become* Caitanya the renunciant by divesting from his normal life in Act Four. The *upāṅkha* is Kavikarṇapūra's missing link between these two modes of life: the play's style acts as a catalyst to transform this performer's very mode of living into a new one focused on "Kṛṣṇa consciousness" (*caitanya*).

Kṛṣṇa's absence works in the same manner throughout the drama. His play cannot end if the community of Gauḍīyas has access to its virtual ongoingness in the eternal play (*nitya-līlā*), but this virtual form has to take on material dimensions to manifest. Therefore the *upāṅkha*'s playwright Yogamāyā takes the seed (*bīja*) of the characters' affects and develops them (√*vṛdh*, "to grow, mature") in such a way as to both (1) reveal time's power and (2) transcend it in some way, to "cross" over its sphere of influence in *saṃsāra*, the ocean of the world. If the audience members therefore manages to divest themselves of their everyday habits (*nivṛtti*) and go beyond the currents of *saṃsāric* life, they will have access to Kṛṣṇa's disposition (*sattva*). The ensemble creates an *as-semblage*, things that "flow together" (*sam-*√*sṛ*) but act as discrete phases in transformation.[143] The shifting perspectives of waxing and

waning of the moon imply this ocean as their shadowy counterpart (*chāyā*), a double which functions to bring Time into the swirling matrix. Caitanya as the "rising moon" (*candra-udaya*) is both the controller of this tidal force of the world and its culminating feat, the *phala* or "fruit" which the entire *nāṭaka* attempts to reach.

The one-act *upāṅkha*, on the other hand, has its own goal which emerges in its plot: *prema-rasa*. In order to facilitate this dispositional matrix, none of the players can stand outside this dense web of illusion (*indra-jāla*). As the playwright, therefore, Yogamāyā continues to set the scene as well as participate as one of its characters in the *līlā*. The enclosing circles of the *upāṅkha* create tensions in the semblances, blurring the lines between realities. The Stage-Manager's daughters cannot play the parts since they have gone to see the same deity the characters of the inner play will seek out. Their training (*vṛtti*) would be useless since they have moved into a full identification with the audience. A performer can temporarily become enraptured but must still switch over to the role to continue facilitating the aesthetic ecology in gestures (*abhinaya*) for the audience. Hence the "cosmetic gestures" (*āhārya-abhinaya*) attempt to corporeally ground the actors into the special concentration needed to perform, "extracting" (*ā-√hṛ*) them from everyday concerns or "seizing" their attention back to their roles.

Meanwhile, the Stage-Manager and his Assistant hear the clamoring of Nārada offstage. He enters the scene in the body of Śrīvāsa looking for the "king of actors" (*gandharva-rāja*) with another character named the Snātaka in the body of Śuklāmbara. This second layer of the play gets to a deeper function in the overall structure of Kavikarṇapūra's dramaturgy. In Bharata's dramaturgy, *snātaka*s are doorkeepers of harems, suggesting they are a type of eunuch who therefore offers access to the queen.[144] The Snātaka acts as a *chāyā* or

simulacrum for Caitanya in this scene foreshadowing Act Four: will Viśvambhara become a *saṃnyāsin* like his elder brother and break his mother Śacī's heart in the process? The Snātaka acts as Nārada's guide to Vṛndāvana, suggesting the process of time itself functions to bring devotion to its proper domain. This character suggests a liminal status in regards to the actor's dispositional matrix as delimited by gender. The Snātaka's presence onstage therefore signals that Nārada is approaching the Queen of Vṛndāvana's domain while Caitanya's gendered body is being layered by the style with a historic matrix besides his own. His presence inaugurates the scene to come.

Nārada's entrance creates a stir among the allegorical figures as well. Premabhakti goes into an extended description in compounds of his features.[145] Maitrī reminds her relative that Śrīvāsa would be playing Nārada, yet Nārada himself had arrived. Prema's remarks hit at a correlation between the levels of the play and the semblances with their dispositional matrices: "Since Śrīvāsa naturally is possessed by Nārada (*sahaja-nārada-āveśatvāt*), Nārada's very own virtual form manifests (*nārada-rūpatā vyaktā*)."[146] Prema also adds that Advaita and the others have merely had the characteristics superimposed (*āropa*) onto them respectively. In this sense, the spontaneous and natural (*sahaja*) is set against the imposed and attributed (*āropa*). Prema instructs the audience to attend to the appearance (*dṛṣṭa*) or semblance that affects one best or properly (*yathā*) and hence should be accepted based on how well the actor performs.[147] Yet the actor must simultaneously disguise the labor of the drama from audiences. The two affective forms hence become elided while the actor's body carries the weight of this character's history into the scene as another layer of the *vṛtti*.

The two different forms of affectivity—natural and imposed—suggests that materiality affords different phases to *bhāva*s. In this case, the semblance which superimposes itself onto

a material body jumps or "falls out" (*niṣ-√pat*) in the aesthetic ecology as a function of its abstracting characteristics. *Līlā* removes the use function of objects or persons and makes them over into new forms in play.[148] Their materiality does not cease to exist in this process though; it remains latently present, working at its own temporal duration. This set of "natural" (*sahaja*) affects congeal in the person and fit the contours of their habituated selves (*vṛtti*). These natural tendencies are the result of one's conduct (*śīla*, *vṛtta*), shaped over time by the actions or gestures one uses to interact with others though.[149] This level is still latent but materially more obvious as it activates the disposition: "Conduct (*śīla*) according to one's self-disposition (*svabhāve*) is one's true style (*sadvṛtte*), for he whose reward is in the enactment of one's motives."[150] Only by overriding our normal motives can this "true conduct" or "style" emerge.

One way to temporarily override these patterns is to have a secondary disposition "enter" (*ā-√viś*) the corporeal body and endow it with its own qualities. The "investment" (*āveśa*) of Śrīvāsa matches the affordances on this texture of reality as it connects him to Nārada; therefore it goes "with the grain" so to speak and appears natural (*anuloman*). When there is no necessary fit, another form can take over an investment in this manner "against the grain" (*pratiloman*) as seen in rituals of negative possession.[151] This layering of material and immaterial forms creates a dense tissue of affective force which can records the strata of time. One lifetime, for example, can resonate with personal memories while the host of "dwelling" (*vāsanā*) latencies from previous lifetimes can affect the person as well.[152] This form of investment is also a kind of garmenting or clothing of the body into layers or "sheaths" (*kośa*s) which blur the boundary between covering and flesh in Sanskritic cosmologies.[153] There is a proper "fit" between the affects which embrace the body and shape its emerging awareness of the world through both embodied and social cues to its nature.[154]

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The switch to Nārada and the Snātaka signals again the propriety (*aucitya*) of the setting as well as the fit between actor and costume. This form of gesturing is called *āhārya-abhinaya*, derived from the root √*hṛ*, "to carry, appropriate." As this involves makeup (*nepathye*), the term can refer to the "cosmetic" gestures which render a world of performance from the outside-in. All theatricality requires cosmetic gesture of some kind for success.[155] Even the idea of a place leaves lasting impressions through these cosmetic details that accrue in bodily memory. The Snātaka comments, "The king of *gandharva*s has gone along with his all his props, thinking, 'It ought to be performed only in Vṛndāvana (*vṛndāvane eva nartitavyam iti*).'" Come on, let's go there." Nārada seems already to be caught in the illusion: "Is this not Vṛndāvana?" The novitiate explains to him, almost as if talking to a child, that Nārada has forgotten himself due to the extreme bliss overflowing from the landscape. Nārada is unable to differentiate internal versus external stimulus as the semblance in art experience equates the external force of possession (*āveśa*) as madness: "Who among those whose mode of life (*vṛtti*), present in the internal and external organs of sense, are deranged by the madness of bliss, can even distinguish their own self at all, what to speak of others?"[156]

The Snātaka then proceeds to lead him on the path, with Prema claiming this is a form of *rati* for the place itself that arises "naturally" (*naisargikī*). Nārada, after going a short distance, again bursts out into a verse resonant with alliteration and dense with compounds:

> Beyond the Viraja river, (*yat-pāre virajaṃ*), manifesting like the supreme firmament (*virāji parama-vyoma iti*), which is sung about as eternal (*yad gīyate nityaṃ*), made endearing with creeping vines made of consciousness and stages consisting of consciousness (*cit-maya-bhūmi-cit-maya-latā-kuñja-adibhir mañjulam*), surrounded on all sides by flocks of birds and herds of deer fashioned of the majesty of concentrated bliss (*sāndra-ānanda-maho-mayaiḥ khaga-mṛga-vrātair vṛtaṃ sarvatas*): this Vṛndāvana is seen. What other result for the eyes is possible? (*kim aparaṃ sambhāvyam akṣṇoḥ phalam*)[157]

Nārada's statement makes the goal of the drama this vision of Vṛndāvana, yet is not physically present to the audience's senses. Instead, it overtakes the habitual ways (*vṛtti*) of his body from inside and out and leads to his vocalizations. As a location that registers both as bliss and consciousness, it appears affectively as an eternal (*nitya*) semblance that can appear elsewise— in another way in the same physical locale. This entails a form of mutual recognition, wherein the audience affects the world seen on stage as they in turn recognize their own being affected by the world.[158] The different levels of its landscape and its plants are made of *cit*, the principle of consciousness proper to the ultimate reality.

Kavikarṇapūra's vocal gestures prepare the audience to see the *līlā* in Vṛndāvana not as an allusion or a painted backdrop on the stage, but to access its hidden dimensions. The back-and-forth of the imagery, moreover, moving from internal to external modes of life (*vṛtti*) mirrors the alliterative reflections (*vṛtta*) of the phrases that interweave to convey something about the location beyond its content: beauty. In this phrase, the name of Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman* is withheld until the fourth stanza, yet it is only "seen" passively (*īkṣyate*), suggesting the agent of this visioning is larger than Nārada himself or the audience. Instead, the audience is caught up with the sage in the rich textures of its linguistic form, that like the creepers wrap around the central semblance and contour it, ornament its shape, and enrich the joy they take from its manifestation in sound. This appears as a semblance since no material forms can be found to ground it.

Moreover, Kavikarṇapūra's linguistic style (*vṛtti*) can elicit strong *anubhāva*s that delimit or "enfold" the performance, blocking out certain views. This brings a level of bodily depth into the language. Alliteration and resonance (*yamaka*), which highly ornament Kavikarṇapūra's style, emphasizes the "tripping" of sounds over one another, acting like a

verbal manifestation of the *sāttvika-bhāva* of stuttering (*svara-vikāra*). In *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* verse 141, Kavikarṇapūra claims that the embracing affects for the awesome *rasa* (*adbhuta*) are all *sāttvika*s, suggesting that the sonic quality carries its affective charge here into the ornamental trope. Kavikarṇapūra calls this wonderous expression of his devotional disposition the "exterior virtue" (*bāhya-guṇa*) of his *rasa*.[159] In this manner, the feeling of the divine is communicable, if not explainable; it carries over in the textures of words and their sounds. The poet's "current of amorous *rasa*" (*praṇaya-rasa-rīti*) and his skill (*vaidhagdhī*) are the affordances necessary to manifest *rasa* as wonder in the writer followed by in the audience.[160] In the *Caitanya-candrodaya* Kavikarṇapūra does not layer meanings as deeply in his language, but this delving into the sonic beauty of Kṛṣṇa's *dhāman* does afford resonances regardless of the material circumstances of its performance. Hence Vṛndāvana can appear in a courtyard put on by historical figures, on a stage recreating its performance, in the mind of a reader or audience hearing the text recited, or meditatively inhabited.[161] Each emerge from the *vṛtti* as it insinuates or inhabits (*āveśa*) within the audience from this staging (*bhūmikā*), contributing to their gestures of wonder and amazement.

How does an audience enter this semblance, this *dhāman* or landscape of the divine's body? The Snātaka gives the first hint: "Divine Sage, this is Vṛndāvana. I hear the sweet notes of the Bhagavān's flute."[162] Nārada's next verse extolling the beauty of the place links the sounds of the flute to its affective force through the *vibhāva*s of animals and plants there:

> The chattering of maddened geese on a lake of sweetest *rasa*, the voice of bee's music in a flower garden of delicate love (*praṇaya*), the drumroll on the deadly fields of battle (*samara*) of highest please (*surata*): Glory to the Enemy of Pūtanā's resonating flute, which bites the heart.[163]

Prema finally interjects once more, signaling the arrival of the Dark-Moon (Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-*candra*), the shadowy counterpart to the bright Gaurāṅga. Nārada, at another layer of narrative,

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comments that it must be true, as the pervading affects of the landscape start to delimit and empower the scene with their own dispositional affects: "The mountain range releases a weighty torrent (*dhārā*) as if of tears; the assembly of trees and plants shoot upright (*pulakayati*) and remain as if shivering in delight; the rivers are frozen (*stambha*): the sound of Hari's flute loudly rises up as the sounds '*hari-hari*.'"[164] The flute creates a semblance of the community's primary devotional ritual, *nāma-saṃkīrtana* or chanting of Hari's name, which in turn gives rise to the *sāttvika-bhāva*s that manifest as his presence *in the body* of the devotee. The Snātaka responds that dancing is the proper way to receive this sonic embodiment of the divine, which can run ahead of the visual form, as it is "the essence of bliss (*ānanda-sāra*), the embodiment of what can be completely relished (*puru-rasanīyam mūrta*)."[165] Sound can eclipse cognition and feeling, overpowering the normal habits of the mind and invoking a deeper dispositional matrix than that normally delimited by the everyday self.

Other facets of roleplaying come to the fore as *āveśa*s. While the term signals possession in most cases, I have deliberately brought out its similarities to costumes and guising (*veṣa*). As part of *āhārya-abhinaya*, *āveśa* acts to carry over the latent disposition in its virtual stillness to a material medium. While gestures can "progress" (*pravṛtti*) into a style by adding to its total fund of possible movements and textures, these styles also feed back from the body into *sattva* as a well of possibilities. This collects the patterns of movement and abstracts them, affording them an ability to be easily recognized within a culture. For example, I could mention a character to an uninitiated audience (say Kṛṣṇa) and some aspect of his style will be present to even people who have no idea who he is. This first stage on the hermeneutic circle is the general impressions of "floating ideas" that permeate a culture when we do not pay direct attention to its contents. These traits can only enter the virtual domain though by

being "di-vested" (*ni-vṛtti*) of their enclothed containers. Characters become part of public culture when others can play them besides their originating actors, for example. After becoming dispositions (*sattva*s), impersonators can be taken over by these virtual forms as they become "invested" (*āveśa*) in a return movement. The clothing allows them to embody and assume the burden of the character's affective traits. *Āhārya-abhinaya* therefore is "cosmetic" not in the sense of being superficial but of engendering a relation to the world as performers' bodies become permeably open to the affects of a role.

Let us return to the play-within-a-play, the *dāna-vinoda*. Kṛṣṇa extols the beauty of Vṛndāvana's landscape, indicates its features in Sanskrit verse immediately after the stage direction. He carries a *kadamba* staff and his flute, and waits in his trademark "bent-at-three-points" (*tribhaṅga*) posture—a tableau immediately recognizable to any South Asian audience familiar with the deity's icons (*mūrti*s). Kṛṣṇa's lyrics contain the most alliterative force out of any seen so far, identifying the ecology and making it an affective soundscape in the process. The Sanskrit retains this better than the translation can in English:

> *hasantī vāsantī, valitamukulo bālabakulo*
>   *viśokaś cāśokaḥ, sulabhavicayaś campakacayaḥ*
> *anāgaḥ puṃnāgaḥ stabakamanaḥ paśya sumanaḥ*
>   *kuṭīraḥ pāṭīrasvasanasurabhir bhāti surabhiḥ*

> The *vāsantī* is smiling, the young *bakula* tree is covered in fresh buds, the *aśoka* tree is carefree (*viśoka*), the bunches (*caya*) of *campaka* flowers are asking to be picked (*vicaya*), the faultless(*anāga*) *punnāga* bowing down with its flowers as if in prayer. Look, the grove of flowers (*kuṭīra*) that gladdens the heart (*su-mana*) is filled with fragrance (*surabhi*) when a sweet-smell (*su-rabhi*) blows from the breath of the sandalwood trees (*pāṭīra*).[166]

Kṛṣṇa's waxing eloquence with alliteration (*vṛtta*) marks the poet's own style coming to full bloom as the *vāsantī* flower itself smiling and laughing in delight (*hasantī*). Vṛndāvana jumps off the page or out of the words to the audience as the lyric textures form a dwelling that it

enters (*vāsantī*), as well as the ornaments clothing (*vasana*) Kṛṣṇa's body as the landscape. Hence Kavikarṇapūra's style (*vṛtti*) allows for the subtle latencies (*vāsanā*s) that "perfume" our experiences in the world to activate in a different ecology, opening the way for the drama's illusory delights.

This line convinces Prema that "He is definitely not Advaita," suggesting that Kṛṣṇa as the absolute reality cannot be non-dual nor lacking a form (*nirūpa*). Instead, Kṛṣṇa himself appears without the art and architecture (*kalā-śilpa*) of costuming and makeup (*veśa-racanā*). Her line signals that "Appearing just as is proper (*yathārtham*), the real thing affords the greatest wonder (*prathayati camatkāra adhikaṃ*). The Form of what is proper gives pleasure and bewilders us."[167] The fact that Advaita as Śeṣa or Saṃkarṣaṇa in his dispositional matrix could play Kṛṣṇa is also polymorphically accurate. As he is the closest body to Kṛṣṇa's *svayam rūpa* or matrix, he possesses the closest set of traits beyond his personality and color. Prema confirms that this is the case, but again approaches the question from the hierarchy of bodily forms:

> One who is not Kṛṣṇa cannot become Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa himself ought to be capable of composing various forms (*nānā-ākṛti-kṛti-samartha*). As the whole (*avayavin*), it is proper that he can assume (*gṛhītum*) the assemblage of parts (*avayava-kalāpa*). How then can one part of the whole take his form?[168]

In this passage, Kṛṣṇa's dispositional side (*kṛṣṇatva*) cannot be accessed by the individual components of the ecology; metonymy is impossible according to this stance. On the other hand, as the affective form possessing qualities (*avayavin*), he can narrow his focus to any individual portion to take on its affordances. Prema reiterates that Advaita cannot be Kṛṣṇa in this sense, but only the deity himself appearing without the aid of cosmetic gestures (*āhārya-abhinaya*). Only vocal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*) remain for the performance to manifest his disposition, along with the physical gestures he takes (*āṅgika-abhinaya*) with his body.

Prema's comments remind the audience that as Sadāśiva, Advaita's dispositional matrix in fact does possess affordances of Kṛṣṇa's majestic (*aiśvarya*) affects but lacks the sweet (*madhurya*) side which characterizes the *vigraha*. Only one other body will exhibit these traits.[169] However, despite Prema's assertions, the body of Kṛṣṇa onstage must still be clothed. While Advaita might be manifesting a *līlā* of the deity in performance, there is still the issue of where this semblance is grounded. The performer's body acts as the stage (*bhūmi*) for the role to take place (*bhūmikā*). *Āveśa* can be triggered in dramaturgical terms with the correct implements and costuming choices as well as from a natural upwelling of feeling. This is an "in-vestment" in the religious clothing (vestments) of the characters. As an "entering" of the body, this form allows the actor's *vṛtti* to adapt to a novel disposition (*para-bhāva*) such as Kṛṣṇa for his devotees. The dramatic narrative of the *dāna-vinoda* itself centers on the economic and legal rights invested in the landscape of Vṛndāvana's forest ecology itself. Who has ultimate possession over this wonderous place? And how are the feelings engendered there accessible to those who do not have a claim on it?

3.5 The Business of Kings: The Trial (*Vyavahāraṇa*) of Vṛndāvana

The conflict of the *upāṅkha* starts over whether Kṛṣṇa can legally enforce a toll over visitors to the forest. This erupts into a carnivalesque battle between the sexes in the form of a trial or legal transaction (*vyavahāraṇa*) over the superintendence (*adhikāra*) of the forest.[170] However, the play's structure puts temporal causality into doubt as the primary semblance of the interior play. The opening volley of this skirmish between the young men and women begins the Holi-like battle of the sexes. On each side are two rulers, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, while their generals (*senāpati*) appear to be Yogāmāyā and Lalitā among the women and Subala and Kusumāsava among the boys. The prize is paradoxically the ability to participate in the action

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itself, as the "eligibility" of the audience in the outer frame is the same term for stewardship (*adhi-kāra*). While the stakes for the characters is a playful attempt to break the rules of marriage (Rādhā is married to another man), for the audience becoming part of the divine play is its own reward. While the conflict therefore appears unresolved by the abrupt end to come, the interruption also suggests how the play might be continued outside the delimited zone of the drama into everyday modes of living.

Kṛṣṇa initiates the conflict by approaching the group haughtily per the wishes (*anurodheṇa*) of his friends for the skirmish. His dialogue shifts away from the smooth, textured style of the passionate (*mādhurya*) affects to a grand, energetic focus (*ojas*):

> Pray Lalitā, Wicked Lalitā/ sharing (*adur*) in your disrespect (*dur-lalite*), where did you learn this brazenness? Are you crazy? Why have you assumed you have the freedom to enjoy my home (*okas*) of Vṛndāvana?[171]

Kṛṣṇa sets up Lalitā's habitual tendencies through her brashness in encroaching and stealing the fruits of his home (*okas*). His framing begins the legalistic scenario with a petition made against the offender (*abhiyoga*), the women, brought forth by the supposed owner of the goods.[172] Similarly, Kṛṣṇa frames the argument as not only about his authority but his economic mode of living. The women, he argues, have no "business" being there, since they are stealing the fruit and crushing his plants. By claiming they will come to "share in the fruits of their actions (*phalam bhujyatām*),"[173] Kṛṣṇa is also setting up an argument about *karma*, the cause-and-effect relationship as a legalistic mechanism for the semblance under production in the drama. The play itself looks at the sequentiality of human activities to literally judge who is at fault and how the previous actions sow future ones. However, the audience soon sees this dispute is only one layer of the play, and its resolution will suggest the semblance itself be nuanced with the contours of deceit, shifting identity, and *claims* to ownership under dispute

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in Kavikarṇapūra's style. Hence the "business" (*vṛtta*) of the play is over whose mode of living

is appropriate: the *gopī*s as they collect flowers to serve their deity, or the *gopa*s who tax the

road.

Jaratī immediately assumes the lead defense in the young women's case, saying they

did not come to eat fruit but to gather flowers for their performance (*prayojana*), not out of a

general desire. Kusumāsava insults her intelligence and claims *phala*, "fruit," means a

"punishment for a transgression" (*aparādhe daṇḍa*, Pr. *avarāhe*). She counters,

> Brahmin baby, you still have milk on your throat! What do you know? Think, what is
> the offense/who is without Rādhā? Punishment is meant for those who transgress/are
> without Rādhā, and not for us who are in the right/with Rādhā.[174]

Jaratī's argument rests on the fact that a transgression (*apa-rādha*) can only apply to those who

have done something wrong, yet they are in the clear. Simultaneously, the girls are Rādhā's

companions, and hence cannot be found away from her (*apa-* meaning a lack).[175] For the

audience, Rādhā is the focus of this contention as one of the central parties in this trial and as

the affective nexus of its actions encircle and spiral around her bodily form and activities.

The game of shifting terms begins in earnest as Lalitā takes up the offensive. She asks

Kusumāsava who Kṛṣṇa is to the forest, or how he belongs to it. Kusumāsava claims Kṛṣṇa as

its "superintendent" (*adhikāryaya*, Pr. *ahiāri*). Lalitā twists this phrase in Prakrit to mean "the

great enemy" (*adhika-ari,* Pr. *ahia-a-arī*) and to claim "If he were not such a great enemy to

the forest, then why is our dear friend's forest in such a sorry state?" Kusumāsava applauds

her for the pun and asks how her friend came to into possession of the forest in response. "The

proof is in the enjoyment (*upabhoga eva pramāṇam*). How else could we take flowers without

fear?" Jaratī interjects and adds that Vṛndā—who has the form of Rādhā's personal servant—

was enjoined (*niyojita*) with the form of a goddess (*devatā-rūpeṇa*) protecting the area. Kṛṣṇa

openly laughs at their assertion. Jaratī claims that Rādhā asked Vṛndā to take the role. Kusumāsava tells Kṛṣṇa in an aside that they can't assume Vṛndā's help in the matter, as she is obviously a partisan for her mistress (*pakṣa-pātinī*) and "She should not be interrogated due to her being evidence (*prāmaṇyatvena*)." The forest itself, therefore, will hurt their case as it knows its proper mistress.[176] Likewise, Rādhā's presence most likely triggers the trees, animals, and humans' *sāttvika-bhāva*s, showing her disposition manifests as in ecology of Vṛndāvana itself.

Subala, however, is not afraid to take this next track of argumentation. "The stamp (*mūdra*) of my friend's name is the proof (*prāmaṇa*). It appears (*virājate*) on every tree." Lalitā counters that this does not affect their flower gathering. While the trees are masculine and therefore part of Kṛṣṇa's domain, the vines endowed with qualities (*sa-kalā*) that are marked with the letters of Rādhā's name.[177] Since her property is clearly marked, she can take the *lavaṅga* flowers without offense as Kṛṣṇa has no claim (*adhikāra*) to them. This argument presents Kṛṣṇa with a problem as he would go against the "natural" order of husbands and wives clinging to one another and would introduce impropriety into the mix if he claimed to be the "over-riding" (*adhikarin*) authority. Kavikarṇapūra is prepared for this objection though as he and his teacher Śrīnātha argue that the strictures of impropriety (*anaucitya*) only apply to material deities (*devatā*) and not to Kṛṣṇa as the Bhagavān. Since he is the supreme deity, theology and not conventions should dictate how to view his playful actions, not the strictures of *dharma* which govern *karman*.[178] Kavikarṇapūra cites an unknown source to write that even adulterous relationships (*parakīya*), while leading to a semblance of *rasa* (*rasa-ābhāsa*) can be raised to the edge of wonder (*camatkāra-daśā*) by a specific power of suggestion (*dhvani-vaiśiṣṭya*) and therefore the flow of impropriety (*anaucitya-rīti*) does not obtain.[179]

The "over-riding" of conventional rules by otherworldly affects was also a requirement for the audience as well who would understand the nuances of this "great secret."[180] Kavikarṇapūra claims this only applies to worldly love, though, which would find female protagonists in adulterous affairs improper. For non-manifested affects (*aprākṛta*), it can be considered appropriate since it reaches toward the divine. Shadows appear in Vedic and other devotional literature as clones or copies of women especially who have no corporeal durability.[181] The *gopī*s similarly have shadows fashioned by the power of Yogamāyā, so these duplicates could have sexual congress with their husbands while they consorted with Kṛṣṇa.[182] Kavikarṇapūra can therefore argue that since they whole-heartedly loved Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-ekatāna-mānasatvena*) their actions could not be considered a semblance. Instead, it became an "overriding love" (*adhikaraṇaka-rati*) which prevented the progression of impropriety (*anaucitya-pravartitā*) to become a semblance.[183] Since the *upāṅkha* has encourage *preman*, it too must be an "overriding" authority for the courtroom-like atmosphere.

Jaratī turns the discussion toward Kṛṣṇa's relationship to the women by admitting he has some domain over the flowers: "If you ask them, then ask for them!" This verb √*yāc* has a double meaning of petitioning but also to ask in marriage. While offering to "give the *lavaṅga* flowers" to Kṛṣṇa, she also implies that giving away the girls is therefore appropriate since "For whom are you not dear (*priya*)?" Rādhā extemporaneously bursts into Sanskrit verse at this mention of being given to her beloved, although it is meant to be an interior speech. Without specifying the subject, she extols the beautiful body (*vapus*) that fills the world (*bhuvana*) with its dark luster (*śyāmī-karoti*), the face that fills every direction to its terminus (*digāntan*) with radiance like the rays of the full moon, the words that grant the ears the weight of nectar-like *rasa*, and with its glances renders the sky full of lotuses. Both this verse at seeing

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Kṛṣṇa and his first glance of her end with a question: "What is this?"[184] The affective force of their verses erases identity and leaves the character in wonder (*adbhuta*). Kavikarṇapūra's vocalizations focus on the external surfaces of their forms and the amassing semblances that they call forth, inducing (*abhi-√nī*) aesthetic experiences for them within the play and therefore by proxy leading (*abhinaya*) the audience in their speeches toward the same affective moment.

Vṛtti as style and embodied habit returns to undercut the "perfect fit" of the characters to the actors who embody them. Jaratī attempts to placate him by giving the flowers they girls carry in their saris. This leaves Rādhā's garment free to coyly tease Kṛṣṇa. She covers a delicate smile meant for him and chides her grandmother for giving away the flowers they were going to offer the *deva*. Her teasing affords Kṛṣṇa another moment to enjoy her beauty while the women begin to fight:

> *añjanī mṛga-dṛśo dṛg-añcalaḥ pañjara-stha iva bhāti khañjanaḥ*
> *leśa eṣa hasitasya dṛśyate vastra-pūta iva candramo-dravaḥ*

> Colored, with doe-like eyes, her sidelong look (lit. "fringe (*añcala*) of her glance) like a bird in a cage resembles (*√bhā*) a *khañjana* bird. An iota of her smile seen is like melted camphor strained through a cloth.[185]

The alliterative quality of *mādhurya* returns in the sweet mode, accenting palatals ("ñ, c, j"), sibilants ("ś, ṣ, s") and again featuring themes drawn from *śṛṅgāra* that "decorate" the scene. The trial fits Kavikarṇapūra's admixture of *ojas* and *mādhurya* to intensify the mood toward *preman*.

Lalitā, meanwhile, continues to squabble with Jaratī by claiming the old woman has ruined their hard-won flowers. "What is he to Vṛndāvana?" Rādhā's grandmother says she is inclined to fight: "Your heart is itching under the weight of unscratched pride."[186] This conjures up questions for an audience knowledgeable about Gadādhara playing Lalitā, or at least exhibiting some relation through Kṛṣṇa's power. His dispositional matrix is usually equated to

bhakti-śakti, the potency of devotion. At other times, however, he is equated with Rukminī, one of Kṛṣṇa's wives.[187] Rukminī is known for being submissive while her co-wife Satyabhāmā is the haughty persona.[188] Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetic assemblage would see Lalitā as a *sattva* that goes "against the grain" of Gadādhara's normal disposition (*svabhāva*). Empowered by Kṛṣṇa's *śakti*, Gadādhara can take on a different devotional attitude (*para-bhāva*) as he becomes invested (*āveśa*) and overridden by the divine style of Lalitā.

Rādhā, however, refuses to leave. Kusumāsava claims there remains the toll (*dānaṃ vartate*) to be paid. His line is also a pun: "Having seen your face, the flowers are frauds (*caurya*)," which can also mean "We've seen right before us your theft of the flowers." Paying the toll will clear their fine and they may leave. Jaratī asks, "what is this toll?" Subala shifts to verse in long-footed meters to accentuate the heroic qualities of his friend:

> Thinking him suitable, Smara, the King of Men, see, gave the flowers in Vṛndāvana to my glory-bound friend (*mad-vasasyam yaśasyam*) and invested (√*sthā*) him especially with authority (*adhipatye*) over customs (*ghaṭṭā*) from bands of beautiful, virtuous girls. Give your duty (*dattvā śulkam*) and you may wander, Beautiful-Eyed Girls, don't offer dry arguments.[189]

Subala's threat of "dry argumentation" reminds the audience of Gauḍīya polemics against the authorities of philosophical schools who do not accept Kṛṣṇa and the affective control of ritual.[190] Yet Kṛṣṇa appears to have this authority at the best of Kāmadeva, whose epithet Smara can mean both "love" and "memory."[191] In some stories, Kṛṣṇa provides Kāma a new form after his defeat by Śiva leaves him unembodied (*anaṅga*). Kṛṣṇa there would not be just a vassal to the deity of love but his overlord (*adhi-pati*).[192] This would be equivalent to the President of the United States using his high school math teacher as a reference for a job interview; the teacher knows his character but the difference in responsibilities is massive.

Kavikarṇapūra uses the different forms that the ultimate personality takes to contribute to the trial without giving away the game.

The next section presents Kavikarṇapūra's dizzying talents at double-entendre as the two sides disorient the audience on Kṛṣṇa's identity. Jaratī presents a counterargument to Kṛṣṇa as a tax-collector (*dānin*). "We are not the subjects of Smara, the Lord of Men." Kṛṣṇa is asked to rule on their case and offers to accept any jewels they might have in the golden pots they carry for the ritual worship. The *gopī*s claim these articles are meant for worshiping Gopeśvara, again setting up a conflict of who is the proper "Lord of the *gopī*s." Kusumāsava argues Kṛṣṇa himself is their deity and should be worshiped. This initiates a riddling game among the two factions. Rādhā's girlfriends claim their lord is Mahākāla, a version of Śiva. Kusumāsava returns with "Is he not a greatly black one? With the mass of his rays, the entire forest is made the black color of a *tamāla* tree."[193] They continue that their god has the moon on his head. He pivots back that Kṛṣṇa's peacock feather (*barha-avataṃsa*) is a moon on the god's head. They return that they worship the husband of Gaurī, the goddess Pārvatī. Kusumāsava finally reaches his end-line of questioning: "Are you all not brilliant yourselves (*gauryā*)?" The girls continue that they worship Paśupati. He retaliates that since Kṛṣṇa for the most part protects cows (which are domestic animals, *paśu*s), shouldn't he be Lord of the Animals (*paśu-pati*)? Subala interjects that since everyone is a *paśu*, they acknowledge him as Paśupati and should worship him.[194] The *gopa*s finally grab the ritual items and Rādhā's last trap springs: "We cannot offer things to the deity that have been touched. Leave them here, and we shall go home first, then return to worship the *deva* with new materials."[195] Her tactical retreat allows the trial to be suspended temporarily while the true prize escapes.

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The *preman* of the play multiplies into several different *rasa*s with *śṛṅgāra* or mādhurya as the primary matrix. Rādhā's actions culminate in the final sequence: Kṛṣṇa brazenly attempts to caress Rādhā under the pretext of searching her person for more valuables. He attempts to stop the *gopī*s from departing by jumping in their path: "You think you're so clever (*catura manye*). Where are you off to?" Rādhā dissembles impatience (*sa-avahitthā-amarṣa*): "We've paid you the capital (*mūla*). What fine do you want now?" He retorts in verse to mask his request:

> This golden lotus ascends from the waters (face), above that are two blossoming lotuses made of sapphires (eyes), below them the hollows filled with rubies (cheeks), and on them two strings of pearls (teeth). All this can be seen. But you have hidden away two golden jugs. What else are you carrying on yourself? I have my doubts (*vicārya*) on this.[196]

Rādhā does not take this kindly on the surface, claiming he has no right to be "examining" (*vicāra*) her as his eyes "stray across" her body. Jaratī places herself between them, and tells him to stop. She implores Kṛṣṇa to think of the women's reputation if he were to molest them in the forest. Lalitā returns to impress on him that the *gopī*s have not acquiesced to his commands. This last round against Kṛṣṇa in the play of identities is entirely in Sanskrit:

> L: Who are you?
> K: I'm the one and only Mādhava.
> L: You're the month of April (Vaiśākha) in the flesh (*ākāravat*)?
> K: Simple girl, don't you recognize me as Janārdana?
> L: That explains why they say you reside in the forest. [His name can mean "harming" (*ardana*) people (*jana*), i.e. a bandit.]
> K: Who on earth does not know me as the Bearer of Mt. Govardhana?
> L: You brought suffering by killing a bull! This is the only way your sin can be cow-killing (*go-vadhana*).[197]

Here a riddling game affords this scenario an aura of mystery while playfully subordinating it to the humor (*hāsya*) of their encounter. This direction confrontation moves from Kṛṣṇa's subordinates to himself, allowing the devotees to playfully engage him in a teasing banter of

friendship (*sākhya-bhāva*). This mode of relating to the divine places him on equal footing, which the *gopī*s claim presents their friend Rādhā as the true controller of the forest. Kṛṣṇa's epithets from the *Mahābhārata* and Vaiṣṇava *purāṇa*s are interpreted to show his sinful deeds in the past. Kṛṣṇa appears with the same name as Vaiśākha, the second month of the lunar calendar starting in the spring. Even his *līlā*s witnessed by the residents of Vraja are turned against him. The episode where he holds Mount Govardhana to shield his friends from the punishment of Indra becomes another lesson where his feats of slaying demons are actually made crimes. This backfires as Kṛṣṇa's friends will take the same tactic against Rādhā in a few moments.

First, though, Prema interrupts the flow of the exchange once more to let this play of identities simmer and boil. Relishing these scenes cannot be accomplished with a quick progression from episode to episode. Instead, each carries its own affective weight, adding to the total body of the drama. Prema's interlude of three verses reminds the audience again that acting only appears as a semblance of the reality manifesting onstage. Prema offers a direct argument that these scenes are the otherworldly *rasa*s of Kavikarṇapūra's aesthetic system:

> How wonderous! Even the play of Hari being performed by actors approaches a virtual relishing (*rasāyanatva eti*). What can we say when it is performed by the Lord himself among with his own people (*svakīyaiḥ*)?

> Indeed, the *rasa* of audience members and actors cannot progress (*eti*) on the path established for literary compositions. But for both who approach the virtual knowledge of *rasa* (*rasavid-tva*), what impedes them in extraordinary matters?

> The play of Śauri that inspires wonder turns (*vṛttam*) the material more than the immaterial (*alukikāt laukikaṃ*). Virtually attracting the people of the world, this is the reason that it becomes virtually extraordinary (*alaukikatvasya*).[198]

To reiterate Kavikarṇapūra's points from Chapter Two, *vibhāva*s are ordinary (*laukika*) when they function as the components of dramas. *Bhāva* as "adoration" for a guru or deity worked

to bridge the worldly and otherworldly affects in his synthesis of traditional dramaturgy and *bhakti* theories of *rasa*. When *vibhāva*s obtain Kṛṣṇa and his associates as their object, they become extraordinary (*alaukika*) in Kavikarṇapūra's system in the *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha*. Prema claims that acting allows this way to relish the virtual or dispositional side of Kṛṣṇa's unmanifest form as a visible form in performances. Reading the dialogue will not afford the same feeling as watching it play out in front of the senses. Literary compositions (*kṛti*) can only reach so far, since the imagination itself has to become a dwelling place transformed by Kṛṣṇa's presence. The material world in fact requires the layering of multiple affects into a single body as a style which "turns" (*vṛtta*) the worldly feeling into an otherworldly experience. Once an audience member approaches the virtual side through the semblance, then they can have access to the extraordinary *rasa*s and affects that cling to its objects.

Returning to the *upāṅkha*, Kavikarṇapūra's choices diverge from traditional conventions to allow for extraordinary affects to emerge. First, the inset play's overall *rasa* is impossible to pin down by standard analyses from Bharata as it remains in tension, suggesting both *śṛṅgāra* or one of the six *bhakti*-endorsed matrices from earlier. The audience will not know the overall mood until a final resolution to the *upāṅkha*. Second, Kavikarṇapūra's style works in another fashion to attenuate the audience's external distractions and to reinforce their attention to the sonic landscape of this play through alliteration, overloaded meanings, and stylistic forms of gesture in vocal utterance (*vācika-abhinaya*). This gives the toll pastime a humorous (*hāsya*) contour while leading to the final affordance. Lastly, play affects the material world more directly when it infuses it with wonder (*camatkāra*). This "wow-factor" bridges the separate levels of Kavikarṇapūra's style to that of the audience's expectations for Kṛṣṇa's deeds. Wonder *engages* us, links audience and actors together in the larger ensemble

of the semblance. It can pull people from the manifested, material side of reality to its unmanifested potentials on the virtual level, which makes it extraordinary or beyond the material (*alaukika*). The otherworldly is already deeply impressed by Kṛṣṇa's play into the material body, and hence it requires transformations to occur (*vṛtta*). The audience will continue to find these extraordinary affects sedimenting into their bodies, inducing them to take new forms of life (*vṛtti*s) as does one of the characters watching the drama.

The final moments of the *upāṅkha*'s plot involve just such a wonderous topsy-turvy rendering of justice as Kusumāsava decides to escalate the battle. Subala offers the last justification in a joking and indignant mood. The audience wants to see Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā together, as do all of their male and female friends. Only Jaratī-Yogamāyā stands in the way of their tryst. While Kṛṣṇa was denied the ability to take the ornaments off Rādhā's body, Kusumāsava the Brahmin resorts to a carnivalesque inversion of legal values in the game of love. He claims Rādhā has committed the five inexcusable crimes of dharmic law: brahminicide, intoxication, stealing, intimately associating with a guru's wife, and extramarital sex. The verse offers these indirectly as "decorous" tropes:

> Your face injures the king of twice-borns (the moon, a brahmin), your two eyes rolls as if from wine, your image with its luster steals the worth of gold, there is no end to your associating with this old woman/guru's wife, and you are attached to the fifth, the Five-Arrowed (Kāma, desire). Nonetheless, there is a means to purity (*śuddhi*). The name of my friend destroys sins without remainder. Yet you think he is so wicked.[199]

Subala makes his point that each of the poetic devices for overcoming, struggling, and degrading things which have value can *literally* be taken as truth. Gold is lusterless after seeing Rādhā's luminous color, the moon is defeated when compared to her face, and her eyes move languidly drunk on love. Even associating with her grandmother is to be attached with her guru (grandfather's) wife! The final charge is singled out yet not explained directly: she associates

with Kāmadeva. This finally hints that Kṛṣṇa himself is the god of love, yet his names, which

Rādhā's party has sullied repeatedly, can even purify sins. Subala tells Kṛṣṇa this is the moment

to "exhibit your boldness" (*dhṛṣṭatā prakaṭanena*) as a toll-taker. The stage directions describe

how Kṛṣṇa pushes Jaratī away with his back to Rādhā while grabbing the young woman's sari

fringe. The *yoginī* frees her granddaughter by force and makes Rādhā disappear. This abrupt

and jarring ending stops the play proper and ends the innermost frame of narration.

This abrupt ending disrupts the nested structure of Act Three itself, as Jaratī the

semblance disappears and Nityānanda reappears while dancing alone in his own body. Maitrī

has to interrupt at this moment, as all chaos seems to be breaking lose: "Goddess, what is this?

How did this happen, and where did Nityānanda appear from? Where did Jaratī go?"[200] Prema

explains that Nityānanda reappeared as Yogamāyā with no resolution to the narrative action.[201]

While the audience has only a "leftover" (*sa-avaśeṣa*) *rasa* to enjoy from the toll scene, as the

playwright she exhibited discretion as it required proper timing (*yathā-samayam*) to stop Kṛṣṇa

before he inappropriately clung to his beloved. While Yogamāyā possessed Nityānanda before

the *upāṅkha* by entering her body, her departure ended the illusion and left him alone in his

own form. The devotee's corporeal traits meanwhile continue to embrace him in the *adbhuta*

of the scene, causing him to exhibit the *anubhāva* of dancing. Why does Kṛṣṇa's final gesture

of grabbing Rādhā's fringe break the moment and cause the *rasa* to be merely a "remainder"

rather than a fully-developed mood? Why would Yogamāyā be satisfied with this ending

despite lacking any narrative resolution in dramaturgical conventions? And where does this

leave the audience overseeing the play who themselves were also participating in its affects?

I argue Kavikarṇapūra treats his audience to a paradox at the heart of devotional

affectivity. While the devotees acting the parts were possessed (*āveśa*) by outside forces of

Kṛṣṇa's hidden realm, the audience could not help but see them as the figures themselves. The living, breathing, sweating bodies of their friends and family members transformed for a time into the figures of their Puranic stories. Kavikarṇapūra positions his own rhetorical flourishes as the best stylistic features to invoke the divine while breaking from this internal audience's expectations for the drama. How did this early audience experience the *rasa*s central to this play?[202] On the one hand, the decorous *rasa* (*śṛṅgāra*) requires situations of consent and flirtation without climax. The additional audience of Jaratī, the *gopā*s, and Kusumāsava contribute more to the comic mood (*hāsya*) than the decorous (*śṛṅgāra*). Furthermore, by grabbing her garment Kṛṣṇa goes beyond the bounds of propriety (*aucitya*). Even if this temptation leaves the devotional audience enraptured, the setting is not right for a tryst. Yogamāyā as a proxy for Kavikarṇapūra is satisfied with the "seed" that engendered this episode while also protecting her character Jaratī's charge Rādhā from losing face in rural society. Hence Kavikarṇapūra's style suggests the layering of identities can never fully dispel social conventions even when these prevent the union of the two extraordinary protagonists. His emplotment (*itivṛtta*) and alliterative style (*vṛtta*) showcase ambiguity and dark play rather than straightforward theological niceties.

And yet the playwright's explicit meanings go against the grain of this reading as well. The final verse of the act summarizes the power of innate dispositions: "The natural affect is stronger from one's own disposition. It exceeds fashioned affect. The hot affects born from water heated by fire and the sun does not continue for even a short time."[203] Similar to my exploration in Chapter One, Rūpa Gosvāmin's aesthetic theory suggests *bhāva*s can embody hot and cold qualities, and passion itself can appear in a hot semblance while still being cooling and pleasant. This suggests that internal passion is more important than that stimulated from

material sources.[204] The main point is to suggest that drama can function as both internal and external affects, with those arising from the dispositional matrix being the strongest. Only innate dispositions (*svabhāva*s) and not the roles of acting (*bhūmikā*s) can generate devotional feeling in this reading. And yet can this be possible if the "fashioned affects" are only visible onstage? How can the play help to activate new tendencies if an audience is not yet eligible for the dramatic secrets shown in the *nāṭaka*? Caitanya is the only one who seems to have reached a full conclusion, but he has yet to appear onstage again. Prema even says, ending the drama, that it is the Lord's play (*īśvara-līlā*) and it does not conform to the flow of acting (*naṭa-rīti*). After this moment, Advaita appears as himself again, and Maitrī sets the stage: "I do not know in what manner the Bhagavān will appear here."[205]

Caitanya's expected appearance is a small moment but it acts as the final transition from Act Three to Four. Without some sense of how their guru interprets the play, the devotional audience is at a loss. Caitanya has appeared in so many forms, and his essential blending with the identity of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā confuses the strata between material and divine embodiment. Kavikarṇapūra's style (*vṛtti*) suggests it is his business to carry this affective load and spread it amongst his audience "like a market."[206] However, the action of Act Three requires an articulation (*saṃdhi*) to shift the plot to Act Four. Like the Snātaka whose future is open, Caitanya himself will opt out of the householder lifestyle and accept a different fate, one in which he becomes available to more devotees. A voice offstage declares "Oh, oh, a renunciate, a renunciate!" Prema becomes disgusted at this announcement. "A *saṃnyāsī* enters the garden of the Bhagavān. Someone sees him and cries. Let's get out of here."[207] And with this declaration left hanging, the "joint" between Acts Three and Four is set. Caitanya will decline to tell his mother that he has decided to renounce his obligations in the family and

wander as a renunciate. This final moment in fact sours the humorous tone prevalent throughout Act Three and leaves a bitter aftertaste—that of the compassionate *rasa* (*karuṇā*). Becoming a renunciant requires a death to one's previous lifetime, an "introversion" (*nivṛtti*) from one's everyday relationality and kinship ties. Irreparable loss of this kind can only deactivate the loving mood of a worldly *śṛṅgāra* moment, yet inexplicably it also seems to become an extraordinary *rasa* since it foreshadows Caitanya's renunciation. The Snātaka, rather than becoming a householder, appears to have been deeply affected with self-loathing (*svajugupsā*) and renounced the world, acting as a forerunner to Viśvambhara in Act Four.

I argue that Kavikarṇapūra's play-within-a-play reveals the hidden economic and social logic of his audience's *vṛtti* in sixteenth century Bengal. As a householder, Viśvambhara would be unable to approach a king such as Pratāparudra in Puri—and paradoxically the king's longing in separation or surrender (*viraha*) would have prevented the play from being written at all. Only as a *saṃnyāsin* can Caitanya spread the "consciousness" of Kṛṣṇa through his embodied practices. This is the true goal of the entire ten-act *nāṭaka*, to which the *upāṅkha*'s ending contributes. But the *upāṅkha*'s abrupt shift of narrative levels leaves a gap that cannot be easily elided. How did Kavikarṇapūra's audience make sense of this semblance of causality when the characters can abruptly end its action from within? What relation does this causality have with *līlā*, which explicitly is meant to counteract *karman* as a force of divine action? Like the *saṃnyāsin*, Kavikarṇapūra leaves behind the rules of drama (*naṭa-rīti*) for this small play as well as the larger *nāṭaka* in order to provide his devotional audience with several theologically-inflected affects. Like his language, these forms also carry affective resonance, and this structure of Act Three suggests that conventional semblances cannot function in Kavikarṇapūra's dramaturgy.

Moreover, as a form of possession, style functions economically to govern the proper "sphere" or *okas* as well as regulating those able to access it as "property" (*adhikāra*). I translated the terms for *āveśa* and *nivṛtti* as "investment" and "divestment" similarly to rescue this latent level of ownership over the shared affective spectrum of social events. Semblances do not have this issue as they are more two-dimensional. While *līlā* has activities, they are episodes that stand on their own without more than a tenuous connection with linear time. Caitanya's crossing (*avatāra*) with the full compliment of Kṛṣṇa's eternal realm brings the virtual and material into overlapping planes. However, the virtual can become manifest without material components as well, appearing not just in the bodies of actors but in the imagination, in dreams, otherworldly experiences, and even after death for devotees. If play is the central illusion of Kavikarṇapūra's semblances, therefore, the audience must be involved in this affective ensemble. The outcome of the plot is just as disorienting for them as for the characters onstage, leaving a bad "taste."

I argue that instead of turning to the semblance, Kavikarṇapūra suggests that this layers a subtle potential into the audience as well. The "marketplace" he will spread out is only possible by divesting from specific relationships with material forces (*prakṛti-guṇa*s) and attending to the divine traits of Kṛṣṇa's all-encompassing qualities. These can flow forth once he becomes a *saṃnyāsin* and reach the largest amount of people. Rādhā's affective form facilitates this for Caitanya but he can only access it after his renunciant career and the inductive force of his fellow devotees Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara.[208] Caitanya continued to remain himself even as Rādhā's *bhāva* overwhelmed him repeatedly, building in intensity through the later years of his life. This gradual progression could only be possible if the material contours of his psychophysical form became more attuned to her particular

qualities. Hence his career was made possible, and his great reach to others, through the affordances of style. By turning to the material affordances of his *vṛtti*, we can see that it is the lasting historical impact of this play in the bodies of devotees that distributes Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya's affects throughout his community.

3.6 Performative Folds: *Vṛtti* and Waves of Affects

In Kavikarṇapūra's play-within-a-play in Act Three of the *Caitanya-candrodaya* the playwright deliberately uses his aesthetic style to overcome the limitations of his chosen medium, drama. One question remains: what is the primary *rasa* of this play-within-the-play? The lovers in Act Three are not united, and yet they are not kept apart in *viraha*, hence *śṛṅgāra* is not possible as a fully embodied mood. *Preman* seems a natural fit as the goddess herself is present in the scene, yet there is no manifested form of love that Kṛṣṇa takes with the *gopī*s besides his cajoling and teasing. Humor is certainly present (*hāsya*), as the *vidūṣaka* Kusumāsava incites misunderstandings and laughter among his friends, but it seems an auxiliary *rasa* (*gauṇa*) at best. Kavikarṇapūra's punning language suggests a transition between strata of ordinary and extraordinary, as Prema lays out in the final verses of Act Three. The *laukika-rasa*s of conventional poetry and the *alaukika-rasa*s of devotional literature seem to be two separate domains in most scholars' thinking on Kavikarṇapūra's texts. Yet there is one potential stabilizing affect that encompasses both worldly and otherworldly, devotional and aesthetic moods. It is this *rasa* that works as a fulcrum to shift the affective weight between the two realms: *bhāva* in the sense of "adoration," which I examined in some detail in Chapter Two.

The stabilizing affect of *bhakti-rasa*, *bhāva* functions as a love for a superior person, including a god or guru.[209] As a subset of *rati*, this *bhāva* as "adoration" constitutes a

semblance for most other theorists, but Kavikarṇapūra argues the pervading affects (*vibhāva*) that shape it can allow it to become a full-fledged *rasa*. As a transformation of a stabilizing affect, it seems specific; yet Kavikarṇapūra claims *bhāva* becomes polymorphic and expands to include the ten *rasa*s. Like Śrīnātha's separate affordance for *bhakti*, this *rasa* therefore functions as an articulation to join multiple aesthetic assemblages. It likewise allows for devotional *rasa*s to be considered proper for aesthetic experiences in spite of previous commentators who relegated it to the status of a material *bhāva*.[210]

I argue that this affect is particularly prone to becoming a *vṛtti* as it becomes "weighty" (*guru*). While a teacher is usually given this title, the term is an adjective for anything bearing "gravitas." For instance, Haridāsa's appearance as the "embodied Goddess of Drama" (*nāṭya-laksmyā mūrtaḥ*) appears to be an affective gravitas pressing down on him and the audience mutually.[211] The burden of luminous energy (*tejo-bhara*) resides in his corporeal form and does not just appear out of nowhere. The audience only experiences it through the cosmetic gestures (*āhārya-abhinaya*) of his costuming and makeup. The actors are literally weighed down by these presences of other dispositions (*para-bhāva*s) as these energies shape their corporeal forms. At the extreme, Caitanya's own body was said to take on strange proportions and shapes when overcome by the magnified affectivity (*mahābhāva*) of Rādhā's disposition.[212] This discrepancy can only be possible if the affective body possess layers that can store multiple histories and memories of lifetimes. Hence Caitanya could act one way while feeling another due to this tiered (*bhūmikā*) structure of feeling: "Outwardly, he burned as if poisoned, inwardly he was filled with joy. This is the wonderful way of Kṛṣṇa-*prema*."[213]

The affective structure of the entire *Caitanya-candrodaya* meanwhile plays off these transmutations of particular characters and their relations to the divine. Character and action

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are connected through disposition.[214] Yet the actors' habits mediate between these two affective phases: audiences therefore will have to experience these forms before reaching the gestures. Their *vṛtti* or mode of living (as householder, *saṃnyāsī*s, and as kings) offers ways to infuse everyday life with Kṛṣṇa's affective matrix. Kavikarṇapūra adopts the four primary varieties of leading men (*nāyaka*s) from Bharata and other aestheticians, but claims Kṛṣṇa can encompass them all as "the master of all *nāyaka*s" (*sarva-nāyakādhīśaḥ*).[215] Kṛṣṇa is able to do this since he acts as "the shoot [that grows into] a cluster of all pure *rasa*s" (*sarva-śuddha-rasa-vṛnda-kandalaḥ*) and is "adorned with utterly non-mundane virtues" (*atyalaukika-guṇair alaṅkṛta*).[216] The virtues carry over from the disposition into *vṛtti*s of the audience members and actors while remaining materially latent. And this presents a unique question: How can an actor display this variety of roles (*bhūmikā*s)? Each is an enaction of a relation between the protagonist and his beloved(s); acting toward a single person in multiple ways would seem incompatible.

In spite of this difficulty, Kṛṣṇa has a pure disposition (*śuddha-sattva*) that manifests as his affective relations (*bhāva*s) with others. These emerge as semblances "due to the commanding force of his play" (*līla-vaśataḥ*), "rendering the different roles commensurable" (*sarvair aviruddhatvād viruddhe' pi*).[217] In fact, it is this multiplication from a reservoir of potential (since it arises due to a virtual inclusion, *aviruddhatva*) that the example of perceived incompatibility (*viruddha*) shows can manifest in play. Kṛṣṇa does indeed encompass all these things at the virtual level, but each can only become manifest when the proper devotee enters his sphere of influence. At that point, his *sattva* splits into a diverging series of forms that creates the milieu itself, his *dhāman*.

Audience members must likewise be active participants in performance through the textures of a given style. Kṛṣṇa's disposition remains latent and virtual but can become accessible. When an audience nullifies certain ordinary habits of the ego and becomes receptive, his *sattva* can "invest" (*āveśa*) them with new patterns of behavior. Act Three of the *Caitanya-candrodaya* lays out one route to developing this receptivity (*adhikāra*), making audiences eligible to witness Kṛṣṇa's polymorphic over-riding of reality. The wonderous *rasa* that takes place in this upends expectations of genre, word choice, and even social standing as new roles are revealed that progress (*pravṛtti*) in performance. *Vṛtti* functions as an affective force that creates stages and dwelling spots where the divine can appear in the textures and style of movement in corporeal bodies. While dispositions (*sattva*) permeate an entire work like an atmosphere, infusing everything with its presence, style floods over the dividual bodies of performers and audience members sharing in an event. If actors are "vessels" (*pātra*s) to carry an affect, they must either contain this liquid effulgence or be carried away by its currents. The well of possibilities in the affective body transition in *vṛtti* into waves of force. As a fluid matrix, *bhāva* therefore does not act like a linear sentence, carrying meaning alone in a straightforward manner. Like poetic imagery, *bhāva* wanders, meanders, and can appear as it reveals hidden contours of the landscapes it traverses. The *way* an affect emerges in performance is more vital to its flourishing for audience and performers than *what* is being conveyed precisely.

Most *līlā*s jump out of living bodies and material forms (along the gestures created with pigments, stones, woods, shapes, lines, angles of movement), as well as the attendant senses along with them (the smells of incense, the taste of food offered in *pūjā*, the feel of clothe offered to a deity). The dispositional matrix of an affect can likewise present itself in material

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forms without phasing from a latent aspect, staying diffuse but somehow becoming embodied in more direct ways as *vṛtti*s. To understand how this becomes possible, I have attended to habits that inflect bodies and shape them, singularly and in groups, to become something new. A life shaped by a particular style will show that, just as singular bodies are implicated by the larger forces surrounding and encompassing them, affectivity allows for one person to reach out and influence an entire network of people. The economy of these flowing affects will therefore reveal how one person can find an agential power within affectivity even when seeming to abandon oneself to forces greater than the person has under their direct control.

Up to this point in my study, I have relied heavily upon textual sources for theories and in imaginative practices gleaned from ethnographic studies of audiences and performers to situate my perspective on Kavikarṇapūra's drama. While the discursive history of *rasa* theory has been extensively mapped by scholars such as Sheldon Pollock, the embodied and historical styles in which these theories were deployed does not have the same archival evidence. For me to rely solely upon textualist theories of performance would ignore the other potential source of affective history: the embodied archive of living performance and ritual lineages still extant today. Performance studies scholars have had to rely upon the repertoire as an alternative source of historical knowledge due to the unequal access to textual sources following colonialism, the Industrial Revolution, and from systematic destruction and neglect of archives in parts of the modernizing world.[218] Traces of these gestures remain in photographs, audio records, film, and now digital semblances yet they are always remnants of the living *vṛtti*s before entering a digitally-virtualized realm. Economies of *bhāva* continue to afford performers' bodies the capacity to affect audiences into the modern period as Kavikarṇapūra's Bengali homeland became one of several centers of British colonial rule.

Yet even through the colonial period, South Asian genres of performance continued to flourish and adapt to the changing lifestyles of increasingly Westernized tastes.[219] How were these affective theories shaped in the modern world and by historical forces when these textual sources were only recently "rediscovered" by scholars and Brahmins in the twentieth century? And how were social relations and human-divine relationships shaped anew by modes of performance? As I mentioned with Nityānanda's appearance, sometimes dancing is the only way one can respond to the divine when its wonder overtakes the self and sprouts into something new. There is no dancer better known for her emotive mastery, grace, and subtlety of expression than Tanjore Balarasawati. Balasaraswati was the consummate performer of gesture, *abhinaya*, in what would become known as the surviving legacy of Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*: Bharatanāṭyam. I shall now turn to her repertoire as its own surviving embodied style of theorizing affectivity in the postcolonial, modern world of Indian independence and statehood as her gestures induced radical changes worldwide. I have been unable up to this point to examine historical or living person's experiences of *bhāva*s and their relation to the theories examine in aesthetic texts. What I found in Balasaraswati was a feminist, subaltern theorist of affectivity in her own right.

4.1 T. Balasaraswati and the State

Bharata Natyam, in the highest moments, may be considered the embodiment of sound in visual form, a ceremony, and an act of devotion…it is undoubtedly *rāga-bhāva* which evokes this *rasa* in all its varying shades and infinite variety. The rhythmic forms and its mould should be such as to augment the *rāga-bhāva*. The more the *rāga-bhāva*, the more does the *abhinaya* shine…the *rāga* and the words of the song should mingle together in the *abhinaya*.[1]

There is a special relationship between Tamil Music and Bharat Natyam. The Tamil lyrics of Muthuthandavar, Ganam Krishna Iyer and Subbarama Iyer lend themselves wonderfully well for dancing with intense participation. It is the distinguishing feature of Tamil music that compositions, coming in an unbroken line from the Vaishnava and Shaiva Saints through Gopalakrishna Bharathi down to the composers of our own time, are replete with moods and feelings [*rāga-bhāva*] suitable for *abhinaya*.[2]

श्रीमती टी. बालासरस्वती

में, भारत का कार्यवाहक राष्ट्रपति, वसप्पा दानप्पा जत्ती, व्यक्तिगत गुणों के लिए आपके सम्मानार्थ, पद्म विभूषण प्रदान करता हूं।

कार्यवाहक राष्ट्रपति
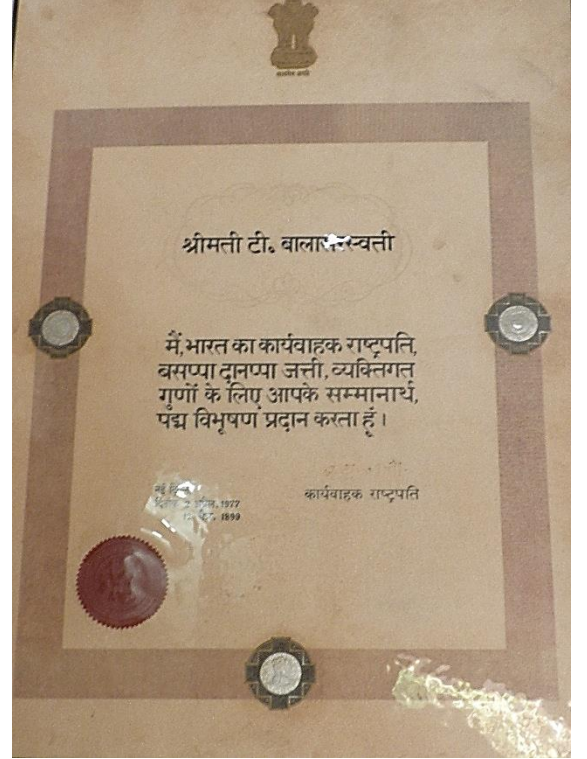
Figure 4.1: *Padma-vibhūṣaṇa* ("Exemplary Golden Lotus"),
awarded to Śrīmatī T. Bālāsaraswatī
on September 29 (Aśvin 2), 1977.
Balasaraswati Scripps Institute of Performing Arts, Chennai. Photo by author.

Thanjavure Balasaraswati (1918-1984) was born into a hereditary family of musicians with ties to the Tanjore court of Tamil Nadu. She grew up in Madras (now Chennai), the center of the British Raj's seat of power in South India, and the emerging urban center for the performing arts. As a transglobal artist known as "Bala," her career span the movement for Indian independence in the colonial period, the Cold War militarization of modern India as it attempted to cleanse itself of its ties to British culture and geopolitics. India's "New Nation" shed, on the one hand, any vestige of British rule, and on the other, had subtly incorporated the

tastes and artistic traditions of Victorian elites. This created a paradoxical tension toward South Asian performance and cultural forms that did not fit the secular-religious divisions of Western assumptions between art and ritual. Dance in particular was deeply impacted by this divide as it was performed in the streets as well as in the central arenas of religious and political power in the medieval era, which gradually became displaced as the British ended royal patronage. At the same time, Balasaraswati managed to not only thrive but find wide audiences for her dance style among subaltern and marginalized performers around the globe. In the postcolonial environment of the 1960s and onwards, her style of Bharatanātyam became not only the "dance of India" (Bharata being an old name for the subcontinent embraced by nationalists with Hindu leanings) but was emblemized by a dark-skinned, middle age woman from a disenfranchised social group. Bala's genius therefore was in standing out when cultural, economic, and political norms attempted to subvert her body by hiding it, displaying it as an object of a lost past, or weaponizing it in the soft power battles of the Cold War. Throughout it all, she persevered and maintained the artistic and feminist integrity toward her self, her family, and the tradition she embodied.

This is all the more remarkable as Balasaraswati's career coincided with an increasing distaste for her community's style of performance, which lost her many potential sources of funding and patronage as former temple networks disappeared. At the same time, she became famous throughout colonial India as she toured and performed outside Madras alongside modern dance figures like Uday Shankar and other classical dancers from elsewhere. After Indian Independence in 1947 she developed health problems and lost her male teacher and rarely performed until the mid-1950s when she again attained national prominence on the concert stage. By the intervention of Kapila Vatsyayan, she was able to perform at an

international dance concert in Hawaii where she became known to Western dance circles. After an invitation to Jacob's Pillow in 1962, she began to tour the United States and Europe while alternating performances in Madras. Through a network of teaching residencies, she trained students at American universities and developed an international network of contacts for her style. By the end of her career, she had transformed what was once dubbed an "ethnic dance" into a parallel classical tradition alongside European ballet.

This chapter attempts to grapple with the paradoxes of Balasaraswati's career and her reception as one of the foremost performers of Bharatanāṭyam, the Tamil-derived classical dance tradition. How was she simultaneously an exponent of a classical dance tradition and a "revolutionary" modern dancer? Why was it "impossible to avoid the word "greatness in speaking" of her while simultaneously her community was being relegated to a footnote in history?[3] Her name itself captures the paradox of the emerging neoliberal dancing subject at the emergence of Indian nationhood. Both the subaltern, patriarchical legacy of British colonial rule and emerging middle-class distate for certain forms of dance viewed her at first as "the girl (*bālā*) Sarasvatī." Simultaneously, the Anglized version of her name captures the potency and "strength" (*bala*) of the goddess of creativity, the arts, and wisdom Sarasvatī, the "flowing" hidden river that inundated India since the time of the Vedas. This transnationalized and translocal naming practices reveal what her followers experienced during her performances around the world. I argue Balasaraswati's dancing body was the pivot for this creative force. Balasaraswati unleashed the historical, embodied legacy of these South Asian affects into global modernity at the historical juncture of Indian independence, Cold War geopolitics, and a rising tide of subaltern cultural flourishing in performance. Balasaraswati's force brought

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together these disparate strands of history through the embodied agency of her gestures (*abhinaya*).

The next two chapters present a paradox in my discussion so far. While I have attended to textual sources of affectivity, dance history requires a separate set of affordances to understand descriptions of performances and even speech. I incorporate performance and dance historian Mark Franko's technique of analyzing choreography to help place Balasaraswati's dancing interventions into context with my previous chapters. In a musicology lecture at the University of Chicago titled "Writing for the Body: Notation, Reconstruction, and Reinvention in Dance," Franko outlined an argument for writing as a form of dance.[4] Similar studies on the corporeal affordances of gesture led me to privilege not only the written sources but to fashion imaginative stagings of the texts I would examine. As performances, each would have their own assumptions and dramaturgical sensibilities governing their actions, or what Teemu Paavolainen refers to as "textures."[5] In particular, I was struck by the powerful speeches Balasaraswati gave in the last two decades of her life and performing career. I wanted to incorporate feminist, subaltern voices in my discussion as interlocuters but realized that she in fact did not actually speak these texts! Instead her daughter Lakshmi recited them aloud while Balasaraswati danced them for Indian and international conferences of music, dance, and performance scholars! I suddenly realized that Franko's admonition that every description of a performance was also an embodied gesture capturing the affective contours of a moment via the pen, typewriter, quill, or keyboard. My methodology therefore links Balasaraswati's dancing and theorizing as a mutual set of embodied performances and historical interventions in the emerging nation state. In fact, her dancing career spanned three historical epochs—the medieval past of her *devadāsī* lineage, the colonial encounter with the West, and the post-

colonial nation state of India. I realized Balasaraswati's history was an embodied repertoire for past gestures of the medieval heritage of ritual women who were subject to social disenfranchisement while gaining access to ritual centers of power. The past, as Walter Benjamin wrote, flashed forth at the moment her community began to disappear from historical legitimacy:

> To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it 'the way it really was' (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger. Historical materialism wishes to retain that image of the past which unexpectedly appears to man singled out by history at a moment of danger. The danger affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers. The same threat hangs over both: that of becoming a tool of the ruling classes. In every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it. [6]

The actor responsible for this "conformism" was the new Indian state itself.

The newly-emerging nation of India begrudgingly at first acknowledged Balasaraswati's affective force as a major performer of the South Indian dance form known as Bharatanāṭyam. While lingering Victorian morals against her community removed traditional sources of patronage, she adapted to the novel entry of India's prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's program of advocating a "Third World" beyond the two major superpowers of the Cold War. Like Martha Graham's State Department-sponsored tours, Bala became a vehicle for an ideal image of India's past and future inspite of her subaltern subject position.[7] In 1977 she won the Padma-Vibhūṣaṇa ("Exemplary Gold Lotus"), the most prestigious award given by the Indian government for contributions to Indian society. The award still hangs in the family's dance institute in Chennai today (see figure 1).[8] Yet even Anna Kisselgoff, the *New York Times* dance critic, elides the social stigma of her way of life. Her review calls the dancer the "widow of a high government official" while Balasaraswati's community of *devadāsī* performers were considered mistresses or prostitutes in colonial literature. Abandoned by her

dance master, Balasaraswati revealed her feminist sensibilities by arranging for an all-female *abhinaya* troupe without male musicians. Social opprobrium was so heated that Balasaraswati frequently found herself only able to perform five to six times in a year during the late 1940s. How did a dancer from a community on the brink of social disappearance become one of the most well-known dancers worldwide? What drew audiences to Balasaraswati's performances, and how did her style develop in this environment of changing mores and developing nationalistic sentiments? And what role did she play in the reception of legitimizing the history of South Indian dance in India by her global circuits? While Kisselgoff described Balasaraswati—or 'Bala' to her admirers around the globe—as "a motherly-looking Indian woman in her sari" at one moment, she was simultaneously "one of the supreme performing artists of the world."[9] I argue that these receptions of Balasaraswati also attempted to negotiate the complex identity politics she faced in India and abroad.

As my choice of epigraphs reveals, Balasaraswati theorized her project in the idiom of performative means of gesture without an explicit political end.[10] Yet this radical stance allowed her to bypass the subaltern loss of agency and voice seen by others in colonial encounters with modernity. Bala expressed her theories on the history, spirituality, and refinement of affects in dance in an improvisational space of possibility.[11] While portraying Bharatanāṭyam as an elite practice ("in the highest moment"), Bala simultaneously forged connections between dance as ritual memory, sonic evocation, and embodied articulation. Both these quotes are not only speeches she composed: she performed them with *abhinaya*. As scholars of religion and dance history, we should attend to the enlivened meanings present in Balasaraswati's embodied theorizing.[12] In Bala's formulation, both melody (*rāga*) and affect (*bhāva*) combine with the outer form of lyrics in gestures to form a transformational body. The

dancer in this moment has access to the vast repertoire of her style (*vṛtti*) and its many layers of sedimented practices, intransigent affects, and enduring features. Her body becomes an "engine that penetrates systems of power and produces widespread, subdiscursive effects within those matrices."[13] The matrix of personal experience which Enlightenment views on emotion would link to the individual instead "erupt" forth with hidden depths. Bala's ties to a Tamil historical milieu for Bharatanāṭyam likewise grounds it in the language of *bhakti*, "devotion," which I have elaborated in Chapters One through Three. As a method of "sharing" and distributing these relations, Balasaraswati infused her performance with these devotional affects and roles as she circulated throughout the world in her later career. Hence Bala's gestures, while universally acclaimed, were translocal figurations in origin as a classical style. Bala participated in the commodified marketplace of performance in the 1960s and 1970s as neoliberal patterns of labor began to emerge and continued to develop her style in avenues alongside modern dancers. If she produced the same abstracting, universalizing experiences for her audiences in performance, using the same techniques of modern dancers, why was her style referred to as classical?[14]

4.2 Indian Dance History and Sovereign Gestures

To answer this question, the history of Indian classical dance forms only emerged as a category around Indian Independence in 1947—about twenty years after early American and European dancers recognized as "modern" first appeared on the concert dance stage. As female artists exploring characters from shared mythologies (Greek, Hindu) abstracted and "generalized" for an audience such as I described in Abhinavagupta's theory of dramaturgy in Chapter One, both Balasaraswati and modern dancers such as Martha Graham created remarkably similar choreographic processes.[15] With her talent and "intense participation" with

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the tradition's material repertoire, Bala carried Bharatanāṭyam into the modern era. Temporally, other Indian dancers such as Uday Shankar and Ram Gopal were considered "modern" in their selective amalgamation of techniques and styles outside recognized dance lineages, performance on the Euro-American concert stage, and by apprenticeship to ethnic and classical dancers.[16] Bala certainly seems less directly influenced by Euro-American conventions although she would have seen Shankar and Gopal perform in Madras on their tours in the 1930s and 1940s. Would this render her style "classical" by default?

During this period, the Sangeet Natak Akademi was also formulating standards to classify, delimit, and preserve Indian forms of dance for the emerging nationstate.[17] Kapila Vatsyayan was at the forefront of this effort starting in the mid 1950s. Her in-depth studies of Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*—itself "rediscovered" by Orientalist scholars at the turn of the century—formal analysis of Indian temple sculpture and its treatises (*śilpa-śāstra*), and first-hand knowledge of multiple dancing styles throughout the subcontinent contributed to a synthetic account of South Asian dance history.[18] In her Aristotelian view, dance preserved a continuity of structure (Form) undergirding all art, developed from ritual knowledge and esoteric practices (Upaniṣads), as well as the ritual knowledge of the Vedas.[19] The "essence" (*rasa*) of dance constituted a transformation of the material body into a shell for the experience of the esoteric "self" (*ātman*) which lies beyond all embodiment.[20] For Vatsyayan, the historical exigencies of cultural labor with all their changing contours reveal an unchanging stratum: "Time and place are consecrated in finitude to suggest the experience of trans-time and the infinite."[21] Vatsyayan came from a nationalist household and studied Laban movement in the United States: her exposure to both modern dance and Indian dance posed a dichotomy in the dancer's relation to her own body. While modern dance focused on "bodily awareness,"

Vatsyayan and Uttara Asha Coorlawala (another scholar of Indian dance) claimed their native styles were attempts to "transcend the body:" "You just use your body." Instead Vatsyayan recognizes a more personal connection: "myself as a body."[22] This recognition of the materiality of both emotional and mental involvement in the world is the major aspect of *bhāva* which I have highlighted throughout this study. Vatsyayan calls her lack of grounding in either modern or classical Indian dance as freeing: "I think I got the essence of each of these traditions without *being bound by the conventions* of these traditions." At the same time, however, Vatsyayan decries a lack of "experienced bodies" grounded in a tradition—including audiences who saw Balasaraswati perform.[23] Vatysyayan saw Bala as counteracting a similar diminishment in the technique of dance with the precision and fluidity of her gestures. Bala was so powerful to Vatsyayan because she "breathed life" into her dance.[24] As an institution-builder, Vatsyayan therefore contributed to exporting Bala as a "soft power" weapon for the Indian state starting in the late 1950s while others still viewed her as the relic of an elided past.

Yet Vatysyana's position on classical dance was fraught with tensions similar to that experienced by ethnic dancers in mid-century America. Indian culture was simultaneously seen as a congealing force for a disparate group of minorities within the subcontinent who would otherwise be fragmented along religious, ethnic, or linguistic lines and the historical textures themselves with differentiated South Asian subjects to modern biopolitical control. Synthetic histories such as Vatsyayan's encapsulation of all South Asian history into Bharatanātyam as a global form of dance subsumes historical difference into nationalist sovereign identity.[25] By linking the dance forms to not only a particular culture but the very psyche of an entire people, Vatsyayan's Aristotelian assumptions of dance history give a textual and interpretive framework while parochializing the forms.[26] Vatysyan makes this point explicit when

discussing the study of ethnic dance forms in India and their contribution to the classical. She therefore appeared to be participating in what Rebekah Kowal calls the mid-century modern relationship of the global to ethnic dance. Audiences could experience the "cultural dynamics of a community" in the embodied participation of dance: dance therefore functions to open "the doors of perception" in a way parallel to religion.[27] Balasaraswati was heralded by ethnic dancers such as La Meri who "danced the world smaller" as her subaltern, feminized body came to encapsulate an entire rich heritage for audiences.[28] Hence in the classical dances of India we find a textured exchange between modern dance, ethnic dance by non-Indian women, and syncretic practices by Western-inspired Indian dancers touring the globe. Vatsyayan positioned Bharatanāṭyam through Bala's dancing body as the most direct lineage of an ancient form of art process in dancing and by a "transcending" of the body. I argue that Balasaraswati's vision of the dancing body diverged sharply from this nationalist depiction as seen in her embodied theorizing and in the political ramifications of her formal style. Vatsyayan countered by injecting a strain of nationalism into Balasaraswati's legacy through government publications and even a speech falsely attributed to Bala.

Balasaraswati's classical dance style infused ancient (the affective ecology of Bharata's system), medieval (the *devadāsī* lifeworld and *vṛtti*), and modern (dislocation, subalternity, colonialism) affordances into Bharatanāṭyam's dance gestures. This power enabled her to survive and pioneer a path of subaltern pattern of labor preceding the neoliberal, transnational economies of dancing. The India state realized this potential by sending her out as a form of Cold War soft-power diplomacy as *śakti*. Not unlike the run-up to nuclear proliferation—the thermonuclear bomb was called *mahāśakti*, the "Great Power"—Bala's "soft power" enabled Indian nationalist projects while creating a distributed body of audience members, dance

critics, and musicians who resonated with her subaltern, feminist, and embodied approach to the artmaking process. Paradoxically, Balasaraswati's gestures carried the abstracted qualities of divine dispositions into global circulation. This process placed them as alternatives to national sovereignty: her dancing therefore articulated with a larger assemblage of disenfranchised peoples around the world whose performance styles shared similar affordances and techniques. Following in Martha Graham's footsteps, her lecture demonstrations provided new audience with knowledge of Bharatanāṭyam techniques, Hindu mythology, and *devadāsī* lifeworlds.[29] While reserving Bala as a soft weapon until the 1960s, the Indian government inadvertently unleashed her at the height of the counter-culture movement in the United States when critiques of governmentality were at their height. Her dance therefore participated in calling national sovereignty into question as the *bhāva*s undergirding her gestures invoked deities that broke the anthropocentric assumptions of what Michel Foucault calls biopolitical control or a "conduct of conduct." By resisting attempts to erase her from history, Balasaraswati also allowed other subaltern dispositions and forces to flail against their relegation as "domesticated Others."[30] Bala's style had the strength to counteract a *vṛtti* at the level of an entire nationstate (Foucault's "art of governing") due to the obduring history layered into her gestures in her art of living.[31]

My claim that Balasaraswati's continued presence on the international stage would present a threat to the state might appear drastic. What threat could a single subaltern dancer pose to the Indian nation compared to its geopolitical foes during the Cold War? How could dance threaten the nationalist project which Vatsyayan saw diminishing by the late 1990s in retrospect among Indian dancers? Balasaraswati's presence as a *devadāsī* "servant of the goddesses," revealed feminine agencies from the past as potential forms of sovereignty to the

secular state. Bala's devotion to dance forced the ancient goddess central to local life in India to reject her "domesticated Otherness" as her subaltern worshippers were denied the privileges of citizenship in the emerging state. While Bala infused her dance style with the ritual and economic affordances of relation to the godess, other classical traditions had similar political ramifications at a formal level. Dance scholars after Vatsyayan have criticized the timeless and apolitical nature of Indian society assumed in these early nationalist projects. Dancer and cultural critic Ananya Chatterjea poses the problem of feminist agency when the discourses of colonial structuralism prevent "the brown, subaltern woman" from speaking.[32] Her provocative counter-narrative to dominate Western styles of embodiment in modern dance and ballet suggests that subaltern performers' unruly bodies can disrupt the hegemonic gaze that cannot see past the saris of Indian female performers.[33] Dance appears to be one method therefore of disrupting the focus on cosmetic gestures by "extro-verting" (*pravṛtti*) into the textured details of multiple performance traditions as they articulate hidden resonances between subaltern, marginalized, and resistive choreographies. Avanthi Meduri's discursive history of Bharatanāṭyam also examines the tensions within the name of the form itself as developed by Indian intellectuals and institution builders such as Vatsyayan and Rukmini Devi Arundale at Kalakshetra. She deliberately reinvigorates this history with censored *devadāsī* literature. While Meduri's *devadāsī*s lack agency in all moments besides performance, her textual focus fails to locate the resistive choreographies of everyday living that performance scholars and ethnographers such as Lucinda Ramberg and Davesh Soneji find in contemporary traditional communities of dancers.[34]

Anurima Banerji's recent work on the paratropic performance potential and the distributed body in Odissi reveals the most formal dimensions of dance to be political in nature.

In her interpretation informed by Foucault, sovereignty is a form of choreography in the state's control and movement of a social body.[35] Classical dances like Odissi and Bharatanāṭyam are "inventions of post colonial India, and that from one perspective, it is a thoroughly modern dance."[36] Dance therefore functioned as a repository of a dense, layered history of control by state agencies and lifeworlds of performers.[37] While multiple styles (*vṛtti*) are combined into the nationalist assemblage of each dance style as a disposition (*sattva*), each strain sediments its own history into the dancing body and reactivates it during performance. The disposition has a singular name that hides its affective diversity, a "mosaic without a defining essence."[38]

Banerjis' theoretical interjections, like the percussive footwork of a *mahari* dancer, redirects her audience toward the "agentive capacities of the body" in the style of *abhinaya* and *nṛtta* of groups such as Nrityagram.[39] The classical is a set of standards dictated by the state as a form of "conduct of conduct," or a commanding *vṛtti* over others, that constructs an atemporal semblance of India's past. This process grounds classical dance in unbroken textual traditions while the texts were used peripherally if known at all. Classicism also locates the center of temple complexes as the sites for developing styles to emerge around male divinities and priests, while subaltern groups performing at the fringe of the temples and villages are ignored or subsumed into the narrative. The semblance might appear stable and timeless, but the historical and spatial forces at play reveal traditions as affected continuously in a process of "continual metamorphosis."[40] Classical dance's formal techniques can be deployed to "contest and transfigure" a tradition's contours: a feat which Balasaraswati managed fifty years before Nrityagram was founded. Yet this process requires both performers and audiences to recognize the resistive choreographies at a formal level as political even when those sharing in this resistive moment are not consciously attempting to be radical.[41] Banerji's formulation of

a "distributed body" between the affective ecology and performer informs my analysis as well as the material I reviewed on *līlā* in Chapter Two. Banerji points out that liberal subjectivity is exposed as a modern construct when the link between temple, deity, and dancer reveals a gap with individualized personhood. Instead, performers share in a distribution of agency in the devotional milieus that offer translocal alternatives to these Enlightenment assumptions.[42] In gestures, art images extend the agency of the dancing body into relation with the landscape and to dispositions.[43] Balasaraswati's embodied figuration carried the weight of the temple into the formal structure of a Bharatanāṭyam dance repertoire, creating a semblant temple in performances. The agency she could invoke with deities in these moments of memorialization (*smaraṇa*) brought the past to life while contesting the diminished legacy of subaltern agents who were closest to these deities. By attending to the link between gestures and the state, the biopolitical features of *vṛtti* emerge and the agency within the dancing body becomes extended to audiences in translocal and global contexts. Balasaraswati's innovation was to introduce alternative sovereigns while performing in the guise of the state.[44] Her dance retained modernist affordances that resonated with the *devadāsī* layers of habit as reflections of sovereign powers outside the individual which open up questions of personal autonomy founded in the Enlightenment. These are questions that have been raised in similar manner by subaltern and feminist theorists of South Asian history and performance.

Methodologically, I introduce an intersectional feminist and subaltern approach to the affective theories I have illuminated so far. Balasaraswati's history functions not only as a personal biography but a way of life (*vṛtti*) and a disposition (*sattva*) as she constructed her own "course" (*carita*) in storytelling, dance, and everyday interactions. I attempt to present what I believe Bala saw as her own hagiography: an embodied theory of performance for her

students which other sources captured and commented upon her oral and dance gestures for their own political, social, and artistic purposes. This latent story is the foundation on which Bala's son-in-law Douglas Knight's 2010 English biography was written.[45] Like any commentator, I assume his text has its own agenda while attempting to unearth the *sūtra* or "thread" of Bala's original message. My analysis differs from Knight, for whereas his goal is one of reinforcing the traditional community of performer's history and agency, I emphasize Bala's agency a unique subaltern performer deploying the tactical resources of her repertoire in novel political gestures. I incorporate the recognition of Balasaraswati's historical context within nationalist discourses and Orientalizing strands of reform in her lifetime.[46] I also draw attention to the lived experience and labor of the dancing body. Balasaraswati expressed her commitment to dancing as a form of *bhakti* or devotion.[47] This was a form of "strenuous" dedication to performance. Her family performed at times through the adversities of injury, diabetes, and even brain cancer! In this way, Balasaraswati's body was the locus of the affective form in a way that no other has been. Women who sang and danced in traditional communities resisted the erasure of their tradition and its assemblage into new patterns of pan-Indian "art" as others attempted to divest the dance from their embodied mode of life.[48]

Balasaraswati constantly imperilled Indian modernity as her classical dance positioned subaltern and marginalized modes of living and performance traditions linked to alternative sovereigns outside the state. Modern dance's techniques were already present in the mirroring and reflexivity on the body in Bala's style. Dislocation was a central aspect of *devadāsī* experience in the colonial period that the contours of Bala's Bharatanātyam inspired American dancers such as Donald McKayle to experiment with their common features to African and circum-Atlantic, diasporic performances. When her dance was finally captured on film at

Wesleyan University in the 1960s and by Satyajit Ray in the 1970s, its features began to resonate across mediums with similar films of dancers from marginalized styles and performances. In particular, I turn to Maya Deren's ethnographic films in Haiti and her *Pas de Deux* with Talley Beatty. Rather than viewing herself as modern, Balasaraswati's genius induced other subaltern performers to locate the agency and alternative sovereignties in improvisational styles and ritual.

Unlike American modern dancers who rejected classicism's class and racially codified conscious repertoire from established European sources, Bala cultivated her "voice" (*bāṇī*) within was governed by her guru Kandappa Pillai's interpretation of the contours of her grandmother Vina Dhanammal's music. In addition, I argue that she should be credited with incorporating inter-generational female-centric feminist memory. Bala developed her lineage along female lines from her grandmother and mother as artists and marked turning points in her ritual-devotional career with offerings to goddesses as intercessory power. Her way of life and style of dance therefore both embraced female agency at dispositional and historical levels. As subalterns in the newly emerging nation-state of India, Balasaraswati and her family were in danger of social and financial erasure during the early 1900s. The family of hereditary performers and their way of life was only able to be accepted by inculcating particular gestures. This process of adaptation transformed their identity as a semblance by middle-class, Victorianized standards prevalent among the upcoming patrons of the arts in Madras. By refusing to accept this status and by exhibiting her dance as inextricably tied to herself as a person, Balasaraswati rewrote her family's history.[49] Bala's revolutionary impact on Bharatanāṭyam as a global form of dance therefore is also tied to her performative genius as her gestures (*abhinaya*) carried the weight of history with such creative force as to divinize

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her. Bala became an *avatāra* or "descent" of the goddess Sarasvatī for those who were enthralled by her dance.[50] These modern audiences and artists found an alternative to the spiraling affordances of Western, capitalist modernity which seemed to dimish agentive control. Balasaraswati was integral to framings of how "Great Traditions" modernized. For instance, the anthropologist Milton Singer's discussion of modernizing processes among Brahmins in Tamil Nadu also recognized Bala's art as an embracing affect (*anubhāva*) to modern styles and tastes as they developed from a range of sources in Madras.[51]

The affective forms I have discussed in past chapters therefore continue to play a major role in understanding the way dance shaped Balasaraswati's life. Someone labelled a *devadāsī*, she was not seen as an individual subject but as part of an affected group. As Orientalist and reform assemblages implicated her dancing body, she was "disciplined" and discursively bound by the terms of others. As dance historian Ninotchka Bennahum has shown for transhistorical Roma-Andalusian Gitanx dancers (in the diaspora and in visual imaginary), these frameworks still enabled certain forms of agency for dancers to exert control.[52] Through dispositional matrices (*sattva*s) that become "revitalized," Balasaraswati's identities were constantly felt to be in flux, in process, and marked by incompleteness.[53] This contingent set of conditions makes their lives into an affective field, modulated by both aesthetic and reform assemblages.[54] Davesh Soneji notes that by focusing mostly on the religious history of *devadāsī*s and not on their lived experience and way of life, scholars have bought into a "redemptive" narrative that consigns them to the past. Many came from economically marginalized backgrounds and were often part of the sexual economy of female bodies at court.[55]

Contemporary South Asian dancing artists today are still relegated outside the sphere of "proper" dancing in Bharatanātyam, even when their lineage has been hailed as integral to the history of the dance form itself. Soneji calls these groups "courtesans" to signal their presence in the secular and performing lives of others as well as their imbrication into a "shifting colonial sexual economy."[56] While Soneji treated this theme as separate from their religious identities, Lucinda Ramberg argues that the *devadāsī* dispositional matrix was created specifically to deny them agency as religious subjects.[57] I will return to this point in my discussion of Avanthi Meduri's history the *devadāsī*s; for now I argue the evidence from Balasaraswati's lifetime suggests that agency was always a major feature of subaltern performances. Even when historically marginalized groups had little social force, their conscious actions and ritual choices could spark political consequences as bodies flooded onto streets to protest. Hence dance movement was always monitored closely by colonial and nationalist authorities until the Devadasi Dance ban went into effect in the 1950s. Dispositions remained largely a product of the enduring past, yet Bala's gestures induced a field where the past and present comingled in the performative moment.

While the terminology of *līlā* I examined in Chapter Two was not a part of Balasaraswati's explicit theorizing, the dramatic illusions (*māyā*) she fashioned while dancing were a central feature of her own experience with Bharatanātyam and among audiences. Semblance for dance is particularly important as it creates virtualized gestures.[58] In turn, *līla* connects the bodies of dancers even across continents and gaps in time and space. Diasporic communities in the late twentieth century were able to create a space memorializing a constructued precolonial past using dance gestures as its vehicle.[59] Bharatanātyam and other classical dances therefore functioned as articulations between expatriate South Asians and the

subcontinent which remained fixated on a timeless memory. In contrast, dance in contemporary *devadāsī* communities tends to be kept "behind closed doors," signaling both their style's marginalization as well as the way it helps continue to shape their sense of identity by being performed today. In this way, the past is continually put back into their narrative in being danced, making it a process of unfinished gestures.[60] I found my discussions with Aniruddha Knight at his family's home and dance institution in Kilpauk, Chennai to be remarkably similar to Soneji's interviews and meetings with courtesan families in Andhra Pradesh. Discussing the past oftentimes led to spontaneous performances—sung lines, hand gestures, even footwork!—interspersed through conversation and recollections.[61] These reveal playful semblances (*līlā*) that manifest the capacities of the community for a short time as they could be, showing him the *mēḷam* troupe of dancing women and creating the ensemble in performance as a fashioning in the present of the past.

Lastly this section historicizes my work in Chapter Three on *vṛtti* as both a "style" and a "mode of living." Balasaraswati's heritage was the embodied repertoire linked specifically to her family's performative relationship to music and musical composition. The style continued to preserve the dispositional matrix of Carnatic dance. However, it was in her use of *abhinaya* or "gesture" that set the dancer apart from her peers. Most academic scholars and dance critics claimed Bharatanāṭyam would be unpalatteable for non-Indian audiences. Yet Balasaraswati's genius upset these expectations. Her ingenuity resided in the ability to communicate the affective force of this tradition of performance across culture boundaries. Rather than viewing this as an individual trait of her as a person, such as a hidden attribute like charisma, this chapter argues that it is her vulnerability and her deep connections with others that drew out the most powerful audience responses to her dancing and singing. Performance

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is a processual force, "a key modulation of subaltern self-presentation and self-consciousness." It allows traditional women to both enact their past and fill it with content as "embodied histories" with their own aesthetic contours unique to their experiences.[62] Each aesthetic assemblage will therefore have corresponding ways of linking or rejecting the reform assemblages discussed during that period.

I would like to add one additional affective form as it plays a major role in understanding Bala's lifetime. Gesture, *abhinaya*, is a major framework for dance critics, academic scholars, and her family to understand the impact of her dancing on those around her. While this term covers topics in several chapters in the *Nāṭya-śāstra*'s aesthetics, I historicize Bharata's text as it enters performance history during Bala's lifetime in the dispositional matrix of scholars and nationalists.[63] *Abhinaya* affords invariable traits to counter the *devadāsī* reform assemblage that denies these women and communities agency.[64] Gesture, as Carrie Noland writes, both reveals the imbrications of power that are inscribed into bodies by repetitive movement as well as opening up intransigent forces that erupt from the body.[65] The field of agency fashioned and emerging in dance, therefore, is open to possibilities.[66] As Balasaraswati learned to "contour" her body to the musical style of her family (*vṛtti*), she in turn found novel ways to reveal her genius in dancing.[67] This aligns with Soneji's contention that dancing women fashion "imaginative possibilities" within patriarchal structures of power.[68] Balasaraswati's *abhinaya* acted as the primary affective form in creating meshworks of bodies that resonated with the hereditary community's art-making process in India and with modern dancers abroad.[69] Likewise, it was her investment in passing along her tradition that contributed to Bharatanāṭyam's global spread.[70] Rather than seeing it as a form of the "classical," pan-Indian culture of South Asia, however, her approach to the form revealed a

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decidedly-modern, feminist, *and* subaltern aesthetic assemblage that continues to resonate to this day.

Gestures come from a recognizable place in the body of a performer. Secondly, it also approaches Balaraswati's family style as a living tradition, rather than make her an interlocutor with a fixed viewpoint seen as "conservative" or "traditionalist" versus the "modernizing" or "reforming" impetus of dancers such as Rukmini Devi Arundale.[71] Instead, I highlight the way Balasaraswati developed her legacy through both the *guru-śiṣya* system of passing on knowledge common in her education with her *nattuvanar* Kandappa Pillai and others, as well as through modern mediatized forms (text books, video films, still photographs, interviews, speeches). Gestures afforded her the ability to spread and distribute her family's embodiment of dancing around the world, while also fashioning networks of performers and audience members that cut across cultural and linguistic boundaries.[72] In this way, Balasaraswati's gestures extended out and beyond her bodily frame, constantly shifting their affective contours as her improvisational acumen shifted her performance to a unique register for every audience. Hence the capture of her gestural life helps to give access to the style not just as an artform but in the totalizing aspect of a mode of living. The communal power of her dancing provoked both political and ethical action in those who participated with her gestures.[73] In this way, her *bāṇī* continues to this day as Balasaraswati herself becomes worshiped and honored as a dancer in Chennai; the family's perspective therefore suggests her lifetime becomes a dispositional matrix or model to be emulated (*carita*). Her daughter Lakshmi Shanmukham and grandson Aniruddha Knight performed and taught her style and ensure its continued importance in female and male dancers' lives today.[74] What can we learn about affective forms as they shape history in a single person's lifetime? If the "shape of Orientalism can be mapped like a dance,

its bodies moving to and from center stage, crossing and extending back into space along multiple choreographic routes," how did the affordances of larger systems of power and discipline trace this route in her dancing body?[75] And lastly, in what way were Balasaraswati's gestures able to create the space for her own genius to flourish?

4.3 The Power of Genius: *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bāro*

I argue in the following sections that Balasaraswati's gestures in dancing (*abhinaya*) are embodied forms of theorizing or a "movement texture."[76] These moments appear when an audience can focus on the gaps in a performance like the spaces found in a crowded street. At the moment I stop looking at the individual bodies and start to see the flow in the space, the gap invites me in. This "thinking-feeling" articulates the aesthetic moment of an ensemble between the performer and audience without rendering either of them in a fixed position. The theorizing occurs as we experience the semblance (the "gap") as a movement of thought in action, or "in-forming" (*ni-rūpya*) the moment onstage as I have argued in chapter two.[77] I shall examine Bala's speeches as dances in more detail in the following sections. Here I argue that we should likewise attend to her most famous piece among knowledgeable audiences (*rasika*s) of Bharatanāṭyam dance, "Kṛṣṇa Come Soon," as a form of theorizing dance. *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* is a Kannada *kritti* composed for the deity at Udipi. Bala substituted this pieces into the *padam* slots of her concerts despite being a separate type of composition.[78] The program for a 1965 performance asserts the composer is the sixteenth-century Vyāsarāyar, the melody (*rāga*) is *yaman*, and the rhythm (*tāla*) is *cāpu* (a seven-beat structure).[79] The translation appears to match Narayana Menon's earlier translations of the piece for Bala's 1962 tour to Jacob's Pillow in Lenox, Massachusetts although he claims the unknown author was from the twentieth century.[80] Bala learned the piece from her mother Jayammal, who received

it from a singer named Hyagreevachar in the 1930s.[81] John Lindquist's photograph of Bala's performance from Jacob's Pillow captures a statuesque pose she performed for *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* at Wesleyan that year.[82]

Figure 4.2: Balasaraswati at Jacob's Pillow, August 1962.
Photograph by John Lindquist.

I have benefited greatly from a copy of her October 1962 performance at Wesleyan University directed by John Frazer and narrated by Hugh Nelson (although see my argument below on the affordances of male voices overlapping Bala's singing voice). My analysis of this performance assumes Bala's performances in 1962 were unique yet drew from similar engagements with audiences in Massachusetts, New York, and Connecticut.[83]

First let me explain the song's lyrics. The song has a refrain (*pallavi*) with accent lines following (*caraṇam*). Hence the first line is repeated after the second before moving on to the

third. The musicians, however, have the option of holding out the line for as long as necessary during a dance; Bala frequently extemporized after she sang the lines herself aloud. Following this first *pallavi*, the dancer's choices controlled the scenario in performance events. Here is Narayana Menon's translation from the 1962 concert at Jacob's Pillow:

> (Pallavi): Kṛṣṇa come soon! Come soon and show me your face!
> (Caraṇam I): With bells on your feet and blue pendants in your ears,
> O Blue-Hued Lord, come dancing to me!
> (Caraṇam II) Little bells tinkling rout your waist, on each finger a ring,
> Round your neck hangs the Vaijayanti-garland.
> (Caraṇam III) Robed in Benares brocade, in your hand a flute
> Redolent with fragrant sandal-wood paste.
> (Caraṇam IV) Your mother beheld the entire Universe when you opened your mouth,
> O Prop of the Universe, O Lord Kṛṣṇa of Udipi![84]

First, the program and the video's narrative layer this piece with a parental matrix (*vātsalya*) as the stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*). Kṛṣṇa acts as the primary pervading affect (*vibhāva*) as his individual traits and ornaments become a dense ecology of semblances in her gestures. These *līlā*s overlap with the events she depicts as commentarial insertions during her improvisation (*mano-dharma*). Kṛṣṇa therefore appears as a small child among the cowherders (*gopāla*s) with his small flute yet he is garbed in yellow silk from Vārāṇasī (*kāśī pitambara*). The female protagonist is revealed by the fourth verse as Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa's mother in Vraja. The episode indexed by this line occurs when she catches the young boy eating mud. After he refuses to open his mouth, she scolds him into revealing the ball of dirt. However, as he is also the supporter of the universe or "prop" (*jagaddodhāraka*), the ball turns out to be the "three worlds" of the entire universe itself.[85] In this moment Yaśodā's disposition (*sattva*) reverts from parental love to the more basic *dāsya-bhāva* or mode of "reverential servitude." Kṛṣṇa's transformation before her eyes leaves the character unable to continue "carrying" (*abhinaya*) parental love as a vessel (*pātra*) for its affects. Instead, she reaches out to call Kṛṣṇa by the

name of the poet's personal deity of preference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa at Udipi (now in Karṇataka). Bala's gestures in this role (*bhūmikā*) therefore help to bring Kṛṣṇa to the stage as they become embracing affects (*anubhāva*s). She will literally attempt to hug, cuddle, console, besmear, and fondle the semblance onstage. As the final part of this ecology of affects, Bala likewise creates additional scenarios to augment the primary matrix with "fluctuating affects" (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s) of annoyance, wonderment, confusion, pleasure, nostalgia, and I argue passion. In fact this final affect encroaches into the "pure devotional" matrix of the piece–in the words of Menon's program notes–to suggest its own latent sublation of parental affection. Bala transforms the maudlin affects of devotional art into a deep well of latent potential.[86] I attend to the phases between Bala's stabilizing affects for each verse. These gaps between the portrayed emotions are filled with affective potential waiting to turn into something new. I also believe that previous scholarship on the dance ignores the differential moment of this performance in 1962 in favor of the general tenor of the piece. These minor moments help to modulate the entire piece.[87]

I argue Balasaraswati's genius lies in this minor gesture as the semblance of erotic longing in its decorous mode (*śṛṅgāra*) suddenly infuses the entire piece with Bala's own affective matrix (*svabhāva*) rather than that of the characters. While her normal humility and devotion (*bhakti*) toward dancing functions at one level of her style (*vṛtti*), her personal investment of *śṛṅgāra* in a tasteful manner infuses the piece with the *devadāsī* affordances of her predecessors. This conscious choice of gestures empowers Bala to break the conventions of Sanskrit aesthetics. Bala managed this superbly subversion of aesthetic codes without even revealing to anyone but a captive aesthete that she could modulate this key of devotional longing from the chaste love of parents to that of personal desire for the divine. Bala therefore

transformed herself from a child (*bālā*) of the creative principle (Saraswatī) in artmaking but overrode it and became an embodiment of its "power" (*bala*). I do not refer to her with the proper diacritics in Sanskrit since the English transliteration of her name continues this force of artistry into discursive semblances in Anglo-American writing.

Balasaraswati begins the performance as she sings the *rāga* Yaman. The video pans over the instrumentalists warming up the flute (T. Viswanathan) and *vīna* (S. Narasimhulu).[88] The *nattuvnar* (K. Ganesan) and drummer (T. Ranganathan) wait to play until the *pallavi* begins. This moment of tuning ends when Bala tucks the end of her gold and yellow sari into her waistline. This gesture affords the dance the *āhārya-abhinaya* of preparing the stage, itself bare of decoration besides a gold curtain. Narasimhulu begins to sing the first lines, *kṛṣṇa nī bēganē bāro* as Bala already has moved into reaching for the young boy. She crosses her hands in frustration and attempts to call him over by snapping her fingers. This gesture repeats with every line of the refrain, allowing the audience to return to the dispositional matrix of this moment. These first embracing affects (*anubhāva*s) set the tone as the divine can be seen in the hidden semblance of his play (*līlā*) but remains just out of reach for the material body.

As the singer repeats Kṛṣṇa's name, Bala performs several gestures to indicate his *līlās*. She holds up the mountain with one arm to show him as *giri-dhara* and daintily playing his flute by raising it to her lips. Here she has a comedic tone to her actions, suggesting an easy familiarity with the divine. Her attempts at cajoling him work as she holds up a pot of milk for him to drink. She asks him to "show me your face" to the lyrics, indicating its luminosity. She snaps her fingers and attempts to pull him back with both hands yet he slips through her fingers again. In astonishment, she nods to acknowledge Kṛṣṇa's slipperiness and inability to be grasped. Bala continues, slipping one arm around him then pulling him close. Lifting up his

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chin to her face, she gazes into his countenance up close. Bala transitions directly into the verse lines as if she wished to bring him closer before the moment passed.

In the first *caraṇam*, Bala begins to gesture his traits and accessories. By enacting these serviceful gestures (*dāsya*), a mood open to any devotee becomes available to the audience. These transformations of *āhārya-abhinaya* into *āṅgika-abhinaya* render the hidden *vibhāva*s of the deity visible onstage. Bala's habitus as a *pūjārī* would have accrued over the years as she adorned various *mūrti* (images) of the divine trickster with similar ornaments (*alaṃkāra*). These ring out at times as she stamps her feet, shaking her dancing bells in the process. The "bells on your feet" resound as she dresses him for the audience. Kṛṣṇa's "blue pendants" dangling from his ears and his sky-blue coloring she indicates by a graceful arc from the sky down the chest to the body and back again. This suggests Kṛṣṇa's all-pervasiveness as well as he shares the same affordance with the sky. Beginning to stamp again with one hand on her waist and the other half-raised to the level of her eyes, she twists and turns on the line "come dancing to me."

Bala begins to improvise at this moment off the lines. A group of women (*gopī*s) goes down to the river to bathe as she notes their beautiful eyes. They make their way down to the river with pots on their heads. Kṛṣṇa leans around a tree to spy them, and Bala registers the pleasure on his face. The women decide to bathe after placing the pots down and unwrapping their saris. Holding their noses, they plunge into the water. At this moment Kṛṣṇa tucks his flute into his vest, leans over quickly and grabs their saris. He begins to toss their garments into a tree as the limbs grow ever higher. He wags his finger as it to chastise them for neglecting to anticipate his move. The *gopī*s meanwhile emerge from the water and are puzzled to find their clothes missing. With his flute in hand, Kṛṣṇa sits in the tree. They see his reflection in

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the water and point towards it on the surface. They humble themselves to Kṛṣṇa in a gesture of supplication, with hands together and head bowed. To clothe themselves anew though they have to expose their forms as this *añjali* covers their chests. Bala rapidly transitions in this moment by articulating this scene directly to the next *līlā* as they turn their saris around their bodies. In this next segment, Bala enacts a scene where the *gopī*s are carrying milk pots along a road. Kṛṣṇa interrupts their peregrination to break the containers and release their liquid goods for his pleasure.

By linking these two incidents Bala therefore comments that the delight he takes in the female form is subtly infusing the scene with *śṛṅgāra* or *mādhurya* as a matrix. As she returns to the *caraṇam* line again, beseeching Kṛṣṇa to "come dancing to me," Bala tries to scoop him up again. When he refuses, she snaps her fingers twice to the cymbal beats of Ganeshan. This scares him away and she offers up a prayer (*añjali*) as if to say, "Look what I have to work with!" This interjectory gesture links the wonder of his semblant appearances (*adbhuta*) and the *mādhurya* of the improvisational vignettes. She backs up several steps at this point and pauses for a line. This small moment of blank space and neutral affect allows her to savor the previous experiences. She closes her eyes briefly and breathes in deeply to add a peaceful (*śānta*) affect to the layered style.

Turning to the second *caraṇam*, Bala gestures more of Kṛṣṇa's bodily ensemble. She stamps again to the "little bells tinkling on your waist" and begins to place rings on Kṛṣṇa's fingers. She places her hand flat atop her own before bringing them together. She kisses each of his fingers in turn. Without a break, she fluidly moves from this intimacy with the divine form to cross her stacked hands to the right. This gesture embodies the weapon he wields in combat, the *cakra* ("discus") along with a *śāṅkha* ("conch") used to start a skirmish during

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wartime. She bows to him, allowing a transition into his martial form he assumes as an adult. Bala places the garland of victory (*vijaya*) around his neck like a central image in a temple. This regal majesty allows her to phase into the third *caraṇam* with its rich silk from Kāśī.

In the third verse Bala opens the moment to a startling modulation toward *śṛṅgāra*. The flute here again signals this shift in Kṛṣṇa's relation to the dancer. Like the *gopī*s listening to his call to the *rāsa* dance, Bala in this moment departs from her previous attitudes and relationship.[89] The sandal-wood paste in the second half becomes the focus of her material labor as she squats down close to the ground. She grinds the block of scent, mixes it with water, and rolls it together in her hands. Bala raises this infused mixture to her face and breathes it deeply into her core. This moment appears to move her toward reaching for Kṛṣṇa as a small boy as she smiles. As she applies the sandal-wood paste to his arms and torsos, she pulls him close toward her body. He sneaks away again yet she reaches with one hand to catch him. As he disappears once more, the look on her face suggests a memory of love (*smara*) that wistfully evokes nostalgia (*smaraṇa*). In this moment, it becomes impossible for an audience to tell exactly who Bala is presenting onstage. The affective weight she carries in her gestures leads repeatedly back to a memory of love–and perhaps even a dalliance she remembers fondly.

While I have no subjective access to her memories in this moment captured on film, it becomes apparent to an attentive viewer that Bala has shifted from embodying Yaśodā's dispositional matrix to someone else. I argue that if we view these gestures as layering roles (*bhūmikā*) into the style of Bala's perfoming (*vṛtti*), they reveal she is carrying her self-disposition in these moments. As Kṛṣṇa slips through her fingers, all the previous phases between the verse lines have been Bala herself emerging onstage. While Yaśodā is the principle character of the vocal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*) and Kṛṣṇa is "dressed" through cosmetic

gestures (*āhārya-abhinaya*), Bala emerges as the mediating figure who bridges these semblances. This assertion might seem easy to dismiss as she portrays multiple characters throughout her *abhinaya* performances, yet something about this song removes the iterations of identity and disordering properties of *līlā* I described in chapter two. If Yaśodā's *bhāva* was the disposition undergirding this relationship (hence Kṛṣṇa would appear to her as a child), then the other *līlā*s would not fit. The humbling of the *gopī*s and Kṛṣṇa's theft of their sweets are all themes an audience of devotees would only relish in a *mādhurya* mood.

This moment erupts from the conventional standards of middle-class and nationalist reframings of *bhakti* toward the *devadāsī* contours of Bala's history. Bala's attention to her hand gestures works as a semblance of *devadāsī* rituals called "showing hands" among Tamil lineages. These rituals were used to inaugurate a self-reflection among village goddesses.[90] This process creates a semblant mirror among the *āhārya-abhinaya* gestures that are brought forward in front of Kṛṣṇa. In these moments, Bala is radically mirroring his most fundamental desires through the "pure disposition" (*śuddha-sattva*) of his latent form. Like a spotlight placed between two reflective surfaces, this phenomenon continues to build the intensity of awareness before it can no longer distinguish individual traits or bodies in its semblant infinity. Rather than presuming a lack of stable identity in this moment as previous theorists have offered, I argue that Bala instead furnished the performance with her own dispositional matrix (*svabhāva*). Bala's mirroring of Kṛṣṇa, the *gopī*s, and even Yaśodā all reflect the intensity of their affects and allow them to merge into a corporeal form. These folds of affectivity lap through her body as the Bharatanāṭyam *vṛtti* absorbs their dispositional qualities (*guṇa*s) and merges them together. Bala therefore subsumed and mastered these divine feelings in a way that brought them under her own control by humbling her own surface emotions. This "empty

space" at the heart of the performative event is therefore not a lack of identity but a space of potential. Bala's mastery was to divorce her surface-level emotions and engagements in order to access her own dispositional matrix onstage. While this went against Bharta's prohibition in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* (see chapter one), Bala was never interested in these rules for their own sake.

Bala's own character and genius at embodied interpretation emerged at these "joints" (*saṃdhi*s) between the lyrical episodes (*līlā*s). They also acted as minor gestures to inflect the original mood of the piece with the unique affects of her own disposition. Rather than just "playing" the characters, Bala revealed herself while assuming their roles. The conventions of staging allowed her to layer their affective contours into her own body and invest (*āveśa*) her bodily habits with their force. Yet she continued to carry these latent material forms back into semblances as she memorialized (*smaraṇa*) the gestures. By fully embracing and embodying the range of affective forms I have charted in this study, Bala added herself into the flow of affectivity. As I will argue below, her life story became part of this current (*carita*) which in South Asian discursive regimes are known as hagiographies. I should return to Bala's coda at the end of *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bāro* as it layers one additional gesture from her habitual training into this new matrix. Her choices onstage therefore helped to dis-position the forces arrayed against her as a subaltern while bringing her embodied history into the spotlight.

Bala was able to carry this hidden self-disposition throughout the composition through her *āṅgika-abhinaya*. Since it originated with her own corporeal form though, it started as a materially latent (*vṛtti*) affective phase. To add it back to the well of possibilities, Bala needs to make it fully virtual. Only semblances can afford this transition. Hence she once again returns to the *caraṇam* verses as they open up a wonderous transformation in Yaśodā's

relationship with Kṛṣṇa. As the role emerges explicitly with the lyrical line "your mother beheld the entire three worlds when you opened your mouth," the semblance from her gestures becomes self-negating. Bala unveils the child Kṛṣṇa eating something from the ground. She catches him and he shakes his head to deny it. She draws her hand back in a threatening manner. This gesture is flat though and seems to be the "showing hands" moment I discussed earlier. Kṛṣṇa looks away as if he knows the mirroring affordances of her hand will distort his appearance and endanger the relationship between devotee and child. Bala coaxes him to look toward her and open his mouth. During this scene she has been crouching down to his level. Seeing the contents on his tongue though forces her to stumble back in bewilderment. Her face registers an immediate flash of surprise as her eyes widen, her hand travels to her face, and her posture becomes stock-still. Bala rubs her eyes as if she cannot believe what is appearing in front of her. She quickly gestures through the crossings of Kṛṣṇa's forms at this moment.

Hence Bala has moved into the position of an audience to the pure matrix of the divine as its *avatāra*s come onto the stage in the ensemble. From her position though, she realizes that the distance between her and the divine is too great to overcome. This resignation (*viraha*) leaves her unable to fully cherish the moment even as the illusions of semblance (*māyā*) revert the two back to their starting roles. The rapidity of this affective phasing brings her back to gesturing yet without the assurance of her previous *mādhurya* matrix to ground her performing. She invites Kṛṣṇa to come to her once more, but without the snapping from the previous anchoring gesture. Without this pride, her face is left expectant and pained. Bala invites him to come forward with her two hands stretched downstage toward the audience as the final line of the song locates Kṛṣṇa as the deity at Udipi. Dwelling throughout the universe and in particular places, his forms encompass the area embraced by material bodies. As she waits to

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see if he will come, Bala rubs her hands together and appears anxious. Her self-assurance gone, this moment reveals her *viraha* as the final transformation. She has gone through the same route as the *gopī*s to a perfected love even the divine cannot reciprocate without material forms of affect. Bala's reward, while anxious in appearance, was "her own purity" in the words of Kṛṣṇa from the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa*.[91] Bala acknowledges this recognition from the divine by bowing forward to the audience as well as her semblant partner in the dance. In the process, Bala manages to override the negative associations of her way of life (*vṛtti*) as a *devadāsī* by infusing it with the contours of this purity. Hence she was able to "progress" (*pravṛtti*) the style by adding to its techniques through this ensemble of semblant forms through her gestures. This is why I argue she was a modern dancer: Bala not only inherited a tradition but made it her own, gave it a particular feeling that no one else could quite embody, and added modern affordances to Bharatanāṭyam for others to carry forward.

4.4 Modern Affects and *Devadāsī* Affordance in Balasaraswati's Bharatanāṭyam

I argue that first, if Balasaraswati's dance was considered "traditional" in the discursive framing of Indian nationalists, dance historians, and art critics, she would have been considered "modern" if born in the West.[92] Douglas Knight's biography offers an American audience an entrance into Balasaraswati's understanding of her dance style and life. The contours of her life and inspirations would fit alongside biographies of Martha Graham, Isidora Duncan, or Anna Halprin in dance history scholarship. I shall attempt to take a slightly different approach in my examination of Bala's lifetime. While certain dispositional matrices influenced her developing dance style, most historians would consider her subaltern position to have been insurmountable. Marxist deconstructionist theorists such as Gayatri Spivak would claim that subaltern women have no hope of accessing audiences for their voices, while South Asian

dancers such as Ananya Chatterjea claim contemporary performers have difficulty "seeing past the sari." As I argued in chapter three, both the bodily envelop and the dancer's history are intertwined such that the *āhārya-abhinaya* ("cosmetic gestures") of a dancer are both the first surface an unfamiliar audience would experience while also being freighted with the cultural weight of embodied habitus, social relationships, and ongoing economic struggles.[93] Chatterjea's contemporary dance colleagues who could not see past this level of the "traditional" guise were unable to recognize the radical departures from tradition her embodied style presented while enlivening the tradition as a *vṛtti*, a "style" which can layer conflicting histories, methods, and qualities. I argue that Bala's style had the same modern affective ecology as many dancers in the United States, Europe, and in India. Her creative use of the tradition enlivened it, added to its capacity to be understood and experienced by audiences, and was an exploration developed through her embodied agency as gestures (*abhinaya*). Hence her impact on Bharatanāṭyam was to allow it to "progress" (*pravṛtti*) by adding to its impact on the world.

I believe a certain type of blindness to Balasaraswati's genius is also apparent in dance scholarship up until fairly recently. Every video and demonstration lecture of her *bāṇī*-lineage of Bharatanāṭyam has been dubbed over with mostly male voices–a patriarchical semblance of control over the dancer's body. This includes both Satyajit Ray's documentary *Bala* (1976), the Wesleyan University performance of *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* (1962), and most recorded lectures found in archives. Balasaraswati herself complained that "When the continuity of the dance is interrupted by costume changes, announcements and explanations, the congealing of inner feeling becomes impossible and concentration is shattered."[94] Note she does not say whose concentration cannot focus and "congeal" the *bhāva*s into a stable form; instead the

entire ensemble of dancer, musicians, singers, and audience is split when they cannot "come together" (*saṃyoga*) in an affective ecology. After sifting through hundreds of programs in archives, I have found that most of them contain the same translations of songs by Tamil brahmin scholars (V. Raghavan, Narayana Menon) trained in Sanskrit. This Orientalist discursive tradition brought me to Avanthi Meduri's 1996 dissertation on the subject of the *devadāsī*'s "sutured" history to Indian nationalism. Meduri's historiography is one of the first tentative attempts to choreograph a history of Bharatanāṭyam that takes *devadāsī*'s lost histories into account.

Though Meduri fails to mention other central figures in this process of silencing Bala's dancing and singing voice were women. For instance, the art historian and founder of the national academy of dance, Kapila Vatsyayan, who paradoxically also put her career on the line to bring Bala along on a government-backed tour to the East-West Encounter in Tokyo, 1961. After interviews with Bala's family members, I learned that one of Bala's most famous speeches at the Congress on Research in Dance's East/West Encounter in Hawai'i from August 1-7, 1978 was in fact written by Vatsyayan and read aloud by Bala's daughter Lakshmi.[95] While Bala frequently had Lakshmi read her English materials and perform *abhinaya* to the words at these lectures, she was recovering from a heart problem at the time and could not have prepared this speech. After assessing the materials again, I realized that Bala's written records were only performative scripts for her gesturing–sometimes not even the work of her own hands! As such, I have considered these writings a form of vocal gesture (*vācika-abhinaya*) to which Balasaraswati's performative genius was to offer bodily gestures (*āṅgika-abhinaya*) as the primary mode of addressing an audience. The lack of video footage of her lecture demonstrations is a truly historic gap. As numerous audio logs show, Bala was so witty

that she managed to win over audiences in places as far apart as Los Angeles and Edinburgh Scotland by her gesturing alone, sometimes contradicting the words of the male speaker. This was a critical feature of her musical and dance training as each line of *abhinaya* can overlap, merge, and diverge from the words of a song yet must fit within the contours of the musical structure.

Moreover I have major disagreements with the focus on discursivity used by dance historians to understand Balasaraswati. Meduri's claims that Balasaraswati "was neither a true *devadāsī*, nor was she *not* a *devadāsī*" attempts to chart this slippage between the essentializing categories of Orientalism and the linguistic turn of the late 1990s. However, Meduri inadvertently essentializes the performative dimensions for dedication to a temple or deity marriage.[96] Balasaraswati's dedication to a deity *as a dancer* did not require a marriage-tying ceremony to inaugurate her status as a dancer-musician. I agree with the need to dis-position the Orientalist binarism as Meduri critiques them. However, Meduri inadvertently appropriates the gestures of erasure which constituted Bala and her family as subalterns. There is no discussion of the microaggressions Rukmini Devi Arundale perpetrated against Bala when the two shared a concert stage at all-Indian performances nor any thought toward the affective ramifications of refusing to engage in conversation. I believe this was an embracing affect (*anubhāva*) from the anti-*nautch* disposition I shall discuss below which attempted to label all *devadāsī* practices (and hence *vṛtti*s) as "prostitution" when danced or performed. This gave figures like Rukmini Devi *carte blanche* to ignore Bala as an interlocutor: it absolved them "of the obligation of having to recompense the devadasi for the emotional and physical harassment it caused them," as Meduri herself writes of the law's effects in the 1890s.[97] This lack of mutual recognition could have been Rukmini Devi Arundale's attempt to subvert the dialectic binding

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Indian women within colonialist discourses, yet it also prevented her from recognizing a different way of life or "elsewise" *vṛtti* in Balasaraswati's living experience. The deliberate rejection of the back-and-forth of debate was a failure to recognize Bala as an equal conversation partner. By refusing to engage with her, Rukmini Devi denied her a turn in the affective economy of the conference.[98]

Therefore I agree with Meduri's overall goal of placing Rukmini Devi Arundale and Balasaraswati "in a coeval temporality," with different "iterations" or semblances of what Bharatanatyam *could* be but go a step further. While recognizing the contours of discourse shaped the "traditional" disposition to disempower Rukmini Devi Arundale's style, this only occurred after her dancers had spread throughout the globe.[99] Surprisingly, the semblances they each advocate differ while their *vṛtti*s or modes of living were remarkably similar. Both were "traveling women who lived and worked in different institutional locations within India and abroad" whose worlds only overlapped occasionally.[100] If Meduri can claim a form of "civilizational modernity" arose from the performative choices of staging, costume design, and training that Rukmini Devi Arundale brough to new dancers, then I agree and believe we should extend the same courtesy to Balasaraswati's lineage.[101]

From another direction, Balasaraswati's students number in the dozens compared to the number of Kalākṣetra-trained dancers throughout the world and hence has been ignored as a part of modern trends in dance history. As an institution with considerable funding, teachers, and decades of dedicated labor, Rukmini Devi Arundale's Madras academy was a contemporary of Rabindranath Tagore's Viśva Bharatai or "World University" in Śāntiniketan, West Bengal founded in 1921. As Avanthi Meduri writes, "What we presently think of as the vanguard practices of cultural modernism had undoubtedly arrived in India in the 1920s."[102] Meduri claims dance scholarship on Bharatanatyam principally misrecognizes two forms of

modernity. Euro-American dance history focuses on "a local modernity perspective" framed around Indian nationalism to describe the dance form's history. She argues that figures such as Rukmini Devi Arundale were just as implicated in "global modernity" which functioned in the colonial context. This matrix was a "spatial, disruptive, and alien modernity" versus the "enlightened, revivalist" sympathies of the nationalists.[103] The affordances of the global are redundant: the modern for Euro-American dancers was felt to be disruptive, a break from the past.[104] This framework has an Orientalist assumption that the modern would never reach South Asia.

Instead, I purport that Balasaraswati was equally enmeshed in a comparatively modern ecology of affects.[105] Meduri makes a startling claim I have adapted throughout this study. Balasaraswati's capture in Raghavan and Singer's Orientalist and transhistorical assemblage continues in the work of ethnomusicologists and American students of her *bāṇī*.[106] She advocates for calling Bala "a travelling woman pioneer" in how she mapped out some of the same transregional patterns of economic flexibility by traveling to the US and Europe.[107] Similarly to Rukmini Devi Arundale, Bala's reach therefore transcended the particular locations in which she danced as her affective influence spread in mediatized forms. Rukmini Devi was only reclaimed as part of the nationalist disposition in the 1960s when her dance headquarters was separated from the Theosophical compound. During this time, Kalākṣetra became an international hub for students of many Indian forms of dance. This group would become a translocal *kula* ("family") of dancers that would carry the affective weight of her style's matrix.[108] To this day, Bharatanāṭyam practitioners know so little about their own history that any encroachment by novel trends appears threatening. As Aparna Keshaviah's 2007 survey of dancers and teachers found,

> One explanation for dancers' disregard of context is they fear that recognition of contemporary, globalized context will render "tradition" obsolete and reveal the "ancient" to actually be "outdated." Delving deeper, with over 50 percent associating tradition with Hinduism, this fear engenders a conviction that contemporary context

will actually render the core Indian/Hindu culture, and therefore Bharatanatyam, obsolete. Thusly, globalization becomes the enemy of tradition.[109]

Thus the global was seen as antithetical to the dance's dispositional matrix itself. Yet while Bala was involved in what Keshaviah describes as the "conservative" streak of the community, she innovated consistently in every performance. Yet in the survey the more guru-led teachers were "more likely to reduce *abhinaya* down to specific movements for specific emotions,"[110] one approach to teaching gestures that no one in her lineage practices. Hence Balasaraswati's approach to Bharatanātyam as it appears today is neither grounded in numerical superiority nor in attending to an exact transmission of its style as a "relic" of the past without the ability to adapt to fit the current dancer's context. Bala's students, while fewer in number, envision a similar attention to their lineage.[111] Keshaviah's study suggests that most regardless of affiliation, the Bharatanātyam dancers of recent decades are a fluid, living tradition:

> What emerged was that variation in *execution* and *values* regarding "tradition" could not be predicted at all. In other words, some of the most stringently held tenets are neither taught, received, nor practiced with any measurable conformity. They are as random as any living, moving art form would be.[112]

If it becomes impossible to detect which strain of the dance is which, then how can dance scholars find the hidden contours of personal and communal histories in the *vṛtti*s?[113]

So far I have attended to ways in which scholars have dismissed Balasaraswati and her dance as "traditional" while contrasting with Rukmini Devi Arundale's "civilizational modernism." Avanti Meduri describes this style as adapting the patriarchical authority from *naṭṭuvannār*s as well as discursive legitimacy from the *Nāṭya-śāstra*.[114] *Sadir* or *dasi-attam* (Tamil, "dance of servants"), was a name for the tradition of dance passed among *devadāsī*s at royal courts which only became Sanskritized when placed alongside Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*. The text therefore gave its name to the dance: Bharatanātyam. Yet this naming schema was part of the nationalist project of modernizing the new nation state. Rukmini Devi Arundale's modernism fit the contours

of European artistic practices: "Her cultural and artistic work was thus modernist in the way T.S. Eliot speaks of modernism as a cultural form or vision that artists labor to lose and then repossess." This can be seen in the gestures she adapted for performances and in a shared *vṛtti* with qualities from ballet:

> When we situate Rukmini Devi's work within the intellectual and social context of 1920s and 1940s we find that her bourgeoisie sensibility was modernist in the best sense of the word. She visualized the structural form of Indian modernism by stretching out and horizontalizing the female body on the Anna Pavlovian ballet barre. By so doing she demonstrated the necessity for the Orientalist presence as artistic inspiration. Yet she reinflected that presence by teaching the dancer not to aspire to an unfettered notion of space and freedom as the ballerina does. She pushed the body down, forced it downwards into the aramandali position, similar to the plie and then stretched out the spine from that place of descending gravity. While the horizontalization that she attempted contained what Anderson describes as the "steady onward clocking of the homogenous empty time" [Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* 1983:37], it also contained the reverberating sounds, blessings and curses of the dancing bell, albeit, without the devadasi."[115]

Two dispositional matrices emerge from Meduri's discussion of modernity. One is the Orientalizing look backward to the past that attempts to fix forms into static positions. Rukmini Devi Arundale adapted the balletic *vṛtti* of her inspiration Anna Pavlova into an opposing affordance. While balletic line defies gravity, Kalākṣetra's style of Bharatanāṭyam grounds the dancer in the *aramaṇḍalī* posture. This gesture contained the latent dispositions of *devadāsī* affects at their empty center. The playful semblances that continue to "ring" in Meduri's account are the *līlā*s that came from this elided space as the *āhārya-abhinaya* of *sadir* was adapted by Brahmin and middle-class women onstage. Some might argue this might appear to be a form of cultural appropriation of the *devadāsī*'s *vṛtti* without any attention paid for the lived experiences they were undergoing during this process. Yet it also signaled a constant layering of performative history from multiple *sattva*s into even Kalākṣetra's style of dancing.

Yet modernity was constrained and shaped by its location in India. While colonial and Orientalist scholars positioned India as a "timeless" landscape, dance historians have been shaped

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by more recent Cold War structures of investigation and disciplinarily. My own use of the term "South Asia" to refer to India was adopted into dance history by Milton Singer (University of Chicago). Singer's collaboration with V. Raghavan, the scholar of Sanskrit and Bharatanāṭyam, shaped understandings of South Indian dance through the anthropological lens of "cultural performances." Though he switched codes at times to describe the dance style. Lecturing in India, Singer emphasized its place within pan-Indian traditions. In the US, he conceptualized his narrative to fit it into larger Asian trends in dance. This became a frequent hallmark of the lecture demonstrations and performances Balasaraswati would experience on her international tours. Meduri links this set of doubled identities to the dance in the works of Raghavan, Rukmini Devi Arundale, and Kapila Vatsyayan. As part of the Cold War era strategy of presenting a "Third World" between US and USSR, this aligned dance scholarship with the political goals of the new nation-state.[116] This trio of Indian institution builders facilitated a transnational historiography that would allow Bharatanāṭyam to be placed alongside European dance (ballet) as a coequal dance form of discursive and technical sophistication.[117] They oversaw the creation of arts *Akademi*s in India furnished a hybrid form of institutionalized patronage for dancing.[118] This allowed the state to selectively preserve repertoires it deemed worth memorializing. These gestures therefore were part of the "progress" (*pravṛtti*) nationalists attempted to build through institutional gestures to develop a "style" (*vṛtti*) open to all Indians.

This form of stylizing the national scene for arts was integral to understanding Balasaraswati's place in this process. Raghavan's 1958 speech at the first National Dance Seminar in Delhi positioned the new name of Bharatanāṭyam as an "investment" in the "revival" of the tradition while placing Balasaraswati and her family as one of its key resources.[119] Kapila Vatsyayan was a participant in the nationalist project in this manner with

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V. Raghavan and Rukmini Devi Arundale. By positioning Bharatanatyam as a "classical dance," it allowed for a range of performers to fall under the same banner.[120] Yet Balasaraswati, who had been steadily losing patronage for decades due to shifting patterns of taste among Madras audiences, was initially rejected twice by the national government for overseas trips to demonstrate the emerging nation-state's artistic heritage.[121] While she certainly had trouble keeping government officials' attention during performances, she seemed to have been passed over for younger dancers.[122] Why did ostensibly-modern audiences in India other than in Chennai have such a problem understanding the complexity of Bala's dance and were unmoved in engaging with her?

Part of the issue appears to be a lack of aesthetic refinement in certain audiences, according to Balasaraswati's own exacting standards and those I heard in interviews with Aniruddha Knight. He complained at times that audiences mostly want to be "spoon-fed," with every line translated from its original language into English and every mood or *bhāva* laid out like a menu.[123] This would place the popular style of taste into what Clement Greenburg called kitsch. Kitsch seems to be the principle enemy of Balasaraswati and her family's style in that it creates a cloyingly "easy" flavor or is "predigested."[124] Bala's art was decidedly "difficult" in that it required a total absorption into the performative moment which many officials would seem to have lacked. Staying with this major theorist of art, he would seem to suggest that Bala's style was modern due to its use of self-reflexivity: "The essence of Modernism lies, as I see it, in the use of characteristic methods of a discipline to criticize the discipline itself, not in order to subvert it but in order to entrench it more firmly in its area of competence."[125] Yet I shall argue below this feature was a typical affordances of *devadāsī* dance. Mirroring,

doubling, and "leading" the audience "into" (*abhi-√nī*) a dance's power was quintessential to Bala's style.

Balasaraswati's use of a "third person" strain of narrative in dancing reveals similar affordances with Greenburg's oblique definition of modernist art. For Greenburg, modernist art calls attention to itself as art rather than "dissembling the medium" as did naturalism.[126] Greenburg's definition of modernism does not accept the Benjaminan rupture from the past, but instead functions as a supercessionist framing: "It may mean a devolution, an unraveling, of tradition, but it also means its further evolution. Modernist art continues the past without gap or break, and wherever it may end up it will never cease being intelligible in terms of the past."[127] Balasaraswati's art most often was seen in its powers of semblance (*līlā*) as her dramatic illusions (*māyā*) were brought to the forefront in *abhinaya*. Modernism differs somewhat in that its gaze demands attention be brought to the medium before it**s** semblance is experienced. This leaves modernism as part of the logical family of paranoid skepticism in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's terms. Both modernism and paranoia exhibit textures of self-reflexivity and spiraling out of control.[128] The movement afforded from modernism therefore has a spiraling quality which loops around an empty center, sometimes approaching it but never fully coming to rest.

I argue that dance scholarship assumes a similar set of affordances for modernity yet which do not appear to be grounded in any particular dancer's style. In the introduction to a collection of Mark Franko's works, Gay Morris described the salient features of the dancer-critic's theory of modernity. Morris claims that Franko's interest in the Baroque grounds his historical discussions against the modernist "destruction of the past." While the Baroque is "concerned with history, the body, society, power, and politics," modernism "looks inward

toward an eternal present that has no reference outside itself."[129] Time for Franko is plastic

and affords extension as replay and delay come with dancing, "raising questions about dance's

immediacy and ephemerality" as features of modernism.[130] Franko's own discussions of dance

modernism in Pina Pausch's staging of Vaslav Ninjinksky's choreography for Stravinsky's

Rite of Spring engage with psychoanalytic theories of expression of affect. This modernist

project was not an expressi**ve** drive for affects but instead a capture and bottling of emotions

within the medium of the dancing body. This displaced subjectivity enters a hysterical matrix

in its inability to find a center, becoming paralyzed in the process.[131]

Yet modernism therefore seems to function as what I have called a "sincere" form of

approach to the world that has lost its ritual gestures.[132] This theory derives its import from

earlier strands of sincerity, which values "authenticity" over ritual form. By doing so, however,

modernism divorces itself from the grounding of its own search. This makes it impossible to

find a "true" affect as they become inexpressible and unable to move *without some ritual form*.

Hence sincerity's dispositional matrix (*sattva*) is hysteria, and its contour is the spiraling

motion of dizziness, loss of self, and as dance critic John Martin claimed of Martha Graham in

Dark Meadows, having "nowhere to stand."[133] Modernity, in Igor Stravinksy's words, "cannot

accept the world as it is."[134] Yet this returns us to the ritualists' world of as-if which I discussed

in chapter one. I disagree with Franko's discussion of modernism as inherently appropriating

or consuming the Other via an embodied incorporation from psychoanalytic theories. This

study's theorization of *vṛtti*s as able to "invest" and "divest" forms with affective capital

suggests that these are not bound by cultural or individual boundaries or membranes.[135] Affects

do not have to be entirely intellectualized to grasp bodies. A disposition requires an embodied

habit in audiences or performers to take hold in some manner.[136] For example, we can see

children beginning to learn to dance as a character or style but who have not had sufficient time to "take it all in." On the other hand, a devoted fan or follower could easily imbibe a style (*vṛtti*) of a dancer from another culture by adapting it to the contours of their own body. Bala was just such a dancer in that she incorporated a wealth of non-Bharatanātyam materials into her repertoire.

I turn to one additional dimension of modernity as it applies to Balasaraswati and her family as subalterns. Modernity progresses unevenly in waves across the globe, as Arjun Appadurai argues in his seminal work on its presence "at large." As an event, the "modern" breaks into the world as a semblance. Appadurai argues this modern "appearance creates a dramatic and unprecedented break with the past" and frequently indexes its opposite as "tradition." In fact, it is the facilitative and performative dimensions of imagination that fracture the modern as a disposition into these variegated semblances. Technology and migration are the two critical factors for this dissemination of affective forms in Appadurai's theory.[137] These create affective communities, Appadurai's sodalities, that are informed as they become part of semblant ensembles that have the potential to transform into collective gestures.[138]

Since modernity is usually mistaken as a temporal texture rather than a spatial contour, Orientalizing tendencies can easily slip into theorizing. A scholar might mistakenly attribute one group's use of ritual, cultural persona, or familiar dispositional matrices for a "backwards" orientation to the past over the future. Appadurai points my discussion toward the spatiality of modernity as a semblance for dwelling: "For many societies, modernity is an *elsewhere*." Likewise, the global presence of others is felt at the level of one's mode of living (*vṛtti*) as "a temporal wave that must be encountered in *their* present."[139] I propose that Balasaraswati, marginalized for her family's *vṛtti* in the temporal wave of modernity, was integral to creating the semblance (*līlā*) of modernity for translocal audiences in India and abroad. Bala

foreshadowed the mediatized neoliberal environment of India in the 1990s critique of the modern. She "punctuated, interrogated, and domesticated" the modern dispositional matrix with her "expressive form" of dancing.[140] As part of the modern disposition, Balasaraswati's style of Bharatanātyam was one method of semblantly modulating its forms.

Globalization itself can be shown to have influenced Balasaraswati in its temporal wave as a "deeply historical, uneven, and even *localizing*" process.[141] As various global flows shaped her identity and experience, they blurred lines that would have demarcated her dancing from others.[142] In particular, Bala's affective embodiment in gesturing (*abhinaya*) tapped into this process of overlapping and intercorporeal modern feeling for audiences. Her ability to "universalize" gestures prevented her from being seen as an "ethnic dancer" while she herself blurred the lines of characters she played in dances. Her consummate achievement, in her own words, was a feature of *māyā* or dramatic illusion.[143] As part of her dancing, Balasaraswati embodied this movement as semblances shift into gestures. Her control and modulation over the mutual economy between *māyā* (*līlā* to *abhinaya*) and *smaraṇa* (*abhinya* to *līlā*) is what defined her as a "modern" dancer. Dancing therefore became one of the "means to modernity" as it could afford audience members a conjuring of the past into present desire (*smaraṇa* as "memorialization").[144] For instance, Franko describes the Spanish flamenco dancer Antonia Mercé in this manner: "Dance engenders an experience for which a gaze thrown back to the past has no place…dance as a means to memorialize."[145] As dance however, gesture conjures magic for its own sake into a futurity not bound by instrumentalized ends. Dance in this way is a pure means with political ramifications that enable agency for the performer.[146] Global audiences could be swept up in this playful interaction since the disposition bypassed local

styles (*vṛtti*s) straight into semblances (*līlā*s) as they crossed down (*avatāra*) into the affective ensembles of Bala's dancing.

Arjun Appadurai's theory of patina on consumer objects can helps us to understand the affective economy at play in translocal strains of Bharatanāṭyam. Appadurai describes how objects belonging to aristocrats are valued for their "wear" as they are cared for by servants. The continued presence of this care imparts them with an aura of durability that the nouveuax rich are unable to replicate. The problem arises when the aristocrat's *vṛtti* is threatened or disappears. This relationship to their mode of living makes the surface indications of patina affectively charged with desire and longing for "a way of living that is now gone forever."[147] If we remove the association with objects, this creates a circulation of desire and memorialization in the gestures of care as they become *smaraṇa*. This process creates a semblance of a past that is felt in a melancholic mode.[148] While playing and activating these memories which can be dwelt upon, patina ensures that there is a divorce between the physical and historical remnants of the past and the imagined ensembles of relationships that inform them. Extending this affective circulation to dance reveals that bodies themselves can develop a patina-esque tendency in descriptions that reference a "noble" heritage or a "golden age." The reformist assemblage in fact created a persistent trope of a "tarnished" past for this exact reason: to suggest a "burnishing" would suffice to bring this patina back to its "original shine." Balasaraswati was one example that reformists and traditionalists alike could cite in this manner.[149]

I veer away from locating an affective matrix within individuals as this replicates primordialist theories on ethnicity and gendered implications. For instance, Appadurai locates communal sentiments as shaped by the socio-cultural affinity at smaller levels. Family feelings

of cohesion give rise to metaphors and qualities that inform villages or towns, regions, and nation-states. Likewise, psychological theories of an "affective core" to individuality presuppose a mostly fixed set of traits that become shaped by family interactions at a young age.[150] Modernity therefore would present itself as a disjunctive rupture from these past ties. However, the primary personae and dispositions that govern modernity have been linked to enduring and familiar figures in "traditional" religions. The contours of particular experiences become articulated to these figures and matrices, such as Varuni Bhatia discusses in terms of middle-class Bengali adoption of Caitanya. The primary affective feel of distance and separation-in-love (*viraha*) as one of the driving forces of *śṛṅgāra* resonated with colonial-era moderns.[151] *Viraha* in particular suggests a sublimation of love into an impersonal but heightened form as it moves from semblant play (*līlā*) into a disposition (*sattva*).[152] Affective matrices are durable due to their aspects as latent, potential forms. This does not mean they are unaffected by the historical context in which they manifest. Instead, they have to cross-down as "descents" (*avatāra*) in performance. Hence these latent forms are continuously-shifting and elusive potentials (*śakti*s) rather than replications of a fixed essence that determines identity "from the hoary mists of tradition."[153] I argue that Bala grounds modernity in *śṛṅgāra* as a matrix rather than paranoia while retaining the qualities of self-reflexivity, attention to the craft of dancing, and personal exploration through embodied movement that characterized modern dancers and their styles.

Bala's lifetime was characterized not only by these large-scale forces as dispositions but also through the "minor gestures" of her everyday relationships.[154] These smaller modalities can shift an *sattva* into a novel configuration as it dis-positions itself in the manifestation of playful semblances (*līlā*s) as I have argued in chapter two. The effects of

microevents can cascade at small intervals as ripples throughout the world as macroevents. For instance, minor gestures can "link global politics to the micropolitics of streets and neighborhoods" in Appadurai's words.[155] Vina Dhanammal's Friday concerts worked at this level to shape the imaginations of their attendees over what Indian music as a disposition could be. Bala's entire style was due to her grandmother Vina Dhanammal's and guru Kandappa Pillai's mutual recognition over the contours of music. I shall explore this in more detail below and in Chapter Five. In reverse, the macroevents can resonate at the infradividual level of affective economies within singular persons.[156] Hence the larger forces at play wash over habituated tendencies with the force of outside invasion and contingency into everyday life. Balasaraswati traced her own musical and dancing career to one such small moment. I now turn to her life story itself to choreograph *how* her affective attunement through gestures lasted from this inciting moment until the end of her life. Bala characterized this commitment to dance as *bhakti*.

4.5 Balasaraswati's *Bāṇī*: Tanjore Affordances in Bharatanāṭyam

> Devotion to art is identical to devotion in the practice and pursuit of spiritual realities, for the dancer's sake and for the sake of the community that benefitted from the dancer's pursuit.
> -Douglas Knight Jr., *Balasaraswati: Her Art and Life*[157]

As the quote above shows, Knight acknowledged Balasaraswati's articulation of performance and affectivity to *bhakti*, "devotion" to her chosen profession of dance.[158] Bala's family were hereditary performers from the Tanjore area of Tamil Nadu, a court ruled by Nāyaka kings (who were originally from Maharashtra). By hereditary I mean a group of people who were not necessarily an endogamous caste (*jāti*) but who followed a way of life centered on artistry. Balasaraswati's family was a "unique, irreplaceable repository" of South Indian music (Carnatic).[159] Bala considered music and dance as inextricably entwined. During an interview,

she laughed when the questioner asked if music or dance was more important.[160] Traditional communities teach in long-term relationships between the *guru* and his or her pupils. Douglas Knight, Bala's son-in-law and biographer, calls this "absorption and constant reinforcement" as one imitates the teacher in both formal and informal settings as well as during instruction: "the process of becoming an artist was a process of becoming an extension of one's teacher or family."[161] The mannerisms (*vṛtti*) or mode of living that the *guru* latently embodies are manifested in gestures. These can be repeated and encultured into the body of the student. This affordance of gestures to distribute throughout multiple bodies links *bhāva*s to *abhinaya* as well, since these gestures can communicate the stylistic contours and moods to audiences. Music was always transmitted in the family in its mode of performance with dance versus the concert style. The two modulations of musical performance were not always maintained outside the lineage, with current head Aniruddha Knight remarking the incredible difficulty in finding outside musicians who know the dance versions of songs from his repertoire.[162] Dance survived in a latent form (*sattva*) in the embodied style (*vṛtti*) of the family's music.[163]

Moreover, the family's stylistic continuity was not a static set of techniques but an evolving and adaptive process. Balasaraswati, Jayammal, and Vina Dhanammal incorporated and adapted techniques from other musical and dance styles to fit the family repertoire. For instance, a song might have a musical mode (*rāga*) not found in Carnatic music. All three adapted songs from Kathak and Hindusthani music from the north. Knight numbers the family's repertoire at over a thousand compositions and over a hundred *rāga*s. Their musical treasure trove afforded them artistic persistence in the face of major societal changes.[164] Dancing in the tradition was not rote repetition; repetition afforded the space for the dancer to truly innovate. As an embodied art form, the family's dance was "by its very nature going to

change" since it was their *process* of fashioning that was central to the art form. Innovation first entailed an arduous process of training in the style that was emotionally, physically, and mentally grueling.[165]

This way of life was primarily led by women as dancers and musicians, while men tended to teach dance, sing, and play instruments. These groups would collectively become known as *devadāsī*s or "servants of the gods."[166] Women in *devadāsī* families were heads of household, and therefore responsible for the financial well-being of their extended families. While they oftentimes took lifetime partners, these arrangements were not recognized within patrilinear structures and therefore existed as a parallel social formation, not quite acceptable but accepted until the modern era.[167] Balasaraswati's partner R. K. Shanmukhan first started their relationship in 1938 and it lasted until 1953.[168] Lucinda Ramberg and Davesh Soneji's recent studies of living *devadāsī* communities both mention that the women see themselves in various ways; as performers and erudite receptacles of an almost-lost history and as ritual specialists who create affine networks amongst women.[169] The style did not require one to be a blood relation or married into the family to learn, according to Balasaraswati's recollections. Instead, it was the discipline (*yoga*) itself that molded persons into dancers within the *vṛtti*. The form could encompass the personal motivations of the student through a dedication to the continuity of its features.[170]

The links between dance and ritual performance also abounded outside these networks in secular areas. Musical accompaniment was not only part of the courtly duties of dancers but also used larger instruments for outdoor events at temples, processions, and weddings that required "the auspiciousness of the sound and music."[171] Hereditary families were gifted land by royal patronage, as well as offered jewels as befitting a high-quality performance.

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Consistent endowments allowed *devadāsī*s to support themselves with farming while also augmenting the symbols of their auspicious status as *nityasumaṅgalī*s, the "eternally auspicious" brides of the divine figures to whom they were dedicated.[172]

At the Tanjore court, dance was part of the modern culture developed by Nāyaka rulers in response to regional and international flows of bodies and styles from the emergence of colonial powers in the eighteenth century. Davesh Soneji argues that the Tanjore court was itself a modern, eclectic aesthetic community in which *devadāsī*s often found themselves both commodified and linked to larger networks outside their region in South India. "Salon dance" or the secular, early twentieth-century performances outside courtly patronage networks also contributed greatly to the shape of Bharatanāṭyam before the "reform" period ushered in changes following the 1940's. Lastly, the post-Independence life of traditional performers has been glossed over in a way similar to other marginalized groups whose lifestyles do not fit the "picture" of modernized life.[173] I track these different aspect of Balasaraswati's life after Indian Independence in 1947 as her family and community continued to find their fortunes ebb and flow in the new transnational movement of dancers. Bala developed her style of dancing further during the era when women became musicians in the salon culture. Salon dance during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Madras was notable for its modernity and frankly sexual themes.[174] It was not until reform advocates depicted both the courtly and salon eras as a period of "degradation" for the dance that Bharatanāṭyam's historical legitimacy as a cultural articulation of colonial and modern forces was forgotten.[175]

The Tanjore court was a unique culture blending local Tamil and Telugu literary styles, the Mughal-style Marāṭha courtly practices of the Nāyaka kings, and modern European Enlightenment era cultural practices. While Serfoji II and Śivājī II were gradually divested of

political control by the British East India Company, they turned the court into a performance-based culture as patrons of the arts. The court therefore performed a kind of improvisational politics to acculturate to colonial modernity.[176] *Devadāsī*s were crucial to this process as instrumental bodies for portraying the literary and erudite skills of the court while also being exchanged in a sexual economy among elite male patrons. Their dance form was part of this "already-modern" matrix in Soneji's terms, as the Tanjore Quartet (1802-1864) of composers and *nattuvanar*s both performed and were exported to the capitals of Europe.[177] While Avanthi Meduri claims this was part of the elite's attempt to discursively present a "contra-modern" set of affects, she offers no examples of texts by which the Nāyaka rulers or by the *nattuvanar*s captured these rules. Yet the texts translated from Sanskrit such as Nandikeśvara's "Mirror of Gestures" (*Abhinaya-darpaṇa,* tenth through eleventh centuries) were translated into Telugu before receiving English translations in Orientalists, globalists, and nationalists contexts.[178] Modern authors were also seeking access to an early stratum of performance theories. Meduri claims that gestures (in particular of the hands, *mudrā*s) were mutually configured in each of these discourses as invested with *bhāva*.[179]

I find it more fruitful to observe the Tanjore systematization as one strain of modern dispositions (*sattva*s) among several competing among local and translocal ecologies. Lucinda Ramberg's discussion of the sexual economy that encompasses dedicated and married women in the same spectrum helps to make sense of the local conditions. She calls this attention to the larger frameworks at play "as a specific disposition of sexuality" whether institutionally supported or marginalized.[180] Dancers were part of a *vṛtti*, a "mode of life" that coalesced both around their labor and expression as artists and women. This is a modality of both their livelihood and an ethical way of interacting with others as a form of being that put agency into

common forms of authority. As a *vṛtti*, each embodied form of *devadāsī* dance moreover could be invested (*āveśa*) with multiple dispositions.[181]

Devadāsī courtesan women were both performers of music and dance as well as composers in this modern Nāyaka culture. They had "investments in temple, courtly, and public cultures" as well as in aesthetic affairs.[182] From the courtly milieu, the substance of *devadāsī* dance and music emerged in particular concert pieces such as Kshetrayya's *padam*s. This genre became popular due to its frank depiction of eroticism among gods and kings.[183] *Devadāsī* women were part of the larger system of female roles and had similarities to palace women, concubines, and servants. They could be cloistered in strict female-only *purdah*, known as *kośa* or *rāphtā* in Marāṭha circles. They were likewise ritually married to the sword or ritual implement of a king or deity similar to concubines in a ceremony called *katti kalyāṇam*. Ritual dedication was known as *poṭṭukkaṭṭutal* or "tying the pendant of marriage to a dagger."[184] This did not equate to marriage with a deity but a form of severing their sexuality from normal ritualized duties. Soneji calls this a ritualized transition into a "nonconjugal lifestyle," marking it as a transformation of the economic mode of life for the woman (*vṛtti*).[185] These forms of dedication often came with stipends for the *devadāsī*s through temple organizations (*devasthānam*) who allotted land for their use. These agreements put their bodies into networks of sexual and aesthetic labor.[186] Finally, like servants their bodies were part of transactional exchanges recorded like other property by courtly records.[187]

Balasaraswati's style of dance was also influenced by modern networks of secular dancing and music. The cosmopolitan networks of performance at the Tanjore court also brought North Indian musical styles into the constellations of *devadāsī* dance. A Marāṭha style performed by women called *lāvaṇī* became popular among the Nāyakas and became a male-dominated style

in Tanjore.[188] Another form found in Maharashtra called *gondhaḷa* was drummed at lifecycle rituals similar to *devadāsī* dances, and images found in Tanjore archives show the dancers displaying similar gestures closely attended by their musicians.[189] In Bharatanāṭyam the dancer was also followed by a drummer and *nattuvanar* until Kandappa Pillai moved the musicians to a place offstage. Musicians who practiced in a north Indian Hindusthani style of music are mentioned in the Tanjore records as coming from Gwalior (now in Madhya Pradesh) in particular to the Nāyakas. These dance styles were known as *kiñjin* from the Hindi *kañcan* or *kañcanī*, ("golden") that were most likely dances learned by the musicians from north Indian courtesans.[190] Hence Bala's tradition was already a hybrid Pan-Indian style of concert. Lastly, Western music inspired large brass bands at the court for wedding events and others that would go on to influence traditional wedding processionals to this day. The introduction of violins was also quickly adapted to Carnatic music.[191] This experimental milieu was the main site for the development of what would be called Bharatanāṭyam later, not the period of its decline.[192]

The dance style as a form of performance gradually took on its current shape in the concert dance (*kacceri-āṭa*, Tamil).[193] Balasaraswati presented her vision of the concert as a form of *bhakti* with Tamil roots during her presidential address on December 21, 1975:

> I believe that the traditional order of the Bharatanatyam recital viz. *alarippu, jatiswaram, sabdam, varnam, padams, tillana* and the *sloka* is the correct sequence in the practice of this art, which is an artistic *yoga*, for revealing the spiritual through the corporeal. The greatness of this traditional concert-pattern will be apparent even from a purely aesthetic point of view…At first, mere metre; then, melody and metre; continuing with music, meaning, and metre; its expansion in the centerpiece of the *varnam*; thereafter, music and meaning without metre; in variation of this, melody and metre; in contrast to the pure rhythmical beginning, a non-metrical song at the end. We see a most wonderful completeness and symmetry in this art. Surely the traditional votaries of our music and dance would not wish us to take any liberties with this sequence.[194]

I shall examine the architectural semblances she imagines as part of this concert process later.

Each of the genres Bala presents in the concert series were individual genres of composition

from Tanjore. The Tanjore Quartet instigated the process of performing these disparate pieces together, but court records do not mention them frequently enough to suggest they were the only innovators.[195] As a historic process, Bharatanāṭyam as we know it only emerged in the nineteenth century, undercutting imagery of its "timeless" nature deployed later in the reform assemblage. Moreover, Bala argues that each piece works in this affective ecology to add a specific affordance to the concert as a whole. As an "artistic yoga" or method of concentrating the audience and performer into an event onstage, it helps to bring forth the latent ("spiritual") dimension of a disposition (*sattva*) using the "corporeality" of gestures.

Hence Balasaraswati's dance was an articulation of multiple regions and genres to a political mode of life (*vṛtti*) shared by *devadāsī*s, *nattuvanar*s, and patrons at the Nāyaka court. As articulations, Bharatanāṭyam did not have to turn out this way. It was the choice of political actors to incorporate these compositions into a single assemblage which gave the style its modernity.[196] Balasaraswati saw this historical form disappearing by the end of her lifetime. It would not have worked if historical factors had changed. As a modern *vṛtti*, Bharatanāṭyam was influenced by the movement of people with emergent technologies.[197] The Tanjore Quartet left the Nāyaka court only to be invited back as Tuḷajā II was attempting to model his cultural capital along the lines of British patronage of modern *nautch* dancing in urban settings.[198] The Bharatanāṭyam dance concert is attributed to their organizational acumen. This was meant to be a cross-genre virtuosic display of the Tanjore court's stylistic output at their time. Oral tradition ascribes to them the same seven pieces as Bala presented in 1975, in the order of *alārippu*, *jatisvaram*, *śabdam*, *varṇam*, *padam*, *tillāna*, and *śloka*.[199] The Quartet's descendants brought extensive notebooks and embodied repertoires of these dances to Madras

by the 1880's onward as a process of gradual migration toward the urban cityscape took place.[200]

The individual composition genres have their own properties and affordances that passed to the concert as part of its affective ecology.[201] The major forms of narrative in the concert performances were cyclical rather than linear stories found in lyrical poetry and set to music. These "abstract visualizations of poetic text" allowed the simple lyrics to afford a dancer space to repeat a line of song with various interpretative strains of *abhinaya*, "gesture." The Telugu genre of *padam*s was at the core of this tradition and was gradually sedimented with additional styles and genres that accented and complimented its lyric subtlety and innate eroticism.[202] The most novel change developed in the mid-eighteenth century in the genre of *svarajati*, a female dance style that combined lyrics, spoken and sung rhythms, *svara*s (solfège sounds of the *rāga* melodies) with abstract and gestural dance (*nṛtta*, *abhinaya*). The *nattuvanar* received his name from the *nattuvangam* portion of the concert. This included recitation of the syllables (*ta tei tei*) along with percussion using hand cymbals.

However, the *kacheri* was controlled by a female dancer as this commanding form or "self-rule" (*sva-rājya*) of the dance. The *nattuvanar*'s recitation was only one musical aspect among many the dancer must accommodate and incorporate through the concert. The solo concert style featured a virtuosic dancer's full range of musical talents in a *śṛngāra* matrix. One of Balasaraswati's most technically demanding pieces was a *jatiswaram* in *rāga* Huseni she danced in 1956, a full fifteen years after Kandappa's death.[203] However, the abstractive quality of *jatiswarams* as pure dance (*nṛtta*) has also made them less narratively engaging for current Bharatanāṭyam dancers and instructors.[204] Bala was therefore one of the few people to experiment in the style as it reduced complex symbols and played with traditional forms.

Similarly, *varṇam*s developed out of the early nineteenth century efflorescence of training at Tanjore. Along with the *jatisvaram*s, these two genres mostly link a kingly patron to an addressed temple deity found at Tanjore or Travancore. Either human or divine figurehead could be addressed in performance as the need arose as a tasteful hero (*nāyaka*) and continued to flourish in the salon culture of the early twentieth century.[205] As "showpiece" dances, the core of the dance concert therefore was meant to invest the ruler of a particular locale with performative capital.[206] The dancer herself became a eulogist for the royal power as a disposition that informed her *vṛtti*, giving it meaning and shape through patronage and technique.

The concert assemblage of diverse styles of music (Carnatic, Hindusthani, and European) thereafter spread with the movement of its repertoire-holders away from Tanjore. The network of *nattuvanar*s and *devadāsī* performers of music and dance spread the Quartet's training style throughout the Telugu and Tamil-speaking areas of south India. A gradual exodus of musicians and dancers from the courts made their way to Madras over a hundred year period from the 1750s to 1850s. Madras became a hotbed for *nautch* dancing and contributed to its flourishing salon culture by the late nineteenth century.[207] Balasaraswati's family lineage in Tanjore can be traced back to a dancer named Thanjavur Papammal, born sometime around 1760. She and her daughter Rupavati danced at the Tanjore court but few extant records of them remain. Rupavati's daughter Kamakshi Ammal, Balasaraswati's great-great-grandmother, was taught by a group of musicians related to the three major strains of Carnatic music in the repertoire of the Thanjavur Quartet: Syama Sastri, Tyagraraja, and Mutthuswami Diksitar. She also ventured outside her natal area to the court of Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala with the youngest member of the Quartet, Vadivelu, as part of

his musical entourage in the 1840s. K. Kandappa Pillai, Bala's guru, was the great-grandson of Vadivelu's brother. Pillai reestablished and rejuvenated the kinship ties between the dancers and musicians of the style's historical founding when he became Bala's *nattuvanar* and first official dance-*guru* (after the "madman at the gate").[208]

After 1860, Kamakshi Ammal moved with her family to Madras. There she supplemented her performing income with a position as a *manikkatthar*, a *pūjā* attendant who sings to the deities at their patrons' private home shrines at intervals throughout the ritual day. Balasaraswati learned this practice for her mother's landlord and taught herself the *bhakti* verses of *tiruppugazh*, a medieval genre from the sixteenth century set to nineteenth century music. Lastly, Kamakshi Ammal showed a willingness to perform the role of *nattuvanar* as a dance master for other dancers, usually a role reserved for men in the tradition.[209] Other women after Kamakshi Ammal learned both music and dance, although her great-grandmother Sundarammal and her mother Jayammal both danced only at home while performing music in public. Bala' grandmother and great-aunt Dhanam and Rupavati, Sundarammal's daughters, learned to play the *vīna* and dance respectively.[210]

The urban environment of Madras would greatly affect Bharatanātyam's dance style as the city's patronage networks, infrastructure, and local deities affected the contours of her dancing. Patronage networks in Madras were based on village relationships. The first patrons were *dubash* (literally "two-language" speakers) from land-owning farming communities (*velalar*) that moved into the city as colonial intermediaries. Speaking both English and Tamil, they worked as civil servants, translators, and staffed the colonial administration. The *dubash* middle class patronized temples and the artists newly transplanted into the city.[211] However, the *dubash* were gradually supplanted by Brahmins settled in Mylapore, formerly on the

outskirts of Madras. Since the Brahmins did not have the resources of other landed communities, they formed *sabhā*s or assemblies to finance music and temples, shifting the burden of patronage to a different community's vested interests.

A salon environment developed in the city where dance and music were commonly performed. However, these environments did not provide enough for a livelihood in the arts. Kamakshi Ammal, at first able to afford to purchase a home near Georgetown in the colonial section of Madras, had to sell it two decades after moving to the city.[212] Balasaraswati's biological father and Jayammal's patron, Modarapu Gobindarajulu, came from a *dubash* family that supported Dhanammal and Hindustani musicians in the city.[213] Jayammal ultimately kept Bala from visiting her father Govindarajulu after he wasted his finances in gambling. This stricture ended up breaking Bala's heart, as she was forbidden to support him with her earnings by the family elders as well.[214] Brahmins therefore seem to have taken over as the dominant strain of financial patrons by the time Bala was learning to dance.

Moreover, Bala continued to learn pieces from both the salon and concert eras. The Tanjore concert style is notable for its refusal to adapt to the salon dance culture of this period by linking its articulated genres to emerging forms. Salon culture developed a unique affective matrix in *jāvaḷi*s. Related to the *padam*, the *jāvali* genre was popularized as a light and playful style in the urban centers of performance such as Madras rather than in the devotional countryside of Kshetrayya's time. Soneji describes their affordances as "unabashedly erotic, sometimes sarcastic, and always upbeat." Composers created *jāvalis* to cater to workers in the new civic society of colonial culture.[215] As a multinational and eclectic genre, some *jāvaḷi*s are found to contain up to six different languages, including south Indian (Tamil, Telugu, Kannada), north Indian, and English.[216] As dancing was linked to this novel configuration and

proximity of peoples in the neighborhoods of Madras, hereditary performers found themselves at a crossroads. Should the concert style be emphasized, or would it be more "appropriate" to cater to new tastes in dance?

Balasaraswati's grandmother, later known as Vina Dhanammal for her virtuosity with her instrument of choice, entered this era of emerging trends. Dhanammal became one of the most respected performers of her generation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[217] Dhannamal was a flourishing musician during this period of salon culture as she performed for the elite among Madras's mercantile and political circles. Her lover and fellow musician Dharmapuri Subbaraya Ayyar composed thirty *jāvaḷī*s specifically for her and her family and even referenced their sexual relationship. As patrons and composers, upper caste men created songs that were literally embodied and performed by *devadāsī* women. The texts are mostly from the point of view of erotic heroines (*nāyikā*).[218] The male composers thus performed in vocal guising (*vācika-vēṣam*) using the actual voices of their desired women.[219] Soneji translated a *jāvaḷi* by Subbaraya written for Dhannamal in *rāga* Khamās. The *pallavī* ("bud") is sung as a refrain, with each continual "unfolding" (*anupallavī*) and multiple "coursings" (*caraṇa*s) returning to the central idea:

> *Pallavī*:
> Crafty lover! This matchless woman is the one for you.
> *Anupallavī*:
> Listen, sweet hero of Dharmapuri. She's the one.
> *Caraṇam I*
> She has learnt her erotic lessons.
> No woman can outplay her. She's the one.
> *Caraṇam II*
> She'll never say no to you, moon-faced one,
> She knows all your lovemaking moods [*bhāva-kādanare*]. She's the one.
> *Caraṇam III*
> She can't suffer Māra's (Kāma, the god of love) arrows anymore–
> Come play his games with her. She's the one.[220]

In this song, Subbaraya links his desire for Dhannamal to the playful games (*keḷiki*) of erotic sport that a dancer would perform with *rati-mudrā*s figuratively gesturing the lovemaking process.[221] The composition's themes also fits the Kannada genre of "play (*keḷika*) used by courtesan performers.[222] This song was part of the family's repertoire yet I could find no recordings of Vina Dhannamal, Jayammal, or Balasaraswati performing it. This is most likely due to the complex changes in ethical revisioning of Bharatanāṭyam inaugurated with Muttulakshmi Reddy's 1927 Devadasi Abolition Act.[223] Bala was known to perform Subbaraya's *jāvali*s in public such as '*Saki Prana*' in *Jenjhuti rāga*, his last known composition.[224] Yet there is no mention of her ever performing the piece about her grandmother.

*Jāvaḷi*s also became widely distributed through new media technologies, including the gramophone record and "talkies." This seems to have contributed to the middle-class backlash against their frank sexuality and eroticism as they became part of the everyday landscape of bourgeois modernity. These movies in particular were one of the few places *devadāsī* performers were recorded and help us discover the sedimented affective weight of the dance tradition. As the "hybrid, cosmopolitan Madras Presidency" and its aesthetic and sexual economies transformed traditional life, the genres continued to exhibit a continuity and simultaneous recording of a new stratum to the lives of *devadāsī*s.[225] New performance genres were added to the style. The *vṛtti* embedded multiple historical eras of their inception as well as the continuing legacy felt in the lineages that passed on the repertoire. Bala's legacy would not be recorded on camera until much later, but many more audio recordings of her singing exist. As the city itself was part of this process, its landscape became encoded with the dancing gestures of *devadāsī*s. This made Madras not only a hub for Bharatanāṭyam performance but

also fashioned the city into a *dhāman* as part of the ensemble.[226] Lastly, I shall continue to turn to Bala's relationship with the deities in Tanjore, Madras, and at other nearby locations as they appear throughout her life.

Jayammal, Vina Dhanamal's daughter, grew up performing and singing with her sisters at concerts and at home. Douglas Knight calls her "the soul of the music of Balasaraswati's concerts."[227] Dhanammal and her family most likely lived at several homes after selling their property to creditors, even living at the Hindu Theological School in Georgetown for some time.[228] However, while Knight recounts Balasaraswati living in their rented apartment on Ramakrishna Street, Aniruddha Knight claims that Vina Dhanammal only hosted musical performances there while her daughter and grand-daughter had to live at another property.[229] Vina Dhannamal's Friday night salons were Bala's first experience of the family's ensemble. Bharatanāṭyam's musicial repertoire-holders came from every part of Madras and South India to attend. These concerts were attended by literati in Tamil and Telugu literature, Brahmin singers and songwriters, and *nattuvanar*s from the Tanjore Quartet's lineage.

In contrast, by the early twentieth century the salon environment had developed a disreputable reputation thanks to British patronage of dancers. The audiences at Dhanammal's concerts appear to have registered a lowering standard of quality to the dancing itself while patronizing quality musicians. By forcing performances out into the open, for a paid audience, artists found themselves having to cater to audience tastes that were not as refined as the courtly and salon environments of the hereditary families. This led to brinksmanship among dancers as they attempted to stand out from their peers. Performances led dancers to value the dexterity of pure dance (*nṛtta*), a particular persona during the gestural portions of *abhinaya* as flirtatious coquettes, or by recourse to accentuating the body of the performer with costumes and

makeup.[230] However, Vina Dhanammal's salon focused on a different set of affordances in the music. She emphasized slowness, melodious improvisation, and iterative differences on the composition as an extension of the artistic process.[231] Technical virtuosity was emphasized only after the tradition was fully embodied, leading to what Bala referred to as a "minimal semblance."[232] While she was fully capable of extemporizing and dancing the technical meters of *svarājati*s, Bala's *vṛtti* emphasized precision and fluid movement between the steps.[233]

This focus on the body over technique prevented the deeper engagement with dance's affective forms. Beryl de Zoete, after meeting Balasaraswati with Ram Gopal in the 1950s, wrote of the hereditary style that its "technique is a garment which both disguises and reveals; disguises the person but reveals his art, or, rather, his part…in his full panoply of technique and costume."[234] De Zoete argues that technique becomes the "dress," directing the audience away from the embodied form of the dancer that it appears to reveal gesturing in performance. As a form of "cosmetic gesture" (*āhārya-abhinaya*), I argue that like Chatterjea's colleague de Zoete was captivated by the surface guise of South Indian dancers. Balasaraswati's later comments on costume changes and novel staging technique suggests she was less interested in this aspect. For her, the focus of a concert should not be on the "container" (*dhārin*) of the tradition but instead on the artifice (*māyā*) of the performance. Bala emphasized this form of humility as devotion to the artform itself over personal interests, health, and even success. Instead, the dance form affords the audience with the ability to divest from the body "into the role" as the dramatic illusion runs from semblances into gestures that bring the audience onto this "stage" (*bhūmikā*).[235] Balasaraswati's playful shift in identity overwhelmed de Zoete as these disguises concealed her "true" self for the Western-trained critic.[236] Yet at the same time, Bala reveled in these moments of control and finesse as she invited audiences into moving

experiences. While the family's *vṛtti* was most *discernable* to de Zoete as a dance historian and ethnographer, it would be Bala's facility with *līlā* that allowed her to dance for non-Indian audiences and continue to affectively move them.

While Vina Dhanammal seemed to have been a strict teacher and mother, it was her devotion to the music of the family's repertoire that affected Bala and her mother Jayammal's sensibilities. Balasaraswati's family lived away from Vina Dhanammal's flat. Bala had to pay up to three rupees for each musical lesson from her grandmother, according to Aniruddha Knight.[237] She did not receive special treatment and she had to literally invest in the continuation of the style. [238] As the matriarch of the tradition, Dhanammal was the head of the household and her relationships reflected this. Ramberg notes that in *devadāsī* kinship groups, the lead *devadāsī* is usually treated as the dominant position similar to how men would be. The *vṛtti* they embody allows for a disarticulation of the position "son" with the sex of male children. The oldest *devadāsī*s acted as heads of the family, inherited land, were the primary income earners, and distributed male-type relations among their immediate kin as well.[239] A *devadāsī* could even perform the funeral rites for her mother.[240] In this way, *devadāsī*s were not "acting *like* men"; they *bear* the role of men (*bhūmikā*) in their families.[241]

I argue that through their *vṛtti* as an everyday mode of life, *devadāsī*s are not "like" men but instead are invested with the same affective weight that men become endowed with by society. This creates an interesting paradox that Ramberg clarified when questioning these women:

> The fact that the devadasis' position as sons in their natal families does not affect their embodiment of sex or gender or their recognition as women. They act in their kin network as sons, but this poses no threat to their social recognition as women, persons whose bodily comportment successfully signifies womanhood.[242]

Among *devadāsī*s, style is not just limited to comportment but layers multiple identities which gender obfuscates. While Western feminists now differentiate between "sex," "gender," and "orientation," kinship also can be articulated in an "elsewise" fashion.[243] The "ripples" of *devadāsī*s' sonhood distribute throughout the kin-body of their networks, performatively rendering them as sons without their becoming men. Kin status is not determined by the sex or gender attributed to a body but by the relations in exchange. The "transactions" or performative behavior can have gender attributed to it, and hence becomes accrued and latent as a *vṛtti*. This makes gender itself transactional.[244]

More directly, this also meant that hereditary women were seen as sources of income for their families as the primary earners. After turning three, Balasaraswati's family apartment on Elephant Gate in Georgetown was on the second floor. Their landlord on the first floor hired Bala to perform the morning singing of the Thanjavur style image of Kṛṣṇa. This became a routine part of her day as rote as practicing at the barre in ballet. This link between devotional income and music and dance permeated Bala's lifetime and the family's mode of living.[245] Bala preferred not to publicly express her devotional objects of affection as she felt this was too personal to divulge outside of immediate relationships with family and friends.[246]

The traditional community also affected Balasaraswati's early exposure to dancing and music. Mylapore Gauri Ammal was Balasaraswati's first inspiration to dance from the traditional community. Gauri Ammal hired her mother Jayammal and aunt Lakshmiratnammal to sing for her dance recitals and went on to teach both hereditary performers and the "revivalists." Gauri Ammal and Kandappa Pillai were frequent visitors to Vina Dhanammal's salon performances on Friday evenings. Bala would follow her footwork and imitate her steps, as well as helping Gauri Ammal to remove her ankle bells so she could dance wearing them

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herself. Bala recounted in an interview: "I would dress up like Gauri Ammal…wear her jewelry and try to dance like her. There would be scolding by the family and some raps on the knuckles, but I couldn't be bothered by them."[247] Here the outer emblems, including the accoutrements of anklets and jewelry, helped Balasaraswati to begin *becoming* a dancer like Gauri Ammal through the medium of her style. These cosmetic gestures (*āhārya-abhinaya*) helped to shape her by the moving contours of the performing dancer she wished to become or had the capacity to become.[248]

Lastly, these theoretical considerations that shaped Balasaraswati's style would seem to place her into a fixed subject position lacking agency. Yet despite this insistence on her passivity—in Meduri's work to the forces of discursive capture via nationalism, Orientalism, and Western musical history—Bala was an outsized presence in the lives she touched. Her dancing brought the affordances of her lineage of *devadāsī* rituals and lifestyle into the modern world like a final wave coming to shore before retreating back out to sea. As such, I attempt to trace her gestures as they affected others and offered her avenues for shaping her own life. In this way, Balasaraswati shaped South Asian history through her *abhinaya*.

Chapter 5.1 T. Balasaraswati: A Life in Gesture

> Balasaraswati as we know her in contemporary international dance scholarship is very much an 'Orientalist' construction, and this fascinating story awaits excavation and remains to be told. -Avanthi Meduri[1]

In this section, I attempt to chart Balasaraswati's personal journey through the lasting impressions made by her *abhinaya* ("gestures") on those around her. While she inherited her style from the *devadāsī* lineage as I elaborated in chapter four, she made it a *bāṇī* or "voice" for her subaltern past to flourish and survive into the present of Indian modernity and independence. While hereditary performers and ritualists did not compose biographies unless petitioned by their followers or devotees, they did engage in narratives of self-fashioning over the course of their careers. Bala's family retains many of these personal anecdotes, which allows me to treat her son-in-law Douglas Knight's biography as a kind of commentary to the primary source of her life. I therefore read his interventions into Bala's life story not as accepted true but as attempts to present the tradition within his own understanding and context as an American ethnomusicologist while privileging Bala's voice and dancing as two forms of *abhinaya* on equal footing.

5.2 Training and Dedication: 1918-1938

Balasaraswati was an artist in a primarily oral lineage of teaching: her lifestory therefore would be conveyed to students and apprentices throughout her time rehearsing, performing, and in non-artistic habits. Hence her own framing of her life was distributed across multiple persons, necessitating a synthetic effort to find her own narrative. I argue that alongside Douglas Knight's biography of T. Balasaraswati, emic perspectives would view her life as singularly empowered and worth retelling as a hagriography (*carita*). Thus I attend to the family's events of her life not to proclaim their narrative the only definitive version but to help

the chart the larger course of how her life affected others. Knight's biography functions more as a commentary to this latent *sūtra* or central text of Bala's own vocal and embodied gestures.

Balasaraswati began her own story as a dancer when she was young. In an interview, Bala's cousin T. Shankaran, remembered her first experience dancing when a beggar approached the family's house on Ramakrishna Street in colonial Madras. This person was chanting the syllables of a *nattuvanar* or dance-master:

> There used to be a beggar, a sort of maniac, who would jump up and dance like a monkey while singing '*tat tarigappa tei ta, tat tarigappa tei ta.*' Bala would imitate him, both dancing like monkeys…That was the real starting point for Bala's dancing mania.[2]

Later in life, Balasaraswati would imbued the episode with religious significance:

> It may be true that I had dancing in my blood…I was a toddler when I danced deliriously with that street beggar. All called him a madman when he brought down the house with his frenetic dancing. Was he really mad? His unerring *jatis* (rhythmic dance patterns) reverberate in my mind. Who knows which *siddhapurusha* he was? I can still see the gleam in his eye. If I am dance-mad now, how could it be otherwise…My first *guru* was a madman.[3]

Aniruddha Knight made this moment the inception of his style's history.[4] This foundational myth associated Bala's dancing with a "perfected being" (*siddha-puruṣa*), who has quasi-divine status as an accomplished *yogi*. These are also frequent guises for divinities.[5] Dancing first inspired her with the commanding form of this impromptu *nattuvanar*'s *jati*s, the steps and syllables that students received from a master to learn the proper rhythm (*tāla*) for compositions. Likewise, Bala's public dancing with the street beggar "brought down the house," and invited others to see her perform. This culture of envisioned recognition created a form of conversation that made the family rethink their reluctance to perform dances in public. Bala's retrospective explanation likewise gave her *bhakti* route a thoroughly Śaiva-Śākta air, as perfected beings tend to predominate in their narrative encounters.[6] Lastly, Bala was actively

crafting a hagiographic legacy (*carita*) for herself. This episode would not be amiss in the account of a saint's life. Bala endowed herself with a "pedigree" from someone appearing in a semblance (*līlā*), an affective form that allows for dispositions (*sattva*s) to manifest their potential in non-material ways. By teaching her to dance through the gestures of abstract movement (*nṛtta*), the sage-like figure therefore endowed her with the first step on her journey. This made her life retroactively into a *carita*, a hagiographical narrative form of biography in South Asian literature.

What was the "dance" this beggar-holy person taught to Balasaraswati, or passed on as a contagious affect? Later on a school of dancers who called themselves "reformers" would label this tradition "Indian dance-drama" (Bharata-*nāṭyam*) to show its influence across South Asian history and geographic diversity. While there is evidence of dance practices present in Tamil-speaking areas of the south since the early centuries of the common era, Bharatanāṭyam is not an unbroken lineage from this time. It has historical origins and founding figures dating back to the early modern era. Balasaraswati "categorically denied" this framing of the dance form's timeless nature. Instead, while emphasizing the tradition's methods of transmission and fashioning of dancers, she also noted its ability to evolve through history by means of gesturing.[7] Bala's "initiation" (*dīkṣā*) by this figure therefore would signal a divinely-sanctioned career for attentive audiences knowledgeable in Śaiva-Śākta ritual texts of *siddha*s. Bala fashioned her own history as an affectively textured course of events to counteract the forces that attempted to surpress her voice, prohibit her from performing in public, and distancing the history of Bharatanāṭyam from its origins in *sadir* and subaltern histories in the bodily *vṛtti*s of *devadāsī* communities.

This process of erasure had already begun in the early 1850s but had progressed by the time Bala began to learn to dance.[8] Performing music for dance was becoming déclasseé during the 1920s in Madras, yet Balasaraswati's family continued to keep the dance mode of their repertoire alive and vital. They were willing to experiment in novel ways against popular opinion, such as when Balasaraswati would sing for a north Indian dancer.[9] The family encouraged these innovations after the corporeal regime of the dance was properly established in the dancer as a *vṛtti*, an embodied habit. The process was inaugurated traditionally by dedication to a deity.

Dedications were part of the ritualized beginning of learning a hereditary style of performance in south India. When Balasaraswati was dedicated in 1922 or 1923, popular opinions seem to have soured on it. "Dedicated women" were associated with the crude styles of performing Bharatanāṭyam. Audiences articulated links between the open sexuality of dancers and the auspicious status they retained as "married" to a temple deity in public opinion. The Thanjavur lineage of Balasaraswati's family saw this as a necessary grand gesture in the process of developing *bhakti* or devotion to the performance itself. In reality, the ceremony to a dagger was intended to make the dancer's body available in public performances as part of the circulation of female bodies in the sexual economy of the time.[10] Weaponry in South India especially was not gendered as masculine but feminine: Durgā, the "Immovable" goddess of battle is the bearer of every weapon belonging to the male deities in the Hindu pantheon.[11] Lucinda Ramberg's study of Karṇatakan *devadāsī*s also shows that their primary divine relationships are to the South Indian goddesses Yellamma and Mataṅgī, both of which are seen as subaltern figures themselves.[12]

Balasaraswati continued this link between dancing and divine feminine figures. She was dedicated at the family's Kamakshi temple in Thanjavur on Manuji Appa Street. Taking the guise of Māyā or Śakti, this goddess embodies both the immanent and transcendent forms of the divine.[13] Her cousin T. Shankaran recorded his memory of Bala's dedication. At the time dedications were still technically legal but unpopular in Madras. Despite few financial resources, Bala's mother Jayammal managed to hide the *pūjā* offerings of the dancer's ankle bells and fruit in the guise of an "informal" spontaneous offering so that priests would not be aware of the hidden items required to complete it.[14] Gauri Ammal recalled that the dancer is given a coconut as part of this process; this links her to the auspicious (*maṅgala*) aspect of the Goddess (Devī) who grants childbirth and fertility. Likewise, an "offering" of five dance pieces was given at the same time a *puṣpañjali* was recited along with a master's cymbals, a drummer, and a small flute (*mukhavina*).[15] As a subversive ritual, in Nicholas Dirk's framing, Bala used her dedication to contest the unequal distribution of power. By accessing this ritual through a goddess who symbolized potential (*śakti*), Bala was engaging in the latent articulations of dance with the political world. This enabled Bala to access her performing capacity to affect others and be affected by them as well.[16]

As her new career was in danger, Balasaraswati's optimism and openly participation in the dedication put her at odds with the "reform assemblage" of the time in Madras. Political reformers attempted to define agency in an internalized and eternal form outside of a sovereign or royal figure using Enlightenment ideals.[17] Bala hence fashioned herself as a courageous figure who at least ritually attempted to subvert her community's continual marginalization by mainstream society. While the dedication could be seen as a minor gesture in its subversive potential, it also acted to catalyze her dance career in a way that linked her to her family's

mode of living (*vṛtti*).[18] "*Devadāsī*" emerged as a new category on a quasi-caste basis in the biomedical capture of the British Raj as some turned to prostitution and were frequently in contact with European men.[19] Public education was frequently denied to *devadāsī* women and their children in the Madras Presidency. *Devadāsī* performers had access to dwindling sources of patronage after the breakdown of courtly allotments of land and salaries through temple committees disappeared.[20]

What had affected the status of the dance by this time? Matthew Allen traces Orientalist works on Indian culture in this period to a popularization of Naṭarāja, the "Dancing Lord" form of Śiva seen in Cola bronzes from ninth through tenth century Tamil Nadu at Cidambaram today.[21] In particular, A.K. Coomaraswamy's 1918 work *The Dance of Shiva* popularized this deity enough to make him a secularized patron of the arts.[22] Rukmini Devi Arundale, who would become one of the "reformers" of Bharatanāṭyam, would place him on the stage. Bala refused to do so.[23] This Orientalising gesture incorporated Edward Said's formulation as a cultural assemblage that links disparate parts into a network across genres and bodies.[24]

*Devadāsī*s as a "category" did not exist in emic terms in Sanskrit, Telugu, or Tamil before the twentieth century in the form shaped by Orientialist projections into the subcontinent's past.[25] Soneji calls the shifting ethical terrain of the middle-class Indian response to *devadāsī* lifestyles as "moral economies." This suggests a continuing engagement with *vṛtti*s that fell outside the nationalist mode of life with its deployment of women's bodies as the new vehicle for modern Indian identity.[26] If a link to the patrilinear past could be established, then India would not have gone through its "moral degradation" that certain Orientalist depictions of the subcontinent's cultural and religious heritage insisted had taken place. Instead, middle-class and especially Brahmin *smārta* women became the central mechanisms for protecting this

heritage in Tamilnadu. Anything that did not respect the new reform assemblage of Brahmin and European values was therefore a threat to the overall national "health" of the nascent nation-state. After this period a common "trajectory" experienced by the people who were deemed "*devadāsī*s" by the British Raj and social mores gradually brought a new assemblage into view. As a dispositional matrix, "*devadāsi*" as a term came to mean a caste-like endogamous group, a way of life, and a set of ritual and kin structures unfamiliar to others outside of these marginalized groups.

Likewise, Indian performers were gradually exposed to Western styles of art. Uday Shankar had already started touring with Anna Pavlova–the Russian ballet dancer–in Europe by this time and would go on to present his style by the 1930's to European audiences. He amassed a wealth of staging techniques for auditorium settings, the newly emerging centers for secular performance.[27] These stages afforded new methods of lighting and spatially arranging the dancers that Bala's guru Kandappa Pillai would innovate for her style. Western standards had become adopted by the 1930s to the detriment of indigenous or "folk" performance styles. Artists like Shankar would attempt to find a "Golden Age" of Indian art in the past following the Orientalist assemblage. The "reformers" in this model saw South Asian culture undergoing a process of gradual degradation as outside influences introduced a helter-skelter variety of practices and beliefs. This contributed to the development of the regional cultures from a singular matrix of an "Indian" or even "Hindu" civilization.[28] Secondly, this core or essential set of Indian "ideas" was best preserved not in the regional languages but in Sanskrit, the pan-Indian language that eschewed temporal markers of history for the ideal and timeless truths that undergirded religious beliefs. *Devadāsī*s fit into this narrative as being the original holders of the Sanskritic dance tradition as seen in "ancient" texts practiced since "time

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immemorial" by artists, like the *Nāṭya-śāstra*.[29] Accepting these two dictums has a corollary, however; contemporary artistic practices were "perverted" or "corrupted" from a primordial matrix. This pattern fit into the context of Puranic narratives of the world as it descended from Vedic purity in past ages. Hence the guardians of this tradition had "fallen" in some moral or spiritual fashion. Balasaraswati rejected this totalizing argument in favor of a supercessionist style of adapting dance. Bharatanāṭyam innately approached the "spiritual" through the "means of the corporeal" and sensuous body of the dancer. Instead, she redirected critiques away from the traditional community who upheld the dance's exacting standards.[30] The people who had "degraded" dancing were recent adoptees of Bharatanāṭyam who were "lowering" its artistic standards, the middle-class women who began practicing in the 1930s and 1940s.[31]

Bharatanāṭyam was uniquely placed in this process as the *Nāṭya-śāstra* was "rediscovered" by Orientalists around this time period as well. Many of the later "reformers" such as Rukmini Devi Arundale would claim, the tradition she learned was not explicitly based on principles directly from this text. Instead, an idea or image of the text was held up to justify certain features of the living tradition as "truly Indian."[32] Bharata's third chapter, in fact, is ascribed to the sage on dance Taṇḍu. This figure taught Śiva his "masculine" dance called the *tāṇḍava*. Taṇḍu analyzes movement into micro-gestural regimes similar to the simple movements taught to dancers in Aniruddha Knight's school.[33] The *adavu*s or simple steps contained do not have a logic or content as they are pure dance (*nṛtta*) versus gesture (*abhinaya*) that contains meanings. Aniruddha Knight distinguishes the tradition's style in that their *adavu*s are cohesive and cannot be combined in an arbitrary logic of "forms without meaning."[34] *Adavau*s can, however, be combined into other dances as iterations or nested structures within the dance ecology of a performance.[35] This process shows the tradition did not have to ground itself in

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the "Sanskritized body" developed by Orientalism for it to find its own footing.[36] However, Taṇḍu's systematization is summarily ignored by Bharata in his later chapters on *āṅgika-abhinaya* and leaves chapter three as a free-standing preface.

Artists from different regions were welcomed by hereditary performers as the contact allowed them to network and relate to others regardless of their musical backgrounds. For example, Dhanammal admired virtuosic musicians in the *hindustani* style of the north, including Abdul Karim Khan. Khan was so moved by her perfect pitch he gave her all of his earnings from a performance.[37] As artists, Balasaraswati's family also could not afford to remain static. The family's business was music and they could not slow down when the contingencies of life caught up to them. Knight recalls: "Family members performed with broken bones, serious illnesses, and emotional concerns that would distract most of us into incompetence."[38] The gradual development of their performances would therefore have to keep pace with changing trends in music and dance.

Vina Dhanammal set the tone for the family's style of dance, since there were no recordings or direct teachings remembered in the tradition until her music.[39] Dhanammal's *vṛtti* stood out from her virtuosic contemporaries who played long flourishes for melodic modes (*rāga*s) while hers could be developed in a matter of minutes to full forms. Visvanathan, Bala's brother, recounted that she inherited this compactness of performance from Dhanammal. By being exposed to the lyricism and refinement of their music, Bala developed the family's style into the perfect vessel for conveying *bhāva*s in melodic mode (*bhāva-rāga*).[40] Their style of musical training also emphasized lyricism, as Visvanathan the flute (*nagiswaram*) player learned from his teacher T. N. Swaminatha Pillai primarily through singing.[41] On Balasaraswati's ensemble recordings I have frequently heard Viswanathan's voice singing the

*rāga*s before pieces in the concert.[42] Hence singing (*vācika-abhinaya*) functioned to give physical movement (*āṅgika-abhinaya*) its contours, shapes, and themes. The latter could diverge from the strict definition of the lyrics while still constrained by the qualities of the music though.

Bala attributed her *bāṇī*'s features to Dhanammal at its dispositional matrix:

> although it derives from Kandappa Pillai and Mylapore Gauri Ammal–in my heart of hearts I feel that it would have been the *bani* of Dhanammal *had she chosen to dance*. That is why my own heart could accept this style. You can see its perfect unison with our music.[43]

If Vina had danced, Bala suggests she would have developed the latent force (*śakti*) of the music to its fullest potential. Bala also described how her grandmother, even when blind later in life, would give her dance pieces to learn. Dhanammal used to perform her *abhinaya* with music in front of a mirror. Her unsurpassed knowledge of the repertoire could fit Bala's status as a novice dancer with compositions at the appropriate level of subtlety for a young girl to perform. This was the reason Balasaraswati could say, without irony, that Dhanammal was the "best critic of my dance," despite never having seen her grand-daughter perform.[44] The family's steeping in the tradition gave them such a powerful access to its affective matrix (*sattva*) that Vina Dhanammal could tap into it and see the semblances (*līlā*) Bala *would* have been dancing.

Balasaraswati changed musical pieces to fit her style as well, adapting it to the contours of the family's *vṛtti* as embodied in "her own imagination and creativity." Bala's most famous piece was a *kriti* called "Kṛṣṇa Come Soon," *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō*. She performed this for two video recordings I have reviewed. The first at Wesleyan University in 1963 and in Satyajit Ray's 1976 documentary *Bala*. Viswanathan her brother described their improvisational sessions before concerts of this piece.[45] Other famous pieces in her repertoire were twentieth

century compositions as well as songs not passed down by the family but adapted to fit their rules of *rāga*. Each family member who had embodied the style became able to interpret and therefore materially theorize *how* a song should be played or danced. These variations on the core theme were therefore correct as long as the *way* they were adapted fit the style's contours. Each song therefore became a semblance in performance of its dispositional matrix; every performance of *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* was different than the last, yet were all somehow still the same song at its heart.[46] Balasarasawti commented on this process to the Music Academy in 1973:

> I have tried to keep myself open to learning form anyone of artistic integrity and to add to, and embellish, the thorough training I received from my family and my *guru*. From ladies traditionally trained in *devadasi* families I learned many things and received special help in languages, including Telugu, Sanskrit, and Tamil. One of them taught me to do an entire song with just my face–first with the music and then in silence. I would have to go through the entire emotional range of the *sahitya* (words), using only facial expression without the aid of hands or arms.[47]

Balasaraswati narrated the strictness of this discipline as fostered by her grandmother's standards. It was like attending a final exam every day that one could never fail:

> her unbending maxim was that all bodily comforts had to be sacrificed for advancement in the art…She would not chastise me directly [when her posture slouched], but just exclaim, 'For students, there can be no comfort or sleep' (*Vidyadharanam na sukhan na nidra*'). This was as forceful as a whiplash.[48]

The pressure this exerted on Bala was considerable, and would make her so nervous she could not eat hours before concerts.[49] Yet paradoxically this training enabled her to dance with a freedom unlike her contemporaries.

The family's connections with musicians and other artists created a dense network of pedagogic relationships for Balasaraswati. *Guru*s from one generation trained multiple students and each student could have multiple *guru*s. The common feature binding them together was the affective core of Dhanammals' musical style.[50] She met her guru K. Kandappa

Pillai at one of Dhanammal's Friday concert series at their Georgetown house. The street would overflow with audience members clamoring to listen to her grandmother's *vīna* and singing. These networks of musicians and dancers allowed for the distribution of dance among different repertoire-holding families. For musicians and dancers, their most treasured "possessions" or investments were in musical pieces given to them and added to their repertoire by established composers. Jayammal claims that one such "bag of money" was given to them by Dharmapuri Subbarayar, a *jāvaḷi* composer who entrusted the family with his last composition, *Saki Prana* in *Jenjhuti rāga*. This *jāvaḷi* became a mainstay of Balasaraswati's repertoire.[51]

While Bala connected with these traditional performers, she likewise found herself singled out for greatness among those attending. She claimed Kandappa Pillai was her "first and only *guru*" who "conveyed to me the legacy of the Thanjavur Quartet and he brought his own exquisite sense of balance in standardizing the bharata natyam repertoire and recital program today as we know it."[52] As her dance-master in concerts (*nattuvanar*) however, Kandappa took a radically diminished role. Traditionally, the *nattuvanar*s sung during the *padam* and *jāvaḷi* portions of the concert. Kandappa relinquished this prerogative to Balasaraswati's mother Jayammal. Having a deep appreciation for the family's repertoire, this allowed them to work in tandem in ways that the traditionally male role of the *nattuvanar* could not accomplish by following closely behind the dancer.[53] Kandappa's deference to Jayammal– and by proxy Dhanammal–therefore suggested he too adopted a humble disposition when it came to the music. This was the affective core of his *vṛtti* in which he taught Balasaraswati the contours of Bharatanāṭyam dancing.

Kandappa Pillai followed the corporeal control over his pupil common to the *guru-kula* system among performers at the time. Balasaraswati claimed that she would not want to

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"follow the harsh practices of my *guru*" after she became a teacher, due to the emotional toll it took on her as a child.[54] The stringent regime altered her body, shaping it via the constant repetition of the abstract dance forms (*adavu*s) she would practice for sixteen hours a day.[55] At times she would carry a sandbag on her head to force her neck into position. Kandappa used a switch on her ankles and legs at times to correct posture and even burnt her hand with a hot coal when she fumbled a gesture at his command.[56] Her mother and grandmother would often be in the house at these times and could do nothing to stop it from occurring due to the reverence paid to the position of the *guru*. While he never expressed pride directly to her, Kandappa Pillai bragged about Bala's progress to his family and contemporaries.[57] While this seems to be both a way of suggesting his own prowess, it also reflects the pride he might not have been able to express under the strictures of the *guru-kula* system of mores.

Balasaraswati could develop an intense engagement with the abstract dance sequences. This resulted from her training as she would perform the *adavu*s in slow motion. In *The Hindu* review of her New Delhi concert on March 28, 1955 the author could still see this finesse: "In the slow tempo, each gesture is unfolded in slow motion (so that) the immaculate accomplishment of the new gesture (becomes clear)."[58] Bala's clarity of motion simultaneously carried forward the fluid motion of her gestures while the sequence could be seen as discrete movements. These micro-gestural aspects each carried their own fulfillment before progressing into the next. The through-line connecting these disparate pieces, as if seen as still frames of a movie held up to a light, suggests the reel itself behind the images containing an affective continuity.[59] Bala's gestures gained their power from the stylistic flesh beneath their seemingly individualized nature. Kandappa Pillai's regime and Vina Dhanammal's slow engagement in lyricism contributed to her style's soft and flowing contours. As Balasaraswati

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danced with these qualities (*guṇa*s), her dancing_emphasized the movement of joints and articulations of the limbs. While Rukmini Devi Arundale's school of dance at Kalākṣetra imbued Bharatanāṭyam with precise, quick strikes between the *aduvu*s, Bala's dancing gave them a fluid grace. Her style revealed the essential grammar of the dance by emphasizing its larger phrases while simultaneously eliding the gaps between its microgestural components. Bala's attention to the *bhāva*s of a song filled in these spaces between the movements that afforded her style with its flowing quality.

By 1925, Kandappa had determined she was ready to perform. This necessitated an *arangetram* in the hereditary community, a rite of passage for performers. First, female members of the community judged the upcoming dancer's skills before a knowledgeable male audience saw her perform. This was one of the major ways the traditional style kept its standards high. Other performers could test the new dancer's dedication and humility toward the art form as well as her knowledge and skills before a public debut[60] After the women approved her daytime performance, at the age of eight Balasaraswati had her first public performance in the summer month of *Ādi* (July-August) at the Ammanakshi Amman temple outside Kanchipuram. Performing at both a time and place sacred to Devī, the Goddess, Bala would attribute her success and the performance's lasting impression in her memory to the goddess's auspicious presence.[61]

Balasaraswati was most influenced by other women when she began to learn *abhinaya*, the techniques which shaped the last half of a Bhartanāṭyam concert. Gauri Ammal Mylapore was her first teacher of gestural content. Likewise, her grandmother and mother's lyricism mentioned above colored much of her knowledge of *abhinaya*. Jayammal was the main agent, producer, manager, and accompanist of all Balasaraswati's concerts. In 1963 Bala even

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brought her mother along to her first performances in the United States. Jayammal was the hidden musical conductor as Bala's lead vocalist in the ensemble until her death on February 2, 1967.[62] One of the central aspects of the dance concert in Bharatanātyam was the use of *abhinaya* set to the genre of *padam* music, composed by the seventeenth-century Andhran bard Kshetrayya.[63] Her mother's musical inflections would color the type of gestures Bala would perform in this way.

Balasaraswati noticed that dance teachers tended to find it difficult to teach *abhinaya* directly as it involved careful attention to the facial gestures, moods, and bodily changes of others as they were moved. She focused on *abhinaya* for its difficulty, as it was "the real essence of dance, which is to give expression to life's moods in its variety…I wanted to give life to the art."[64] The pure dance (*nṛtta*) was the introductory or preliminary ritual to the core of her dancing. This empty space had improvisational focus (*mano-dharma*) as its central practice.[65] Only in this place, once the dancer was "refined" and rendered prepared by the process (*saṃskāra*), could she display this vitality through the *bhāva*s aligned with the melodic modes (*rāga*).[66]

The process of artistic creation in *abhinaya* also allowed for the style (*vṛtti*) to be continually embodied.[67] Viswanathan described in an interview how Balasaraswati and her ensembled worked on little-known pieces in the family's repertoire that had been almost forgotten. She spent hours singing every line, considering how to dance it, alternating interpretations: "I think she was trying to decide how variations should be interpreted in the music, what contour–shape–would best communicate the meaning of each particular word or line, through the music." Viswanathan described how many variations she could perform on a song, with each interpretation creating a new semblance on the song's dispositional matrix.

Bala would practice a single word or line of a song, honing it to a diamond-like precision before she was ready to perform the piece.[68]

Balasaraswati also trained under the noted dance master Chinnaya Naidu, who taught in Andhra Pradesh. As part of her training under this *guru*, she learned how to improvise on short cues and switching rapidly into the appropriate disposition (*sattva*) for the heroine (*nāyikā*). In order to due this, she memorized the *Amarakośa*, a Sanskrit lexicon that included the names of deities and mythological figures from Puranic narratives. Bala therefore had a vast repertoire of stories and personas to deploy in any given improvisation.[69] This breadth made her a literal embodiment of the knowledge of dance and theatrical terminology from sources outside the *Nāṭya-śāstra*.[70] Moreover, *abhinaya* allowed Bala to perform when forces beyond her control removed her ability to perform full concerts. Due to her declining health and loss of Kandappa Pillai in the late 1930s, Balasaraswati had to refocus her labor on an all-*abhinaya* program. She debuted this female ensemble in Madras on December 23, 1934.[71] Without the *nattuvanar*'s rhythmic control, her art form gravitated toward the gestural fluidity of the latter half of the concert program. While the loss of male authority inadvertently shaped public perception of her style, Bala continued to practice *tillana*s, *svarājati*s, and other *nattuvanar*-led pieces in private. For the following decades she primarily performed *abhinaya* pieces such as *varnam*s, *padam*s, and *kriti*s which were the improvisational heart of the Bharatanāṭyam concert series. This created a democratization of the form similar to opening up a central sanctum of a temple to all classes: the innermost treasures of the style were available for anyone to embrace.

Balasaraswati's all-female ensemble performed while the second wave of anti-*nautch* legislation was introduced in the Madras parliamentary assembly. As part of the disciplinary

policies advanced by middle-class Western-educated Indians, the legislator and one of the first female physicians Muthulakshmi Reddy introduced a bill in 1927 to ban *devadāsī* dedications.[72] Anti-*nautch* (Hindi "dance," from Sanskrit √*naṭ*) advocates before Reddy in the late nineteenth century frequently conflated the extradomestic lives of *devadāsī* performers with the content of their songs. Lyrics presented a paradoxical disparagement of the divine in dances by giving the deity human foibles and his female paramours hidden insight into his actions.[73] This legacy pushed reform-minded middle-class Indians away from *bhakti* depictions of deities such as Kṛṣṇa due to the "lasciviousness" of the lyrics as much as the practices of the ritualists who worshipped him. Meanwhile, the British seizure of royal prerogatives to collect taxes prevented hereditary communities from their primary means of livelihood, forcing some of them to prostitution in centers such as Bombay and Madras.[74] The legislation barring dedication did not pass until 1947. Instead, Reddy managed to pass laws prohibiting *devadāsī*s from performing dances and ritual gestures at temples in 1928.[75] Reform advocates of the dance style such as E. Krishna Ayer performed in *strī-veṣam* to counter the anti-nautch sentiments but also conceded the aesthetic-moral assumption of the reformers: the dance form was in need of resuscitation.[76] In the process, Ayer glossed over the living tradition of hereditary performers that were still practicing the dance in the 1930s.[77]

As part of the process to showcase the "treasure" or wealth of the family's dance and musical repertoire, Balasraswati's performances for Tamil intellectuals such as T. K. Chidambaram also spurred the academic "rebirth" of Bharatanāṭyam in the regional nationalist circles of Madras in 1935.[78] Bala's second concert at the music academy preceded Uday Shankar's first performance in Madras in 1933 at the Elphinstone Theatre. This led to further concert engagements for Bala outside of the South, including on Shankar's 1933 tour. After

Jayammal turned down the request, Shankar insisted and arranged for her first performance at Senate Hall in Calcutta on December 23, 1934 for the All Bengal Music Conference. There Bala met Hindusthani musicians including Ali Akhbar Khan and the Kathak master Achchan Maharaj.[79] Bala danced and sang the Bengali song *Jana Gana Mana Ati* that would later go on to become India's national anthem.[80] At this concert series, Bala adapted Bengali *bhajan*s–devotional songs to north Indian saints such as Mīrābai–to Carnatic *rāga* melodies. Bala's skills were evident as she could perform even a Rabindranatha Tagore song such as *Jana Gana Mana Ati* to a cultured Bengali audience while still showing her virtuosity in the family's style.[81] This was also the first time Satyajit Ray saw her perform. Afterwards, Balasaraswati accepted an invitation to perform for Rukmini Devi Arundale at the Adyar headquarters of the Theosophical Society in 1934 where she would meet Narayana Menon. Menon would become a long-term ally and authority on Bharatanāṭyam in India and abroad who advocated for Bala's style.[82] Rukmini Devi recounter meeting her in 1933 and seeing her perform at Vina Dhanammal's home, going so far as to praise Bala's musical affectivity:

> Among the dancers I saw, she was the only one where the music and dance were equally important. Because she was from a family of great musicians, her dances moves were deeply affected by this. She was able to convey not only the meaning of the dance, but also the emotion of the music. That's what I liked best.[83]

Rukmini Devi's praise would be particularly ironic given her later stance on the *devadāsī*'s musical style requiring "purification."[84]

In the mid-1930s hereditary performers were faced with increasing ostracization and a changing economic and social landscape in the south. Shifting from a court-based endowment system and a matrilinear structure to a more Europeanized and Brahminized set of norms in the cities, musicians and dancers were unable to find work unless they contradicted their old way of life. They abandoned the "property, family structure, and culture" that shaped their

identities. *Devadāsī*s in particular were hard pressed while the men in their families were often the beneficiaries of this process at times. Balasaraswati's family could have tried to find her a husband to fit these changing mores. However the community's mode of living placed their dedication to the art form above other social relationships and duties.[85]

Bala met her future partner, R. K. Shanmukhan, after a performance at the Madras Corporation's headquarters on January 1, 1934. The two shared a passion for Tamil culture and traditional art, as well as the regional nationalism characteristic of Tamil strands in the independence movement. By supporting the *devadāsī* community, as well as piquing her intellectual and emotional interests, Shanmukhan helped bring Balasaraswati and her family into the burgeoning movement. This helped Bala to lionize Bharatanāṭyam outside the reform apparatus that indexed a pan-Indian identity to the dance. Instead, south Indian and Tamil regional groups propagated the form to help fashion their identities during the anti-colonial movement.[86] Shanmukhan was twenty-six years older than Bala but the family accepted their partnership after two years. As a businessman and member of the Justice Party, he helped marginalized voices express their interest in Indian independence outside the confines of the Indian National Congress (dominated by Brahmins) and would go on to become India's first minister of finance under Jawarhalal Nehru in 1947.[87]

5.3 "Reforming" *Śṛṅgāra* and Nationalism: 1938-1947

Vina Dhanammal passed away on the morning of October 15, 1938 calling the names of two deities: Kamakshi, the name of her daughter, and Gopāla Kṛṣṇa. This devotional side to the family can be seen in her invocation of these two figures as well as her voiced regret that she could not take her *vīnā* with her.[88] 1938 would mark a major turning point for Balasaraswati as well. As the progressive disenfranchisement of *devadāsī*s by middle class patrons limited

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dance venues, Balasaraswati found herself without a *nattuvanar*. To some extent, the sexist and racist encounters that forced her to reconfigure her artistic life and legacy were similar to those other dancers from disenfranchised communities encountered. Uday Shankar convinced her guru Kandappa Pillai this same year to teach at his institute in Almora near the Nepali border of northern India. This devastated Bala and caused a rift between her and Shankar for decades, as the loss of Kandappa prevented her from performing full dance concerts. This financial exigency led her to perform concerts of *abhinaya* with an all-female ensemble. Jayammal led the troupe.[89]

With this increased visibility of female performers came tensions. Jayammal and Bala would fight over what she saw as Bala receiving undue attention in the press. The humility that musicians brought to the form was starting to fracture when this jealous disposition entered their relationship. Critics and audiences noticed Bala would glare at her mother out of character at times and Jayammal threatened not to sing for her until Viswanathan would convince her to relent.[90] New technology magnified these tensions as microphones on the stage carried the previously-unheard backstage banter across the floodlights to audiences.[91] Bala's health also deteriorated due to complications with rheumatic fever that damaged her heart as a child as well as a thyroid imbalance that made her energy fluctuate and caused her appearance to change. Critics latched onto these minute changes at times as well as becoming depressed from her personal and professional losses.[92]

Balasaraswati became the economic provider for several people at this time. She became pregnant several times, but the only child she carried to term was Danalakshmi Shanmukham (Lakshmi for short) on October 30, 1943.[93] Likewise, the loss of Kandappa Pillai to failing health left his son Ganesha to her care. As Bala and Ganesha learned dance and musical rhythm

together, their working relationship helped developed lasting ties in their ensemble. As chapter two points out, shared gestural regimes allow for a semblance (*līlā*) to emerge in performance. Likewise, the musical ensemble Balaraswati required had to be familiar with her style of performance for the music and dance to fit properly. This required facility with the family's musical mode of living (*vṛtti*) as well as the ability to play music for dance.[94] This would make it difficult for Bala, Lakshmi, and Aniruddha to find musicians at times, and why Uday Shankar's offer to Kandappa Pillai prevented her from putting on full concerts without a *nattuvanar* trained in their manner of performing.[95] This shift to a full-female ensemble and all-*abhinaya* concert setting would create her signature performance event in the 1940s. Meanwhile other dancers ignored *abhinaya* for the intricate footwork of *nṛtta*.[96] This structural reformation of the ideal dance concert might appear to be due to the limited economic and authoritative legitimacy Bala lacked without her *nattuvanar*. However, later groups of female performers such as Nrityagram developed a counter-hegemonic system that empowered female dancers using the very techniques of the patriarchical apparatus (*guru-kula*, "teacher-student" relationship) over the style of Western academic settings developed by nationalists such as Rukmini Devi Arundale at Kalakshetra.[97] The radical nature of this choreographic choice can be seen in the lack of archival evidence for the troupe.[98] Much like the classical Odissi audience and performer's unease with Nrityagram's break of conventions via conventions, Balasaraswati's bold move appears to have placed her audiences in a strange bind.[99] The lack of a patriarchical authority figure and archival loss outside Tamil reviews suggest an encroaching feminine agency similar to that afforded to *devadāsī*s in the medieval period but lacking the institutionalized support. Bala and her ensemble engaged with an emerging middle-class group of women that found social capital in South India music.[100]

The 1940s saw a shift in patronage as the traditional families were gradually supplanted by performers who trained at alternative locales like Shankar's Almora or were from outside the *guru-kula* system like Rukmini Devi Arundale.[101] This was ironic in that the "revivalists" considered themselves "classical" dancers while the process of dancing was more akin to the modern dancers of European and American fame. In fact, Indian audiences were more enthralled by Western-type production values (costumes, stage lighting, and "glamour") that favored accessibility. This led to a shift toward abstract compositions called *kriti*s. These pieces could not be danced and improvised upon at length with *abhinaya* in the same manner as *padam*s or *varnam*s.[102] Bala said in a May 25, 1969 interview for *Illustrated Weekly of India* that the affordances of these genres worked best for "modality of affects" (*rāga-bhāva*) in her gestures:

> We have a rich treasure of traditional compositions most suited for improvisation with excellently merged *raga bhava* for the *sahitya* (text). For *abhinaya* the opening words of a lyric are most important for establishing the mood…It is clear that the aspiring dancer must receive training in the art of music as fully as in the elements of dance if she is to understand these things and do justice to the great concept of the art as it has been developed by our ancestors. It is also essential that the *raga* (melodic modality) and *sahitya* be perfectly matched and in accordance with the necessities of expression in the dance…The scope of *sahitya* is often too limited and specific to allow for full development of *abhinaya* as is often the scope of the *raga-bhava*. Songs to be used for dance expression must be carefully chosen and one need only think of the almost unlimited scope of many of the *padams* and *padam varnams* to sense the great difference between them and most devotional songs or concert pieces.[103]

Balasaraswati's aesthetic articulation links gesture (*abhinaya*) to mood as the performative mode of "expression" for dance compositions. Dance pieces are intimate ecologies of melodic variations (*rāga*) and text (*sāhitya*). Affects (*bhāva*s) can accrue to any of these conditions within the style as a contour or shape in the melodic line, resonating across the lyrics from literal text to intertextual associations. This linkage enables the dancer to express the affective matrix of the song. The frank erotic lyrics of Kshetrayya oftentimes carried a *śṛṅgāra*

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disposition while the dancer had the freedom to take them into a comic vein (*hāsya*), suggest a tragic longing-in-separation (*viraha*) from the divine, or even anger (*krodha*) at the deity for infidelity.

However well-developed these improvisations were, Brahmin audiences grounded their assessments of dance in the lyrics of songs. Their aesthetic values and "tastes" shaped the key contours of Bharatanāṭyam away from the inflections of *devadāsī* styles of dance. Balasaraswati's style was uniquely powerful as a form of marginalized dance in this period as it survived. Both Bala and her middle-class interlocutors saw her *vṛtti* as what *devadāsī* dance *could become*, rather than a faithful representation of what it *was* during the salon dance period. Her style's terseness and succinct economy of gesture in both music and dance contrasted with the "loose limbs and movements" as well as a dearth of knowledge about the musical forms of melodic modulation (*rāga*) and rhythm (*tāla*).[104] I argue Bala deliberately attempt to modernize the style as hybrid form of *devadāsī* matrix with its musical repertoire as well as a "tasteful" modern *vṛtti* in its emphasis on a dispositional matrix of the properly decorous (*śṛṅgāra*).[105]

Dancing gestures however, are not merely replications of everyday movements. Balasaraswati's style demanded a strict control over the body. She invested decades of labor to achieve this magisterial finesse.[106] This helps to show how the debate over the style's affective matrix, *śṛṅgāra*, became an issue. While scholars and reformers translated it based on the context as "erotic," it initially comes from the enculturated norms associated with beauty and ornamentation as I have argued in chapter one.[107] *Śṛṅgāra* invokes the subtlety seen in Balasaraswati's description of *abhinaya* but also encompasses the auspicious affordances of beauty, grace, and the decorative motifs of feminine powers.[108]

Balasaraswati approached the discussion of *śṛṅgāra* from the *bhakti* foundations of her art form. She recognized three principle characters in its aesthetic ecology. The hero and heroine (*nāyaka* and *nāyikā*) attempt to connect with the aid of the go-between (*sakhī*) who was usually a messenger and close friend of the heroine. Bala interpreted this third figure in a Śaiva manner as the *guru* who mediates the connection between the human (female lover) and the divine (male lover).[109] While *śṛṅgāra* as a *rasa* was indeed a major aesthetic category in Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra*, the debates over it compactly mirror the issues of the traditional performing community. What was at stake was not only an aesthetic style but an entire mode of living. The content was questioned as part of the revivalist "cleansing" of the style's historical accretions in favor of a return to a pristine, Orientalist-envisioned "classical" past. However, this link between the embodied carriers of the style (*devadāsī*s) and the dispositional matrix (*śṛṅgāra*) made it a larger assemblage than an aesthetic category could encompass. Balasaraswati staked her claim to authority on her understanding and embodied mastery of *śṛṅgāra*. She modernized Bharatanāṭyam as her way of life, not in response to the objections of reformers such as Rukmini Devi Arundale. Part of this process involved a transition away from the *guru-kula* system of long absorption of styles into an institutionalized setting of examination. This presented a modern scenario as the *process* of learning, rather than the content, was changed. In this rupture with the past, the *how* was more important than *who* was dancing or *what* was danced.[110]

Soneji calls the courtesan performances an "alternative mode of being, an identity that uses the past in order to establish a relationship with themselves in the present." Dancers create self-reflexive relations that fill in the gaps between their "unfinished" pasts and presents that fill with affective meaning.[111] As modes that are filled with paradoxical fullness and emptiness

at the margins of social acceptability, *devadāsī* dance qualities (*guṇa*s) are part of a constantly-fluctuating environment that is at the core of affective potential.[112] This affordance of self-reflection is also at the heart of the modernizing project as stable identities became dis-positioned in the changing technical, social, and cultural landscape following WWI.[113] *Abhinaya* and personal recollections emerge hand-in-hand when *devadāsī*s recall and perform their past, intermixed with passages of songs and rhythmic movements. Soneji claims of his ethnographic interlocutor R. Muttukkannammal that acts

> of performance ignite an affective resonance between flashes of quotidian memory…and the traces of an aesthetic history represented by her repertoire. If the art of the *devadāsī* is in part an art of commentary, of glossing lyrics with gestural interpretation that change as they are repeated over time, then Muttukkannammal's private performances constitute enactive interpretations of what she has already experienced during "official" performances before audiences. The historical world…the worlds of play and performance, and Muttukkannammal's own subjectivity unfold together; this kind of performative recollection creates a narrative that is simultaneously in dialogue with both the past and the present.[114]

This courtesan's performance style is a form of "commemorative nostalgia," similar to the melancholic recollection of the past seen in Turkish "classical" music following its secularizing process of creating a national identity.[115] By invoking a "memorializing" (*smaraṇa*) phase of gesture, these shifted into an imagined past where the courtesans could still dwell. Their longing (*viraha*) then opened up the "affective potential" where they might still have social reputations.

While reformers attempted to shift Bharatanāṭyam into a new constellation of middle-class values, it still retained its *vṛtti*'s sedimented history in the bodies of *devadāsī* women. As a latent matrix in music, their life and habits could burst forth suddenly and inspire new people with potentials.[116] As the majority of Balasaraswati's repertoire for dance were *śṛṅgāra* pieces, rounded out by Tamil hymns and devotional songs such as *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō*,[117] her style

needed to be seen outside the context of the reform assemblage. Bala distinguished her art by a deliberate refusal to ornament the stage, such as other modern dancers had taken when simplifying the elaborate sets and costumes of ballet. This focus on minimal cosmetic gesture (*āhārya-abhinaya*) distinguished Balaraswati's performance events from her contemporaries such as Rukmini Devi Arundale, whose sets and costume were inspired by the Ballet Russes she had seen in England accompanied by an image of Naṭarāja. Anna Pavlova gifted Rukmini Devi with her dispositional matrix rather than "her ballet shoes."[118] In contrast, Bala never brought deity images onstage, had relatively few if any costume changes, and had minimal lighting and sound design other than microphones and basic lights.

Their difference in stage presentation was made obvious when performing on the same program. At the All India Dance Festival in Bombay, in January 1945, Rukmini Devi's elaborate set and properties were taken down after thirty minutes. This last-minute decision left Bala with only a bare stage to perform. Her singer for the performance, Mrs. A. K. Sundarajan, recalled how Balasaraswati persevered, with "such enormous energy" she "danced wonderfully." It was as if she decided to say, 'I want to show art is not just stage trappings.' And she proved her point. The audience was thrilled."[119]

5.4 Independence and the "Face" of Indian Dance: 1947-1956

Despite wide-spread notoriety, Balasaraswati found Madras a difficult environment for dancing. Dancers from traditional communities faced a new issue as the Devadāsī Prohibition Act was finally passed in 1947. Public opinion and a renewed interest in dance by middle-class elites had displaced the popularity of hereditary performers from the first half of the century.[120] Balasaraswati felt this pressure in terms of her invitations to perform. With the passage of the Devadāsī Act on January 6, 1947, it became illegal for Balasaraswati to perform at temples or

in processions in front of a deity. This caused her to lose most of her patronage and funding outside of select venues such as the Madras Music Academy engagements. She became unable to provide for her entire extended family and young daughter. She would not have an engagement for nearly four years after the ban was passed.[121]

Bala appeared in concert only eleven times in 1944, three in 1945, once in 1946, and was offered no engagements from 1947-1949.[122] This made it increasingly hard for her to provide for family as the head of a house including four siblings. Ranganathan and Viswanathan were both musicians in her ensemble by this period. Both started to branch out by taking performing opportunities outside the ensemble as they shifted to an all-female group performance. Likewise, a thyroid imbalance had left Bala self-conscious of her appearance.[123] Finally, her partner Shanmukham passed away on May 5, 1953. His loss left Bala inconsolable and ready to give up performing entirely.[124] Audiences seemed to have viewed her as part of the "civilizational past" of Bharatanātyam's history by this point and had relegated her to the aesthetic history of Indian culture.[125] She appears to have been caught up in the "loose ends" of the recuperation of the *devadāsī* mode of living by the state apparatus and relegated to the margins like many of her fellow traditional performers.[126] In her public and personal life, Bala felt hopeless throughout this period. This was not to be the case for her, as the extended network of regional and national musicians, academics, and dancers helped to create a new audience for her style.

By 1949, Bala was invited to perform at a small salon in a private recital. She credits this performance at the Rasika Ranjani Sabha in Madras and the European who facilitated it with the reviving her career. It was arranged by Ram Gopal for Beryl de Zoete, who would write about Bala's performance in *The Other Mind*.[127] Another source of patronage was Dr. V.

Raghavan, the secretary of the Madras Music Academy. The Academy became Bala's most consistent source of funding and performance venues throughout her career in India. Raghavan facilitated her first teaching enterprise in 1953 with the Balasaraswati School of Indian Music and Dance where she would train young women in her *vṛtti*. She trained a group of students to perform a Tamil dance drama (*kuravanji*) from the Tanjore court dedicated to the deity at the Bṛhadeśvara Temple in 1949. This was the first chance for Bala to amass institutional support for her dance.[128] In 1959 Raghavan would also write a book on Balasaraswati's *bāṇī* of Bharatanāṭyam, helping to enshrine her gestures as photographic semblances to teach the style.[129]

Bala also credited her career's revival to divine sources as an expression of her personal devotion. One of the deities and religious figures of her interest included a religious renunciant (*saṃnyāsī*s) named Padakacheri Swamigal. His *samādhi* (shrine-tomb) was erected outside Chennai at Thiruvotriyur and holds an ancillary shrine to Śiva and the Devī. He appeared whenever Jayammal had an asthma flare-ups. While he was alive, Padakacheri recommended Bala visit the goddess named Devi Karumāriyamman.[130] The shrine is located west of Chennai in the village of Thiruverkadu. A woman who used to clean Vina Dhanammal's house visited there often. Bala heard of this goddess from multiple sources it seems, as the medium of Karumāriyamman asked for her repeatedly. This goddess was known for caring for the marginalized and those facing misfortune.[131]

Throughout Tamilnadu, Māriyamman is a goddess who is deployed to care for modern concerns. Informants at the temple told me in 2019 the Tamil *karu* in her case means "water." As a force for healing and sovereign control over life and death, the goddess embodied political tensions in the response to modernity versus modernizing projects.[132] In particular, she also

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shown in Tamil as ruling over Tanjore as a deity of the region.[133] Māriyamman is traditionally associated with the curing of smallpox as she leaves "pearls" (*muttu*) on the body. As an affective matrix, she appears as the figure who guides a person through illness experiences with its attendant symptoms and social transformations. She likewise eschews male control over her body. Perudevi Srinivasan gives one version of the origin of Māriyamman's powers over pox. Starting off as a young woman, the god Śiva throws a garland over her head as she practices austerities (*tapas*). This enrages the young woman as the gesture is used to indicate marriage. After remaining fixed in place for thirty minutes, she retaliates by forcing Śiva to wear it as a garland of poxes (*muttu*s).[134] The god has no choice to end his pain but to beg the human woman for relief! I argue Balasaraswati's attraction to this version of Māriyamman privileged similar affordances for subalterns over those in positions of power. The goddess's rejection of patriarchal authority, the rigid control and sublimation of desire toward spiritual potency, and reconfiguration of gestures of domestication were all aspects of Bala's *devadāsī* identity. Like Lucinda Ramberg's female *pūjārī*s of the sister goddesses Yellāmma and Matangī, Bala forged an alliance with this goddess that placed them together in a form of mutual nurturance.[135]

Bala's first visit to the shrine came in late 1947, after the family had to sell their house in Egmore. She sold her jewelry to fund bus fare and ritual offerings for her and Jayammal, Lakshmi, an aunt, and a friend C. P. Srinivasan. The goddess did not appear that Sunday, but Bala decided to come back the next day on the same fifeteen-kilometer bus ride without her aunt. The medium manifested the goddess and claimed the aunt had secretly been planning to gossip about Bala's problems. The Devī would have revealed publicly:

> You pawned your ring to come see me. You have come here because you have nowhere else to go. No matter that you have a husband, or brothers at home, you are alone. Like

all these who come to me for protection and help, I will also help you. Like rain falling to the ground (*karu* Tamil "rain"), and slowly rising to become the sweetness of the milk of a coconut, I will meet your needs drop by drop. You will not need to worry.[136]

This unexpected alliance would go on to impact Bala's personal devotion for years to come and offered her solace when her career and health were deteriorating.

Another unexpected connection was formed when her *abhinaya* was recognized by a master performer. A *kuchipudi* dance master from Andhra Pradesh arrived unannounced at Balasaraswati's house in order to pass on his techniques to her. The orthodox Brahmin Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastri came to her Madras home in 1948 since "he wanted her to be a repository of his art."[137] Bala learned the most minute control over facial gesture and *sāttvika-abhinaya* from this *guru* who Lakshmi claimed could "sweat on command, make his hair stand out, change the color of his skin."[138] Bala described Shastri in a 1973 speech at the Music Academy:

> In my thirties, Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastri opened great new vistas for me, especially in *varnam* improvisation. He shared his immense knowledge and, in a very real sense, gave me the confidence to attempt those things I do today…I would pierce him and he poured forth.[139]

Knight argues the Tamil word for "pierce, pour" suggests the nectar of a bee. This imagery is in line with Śaiva-Śākta imagery.[140] She had the *mudra* gestures taught in these classes photographed so she would not forget after incorporating them into her embodied repertoire.[141] The photographic capture of her gestures would continue to be one way she accepted new technologies. Bala fashioned her corporeal form into an embodied "engine" for carrying these gestural regimes into a new medium.[142] As part of the capture and abstraction of these dancing images, she inaugurated the process of creating her own disposition (*sattva*) as a free-floating presence. Satyajit Ray's film would take this a step further with the capture of her movements as well as positions.

Technology and devotion went hand-in-hand for her in other ways. Balasaraswati was unable to perform in 1942 due to heart problems caused by rheumatic fever.[143] Aniruddha Knight recounted to me how Visvwanatha used to cheer her spirits in this period of recovery by asking her to sing a song to Murugan, the peacock-riding son of Śiva and Pārvatī, in every conceivable *rāga* they could try. Bala went through almost one-hundred eight different melodic variations of the song with her brother accompanying her. Aniruddha lamented that his grand-uncle had recorded these sessions somewhere but he had been unable to locate them.[144] In 1954 Balasaraswati and her family went to a temple at Thiruthani dedicated to Murugan, before whom she had wanted to perform since her *arangetram* in 1925. Convincing the priest to leave the image's sanctum for half an hour, she performed with only her musicians and daughter watching. Later Bala should say this performance helped inspire her return to health and success:

> Did I really dance? I only remember the joy I felt at that moment of fulfillment–years of yearning had finally come to an end. After that what dancing He manipulated through me, He alone knows.[145]

Bala attributed the affective completion of this dedication to Murugan as if the deity overrode her conscious volition and moved through her body. She invited the deity in to "invest" (*āveśa*) her dance style. Her individual volition continued in gestures but she cultivated these spiritual articulations to manifest through her mode of living (*vṛtti*). This dance was illegal at the time since she was a *devadāsī*, yet she favored the subaltern reclamation of her relationship to a divine entity over the jurisprudence of the Tamil state. By asserting her own position and recognition with the divine, Bala circumvented the capture of her body by legal mechanisms in favor of a different form of encounter. As a way of contesting space, she participated in what

William Elison calls an alternative sovereignty over the visual markers of space.[146] Murugan became one of the deities she frequently evoked as part of her repertoire.

In 1938 Rukmini Devi Arundale's school for teaching dance called Kalākshetra had been established near the Theosophical Society's headquarters in southern Madras.[147] At the time her style was dominated by a "cleansing" of what she considered erotic material (*śṛṅgāra*) in favor of Puranic narrative dances such as the *kuravanji*. Rukmini Devi's appropriation was doubly insulting as it attempted to erase *and* improve upon the *devadāsī*'s affective matrix.[148] Balasaraswati disagreed wholeheartedly Rukmini Devi's project. The new direction for the style as devotion rendered the entire ensemble as an emotionless husk. Lakshmi would comment on the difference between *bhakti* and *śṛṅgāra* as dispositional matrices that each had different affordances. According to Lakshmi, Bala could not perform a particular Kshetrayya song *Ninnu Joochi* as if it only took place between a man and a woman:

> All Bala, being Bala, wanted was to see Krishna. That was her only aim. Bala's soul was always seeking Krishna…We say it isn't *bhakti* because it isn't *bhakti* as one of the emotions. She (creates real) *bhakti* because Krishna is there, she is longing for Him. But she transforms this love song into *bhakti* when she does it.[149]

Lakshmi would sing the lines of the song and explain it as she went, opening up the lines into nuances of meaning and variations in interpretation. Note here that *bhakti* in the family's style is *not* the right matrix for this song; it is a "decorous" song, and *bhakti* cannot override this set of loving relationships at its core. Unlike Kavikarṇapūra's elaborate theological and aesthetic hybrid of *bhāva* as adoration, the *devadāsī*s did not have a liminal category to link the ritual *bhakti* of personal life to their professional *vṛtti*s. *Bhakti* was not a dispositional matrix for *devadāsī*s since *śṛṅgāra* acted as the singular disposition undergirding all other affects.[150]

Instead, Bala infused *Ninnu Joochi* with *bhakti* in her personal style. She invested the song with *bhakti* by invoking Kṛṣṇa and generating his presence on stage. In essence, her

dancing style (*vṛtti*) manifested a separate semblance in her gestures than the affordance of the disposition would normally permit. Bala's genius at *abhinaya* could lead back to both her style and the disposition in its virtual side through the semblance. The depth of this modulation of the affective forms boggles the mind, as most aesthetic theorists would claim only a single *rasa* could dominate a piece, yet here Lakshmi claims her mother could have two mutually-contradictory affective centers from the same assemblage. Her innovations with the all-female *abhinaya* troupe, elaborate iterations on a single theme over dozens of melodies (*rāga*) while attempting to convey the proper *bhāva*, and constant improvisational fine-tuning with her musicians gave her pieces a constant air of experimentation. Balasaraswati's choreographic approach was therefore never fixed but adapted to the specific context of performance.

This process of performance and artmaking was also connected to non-Puranic sources of South Asian religious practice. Balasaraswati's student Roshen Alkazi mentions that *sādhana* ("practice") was an aesthetic development of ideas found in Tantra and other esoteric teachings. The affective engagement between two lovers could develop a polyphonic depth of meaning. Decorous emotion could not be plumbed or expressed through a surface-level understanding of sexuality.[151] While not strictly "Tantric," Bala's style was enmeshed in the larger Brahminical *smārta* recuperation of Tantric material at this time.[152] Balasaraswati shaped the erotic qualities of her source materials alongside "strictness of form and the musical challenges of her composed pure dance." These qualities changed the frank eroticism of the compositions into a "decorous" ecology of *vibhāva*s, *anubhāva*s, and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*s. Each piece, including the characteristic *tirmanam*s she learned from Kandappa Pillai, marked the style as her own. If Bala did not perform them to her own satisfaction, she would dance them again until performed without errors.[153]

I want to turn briefly to Bala's insistence that *bhakti* and dance were specifically South Indian forms of culture. This contrasts the regional nationalism of Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada cultural depictions with the Sanskritic-Orientalist assemblage discussed previously.[154] While Bala deployed the expressivist tropes common to spiritual practice by the 1970s in her speech to the Tamil Isai Sangam, her depiction of Bharatanāṭyam fashions it with an architectural semblance (*līlā*) of a South Indian temple style. Note that this was a dance, as Bala performed the speech with *abhinaya* while Lakshmi read it aloud.[155] I argue that Bala's theorizing was therefore much like her dance: she created variations on the theme of her lyrics in *āṅgika-abhinaya* while the vocalizations (*vācika-abhinaya*) were fixed. The contours of the speech from Lakshmi's voice would have offered Bala the rhythmic and melodic qualities to fashion her gestures. Hence I argue dance scholars need to attend to Bala's written writings as if they were choreographic notes.[156]

Each of the seven compositions of the *kaccheri* ("concert") from Tanjore has its own affordances according to Balasaraswati's theorizing. Each of the seven different genres are thereby abstracted and virtualized through her gestures into this larger semblance as a temple with its concomitant details. The opening piece, *alarippu*, contains only metrical steps (*tāla*) and "brings out the special charm of pure dance." It loosens the dancer's limbs and relaxes the minds of audience and dancer alike. Its major affordance is "single-mindedness."[157] Next, the *jatiswaram* adds melody (*rāga*) to rhythm without adding words or the *nattuvanar*'s solfège notes (*svara*s). Bala claims this "has a special power to unite us with our being" and links melody with movement. I argue the *jatiswaram* articulates an audience and performer with the dispositional matrix (*sattva*). At this moment, the dance starts to accrue by the building up of the ensemble in performance. This allows for *nṛtta* of pure dance to manifest as a "minimal

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semblance" (*līlā*) in Bala's words.[158] The *sabdam* follows by unfolding this affective matrix into the "myriad moods of Bharatanatyam." Bala likens these steps of the *kaccheri* to a "Great Temple," with the *alarippu* acting as the entrance hall (*gopuram*) adorned with myriads of deities and semblances of the divine. The *jatiswaram* is the half-way hall (*ardhamaṇḍpam*) where large concerts are frequently held at temples such as in Mylapore today. Next the *sabdam* becomes the main temple pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) as it encapsulates and opens up to greater mysteries at its center. The *varṇam*, the first of the *abhinaya* pieces, she calls "inner sanctum," the *garbha-gṛha*. This spatial metaphor facilitates a semblance as Bala affectively navigates her audience through the concert dance. She can "flex" the architectural illusion through her gestures as they conjure an image of the temple for her audience.[159] This flexible space at the center of concert performances affords her the room for *mano-dharma* to take place. *Varṇam*s tentatively proffer the dancer the most creative zone for "delighting in her self-fulfillment" in the tradition. This part affords *joy* in its expansiveness, where the *vibhāva*s of traditional aesthetic theory develop fully into the individual moods.[160]

I should note that Balasaraswati did not create a historical lineage in the vein of Orientalist depictions of *devadāsī* dance as stemming only from temple culture. While her argument made the case for certain forms of performance having ritual and cultural ties to religious figures, it is the court culture of Tanjore that she defends in this speech. Unlike depictions of dance grounding it in the dancer's embodiment of divine forces (as *maṅgala*, *śubha*, "auspiciousness"),[161] Bala expresses the disposition of her dance's matrix as a playful semblance of a temple. This play links history and myth in a very different way than the Orientalist assemblage that delimits the agency of subalterns by refusing to allow them any change whatsoever.[162] Likewise, Bala's dynamic examines the potential within the dance.

Concert dance hides the physical temple architecture and divinized bodies of the sacred precincts. Denied access to many performing spaces under the Devadāsī Prohibition Act, Balasaraswati likewise fashioned a form of memorializing (*smaraṇa*) in a space she was physical denied. While there is a "distributed body" at play in Bala's thinking, it is larger than a single temple could contain.[163]

Audiences were connected by her gestures into this ensemble. Balasaraswati's dance touched audiences not at the level of personal emotions but what she called "intuition." The dancer and critic's "feelings should be universalized into aspects of divinity and not remain the limited experience of an insignificant human being."[164] The critic S. V. Shesadri wrote in *Shankar's Weekly* on August 18, 1963 that she infused gestures with affective power:

> The characteristic feature of *abhinaya* in Bharata Natyam is that it does not build up feeling through isolated episodes. It would be truer to say that feeling is the transparent form of action in *abhinaya*…Balasaraswati's distinction lies in the fact that she depicts action as the vesture of feeling. Her greatness lies in the fact that while identifying herself wholly with the feeling, she is yet apperceptive enough to explore it in terms of a rich variety of *mudras* (hand gestures)…The magic of Balasaraswati's art alternately condenses and dissolves space into significant form and pervasive feeling.[165]

Shesadri makes several important points about her style here. One, gesture renders affect a "transparent form of action." *Abhinaya* becomes the instrumental form par excellence in its clarity and ease of access. Next, Bala endows or "invests" feeling into action through her *vṛtti* or style from the range and depth of affect the musical form allots. The family's smooth and slow modes of playing allow her to develop a theme quickly and bewitchingly move on to the next modulation of affects. While these seem to be fully engaging and moving (they come from the dispositional matrix or *sattva* of the piece through the lens of the style), she can still develop them enough into playful ensembles (*līlā*) to weave a "rich" tapestry. The semblance both "condenses and dissolves space" into a commanding form (*sattva*) and pervades the

environment with her affectivity. The architectural body she creates in dance is one such semblance, as it engages the audience, enfolding them into an affective ecology.[166]

Returning to the point of her magisterial art or *māyā*, critics and audiences frequently claimed Balasaraswati's genius resided in her ability to create what her grandson Aniruddha called an "empty space" and Douglas Knight refers to as intuitive "self-forgetfulness." This opening up of the normally-bounded self in performance allowed her to create illusions in the semblances her gestures would evoke. At the start of a piece, she would use *abhinaya* to gesture the literal meaning of the phrase, extending and elaborating on its text like a *rāga* melodically opening up and improvisationally revealing its hidden potentials. This placed her dance directly into the *rāga-bhāva* ecology of melody and affect that could be tuned, resonating hidden chords that were not first glimpsed at a surface level. Bala's engagement with the different layers of a composition unfolded like miniature worlds coming to life in her gesturing.[167] Bala did not have to perform the actual movements on stage, but could instead offer just enough of an action, a micro-gesture, to suggest a complete set of movements hidden in potential form, waiting to be explored even as she touched their edges. All that was required was a terse "minimal semblance" that arose from a finely-honed unit of movement. She told this to her English translator S. Guhan: "It is the music that is deceiving you."[168] As a form of *māyā*, gesture therefore "fashions" the world.[169] Furthermore, the extensions of her gestures activated this semblant image of the temple for her audiences as well: Balasaraswati's creative force enlivened audiences by distributing the feminine power of materiality itself (*prakṛti*) in performance spaces. Her concerts created a rich, intersubjective environment which left audiences wondering how she could so powerfully move them. This semblant deity, temple,

and dance were all created in the matrix of Bala's corporeal form as it shifted from gesturing into the memorializing process (*smaraṇa*).[170]

Gestures did not make someone over into the disposition or character they portrayed. Instead, it brought these *sattva*s up alongside the dancer, crossing over her bodily frame to extend into the duration of performance. Lakshmi claimed her mother never said she "became" the baby Kṛṣṇa or Yaśodā, but instead found herself alongside them, "she becomes engrossed in the experience of dealing with these powers." Yet at times her affective matrix would overlap with that of the mother and "She actually became that. Even though she says she didn't." Rather than being contradictory, this shows that the affective dispositions could shift the potentials even within one person, so she could play a mother and lover to Kṛṣṇa in the same song while remaining herself.[171] This was possible because the self becomes an "empty space" that makes a space and time possible through itself in the material realm. In other words, the body becomes a vehicle for divine personas to manifest while also resonating with the performance as she is dancing. In this way, *abhinaya* functions instrumentally to allow affects to emerge and to carry the performer *with* the affects. She herself does not always control the process but modulates it as its director.

Returning now to Balasaraswati's discussion of the architectural semblance, the dancer can modulate it further to empty out the audience as well. The *padam*s offer "the containment, cool and quiet," of approaching the *garbha-gṛha* or sanctum where the central deities of a temple are found. As the rhythmic virtuosity of the *varṇam* is modulated to a softer pitch, the "heart" of the temple blossoms into the affective matrix's core disposition: *śṛṅgāra*. The "soul-stirring music" of this phase shifts the focus entirely onto *abhinaya*. Here is the darkest yet most receptive of the spaces as the "womb" (*garbha*) from which all capacities emerge. Bala

equates dancing the *padam* to the change in worship when lights are removed and the temple drumming slows to the chanting of verses. The next concert piece, the *tillana* "breaks into movement like the final burning of camphor accompanied by a measure of din and bustle." This allows for a moment of thanksgiving and recognition of one's gratitude; Bala in particular would have danced *tillana*s taught by Kandappa Pillai at this juncture. Lastly, a final heartfelt prayer is offered to the god internally in the *sloka*.[172] At this phase, the audience is left with the overflowing feeling of the "waves of affect" as they washed over them up through the *varṇam*, then gradually subsiding. The *śloka* removes all musical ornamentation until only the voiced sound of a verse resonates. An imperceptible sound (*nāda*) is implied to continue at this point for audiences attuned to this process as a latent reality undergirding all expressed sounds.

Balasaraswati fashioned these ensembles of dramatic illusions to virtualize the affects and make them generalizable rather than individually located. Bala calls this shift away from the personal after the *alarippu* in terms reminiscent of Abhinavagupta's theorization (see section 1.7). By making *śṛṅgāra* into the affective matrix of the entire concert series, Bala endowed it with a decorous disposition that would not fit the virtualizing tendency if it invested the form with worldly attraction (*kāma*). Desire itself is a materializing affective tendency (*pravṛtti*). Instead, the self is "clarified" and melted like butter in the crucible of the performance event as the "joy" felt during the *varṇam* is a dispositional matrix for all its variations (*līlā*s) as they play out.[173] This form of rapture emerges not from the dancer but from the tradition and renders the dance itself divine.[174] This process sounds inflected with the aesthetic terminology of Śaiva-Śākta semblances. Only later in life could Bala explicitly acknowledge these allusions in performance. Due to frequent allusions to Tantric ritual transgression of sexual and purity taboos, *devadāsī*s were frequently linked to these practices.

Like Bala, most would have claimed their ritual and dance lives were principally devotional. Tantricism was unpalatable for most *smārta* Brahmin audiences (even in the avowed Śaiva south); they would have been willing to accept the formulation in Vedantized terms as Rukmini Devi Arundale would lay them out.[175] However, Bala's gestures did contribute to a goal hidden for audiences unfamiliar with Bharatanāṭyam. The "progress" (*pravṛtti*) of her desire to contribute to the dance did instill her style with additional resonances. Personal experiences overlaid the embodied habits as her dance performances were each unique moments. The improvisational core at the "womb" of the temple therefore offered one avenue for Bala to develop her *vṛtti*.[176]

Balasaraswati's career therefore carried this assemblage of affective semblances with her even before she formulated them. She could draw her audiences into this latent disposition and invite them into the dance's historical depths without a physical temple space being "re-presented" by an icon of Naṭarāja. Critics tended to focus on Bala's body during this portion of her career as a failure of *āhārya-abhinaya*. Her return to the stage was noted at the October 23, 1949 performance by dance critic K. Chandrasekharan, who also advocated for Rukmini Devi Arundale. He noted Bala's concert program was a "rarity." While making disparaging claims about her weight gain due to a thyroid imbalance, Chandrasekharan claimed her dancing was characterized by an "entrancing fountain of ideas."[177] Bala's *abhinaya* continued to influence critics as both affectively moving and provocatively intellectual gestures. This afforded her the ability to communicate ideas to anyone regardless of their age, nationality, or linguistic background.

As a teacher, Bala was incredibly kind and patient with her students, including her first group recital in December 1949 for the *kuravanji* dance drama *Sarabendra Bhoopala* set to

Thanjavur court music. One of Jayammal's students who performed the music, Sarojini Kumaraswami, remembered the young dancers versus her own training under Kandappa Pillai:

> It was during those rehearsal times [on Sunday mornings] when we were so close to her, that we could see the mother in Bala. She was not just a teacher, but was full of love for all the girls. Not once did she lose her temper…Whatever she wanted to correct or have done differently was said as though she spoke to her own child. No harshness and that is remembered even now…the kind of person she was…warmth, tenderness and love, qualities that were seen and experienced.[178]

One of Balasaraswati's first adult students, Roshen Alkazi, narrated her first sight of Bala dancing in Bombay. In 1952 Alkazi thought the dancer was already a legend and had stopped performing.[179] Bala encapsulated not just Bharatanāṭyam for Alkazi but "in her form was the whole history and tradition of our country."[180] Alkazi continued to described this nationalist assemblage as congealing around Bala's dancing form as a *devadāsī*.[181] She had the ability to portray a national identity due in part to the *devadāsī* assemblage discussed previously. However, Alkazi seems also to be sensing the Tamil *bhakti* dispositional matrix discussed above. That a "line of *abhinaya*" could become "so many things" contradicted the Orientalizing depictions of South Asian culture as static. Bala's gestures unfurled the potential for a capacious set of semblances that could revivify the culture without being divorced from its radically novelty-in-tradition.[182]

In a January 1956 concert in Bombay Bala again networked with other performers to help shape this nationally-emerging disposition of Indian culture.[183] By performing alongside Rukmini Devi Arundale and Kathak dancers such as Aachan and Birju Maharaj, Bala revealed *devadāsī* dance to be a thriving tradition rather than a mythological footnote to Bharatanāṭyam's history. Birju Maharaj–the scion of a *kathak* family and Hindusthani musician–would practice his *tabla* with Balasaraswati's brother Ranganathan who played the Carnatic *mṛdāṅgam* drums. Bala agreed one day to sing for his *kathak* recital and did a *tillana*,

similar to a Marathi dance tradition (*taranam*) imported to the Thanjavur court. Maharaj claimed she was criticized in Madras for performing in a Hindusthani concert yet claimed "she did not differentiate between artists of North and South, and felt all artists should support each other, especially those with talent."[184] They agreed on an ecumenical approach to dance as the two dancers created networks of appreciative audiences between Madras, Bombay, Calcutta, and Delhi. The pan-Indian appeal of Balasaraswati's dancing would soon furnish her with international networks of modern performers who could recognize her greatness.

5.5 Transglobal Networks of Modern Dancing: 1956-1962

1956 marked a turning point in Balasaraswati's career. While Westerners had seen Balasaraswati perform at times, most of them were academics. The American State Department tour of Martha Graham's company during the Cold War era of cultural ambassadorship inaugurated a new set of international connections in Bala's dance network. This process culminated in 1992 with Bala's first overseas performance in Tokyo for a foreign audience. Martha Graham and her dance troupe visited India in 1956 through a State Department sponsored tour and saw Balaraswati perform in Madras. Graham was even met by Shanmukham, India's finance minister and Balasaraswati's partner.[185] Among them was Donald McKayle. Although the two dancers would not meet again until they both two taught at the California Institute of the Arts in 1972, this moment of cultural recognition facilitated his own experimentation in subaltern forms of dancing.[186] Compare figures 5.1 and 5.2 below to see the evidence for McKayle's investment in Bala's style and form.

Not only did these modern dancers respond to her performances in a manner that recognized her prowess as a proponent of Bharatanāṭyam; they also recognized her as an equal in modernizing dance. Bharatanāṭyam has been treated after the nationalist, pan-Indian

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reformulation of its origins as a full-fledged classical dance form similar to ballet. Before this point, Indian or "*nautch* dancing was treated similarly to the complex of dancing performed by African-American dancers in the United States. It functioned frequently as a storehouse of techniques that were added to the repertoire of modern dancing and staged as its "other" as modern dance went through a series of "generational rebellion structures."[187] As part of the larger democratic set of political forces fighting Nazism, modern dance was used to suggest America was both a fragmentary set of diverse peoples assembled into a national unity that did not erase the historical past for a mythic history but instead an ongoing process. Certain dispositions could be singled out as characters from the shared mythological past but they helped express modern concerns of women in a time of increasing alienation. Graham's system accentuated the skeletal structure and nerves in this period, while Bala's articulations drew attention to the ligaments, joints, and flexing points of the body.[188]

Comparing the way modern dancers approached their dancing and the body, I argue common connections exist between Balasaraswati and Graham's approach to dancing. Both used mythic storylines and presented them with an economy of gesture in their own style, expressively envisioned as well as shaped by their repeated rehearsals of a form. While Graham's style grew out of adaptations and experiments with the Denishawn Company's form, Bala investigated, theorized, and embodied the improvisational structure at the heart of her concert format. Each style resulted in unique choreographic experiences that were difficult to capture as they morphed in each iterative performance. Both dancers navigated the political terrain as women from marginalized groups (Graham's Jewish heritage, Bala's *devadāsī* background) yet took part in a process of making modern dance a national assemblage with diverse parts. I argue that though Bala could not prevent her *devadāsī* position from being

captured in the Orientalist assemblage, she retained and modernized her mode of life with living vestiges of the past and a prevented it from being seen as a "degraded" form of performance at odds with social mores.

This also inspired dancers like Donald McKayle who came from similar marginalized backgrounds of performance to experiment with their own heritage. McKayle writes of his experience seeing Bala perform:
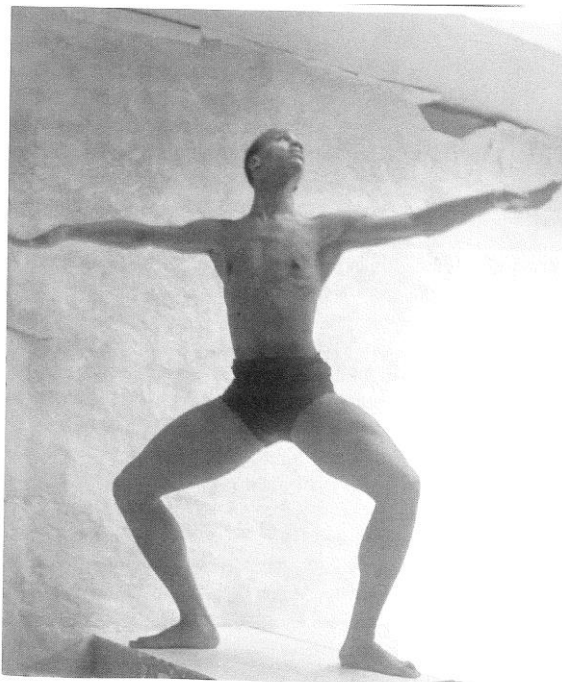
Photographic studies by Carmen Schiavone.
Photos © Bennett and Pleasant.

Balasaraswati stood on stage with her weight resting against one hip, her head and shoulders counterbalanced in the classic peaceful position of repose, an icon of feminine grace, at once delicate and at the same time coiled, ready to lash into motion. *She was surrounded by five musicians*, who were all masters of their instruments. The tabla player was especially captivating as he drummed his complicated rhythms while singing counter-rhythmic syllables in that wonderful South Indian way so reminiscent of jazz scat singing. The opening pure dance was arduous and blended seamlessly into a padam of expressive narrative dance where the lips, eyes, nostrils, and the entire musculature of her face was featured against the yearnings of her responsive torso. I was in the presence of a great artist, and I wished it never to end.[189]

Figure 5.1: Donald McKayle, studio rehearsal
Date unknown, Photographed by Carmen Schiavone
in *Transcending Boundaries*, p.83

This link between Bala's process of dancing and jazz improvisation links up the *mano-dharma* with trans-Atlantic complex rhythms and polyphony. McKayle experimented with Bharatanāṭyam poses in his workshop (Figure 5.1)[190] that mirrors the starting *aramaṇḍalī* or *plié* in the *jatiswaram* of the family's style.[191] This would encourage McKayle to experiment with the articulations he saw between their two styles in his own idiom for *District Storyville*

(1962) as well as his highly affecting link between melody and gesture in *Rainbow Round My Shoulder* (1967).[192] Bala's dancing therefore resonated as modern dancing among subalterns. In India, however, Balasaraswati's reception continued to be weak in Madras while strong elsewhere in the country. Bala and her daughter Lakshmi both learned that performing required a deep level of concentration and focus, often times leading to sickness before concerts. Reviewers continued to dwell on her appearances despite praising her for the virtuosity of her footwork in abstract dance and the graceful "magic" of her *abhinaya*.[193] She was recognized on the national stage with the award of the *Padma Bhūṣaṇa* ("Golden Lotus) in 1957.[194] This showed the government recognized her for national achievement and

Figure 5.2: Balasaraswati, Studio portrait of *aduvu* "Tei ha tei hee,"
1934, photographer unknown
in Douglas Knight, *Balasaraswati: Her Art and Life,* p.85.

service, and she would go on to win the third tier Padma Vibhūṣaṇa Award in 1976 before she died.[195] The notice of the final award is still hung in the family's house and training school in Kilpauk, Chennai above Vina Dhanammal's instrument (Figure 4.1).

Returning to Figure 5.2, this photo was taken the same year as Balasaraswati's first performance with her all-female *abhinaya* ensemble. The *aduvu* or movement sequence is described in the *nattuvanar*'s rhythmic syllables *tei ha tei hee* as she would have moved from an upright default position with hands at the sides or on her hips into a deep, retained plié. The

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dancer turns the hands up then down, moving her gaze back and forth between one set of fingertips to the other. This position is known as *ardhamaṇḍalī*, the "half-circle" or "sitting position" in Tamil.[196] Bala is positioned in the center of a sitting room, most likely staged for photographs with the brocade curtain and traditional dancing garb. Twenty-two years later, the ethnographic filmmaker Maya Deren would work with Talley Beatty, a choreographer and dancer from Katherine Dunham and Martha Graham's company, to stage a similar final sequence at the Palisades on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River.[197] Deren's evocative world-making creates a *pas de deux* with Talley as her camera cuts between locales. Beatty's deep second position *plié* transitions the film to its ending moment as he emerges from the Egyptian Hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art to the Palisades cliffs. In order to reach this position though, his extended arms are first shown moving gracefully from an open gesture reminiscent of the Bharatanāṭyam *jatiswaram* or *varṇam*.[198]

Figure 5.3 Talley Beatty, in Maya Deren's film *Pas de Deux* (formerly *A Study in Choreography for Camera*)
Shot in the Palisades, New Jersey, 1945, silent film

In his analysis of this dance, Mark Franko refers to "dance's critical intervention," the modernist contours of time and space were put into question alongside racial and gender relations in Deren's formalism.[199] Martha Graham's early diagramming of Indian and African-American dance as "integrative" and "disintegrative" also would link African-American and South Asian dancers' corporealities into a common subaltern strata of Dionysiac "freedom."[200] However, the qualities of grounding, stillness, and balanced control seem to be shared in the recorded dances of both Talley Beatty in Deren's work, Donald McKayle's choreography, and Balasaraswati's Bharatanāṭyam. Bala's style was always historically grounded in the cultural corporeality of *devadāsī* embodiment, which cannot approach universality through its marked

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presence in the colonial encounter with modernity. Like Deren though, Bala was also invested by the habitus of "stylistic gestures" which she deployed to create alternative worlds in her dancing. As Erin Brannigan writes of Deren's filmic gestures, "Rather than quoting familiar, signifying actions or trying to represent everyday, utilitarian behaviour, the physical performances in this film trace trajectories and loiter along gestural routes that escape into 'verticality.'"[201]

The "transfer" of affectivity between dancers and objects, including Talley Beatty in his 1948 dance *Mourner's Bench* as part of *Southern Landscape*.[202] Franko claims that unlike Graham's universalized subjectivity in *Lamentation* (1930) which uses the bench to objectify the emotion, Talley forms an affective ecology with the bench in his gestures to memorialize the racial history of segregation, Jim Crow, and slavery.[203] Set to the song *There is a Balm in Gilead*, the dance presents the tension within the black dancer's body against the expansive, balanced gestures of his arms. This contrasts sharply with the disorienting and sinuous movements of the possessed body as it is ridden by the *loa* in Deren's slow motion film of Haitian ritualists. The possessed priest is unable to look at the direction of his hands, while Beatty's dancer in *Mourner's Bench* constantly looks heavenward. The bench thus grounds the black body while possession invests it with a novel presence that overrides habituated patterns. Balasaraswati's dance, meanwhile, affords similar features to the extended gestures of Beatty and McKayle, grounding the lower body to the earth with bare feet or to the historical site of lamentation which was denied, a "socially erased event." [204] Unique to Bala's style though is a focus on the direction of the eyes to the hands. This unique set of qualities affords an imagined object of a mirror, again heightening the self-reflexivity of the *devadāsī* gestures which enfold both divine and mundane, heavenly and earthly, as an immanent encounter. I

shall return to this point further in regards to Satyajit Ray's film *Bala* and Deren's ethnographic work.

Back in India during the 1950s, Balasaraswati's's family continued to suggest their tradition was a vital mode of living for hereditary performers in the south. In this period, Jayammal offered a critiques of popular taste in dance in a rare interview for *The Sunday Statesmen*. Jayammal and Bala both spoke with Meenakshi Puri after a concert at the Sangeet Natak Akademi in Delhi on April 7th, 1957 about the dancer's unique skill in both Bharatanāṭyam and music. Jayammal uncharacteristically remarked that the national government's refusal to send traditional artists abroad while showering praise on the family for preserving a "national treasure" was exclusionary at best.[205] In fact, Bala was passed over once for a state-sponsored tour of performers sent to Russia in 1958[206] and was nearly passed over in 1961 until Kapila Vatsyayan staked her career on the dancer's success.[207] The filmmaker Vishnudas Shirali almost filmed Balasaraswati at the All India Radio studio at Madras on Beach Road in late 1957 but the footage was lost.[208] It would not be until the Wesleyan performance of *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* in 1962 that a full video and sound recording of her dances would be left for posterity.[209] These gestures might appear to be a less an attempt at systematic exclusion and more like the benign neglect of bureaucracies. Yet the particular micoaggressions perpetrated on Bala during this time belied what Meduri calls the national government's attempts to "make amends" for the social and financial alienation foisted on *devadāsī*s by their policies and inaction.[210]

Even personal events in Bala's life suggested the marginalization as she and her repertoire were articulated in an affective manner. After December 25, 1960, Bala took Lakshmi two hundred kilometers south of Madras to the Naṭarāja temple in Chidambaram.

Unable to see the image of the deity through the thronging crowd of hundreds in the cold winter air, Bala spontaneously began to sing *Vazhi Maraittirukkude* ("The Way is Obstructed). This song's lyrics are directed to to Śiva from the perspective of an *avaṛna* person named Nandan. Nandan's view of the lord is blocked by his bull Nandin. The song implores for "just a little room" to see the divine. This composition puts a marginalized person at its affective matrix, imploring the source of authority and life for room to be recognized and seen in return. When Bala sung this piece, she and Lakshmi were brought to the front of the temple after a constable realized her identity.[211] Bala found not only her view but her economic prospects "obstructed" as her subject position was constantly being renegotiated through each political change.[212] When people attempted to make sense of her celebrity status, it infuriated her due to the unfair treatment she experienced elsewhere. For instance, even the temple's scholar (Dikṣitar) in residence called Bala the "Queen of Dance," (Naṭa-raṇī). She would never put herself on the level of the deity though, leading her to call him a "so-called scholar" (*dikṣitan*). Her humility and recognition of forces greater than herself allowed her a measure of grandeur others could find intimidating.[213]

During the same trip, at a small shrine to Murugan called Vaitheswaran Koil, Bala asked the image in tears, "Did you not punish me because I deserved it?" A few days earlier, she had been performing at the Music Academy and presented a *sabdam* called *Devadevanam* in praise of Murugan and a host of other divine figures. When Balasaraswati would call them up in *abhinaya*, the audience frequently expected to "see" these figures in the semblances she invoked. In one story, Murugan raced his brother Gaṇeśa around the world to win his parents' favor. Lakshmi later recounted that during this dance, Bala would portray Pārvatī their mother. When dancing Bala would experience a deep "personal connection" felt as a supersensory

experience of *jñānam* or "gnosis." However, semblances require a host of factors to work in union as an ensemble. They manifest capriciously as each part contributes to the ecology. During this 1960 concert Murugan did not deign to appear: "Somehow he punished her ego that day."[214] This experience was not just in Balasaraswati's mind nor was it subjective. The cultured audience (*rasika*s) who attended her concerts saw her gestural semblance. The critic Chandrasekharan rushed home instead of seeing Bala in her dressing room after the performance. He asked her the following day, "What happened, Bala? *Enna aachchu*?"[215] Not everyone present was aware enough to catch this subtle difference in the performance, but for the dancer and her knowledgeable audience they could see there was no semblance. Lakshmi claimed

> It had nothing to do with the audience…It had nothing to do with anyone else present. She took it very personally. I was there. I went through it with her the whole night. He just corrected her ego. That's what it was. And she cried. I can tell you, I couldn't control her. That was what she was conveying in her presence. That is why she was great. Because she was totally connected, personally connected. And what she was able to send out, that radiated in the audience. And that radiation was not being given out that day.[216]

While Balasaraswati was engaging with the divine in their virtual forms, she was invoking their presence through gestures. "What she was able to sending out" through *abhinaya* "radiated in the audience" as a *semblance*. This was not a mechanical apparatus but an open invitation. The other party involved could refuse to attend. Bala's dances were performative donations (*dāna*) of her embodied labor.[217] Like a feast offered for respective guests, her offering was rejected. Her tears flowed from the failure to be acknowledged by these figures for whom she held such deep affection. To lack even the recognition of the gods pushed her too much.

Affectively, gestures are not mechanical but organic and encounterable phenomena that do not necessarily create connections; one has to find the right point for a network to be made, and oftentimes as this example shows, they fail to take hold.[218] The Tamil idioms of her *bhakti* resonated as well with her personal affection for Kṛṣṇa. In the summer of 1960, Bala also danced one of her most personally fulfilling performances for the Kṛṣṇa at Udipi, the particular deity portrayed in *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō*. In fact, she was so overwhelmed by her experience while dancing that she stopped in order to fully savor the affective weight of the moment.[219] Concert performances did not afford these moments when the dancer veered toward the audience pole of the event as her exacting standards made the audience's experience pivotal. Yet these personal moments gave Bala the greatest fulfillment as a way to express her deep connection in dancing to the divine, allowing her to experience the "multisensory" bliss of free movement.[220]

In spite of the recognition from the Indian national government, administrators and organizers frequently passed over Balasaraswati's ensemble due to the prejudice against her appearance and heritage. In 1958, five years after Stalin's death, she was invited to tour of the Soviet Union by the new national government.[221] Bala was skeptical and took some convincing before agreeing to go at great personal expense. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of postcolonial independent India, intervened when his male advisors convinced him that Bala was not the right "image" to project abroad. The "government" subsequently canceled her tour one week before the ensemble was set to leave. When she asked for a reason, the only response was it would "save her the humiliation" of a negative reception by an audience that expected modern standards of performance.[222] While Avanthi Meduri claims that the government and national *akademi*s were competing to offer awards (*padma*, Nehru's "rose"), this process was

also *vṛtti* that carried over previous affordances from the royal era. Pre-colonial rulers often offered flowers as a symbol of recognition for talented artists at royal courts. With the marginalization of Tanjore and benign neglect of the British Raj, the new national government of India was the new patron that could now potentially fund Bala's artform once more. Nehru's rejection therefore came to stand for a larger rejection by government officials of Bala's style.[223] Bala thereafter became less interested in catering to Indian audiences who were unable to appreciate the details of her style.[224] Yet somehow she was also simultaneously able to reach non-Indian audiences who would have found the intricate codes of meaning in *mudrā*s and South Indian materials of lyrics completely foreign. This suggests that the audience in India had developed a disposition antithetical to Balasaraswati's *śṛṅgāra* matrix while modern audiences elsewhere were able to resonate with its qualities.

This patriarchal shaming was nearly repeated several years later when the emerging scholar of Indian art Kapila Vatsyayan was scheduling an Indian contingent to an international event for musicians and dancers. Vatsyayan mentioned that she had trouble convincing Balasaraswati to attend the 1961 *East-West Encounter* in Tokyo due to prejudice against her from inside the Indian government as well as the dancer's own reluctance to be humiliated again.[225] Vatsyayan only convinced government officials to allow the forty-three year-old dancer to perform under the guarantee she would resign if Bala was not a success. Performing at the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, (Metropolitan Hall), Bala and her ensemble offered demonstrations in the morning–explaining the music with examples–and performed evenings to a crowd of two thousand. Japanese audiences did not emote quite as much as Indian audiences would, worrying the performers that they had put Vatsyayan's career in jeopardy.

Yet audiences offered standing ovations and reviews were incredibly encouraging. Bala attributed the success of this concert to her dance at Udipi for Kṛṣṇa.[226]

5.6 Bharatanāṭyam in Global Networks: 1962-1966

Following the *East-West Encounter* in Tokyo, Balasaraswati and her ensemble were invited to the United States by major luminaries in the dance and political world, including Ted Shawn, Martha Graham, and Jaqueline Kennedy. With an additional tour of Europe following the Edinburgh Festival, Bala cemented articulations between her dance and the Anglophone world. She would be offered teaching positions with *avant-garde* musicians and dancers at residencies throughout the U.S. from the mid 1960s until the late 1970s. Remarkably, Bala's style also fit with the creative principles behind postmodern dancing and music at locations such as CalArts and in performance spaces on the east and west coasts linked to the networks of radical feminist and minority dancers. Bala's connection in the emerging global circulation of dancing bodies predated the neoliberal policies that encroached into the Indian domestic economy. This trend continues to shape diasporic dancers of South Asian background today.[227] Hence Bala's most prominent contribution to Bharatanāṭyam in this period was in establishing its ensemble as a global network of bodies circulating across continents which continues to this day.

Charles Reinhart arranged for Bala's first American tour after seeing her at the East-West Encounter in Tokyo in 1961.[228] With a sponsorship from the Asia Society in New York City, Reinhart prepared for her to come to the United States using money donated from the John D. Rockefeller III Fund and developed by Isadora Bennet for the whole program. Reinhart would later run the American Dance Festival out of Wesleyan University in the late 1960s. He arranged for Bala's first US tour in 1962, starting with a performance at Jacob's Pillow in

Lenox, Massachusetts.[229] The August performance took place at Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis's compound and summer concert venue. Photographs taken by John Lindquist from Jacob's Pillow archives show Balasaraswati meeting with Ted Shawn onstage,[230] as well as visiting with several Indian dignitaries and modern dancers such as the ethnic dancer La Meri following the performance.[231] Lakshmi told the story of Shawn greeting her mother after their limousine ride from New York City as he posed in the famous gestures of the Chidambaram Śiva. He even said to them, "I am Naṭarāja." Bala became deeply embarrassed. However, she was polite enough to say nothing.[232] This performance helped cement her with the larger dance community of appreciative connoisseurs and critics. Unlike the "little scholar" at Chidamabaram, she was careful to groom her connections with modern dancers even when they went against the grain of her humble disposition.

Balasaraswati also networked with ethnic dancers who had been presenting Bharatanāṭyam and other South Asian styles for New York City audiences since the 1950s. La Meri and Shawn can be seen in one photograph with Bala during the first night of her performance at Jacob's Pillow. Alongside Ruth St. Denis—Shawn's partner in the Denishawn troupe—La Meri presented "ethnologic" forms of dance as a representation of a large swathe of people or culture. She ran the School of Natya at 66 Fifth Avenue in New York City after it opened in 1940 and by 1943 St. Denis had ceded teaching control to her.[233] Shawn's introduction of La Meri to Balasaraswati therefore functioned to articulate connections between midcentury modern dancers and Indian "classical" dance forms due to a sense of "authenticity" expected of both by American audiences. Yet Bala's own response in critical and personal reactions suggested that her work somehow transcended the cultural sitedness of La Meri's performances. I argue it is precisely Balasaraswati's subaltern dancing body that

acted as the matrix for marginalized performers to find common cause with her style. Donald McKayle's experiments with Bharatanāṭyam introduced these features into modern dance by Bala's arrival in 1962.

Figure 5.4 Narayan Menon, La Meri, T. Balasaraswati, Ted Shawn, unknown
Photographed by John Lindquist
Jacob's Pillow, Massachusetts, August 21-25, 1962

Like ethnological dancers though, audiences expected certain features from an "ethnic dancer." Balasaraswati's tour of the US was seen as "selling out" by Indian cultural critics. As South Asian authors had their identities systematically erased from public recognition in the subcontinent, the also gained the freedom to discover inspiration across cultures outside of forms of appropriation or colonial expansion.[234] In an interview with Smita Shah on Shawn's reception of Balasaraswati to Jacob's Pillow, Kapila Vatsyayan made a strange pronouncement:

> a person so beautifully and richly rooted in her own tradition carried that message as
> easily to the United States, where she worked for many years. Not for a moment was

Bala affected by the U.S. or (did she lose) her own security in herself, and this is what peace is all about. That you recognize the otherness of the other, be yourself and yet be able to make your dialogue. For a person of Bala's caliber to be able to do this showed both the strength of the tradition and her own strength, because a lesser artist could have been blown off their feet as many others have been.[235]

In a generous spirit, Vatsyayan could be read as protecting Bala from these negative influences. By placing her outside the gambit of material concerns and influences, Bala was "unaffected" and self-effacing as an artist in the "windy" post-WWII American consumer culture. On the other hand, I cannot help but see disparaging assumptions about Bala's *devadāsī* heritage throughout Vatsyayan's statement. Suggesting "a person of Bala's caliber" overcoming burdens and obstacles to success ignores her entire performance training by Kandappa Pillai in humility and devotion to the tradition while also suggesting her disposition is negatively "colored" by her caste background.

However, the real problem for me lies in the ahistoricism of Vatsyayan's Orientalizing gesture: Bala was fixed, spiritual, and "peaceful" in the face of temptations from other dancers, accolades, and "otherness." Why would Bala *not* be influenced in some manner by other modern dancers and performers she saw and taught alongside in the United States? Her family's history working with Hindusthani musicians suggests that they would have been adaptable enough to find common ground with American and European performers. This aspect relegates Bala's dance to the "timeless legacy of India" tropes common to Orientalist depictions of ritual that went on to shape how dances like Bharatanātyam could be seen as "classical." Moreover Vatsyayan's comment completely ignores the personal affectivity Bala felt for certain dancers. Outside the tradition, Bala loved the ballerina Margot Fonteyn in *Swan Lake*, Donald McKayle whose dance was decidedly subaltern in its staging and themes, as well as soap operas in the U.S.![236] While she was sympathetic to Martha Graham in her visit in the

1970s, I could find no family correspondence that suggested Bala had watched Graham dance.[237] Furthermore, American dance critics such as Anna Kisselgoff reacted vehemently to the idea that Bala was "merely" an ethnic dancer. Kisselgoff's framing of Balasaraswati as a virtuosic performer allowed her to elevate Bharatanāṭyam to her *New York Times* dance audience as a classical form in line with ballet for its universality. In a letter to Luise Scripps on September 24, 1976, Kisselfgoff wrote: "I stress the word <u>classical</u>, because in no way must Balasaraswati be considerd folk or ethnic dancer. She is the most distinguished exponent of a centuries-old classical dance tradition that is as complex and as beautiful as our own."[238] By rejecting ethnic dance terms, the dominant class of critics and audience could appreciate Bharatanāṭyam by abstracting its cultural differences into a universal system comparable to ballet.

Regardless, Balasaraswati continued to cultivate her dance in an accessible style for American audiences. As part of this first trip, Bala also was invited to a residency at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut. While Knight reports that Victor Butterfield, the president, was in support of the general mission of David McAllester and Robert Brown's emerging ethnomusicology program,[239] university archives revealed that the particularities of Balasaraswati's ensemble presented problems.[240] Having a single artist like John Cage in residency for a year could be feasible, but the dancer and her entourage would require housing for five to six people at a minimum. Brown apparently convinced Butterfield to let Bala stay for a two-month residency,[241] yet the same issues of representation emerged as she was seen even in academic settings as "outdated" or lesser known than North Indian artists. The residency was a success but was significantly curtailed compared to Brown's original proposal.

Bala's tour traveled to Washington, D.C. in October 1962 when she performed for First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy. They moved from Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania to New York at the Martha Graham School, Columbia University, and Julliard. They then flew to Chicago and performed in the Midwest before arriving for a concert at UCLA followed by San Francisco and Berkeley for a small audience at the studio of Welland Lathrop.[242] Lathrop had danced for Martha Graham, had become a scenic designer, and 1946–1954 studio partner of Anna Halprin in the North Beach community of postwar San Francisco.[243] This vital connection placed her in the orbit of both east and west coast female dancers in the *avant-garde* scene. This suggests Bala was just as at home among the *avant-garde* in America as any postmodern dancer, albeit with real barriers due to her fear of speaking English in public.[244]

Ananya Chatterjea remarks about the post-independence *avant-garde* in India that it "chooses to privilege what has been marginalized, often attends to the differentials enforced by class, caste, and gender inequities, and looks to itself to define its own aesthetics and politics."[245] Even dancers working in what she calls "neoclassical" styles of performance can still be seen as *avant-garde* if they attend to these qualities of dance context. Balasaraswati was innately *avant-garde* in that her dance style itself was marginalized. Her choice of songs from her repertoire revealed fault-lines in the class, caste, and gender discrepancies within the compositions themselves she performed. Likewise Bala borrowed and developed her family's *bāṇī* based on personally-affecting markers rather than being set by outside standards. Her most intimate moments of performance were not in front of paying audience but small intimate venues or venues lacking human audiences altogether. The shift in Chatterjea's framework from neoclassical to contemporary dance is marked by a focus on time and rhythm to space and form.[246] Yet Balasaraswati's dance, especially in *abhinaya*, was innately spatial *and*

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narratively engaging in its temporality. Chatterjea calls this form of narrative less "cause-and-effect" in Aristotelian terms but instead "stream of consciousness." I would amend this slightly in the example of Bala: her form did not seem to be about whatever she had on her mind at the time. Instead, her devotion to dancing inspired something between herself and the audience that emerged in the articulation of performative and everyday time and space. This affective valence filled her performances with a weight that audiences could palpably sense, "bringing in a wealth of intimate details."[247]

I have argued that hereditary performer's knowledge and everyday practices contributed to shaping their style as a modern ecology of affective forms. This continued in India *after* independence in 1947. This is what I assume Chatterjea is referencing in her discussion of agency and performance: "Just as the *devadasi* returned to eventually claim the central place of dance within Indian religious practice, so too are contemporary choreographers revisioning and reclaiming ground in the secular performance arena."[248] Considering the fact that *devadāsī* performance and dedication is still illegal (and was in 1997 when Chatterjea's piece was published), it seems unlikely she is referring to historical events. Instead, she appeared to be discussing the construction of dances such as Bharatanāṭyam in neoclassical matrices. Yet Bharatanāṭyam, as Soneji and others have shown repeatedly, emerged just as much from the secular performing spaces of salon dance and courtly culture as much as from some "distant" historical memory of temple rituals. By eliding the ecology of historical connections Bala fostered in secular performances, Chatterjea has relegated her as a "*devadāsī*" to India's religious.

Balasaraswati, however, was just as popular as she was radical for Anglo-American audiences. Lord Harewood saw Bala and her ensemble perform at the East-West Encounter in

Tokyo and decided she would help to "spearhead" the "Indian invasion" of his Edinburgh

Festival in August 1963. His investment was in an "invasion" of *devadāsī* disposition into the

intercultural style of the festival. He remembered Bala's stipulations were for a "hard floor, a

stone floor…I must have something to stamp on, something which totally resists me, stone if

possible."[249] She adapted the unfamiliar setting to fit the affordances of her dance in a way that

other performers would have found strange but fit her *vṛtti*.

Bala performed twice the amount of allotted performances scheduled for her due to

popular demand.[250] She enchanted people with off-the-cuff *abhinaya* throughout her tour of

the U.S. and Europe. An aesthetic academic Narayana Menon narrated one time during the

Edinburgh Festival when he invited Balasaraswati up to describe the city in gestures. He

claimed, "In less than a minute's time, she had conquered the audience. She had got the

audience, the cameras clicking, film and television people. From that moment, Bala was the

star of that festival. And he had a fantastic success."[251] The Indian contingent included Ali

Akbar Khan, Ravi Shankar's *tabla* player Allah Rakha, and Julian Bream as well as

Subbulakshmi and the family entourage. This eclectic group of musicians played for fun

together and continued to share their diverse strains of musical style.[252] Bala performed one

day in a light-pink sari with black and gold brocade, which the Edinburgh Festival featured in

a video release of her dancing to Ganesha's *nattuvangam*, the rhythmic syllables of *nṛtta*.[253]

Balasaraswati's success on these tours reaped financial rewards. She could afford to

build a new home in the Kilpauk area outside her former home in Egmore, Chennai in 1965.

This gave the family a large area for each member as well as to host large performances out on

the veranda.[254] As the first step in cementing her legacy, Bala was also recorded at Wesleyan

in October 1962 performing *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō*, the first full video footage of her

dancing.[255] Moreover, her brothers Ranganathan and Viswanathan had secured longer residencies in the United States teaching drum and flute music from the family's ensemble style. Their contacts allowed Bala the chance to find additional teaching opportunities in the U.S. Viswanathan received a Fulbright scholarship to study ethnomusicology at UCLA in 1958 working with Robert Brown, and Ranganathan taught at Wesleyan from 1963 to 1965 before joining Bala for a residency at UCLA in 1968. Bala had secured funding due to her patrons Luise and Samuel Scripps, who arranged with the American Society for Eastern Arts for her residency at Mills College (Oakland, California) in 1965.[256] Both brothers were invited to teach at the new California Institute of the Arts in Valencia California in 1970. Bala would join them there for her a trial residency (April 3 to June 16).[257]

This network of academics and patrons would greatly help the family's performance revenue and notoriety in America. Luise Scripps and her husband Samuel H. Scripps were greatly affected by Balasaraswati on her first tour, even following her all the way to Hawai'i at the end of 1962. The two founded the American Society for Eastern Arts in San Francisco, as well as moving to Madras in 1964 to be near the new family home in Kilpauk to study under Bala.[258] After touring in Europe for several months, starting in Paris, Balasaraswati and her ensemble attended a residency at Mills College in Oakland, California. Clifford and Betty Jones directed the institute and hosted visiting artists in residence from India and Indonesia there for ten years. Bala began there on July 10th, 1965 in a period when her health began to wane and performances required expert management of her condition offstage by Lakshmi and Luise.[259] In September of that same year, after performances and teaching around San Francisco, she went on tour of the U.S. again. Traveling to over thirty locations across the country, the ensemble covered ten thousand miles in two months. Bala's ensemble performed

at the Esalen Institute near Big Sur, California, a center of research inspired by the counter-culture movement and Eastern philosophy, or a "religion for Americans with no religion."[260]

Mantle Hood hosted Balasaraswati and their ensemble at UCLA where she was introduced to Jan Steward the photographer.[261] On the same tour, they performed in Washington D.C. at George Washington University, Howard University (a historic black college), and the U.S. State Department for the Indian ambassador B.K. Nehru (cousin to the Jawarhalal Nehru). They then performed at historic locations for modern dancers such as Bennington College in Vermont (where Martha Graham taught starting in 1934), at Swathmore College in Pennsylvania, and at Wesleyan again on October 17. Finally, in New York City at the Theresa L. Kaufmann Auditorium at the 92nd Street Y, Uday Shankar saw Bala perform for the first time since he had convinced Kandappa Pillai to leave for Almora in 1938.[262] Her dance concert brought him to tears for depriving her of the resources her guru would have provided.[263]

After her American and European tours, Madras audiences were still not interested in Balasaraswati's style due to the competitive nature of the reform dance scene and what Knight calls "an increasingly politicized performance environment." However, Bala became more nationally recognized, giving performances at the Music Academy Conference on New Year's Day 1965.[264] S. V. Shesadri wrote for *Shankar's Weekly* for August 18th, 1963 on Balasaraswati's dancing at the at the Edinburgh Festival. His focus was on her dispositional gestures that expressed a level of subtlety in dance that others could not reach. Expression always pushes the boundaries of the language or form it is contained within; for great artists, they push back against the form, shaping it in new ways:

> When all that is expressible through language is stated, there is still a residue of meaning which can be communicated only through direct rapport of feeling…And it is

only an artist that has the perfection of language at his or her command that can afford to break it up for conveying the perfection of experience. In Balasaraswati, her *satvika* [*sic*] *abhinaya* takes over complete command from the beginning…In the white heat of her feelings, Bala has no need for the external trappings of movement and *mudras* to convey those feelings. She becomes the vehicle of these feelings completely.[265]

Bala could dance without using anything besides her face and singing, the traditional gestures which her lineage claimed fell under *sāttvika-abhinaya*. This suggests a focus on the *sañcāri-bhāva*s ("affects that flow [*car*] together [*sam*-]"). In Bharatanāṭyam they are linked to facial expressions alongside the transitory affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s). In her inimitable way, Bala could transform the most fleeting, bewitching gestures into the most affectively moving forms (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) through minute microgestures. Her level of control to achieve this affectivity was astonishing as she was able to become a "complete vehicle" for these feelings while still maintaining a "minimal semblance."

Balasaraswati's level of adroitness afforded her flexibility in *mano-dharma* improvisation. While the first line of a *padam* or *varṇam* is usually gestured, each repetition of the line allows the dancer to diverge from the sung lyrics with *abhinaya*. Starting from a mutual point, the lyrics repeat while the *abhinaya* takes on new meanings and unfurls into divergent storylines, allusions, and mythological incidents. Bala's genius lay in the dense network of stories she could conjure for one song, making each dance into a novel event that had no other like it.[266] V. Chandrasekharan recollects a story about Bala's New Year's Eve 1965 performance at the Music Academy. During the *pada varṇam* "*Mohamana,*" she danced to the phrase "the birds are chattering" with a novel twist. As the bird sat in her hand, she gently closed its beak with the other, causing its wings to flutter. The critic rushed backstage after the show to admit his astonishment to her:

> 'Bala! The bird! The way you tormented that bird! It was so unusual.' She smiled and said, 'You noticed that? Good.' Then she would join in with us. 'Look at the way that

bird fell into my hands so I could play with it.' Bala was speaking of the process of making images into dance. The bird fell into her hand. It came to her. She created the illusion, and then she watched it, and played with it.[267]

Bala demonstrated her gestures could erupt into the unexpected beyond just the audience and the performer. The ensemble created during the event encompasses larger bodies than only the material. The bird in this case was a semblance that Bala could "play" with (*līlā*), making her craft both self-fashioned and inviting in the presence of an Other. By stepping away from the usual style of her gesture (*vṛtti*), the *abhinaya* opened up into its potential form as *līlā*. This virtual domain sits so close that it can occasionally be reached in performance, but it also reveals the startling possibility of something else reaching back to the dancer in recognition.

Balasaraswati and her ensemble returned to Mills College in 1966 for another ASEA residency. At this time, Bala's health was deteriorating due to heart arrhythmia, tuberculosis, and complications from diabetes. Luise Scripps remarked about this period that Bala

> managed to perform under increasingly difficult, and dangerous, conditions. I marveled at Bala's ingenious way of trimming and somehow managing to adjust herself, her program, her energies, so that she could perform fine concerts despite her physical problems.[268]

Melody and improvisation by the singer usually set more of the tone of a dance than the lyrics or setting of a song. Dancer and musicians therefore needed to recognize when these improvisational modulations could take place before creating appropriate changes in the dance to recognize this variation. *Abhinaya* was never rehearsed.[269] By managing to continue function within an ensemble therefore showed Bala increased her connection and reliance on others both on and off-stage during this period to continue performing. It would become vitally important as she had agreed to train her daughter Lakshmi officially as a dancer by this time.

5.7 Transmitting a Legacy, Becoming a Legend: 1966-1976

With the family's fortunes taking a positive turn, Balasaraswati saw her personal devotion to Kṛṣṇa, Murugan, and Karu Mari Amman pay dividends in her career. Bala turned further toward *abhinaya* to compensate for her deteriorating condition. At the same time, she realized after the Wesleyan concert and failed documentary in the 1960s that her lineage of dance would need to be passed on. Her American students, from diasporic backgrounds in South Asia and elsewhere, were affected differently depending on what they were seeking. Medha Youdh found Balasaraswati to embody a "Hindu" matrix of identity.[270] This allowed Bala to create offshoots of her *vṛtti* throughout the global networks and academic institutions of her residencies. Unlike the institutional framework of Kalākṣetra, Bala's teaching methods were personal and directed at the self-disposition (*svabhāva*) of her students.

Balasaraswati's daughter Lakshmi had been watching her mother dance and by this point convinced her mother to formally take her as a student. When Lakshmi was born in 1943, the stigma associated with dancing the traditional style was still strongly felt across the Madras musical community. Rather than subjecting her to this opprobrium, Bala had not taught her directly in the manner of her guru Kandappa Pillai. Lakshmi sang and performed with her mother's ensemble, but formally had not begun to learn until 1965 when she argued to be taught their *vṛtti* personally. By this point, artistic opportunities outside and within India had blossomed and the American tour's success convinced Bala that their dance style could be recognized outside the family.[271] This did not mean Balasaraswati would allow the same type of instruction she experienced herself. When Lakshmi began to take classes with Kandappa's son Ganesha, Bala's *nattuvanar*, he would pinch her ankles after she made mistakes. When Bala heard of this, she ended the classes immediately due to her distaste with the corporeal punishment common to *guru-kula* teaching.[272]

How did Balasaraswati's teaching style chart a course between the institutional framework and the "traditional" methods? Bala's lessons with Lakshmi were always considered "dance classes" or lessons, even if they never moved their feet. This process would continue for twenty years until Bala's death in 1984.[273] Bala and Lakshmi would sit in their bedroom upstairs in Kilpauk doing *abhinaya*. These sessions could last for several hours and never involved them moving much beyond their sitting positions, yet musically and gesturally they were rich with the style being passed on.[274] Both daughter and mother learned slowly by allowing the style to incrementally permeate them. This development (*bhāvanā*) worked as a form of "steeping" in the style that brought out their innate tendencies (*vāsanā*) as dancers.[275] Bala taught Lakshmi to spend hours honing a single note or gesture until it was perfected.

The style was constantly being embodied across generations while creating new memories in the process as they assimilated it. Lakshmi claimed they would both cry when she had difficulty with a particular passage. The benefits were enormous though:

> I have absorbed it…I have merged with her. That is why I believe what she said before she died, 'Lakshmi, I will never leave you. When my *atma* goes it will go right into your heart. I won't go anywhere.'[276]

Lakshmi here shows how the style (*vṛtti*) progressively builds up through the layering of gestures (*abhinaya*) until it reaches a saturation point in the performer's body. When Bala herself would be gone, her presence would remain as the sedimented gestures shared across their bodies in the teaching and dancing encounters they shared. In this way, her *ātman* or "self" would remain affectively present to her daughter still. This could also go a step further and see this corporeal disinvestment as a form of virtualization that can reside anywhere, including in other embodied forms: Balasaraswati's vocal gesture ("I won't go anywhere") fashions herself into a disposition (*sattva*). When Jayammal died on January 2nd, 1967, the loss

reverberated as it made Balasaraswati the new matriarch of the family, as well as the reigning visionary for how the ensemble would perform. This also shifted the dynamic of power between her and her daughter Lakshmi. Lakshmi managed the new commanding version of Bala with grace and good humor as well as navigating her new-found independence as a dancer.[277] Lakshmi's formal debut (*arangetram*) was in early 1973 at the home of her half-sister, whose mother was Shanmukham's first wife.[278]

Balasaraswati was also interested in her legacy, with many of the speeches attributed to her being written and danced in this period. Lakshmi recited these speeches that Bala prepared while her mother danced them through *abhinaya*.[279] In an April 6th, 1971 interview with *The Indian Express*, Balasaraswati commented in a more detached way on her approach to Bharatanāṭyam. Her affective engagement with performing was both involved and distanced. She had to be present for "every moment, to depict every nuance" as well as find a dual stance between her semblances while dancing and her self-disposition, between creator and created. She returned to the imagery common to *bhakti* that develops a nuanced approach to the divine as related but still separate:

> What is the point when the sugar cane becomes another sugar cane? It should be just *like* a sugar cane. It should taste sweet–but it should be more than that. I tell you about a thing, what it is, but do not become that thing. I remain myself.[280]

In the normal *bhakti* framework, one does not wish to *become* sugar cane; this presents a problem for assuming a monistic or non-dual stance (*advaita*) between creator and creation. Instead, Bala posits a similar issue of semblance. An affect in performance "should be just *like*" its matrix while keeping room open for novelty.[281] Balasaraswati magisterially suggests here that the sweetness of performance is already present, going a step further and combining the Śaiva-Śākta insistence on the presence of the divine as *ānanda* ("bliss") within every

person. Likewise, the divine hides itself as a semblance, performing just "like" something it both is and is beyond.[282] Her metaphor on the permanence of a place to return, a matrix where "I remain myself," seems to be a way her style (*vṛtti*) contributed to her sense of self. The "remainder" appeared in her performances to anchor her back to the possibilities latent in the style. This residue in turn was the semblance she created for her own self-fashioning as a dancer. Each dance changed her and changed the style simultaneously, adding to its depths as a well of possibility becoming virtualized. Rather than changing Bala into someone she was not, she instead is carried by the currents of these affective streams yet "remained" herself throughout the changes in identity and form.

Bala's reverence for the tradition was a separate form of *bhakti*, however, as a process of making art established throughout her life. It also meant she had to turn down lucrative fees at times. During a January 1971 performance at Tejpal Auditorium in Bombay funded by the "Bala Felicitations Committee," the organizers decided to take up a collection or "purse" to pay her. She insisted only on accepting a fee, as collections during performances were seen as indexes of a different strata of performances at the folk level and would have belied her status as a professional within the hereditary tradition. The committee instead refused and she had to turn down sixty thousand rupees and went without pay.[283] Bala's rejection of this generous gesture elides a form of investment in the labor and artistic capital of her "refined" version of dancing. If she accepted the purse, she would have been participating in the "sexual economy" of middle-class dancers she decried.[284] Bala suggests in her own inimitable way that she remained herself throughout the concessions and insults to her lineage, appearance, and subaltern positioning by others.

Connections in the new global networks of dancers were opened due in part to her marginalization at home. Despite Balasaraswati being awarded the *Sangitha Kalanidhi* in recognition of her contributions to Indian music throughout the world on New Year's Day 1974,[285] she was still finding it more profitable to dance in the U.S. alongside her long-standing invitation at the Music Academy. Throughout her time in America, Balasaraswati taught twelve residencies. Three were at Wesleyan University (in 1962 then later in 1980-1981), two at Mills College, and once each at UCLA, University of Washington, the Center for World Music in Berkeley, the American Dance Festival at Duke University and Connecticut College, and lastly at the California Institute of the Arts School of Theater and Dance.[286]

Balasaraswati was invited for a residency at the newly-opened CalArts from April 3rd, 1971 until June 16th. Encouraged by Robert Brown and her brothers Ranganathan and Viswanathan, the faculty allowed students to study dance with her primarily without other performance responsibilities during the residency period. Donald McKayle was on the faculty that year, meeting Bala again after their encounter at her home in Madras during 1956.[287] Many of her students, including Medha Youdh, Kamala Cesare, Kay Poursine, and Nandini Ramani would study intensively with her there. In an interview at the American Dance Festival at Duke University on June 13th, 1994, McKayle recalled the way Bala affected him:

> I remember being tremendously impressed with the expressive dance. I just thought it immediately opened a whole picture of life that she was trying to get across. I was completely carried away by it…

> But a lot of the things I learned from her became incorporated in my work, like the sound of the feet on the floor. I would do things where I would lift the toes and get a certain sound and let them slap onto another…It is just the whole use of the back, the arms, the head, the neck…I robbed her warmup (*alarippu*) for my class because I felt that it extended the energy all the way out to the extremities. Also, it gave them a very different use of their bodies, so they didn't have a face that was observing the rest of their body, which was dancing. It became a much more total look.

I've found over the years, that those people that have worked with me a long time have a very different way of performing than those who come to me at the beginning and don't have it. So I feel that was one of the things I got from working in this art form and Bala was a very important force of that…And there is belief behind it. There is actual performer belief behind it. That conviction cannot be imitated. It is very strange. Even if they don't feel it after the moment is gone. It doesn't matter, it is in the dance.[288]

McKayle's dance and teaching styles were both affected according to this account. First, his use of the body was influenced by Bala's Bharatanātyam forms of interacting with the environment and the body. Slapping the floor with the foot, extending the energy to the limbs, and the total involvement of the corporeal frame helped shape his style. Students could focus on the *alarippu* rather than fixate on their self-image in the dance mirrors of a practice space or at the ballet barre. Likewise, McKayle practiced with Bharatanātyam forms himself, as photos from his rehearsal space attest (Figure 5.1).[289] Next, he appreciated Bala's *vṛtti*'s influence as students absorbed his own technique over long periods of time. Bala's residency helped inculcate this process of absorption in her American students, many of whom would travel to study with her in Madras. Lastly, his first and last comments suggest to me that he saw Balasaraswati herself as carrying and conveying the tradition in her gestures. The belief and the "whole picture of life" in *abhinaya* both suggest its power to "carry into" (*abhi+√nī*) and charge an event with her particular touch of genius. The dance itself would linger, "even after the moment is gone."

As a teacher, Balasaraswati embodied the style in a way that her American students experienced similarly to her South Asian devotees such as Alkazi. One point about how *vṛtti* functioned was that it did not have the capacity to represent as *abhinaya* did. Instead, it had to be embodied in specific persons. In this way, Balasaraswati "did not *represent* the hereditary tradition of bharata Natyam; she *was* the hereditary tradition."[290] In an interview from July 1976 in *The Patriot*, Bala claims that she was willing to teach any student who spent the

requisite amount of time and dedication to the dance. Western students needed more time to assimilate the material due to their lack of familiarity with the affective gestures of her tradition. Likewise, she "never had any problems communicating with foreign audiences" and found them to be "equally responsive abroad."[291]

Physical manipulation was another aspect of Bala's teaching style that influenced Donald McKayle and Bella Lewitzki who credit her with this style of modulating a student's bodily positioning.[292] As part of the ASEA's last initiative, the Center for World Music was opened in Berkeley in 1974. Balasaraswati was slated to teach there with her ensemble and prestigious Carnatic and Hindusthani musicians. At this residency, Bala decided to teach her American students a *kuravanji* dance-drama called *Daśāvatāra*, "The Ten Crossings of Viṣṇu."[293] Bala chose roles for her students to highlight their strengths and simultaneously to expand their confidence and skills in *abhinaya* performance.[294] Kay Poursine in the 1972 class at Mills College had her hands "sculpted" by Bala to demonstrate the proper contours to the affects.[295] Poursine claimed Bala would say *bhāva-rāga* portions of instruction weren't something she could teach explicitly.[296] She would tell her later in Berkeley not to be afraid "to let the art take control of you."[297] Allowing the artform's disposition to invest themselves in a style (*āveśa*) was therefore one way to expose new performers to its qualities.

This extended to Bala's audiences as well, since they were involved as part of the larger ensemble through her gestures. In an interview on the program *Eye for Dance*, Kamala Cesaire would describe her work with Bala as connecting her as a diasporic dancer to her roots in Indian culture.[298] In an interview, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay mentioned seeing Balasaraswati perform once early in her life. Bala remembered her from the audience decades later:

> When I dance to an audience, I have great respect for every individual watching me. I feel I must give my best. But some sort of alchemy happens and I become tied into

communication with a single individual – and that evening it was you. I didn't know you, yet I established some communication. Therefore, I could never forget your face or your personality, which has been with me all these years, even though I didn't know then who you were.[299]

This form of communication or "alchemy" created a spontaneous bond across a dancing event that linked their two bodies to the dispositional matrix. Bala could not forget her, and neither could Chattopadhyay stop cherishing the moment of this connection. This is how *abhinaya* as gesture creates networks. Without hearing her speak, Bala could claim to know her "personality" as one self-disposition (*svabhāva*) within the larger dispositional matrix (*sattva*) of the event. Preserving a tradition in the diaspora entailed a continual process of creation.[300] Yet this occurred not through a connection to the narrative of the story but through Bala's engagement with the abstract portion of the dancing.[301] Bala's techniques therefore matched the affordances of modern and post-modern aspects of dance that focus on the movement in its pure gesturality.[302]

Bala's health made her less willing to cater to others' tastes later in life at times though. She was officially diagnosed with diabetes after a concert in September 1972. Her student Nandini Ramani would claim later that she did not believe in "public relations."[303] This was the first time her heart problems could be traced to a single condition as well. Following treatments of insulin she went immediately to perform at the Asia Society in New York on September 18th. Her severe mood at this point was seen by several people familiar with her style. Several days later on September 22nd, she performed at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center to a full house. As if to prove herself capable, Bala executed an incredibly "dense and formal" concert that left audience members unable to follow.[304] Anna Kisselgoff's review in the *New York Times* described her as unwilling to "cater" to her audience:

For those cowards who fled during the short intermission of her uncompromising three-hour exposition of Bharata Natyam, the classic dance style of South India, there was perhaps only a suggestion of the spiritual range she could offer. For the majority–almost exclusively of young people–who remained and gave the 54-year-old dancer a standing ovation at the end, there was something more…The sight of this exceptional performer, with eyes closed, arms raised, palms out, achieving a state of the sublime, was a revelation…To say that Balasaraswati makes no concession to the audience is an understatement…The first part of the program–an hour and a half–was presented almost nonstop, and even here Balasaraswati reportedly cut short the two long sequences known as sabdam and varnam. Concentrating almost exclusively on gesture, torso movement and facial expressions, these dances offered fewer of the active leg movements…Yet, in the end, it was this high degree of self-involvement and lack of theatricality that made Balasaraswati's art appear so pure…A superb mime and still a sharp technician, she can express a sudden change in emotion without warning, but with depth.[305]

Audience "taste" was no longer Bala's main concern in performances: protecting her legacy took center stage. As her health deteriorated, this became even more vital. In the autumn of 1974, Bala was diagnosed with cancer and quietly treated.[306]

5.8 Memorializing the Dancer: 1976-1984

In the final decades of her life, Balasaraswati's legacy would be recognized throughout the network of audiences, dancers, critics, and performers her dancing touched. She received an honorary Doctor of Literature from the Viswa Bharati University at Santiniketan, West Bengal in 1980. The Tamil Nadu state government recognized her with the title *Kalaimamani* in the same year.[307] In December 1981, she was elected the president of the Conference of the Fine Arts Society in Madras and given the title *Sangitha Kala Sikhamani*, "Crown-Jewel of the Musical Arts."[308] By the mid-1970s, Balasaraswati's health would continue to deteriorate until she died at home in 1984.

Increasingly her dances became about her own personal expression as she sought to fulfill her own expectations rather than that of others. Two episodes in 1976 show this quite clearly. The first was on April 2nd, 1976, when she was awarded the *Padma Vibhūṣaṇa* award

by the Indian national government, the third degree of the award for national service. At the performance concert that same day in Delhi, Bala performed *Kapi varṇam* rather than a full concert. In the song, she offered a camphor flame lamp as part of the *abhinaya* and decided it wasn't enough. Lakshmi recalled: "She created a forest fire! The whole thing was in flames. She created a forest fire, that's how I can describe it to you. And she offered that." Bala would tell her afterwards that she did not want to dance, as the performances were becoming harder to create lasting, vivid semblances: "I don't want to do any *padams*, I don't want anything. I just want to be left alone."[309]

The second would show that her legacy's mediatized influence would likewise not be controlled by the Orientalizing dispositional matrix. Satyajit Ray, the Bengali film director, shot a short documentary of Balasaraswati in 1976 including *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* and a *varṇam*. The first was shot outdoors at the Shore Temple in Mamallapuram an hour south of Madras. The first take was during a strong breeze yet Bala was happy with the performance. However, the director forgot to take the cap off the lens and lost the shot. Bala "made life miserable for us all, "Lakshmi later claimed, and portions of the second take made it onto the film.[310] Ray also wanted to shoot Bala doing her normal *pūjā* routine, that she refused as it was an invasion of her private devotional life. Bala sarcastically responded to his request:

> 'You want me in the garden picking flowers? Certainly!' Imitating her friend Subbulakshmi's songs from the hit film *Shankuntala*, Bala ran about the garden picking and tossing blossoms, talking to flowers, and dancing along the stepping stones. 'It was hilarious, actually,' Lakshmi reported. 'Needless to say, Ray did not include that footage.'[311]

The lackluster reception for the film and its disappearance after the premiere suggest that this version of Bala, framed by the "oceanic feeling" common to descriptions of divine experience, would not resonate with audiences that knew her dance and her personality[312]. Bala refused to

fit into the tropes of a "dying tradition" of dance based on the temple ritual that framed Ray's film.[313]

Figure 5.5 *Bala*, Satyajit Ray directing, 1976, stills
T. Balasaraswati dancing *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* and *varṇam*

Figure 5.5 above shows a curious connection with Maya Deren's ethnographic filmwork in Haiti called *The Divine Horsemen* seen in Figure 8 below. In 1946, Maya Deren was the first person to receive a Guggenheim Fellowship for cinema. Her proposal for a study of the "cross-cultural fugue" between Haitian and Balinese ritual eventually ended with her deep engagement with the authenticity of Haitian Voudoun. Deren would also go on to write a 1953 monograph on the "living gods" of Haiti.[314] She first went to Haiti in 1947 and filmed on several different trips through the 1950s.[315] The strong placement of the hands on hips, the weight down into the earth, and the mirroring of multiple bodies with the same divine disposition suggests a form of sovereignty shared among subaltern groups with no direct cultural connections.[316]

Figure 5.6 *The Divine Horsemen*, Maya Deren directing, 1977, footage from 1947-1953
Haitian *serviteurs* of the "living gods"[317]

At times Bala's *ardhamaṇḍalī* posture is even struck by the possessed *serviteurs*. While her gestures are grounded in the weight of her body and fluidly transform, her wrists rotating up and down as her eyes move between fingertips of her two hands, the *serviteur* riden by the deity is ecstatically unrestrained. His arms writhe up and down in sinuous curves between shoulder and elbow, elbow and wrist while his compatriots hold him down. The final image in the edited clip of Deren's footage zooms in closeup on his gaping eyes. This focus on visual gaze differs from the modesty Balasaraswati portrayed in her dancing. As part of devotional fervor, she had to maintain composure during her performances in spite of similar feelings of rapture when the divine overcame her corporeal form.

Both Ray and Deren's films therefore appear to capture moments of subaltern agency and sharing with alternative sovereign forces outside the nationstate. These technological gestures of the "film cut" work to virtualize and transform Balasaraswati and the Haitian *serviteur*s into dispositions (*sattva*s). Moira Sullivan cites an interview between Deren and

Arthur Knight in which her theory of film's affective ecology proceeds from gestures between corporeal and technological forms: "My choreographies for camera are not dances recorded by the camera; they are dances choreographed for and *performed by the camera and by human beings together*."[318] The gestural regime Deren advocates therefore extends the body of the cinematographer into the camera, affording it the capacity to carry the body's affective charge in novel configurations of form. This filmic ensemble therefore functions to produce unique semblances due to the presence of the camera's affordances. Sullivan links this with ritual dance which Deren claimed had a "principled" relation to a deity, resulting in the spectator being affected.[319] Deren's footage of the Haitian dances falls into this category, as Sullivan explains:

> Deren's planned-by-eye footage allowed for movement of the human body or objects into the path of the camera. Incorporated into the overall motion, the individual is "depersonalized" and *embraced by the collective*, which is made evident by the almost exclusive use of medium or long shots. Typically, long shots provide the ceremonial framework followed by medium shots of the *servituer* or devotees.[320]

Dance in Deren's ethnographic art process therefore was still a world-creating form as it creates depersonalization of the ritual participants through an "embrace" by dance. This meant dancing progressed (*pravṛtti*) into a style as "embracing" affects (*anubhāva*s). Dance as an *anubhāva* is one of the primary methods devotees have of developing an overall orientation to a novel tradition.[321] This affective form therefore "incorporated" a collective habitus into the sole body of the dancer one the one hand while simultaneously creating a virtualized ensemble with the audience watching. The camera's affordances of long and medium shots prevent a singular bodily locus for affect to congeal; instead affect becomes distributed as the agency of dance becomes shared with a deity and others in *vṛtti*s on the one hand while simultaneously a semblance links dancer, camera, and environment into an affective ecology as a semblance

(*līlā*). Similarly, I believe Balasaraswati attempted to choreograph her work *with* Ray's camera but failed due to the director's focus on the ocean more than her dancing.

While Bala was retreating into her own reveries in performance, Lakshmi meanwhile was becoming a solo performer in her own right and forging new connections in America. Bala continued to sing for her daughter at this time as well, including at her solo concert at Occidental College in Pomona on May 28th, 1977. Jan Steward, Bala's photographer, wrote of the event and *sitar* player Ravi Shankar's reaction as an audience member:

> 'Pure joy,' he said. 'When Lakshmi's exquisite *abhinaya* was accompanied by Bala's singing, it was the purest joy. I experienced the incredible happiness which is the gift of great art. The eyes of the dancers and the musician (Bala) often met. Their arts are blended into a totality greater than individual accomplishments can achieve. To see this family sharing their great individual gifts was not only thrilling, it was a revelation.'[322]

Like her mother Jayammal, Bala was increasingly recognized for her musical abilities leading the ensemble. The close connection between Lakshmi and her mother allowed for a novel facilitation of melody and affectivity. Douglas Knight entered the family's orbit at this time. He studied music under Ranganathan and Viswanathan as well as Balasaraswati at the Center for World Music, at CalArts, and even toured with the ensemble. In 1978 he and Lakshmi were engaged, later marrying with Bala's blessing in February 1980. Subbulakshmi, Bala's longtime friend from the traditional community, sang for the occasion.[323]

This gradual transformation of their way of life suggested the family was adapting to the pro-marriage stance of *smārta* and *avarṇa* reformers as well as Western standards.[324] As the new standard-bearer for the tradition, Lakshmi was feeling the pressure of living up to Bala's legacy while simultaneously being her *voice*, backstage support, student, and friend. As mentioned throughout this chapter, Bala's December 21, 1975 speech to the Tamil Isai Society set out her diagram of the heart of traditional dancing as both Tamil and *bhakti*.

There is a special relationship between Tamil Music and Bharat Natyam. The Tamil lyrics of Muthuthandavar, Ganam Krishna Iyer and Subbarama Iyer lend themselves wonderfully well for dancing with intense participation. It is the distinguishing feature of Tamil music that compositions, coming in an unbroken line from the Vaishnava and Shaiva Saints through Gopala-krishna Bharathi down to the composers of our own time, are replete with moods and feelings [*rāga-bhāva*] suitable for *abhinaya*.[325]

Lakshmi recited her mother's words while Bala conveyed the moving contours of her *vṛtti* alongside it. This ecology of explicit speech and dance linked the affective weight into a translative and commentarial movement. By embodying the commentary, Bala could deploy *abhinaya* as a form of gestural resistance to the silencing of subaltern women's voices.[326]

Lakshmi also seems to have helped facilitate her mother's legacy in America. Charles Reinhart invited Balasaraswati to perform at the New London location of the 1977 American Dance Festival including her among modern dancers.[327] During the Duke University hosting of the event in 1978, Bala suffered a heart attack. After recovering, the family had a good residency and Samuel H. Scripps even endowed a teaching chair in Balasaraswati's name for the festival.[328] After this episode, Bala had a second heart scare that kept her from attending the first portion of the Congress on Research in Dance's East/West Encounter in Hawai'i from August 1 to 7, 1978.[329] She attended the second half and managed to sing for a second performance. Lakshmi read the closing address attributed to Bala at the last day of the conference.[330]

This speech was actually written by Kapila Vatsyayan who also attended the conference according to the family's history.[331] Rather than dwell on this episode as an additional example of the erasure of subaltern women's voices for a semblance of *smārta* Brahmin women's voices,[332] I instead see it as a more successful attempt to "rebrand" Bala in Vatsyayan's nationalist assemblage of performance history.[333] Like Satyajit Ray's film, she links Bharatanāṭyam to a larger history of performance in South Asia. Unlike Bala's own

performed speech, there was no *abhinaya* to bring this to a full embodiment of her *vṛtti*. Vatsyayan's speech claims "The individual is basically the mind" to conform to this disembodied devalorization of the body, in contrast to Bala's own metaphor of the crucible reshaping the senses toward spiritual ends.[334] While Ray's film captures her in the semblance of the "oceanic feeling" common to religious tropes of the holy,[335] Vatsyayan's speech is missing Bala almost entirely. A dancer would never claim to "take dance as nothing more than an exalted sensual experience."[336] This nationalist assemblage is still part of the larger *sattva* surrounding the dancer's legacy today as references to it appear in Bala's memorial volume published by *Sruti* as well as throughout mediatized depictions of her dance.[337] Vatsyayan sensed the alternative vision of sovereignty Balasaraswati performed, claiming that outside audiences would foster improper views of Indians as modern subjects:

> Now when I look back, I recall great moments and moments of regret. The moment of success was also the moment when Bala was picked up by the West. History will question whether that was good or bad… These are contextual arts. They are decontextualized, exposed to market forces, presented to larger audiences where communication is not taking place. While the artist gets success—and this is very good—what happens to the art is a big challenge. *We need to address what has been done by this overexposing of dance to uninitatied audiences.*[338]

I argue that Vatsyayan sensed a weakening the nationalist assemblage that Balasaraswati's embodied style burst. In fact, neoliberal processes of labor and migration between America, Europe, and India would go on to characterize South Asian dance after Bala's death in the 1980s. Balasaraswati inaugurated the form of a Bharatanāṭyam dancer in the global dance world as Lakshmi Kedar notes: "Thus the South Asian dancing body reveals not only the friction of bodily encounters in globalization but also the flexible corporeal tactics used by transnational dancers to move with, through, and against the often uneven and unequal flows of global capital."[339] Bala's flexibility, articulations with subaltern and disenfranchised

performers, and audiences created a marketplace for South Asian dancers to develop their own styles.

By 1980, Bala's family continued to grow. At a Wesleyan University residency, Bala performed with Viswa, Ranga, Lakshmi, and Josepha Cormack, who would go on to marry Viswa.[340] Lakshmi and Douglas's son Aniruddha was born on November 13th, 1980. Bala loved to dote on him, even staying behind to watch Ani during Viswanathan and Josepha's ceremony.[341] By late 1983, Bala did not feel the need to dance as part of her dedication to the family's *vṛtti*: Lakshmi's dancing fulfilled her requirement to pass on the practice through her lineage.[342] Aniruddha also seemed to be disposed to dancing, suggesting he had the proper disposition needed to dance. Bala accessed this resonance while watching her grandson dance as a toddler, while Lakshmi felt the choice should be his to make.[343] Music historian N. Parrabhi Raman and dancer Anandhi Ramachandran wrote of Bala in the *Journal of the Sangeet Natak Akademi* during this period that she felt freed:

> She may not be on the stage, but her mind dances still, nuanced thoughts take shape as in her *abhinaya*, aided by snatches of singing and vivid facial and hand gesture which punctuate her speech…The *bhava* of her singing, the emotions displayed through delicate gestures, the images described by her long, tapering fingers all create a sense of wonder in us.[344]

Aniruddha in an interview with Smita Shah when he was seven, claimed Bala never stopped dancing either: "her feet kept patterns in her sleep. She was the greatest dancer in the world."[345]

Bala's health continued to decline and began to affect her face by the end of her last U.S. residency in 1981. Ra Ganapti asked her how she fared after three months of prolonged illness:

> She laughed, saying, 'The automan arrived – all the luggage was ready to take; all of a sudden, at the last moment the luggage was not put on the auto. But, even now they are outside, still there on the veranda.' That's all she said.[346]

This somewhat cryptic statement makes sense in the *carita* genre as a final call home. Audiences might imagine the automen at a hotel as *dvāra-pāla*s, deities who protect gateways and points of transition. These drivers would be the servants of Yama, the king of death, acting like henchmen. The "luggage" being unloaded suggests Bala had been given more time while they wait for her to finalize preparations for the trip.[347] In this episode, Bala therefore continues the process of choreographing her own hagiography in vocal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*).

At this point in her life, Bala saw Karumāriyamman as her principal *guru*. She oftentimes disagreed with the medium Punnyakoti Swamigal's counsel, although she accepted in principle the deity's guidance. At Karumāriyamman's shrine at Thiruverkadu, she also felt herself to be one person among many who came to seek the goddess's blessing in community. During the 1983 festival of *Nāvarātrī*, the "Nine Nights" of the goddess Durgā celebrated in the autumn, Aniruddha's birthday fell during the festival. Bala and Lakshmi sponsored performances there and helped choose local *nagaswaram* players with the medium. Ani danced one night to the song *Neela Vanan Kanan Va Va*. Bala was conviced he would become a professional dancer after seeing this dance.[348]

Whether due to the family's prominence as patrons of the shrine or from the personal attribution of miracles and success from the *devī*, Karumāriyamman was a major player in Balasaraswati and her family's life. She attributed her success after being marginalized in the 1940s due to the goddess' intervention. Bala fell into a diabetic coma on January 29th, 1984 and only woke afterwards when Punnyakoti Swamigal, the medium for the goddess, visited her hospital room at Lady Willingdon Nursing Home. Lakshmi remembered her mother waking up briefly for this visit, chanting the name "Karumāri" before slipping back into unconsciousness. On February 3rd, 1984, on *rātha-sāptamī* ("chariot's seventh"), she passed

away while the family was at a small Gaṇapati shrine outside the house in Kilpauk. In honor of Bala's passing, the Prime Minister and daughter of Nehru Indira Gandhi donated a full-sized wreath in the shape of the wheel of flame with Naṭarāja. Ironically it took a female patroness to finally acknowledge Balasaraswati's greatness on the national stage.[349]
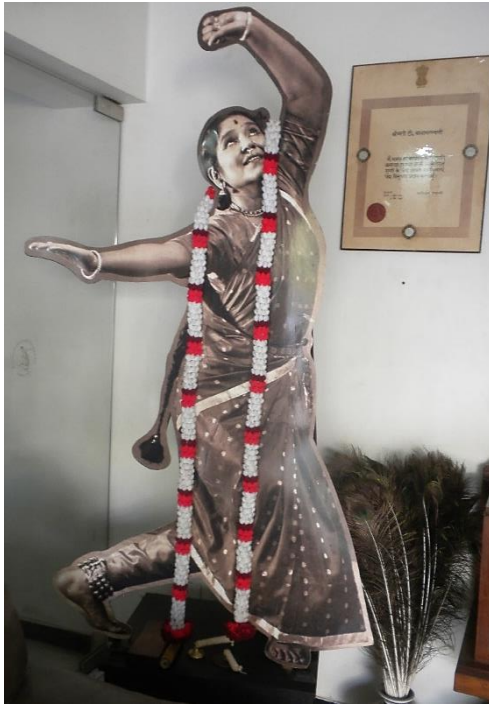
5.9 A Living Tradition: 1984-2019

Bala's doting on Aniruddha Knight suggested she was willing to alter tradition when a male member of the family wanted to dance despite his issues with the family's style being seen today as "feminine." Aniruddha Knight in

personal interviews at the family dance studio in Kilpauk informed me of a great deal of the family's history, as well as a similar line of transmission from his own mother Lakshmi who died of cancer in 2001.[350] This was a harrowing decade as he attempted to learn as much of the

Figure 5.7: Cardboard cutout and *Padma-vibhūṣaṇa*.
Balasaraswati Scripps Institute of Performing Arts, Chennai.
Photo by author, April 1, 2019.

family's repertoire as possible before his mother passed away. He told me at one point that she stood up from her bed a few days before passing away to show him the proper *mudra*s after he repeatedly failed to perfect them: "I never forgot them after that."[351]

I need to emphasize that Balasaraswati's style is still taught today in Chennai. Scholars of the tradition have mostly viewed her legacy as a historical influence, relegating her *devadāsī* inheritors to the same Orientalized "static" past outside the confines of modernity. I had the

opportunity to see Aniruddha teaching his students, including the *svara*s (*ta thei thei*) of a dance with an intricate *tāla* rhythm. The studio had two large cutouts of Balasaraswati and Lakshmi Shanmukham flanking Vina Dhanammal's portrait and instrument (see Figure 4.1). Above and to the left of the case is Bala's *Padma Vibhūṣaṇa* announcement from the Indian national government (Figure 5.7). Alongside the depictions of family deities at Thanjavur and Thiruverkadu, these images on Sunday classes were adorned with flower garlands, *tilaka* marks on their foreheads, and rupee notes in Lakshmi's upraised hands. How should we analyze the up-coming dancers' offerings to the lineage of female dancers in this particular modern Indian way? Was this an example of Balasaraswati as a dispositional matrix in her own right?

Lakshmi continued to dance after her mother's death in the U.S. and India, taking residencies throughout the country at Wesleyan, performing at Jacob's Pillow and at UCLA among other hosting institutions. She and Aniruddha shared a kind of humble awe over Bala as what I consider the new dispositional matrix of their family's style, even above Vina Dhanammal. I quote Lakshmi at length here on the way her mother affected her as a dancer and a person:

> My mother taught me so many things. Respect for art and for anything one endeavors, to maintain one's principles no matter what the cost. This thought was ingrained in her. She was unique, a supreme being to me. I understood her as an artist and as a person and I am truly grateful that I was capable of understanding her as both. I could comprehend the artist on stage as well as the mother and friend. When one enters the stage one should do one's best. She had to fight to prove how wonderful the art is. How could we forget how she was transformed while performing – and moved the audience! How dancer and audience became one![352]

Lakshmi's remarks underscore a key point that I argue: how the dancer moves through gestures to network the body in a performance event. *Abhinaya*, from subtle movements of the face to grand gestures of the entire body, contributes to this "becoming one" of performer and

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audience, blurring the lines between poles of the performing event.[353] The "transformation" of the performer while dancing was a deeply moving experience that impacted Lakshmi from an early age. She would spend the rest of her life dancing until 2001 when she passed on.[354] Aniruddha continued to perform to this day, as well as teaching students in the last decade or so. He advocates a similar manner of "absorbing" the living style (*vṛtti*), including listening to American scholars ask their *guru* questions and sit obtrusively on the couch while they perform the *adavu*s.

While I did not get a chance to ask his students personally why Bala and Lakshmi were being worshipped, it became clear they saw themselves as participating in a larger ensemble of dance. Even mass-produced images have a life of their own in South Asian styles of worship.[355] Aniruddha accepted students from any family, interspersing Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit, and English into his lessons. Like Soneji's informants, he mingled *abhinaya* and songs into his discussions of the past.[356] The family's repertoire is also hard to promote as he requires singers and musicians familiar with the dance versions of songs in Carnatic music. As a man performing in Bharatanāṭyam, he also had to present himself in hereditary terms as both part of the *devadāsī* lineage of Vina Dhanammal, Balasaraswati, and his mother Lakshmi while also showing his innovative tendencies as a performer from the individualist-artistic ethos of American dance culture. This emerging artists were becoming new embodiments of the family style (*vṛtti*) along with the personal contributions from his lifetime of dancing, his mother's experience, and his grandmother's as well. Through personal archives and recordings, he could still introduce his students to Bala as well as his mother's performances. They are a real, vital presence that seemed to come over his body when he dances, while still being also himself. In this manner, he continued to pass on the gestural power of Bala's form in a latent disposition,

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in the semblances that emerge from mediatized images and recollections of her in living memory, as well as the sedimented pieces of their repertoire of dance. These forms only emerged directly when performed; as long as there will be dancers, Balasaraswati will continue to appear as her *abhinaya* connects audiences and performers in the dancing.

I have attempted to tell the story of the family, including T. Balasaraswati, Lakshmi Shanmukham, and Aniruddha Knight, even as I laid out an argument to read Bala's life in terms of the way dancing affected her and she affected the style. While scholars have argued from the emic perspective of South Asian dancers in Bharatanāṭyam and art history that she was a "classical dancer," the family's perspective sees their practice as both traditional and contemporary. In both academic and in the network of performers who knew her though, both she and Kandappa Pillai are credited with creating something novel in her *bāṇī*. While never quite fitting into the reform assemblages (Orientalist, nationalist), she consistently both used and resisted the norms placed on her corporeal form through the instrumental means of her embodied gestures. As dancers are imbricated into dense structures of discourse and discipline like the apparatus of Orientalism, their bodies allow them to modulate these discourses with their performances. On the one hand, dancers experience the affordances of repetition seen in their modes of life (*vṛtti*s). The Orientalizing gaze of different audiences fashions semblances (*līlā*) to link their bodies into ensembles of political, historical, and religious identities on the other hand.[357] Balasraswati's genius as a dancer influenced other marginalized and female performers. Her courage set an example in dance and ritual scenarios that showcased her body as both *devadāsī*, non-Brahmin, and subaltern in spaces that were legally, socially, and economically denied to her. Through her progress (*pravṛtti*), I suggest, Balasaraswati offers a new generation of dancers the space to empty themselves of their prejudices and social roles,

in order to find the creative movement at the center of their affective matrix. This was a decidedly modern gesture.

Conclusion: *Bhāva*s Beyond Aesthetics:
Embodied Affectivity in Healing Performances

Figure 6.1 Śītalā-*pālagana* actor before performance, West Bengal, March 23 2019

I walk backstage—which is to say, I follow a small path from the main road of town down a small alley and into a vacated dwelling. The seven performers are at various stages of donning makeup and costumes. Śītalā, the "Cooling Goddess," is performed in this *jātra-pāla* (Bengali "theater troupe") by a Padmini, a *hijra* (see Figure 6.5). The performers agree to let

my colleague from a nearby university in Kolkata interview them with my prepared questions while I take pictures and record their responses on my cellphone. The actor playing Kichauk, the evil brother-in-law to the king of Birāj (Figure 6.1) is especially loquacious: he was taught by his parents to act thirty years ago and has been performing in the winter and spring season of *jātra* performances. The summer season ends before they start again in the monsoon season and go through Dūrga-*pūjā* in October. The troupe plays for multiple occasions but mostly travels for *pūjā* season: this evening, a few days after Holi in March, 2019, they are at a small suburban temple dedicated to Śītalā, Manasā (the snake goddess), and Kālī whose worship interrupts their performance throughout the night. The performers all claim they act in *bhakti-bhābe*, "in devotional affects," when they portray the characters from the Śītalā-*maṅgala*s ("auspicious stories" of the goddess's episodes gathering converts). We stop to drink tea while Śītalā joins the conversation. The actors tell us they play the part with gestures (*abhinaye kareche*) when asked what they feel after applying their costumes and makeup. Śītalā introduces a new dimension though: when asked if acting is her profession or if she acts out of feeling (*bhābe*), she claims that her previous singing (*gajon*) career was a profession (*peśā*). Instead, acting is a "blessing from the Mother, and I will do it as long as I can."[1]

At a village festival (*melā*) farther outside Kolkata a few days later, two graduate students and I take an Uber to find another Śītalā-*pūjā*. About a thousand people mill around the village center where a small carnival area has games and rides arranged. At the *maṇḍap* or pavilion in front of a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple, a vegetable seller I had met a week before is singing the goddess's part in a one-person *jātra* (*ekagaṇa*). The musicians are too loud to hear Śītalā's lyrics beautifully rendered in the soft voice I had recorded earlier. But the performance was not at the center of the audience's attention at this time. At the nearby Śītalā-Bonobībī temple

behind the pavilion, a lake separated the two temple complexes. A Hindu *pujārī* and a Muslim *fakir* led the mostly female worshipers side-by-side as the sister goddesses's *mūrti*s filled the small space (see Figure 6.2). Bonobībī, a local goddess "of the forest" rode a tiger. The nearby National Tiger Preserve in the Sundarban wetlands emptied into the Bay of Bengal and many people in the area had migrated there to work in the city. The women at this temple started to make their way prostrating from the temple pond after bathing, moving body-length by body-length from the temple around the images of the goddess sisters and around the pavilion to the temple. Others went up to my informant and had their children pin rupee bills to Śītalā's red costume (Figure 6.3).

6.2 Muslim *fakir* at Bonobībī *pūjā*, West Bengal, March 27, 2019

In some ways, the crowd was the attraction for the village as much as the *jātra* being sung and danced. During both evenings, the temple rituals overwhelmed the performers and everyone paused while temple bells rang, priests chanted Sanskrit and Bengali *mantra*s to the

goddesses, and women held pots of fire on their heads and in both hands. The men at the second performance flung powder into the flames, igniting them and offering a major spectacle to honor the women's *tapas* or "austerities." The women's dedication of offerings to the Śītalā *jātra* actors, the *mūrti*s of the goddesses, and even one another suggested to me a distributed body of the goddess: each held the female worshipers in her lap at some point, or blessed them by placing a hand on their heads with a fly whisk emblem of her sovereignty over negative spirits inflicting diseases on humans.

Figure 6.3 Śītalā-*ekagaṇa* performer, West Bengal, March 27, 2019

At this point in my study, I have relied mostly on textual and historical sources to suggest the ways *bhāva* was shaped and experienced by performers and audiences. As a

disposition (*sattva*), *bhāva* permeated the carnivalesque atmosphere of Śītalā's rituals. Audience members were cajoled into paying the performers and for the paraphernalia of *pūjā* by a common collection; at the earlier show, even Muslim families in the area touched the goddess's feet briefly before returning home for the evening. Human women came to embody the goddess's fiery disposition as she herself emerged from a ritual fire in the earliest Śītalā-*maṅgala* accounts.[2] The semblances or appearances of the goddess (*līlā*s) were experienced in song, dance, and images. Even the women were treated as a temporary *avatāra* of the goddess as their fellow mothers sat briefly in their laps as if cradled by the goddess. The gestures (*abhinaya*) of prostration, singing, dancing, offering, holding fire, and offering an audience a mirror (Figure 6.1) extended the performers' personal agency into a networked ecology of forces. My interview with the actors showed that they viewed gestures as forms in their own right that were "put to use" or "enacted." Men like my informant became the goddess and marginalized singers such as Padmini could embody Śītalā for the gaze of a Western academic with a video-camera (Figure 6.5). Lastly, the habits and styles (*vṛtti*s) that caught audience and actor together in a shared moment of performance centered on an economic exchange on the physical body and costume of the performers. Audiences recognized the actor-singers' cultural position while also honoring the goddess in their corporeal forms.

Figure 6.4 Śītalā-*ekagaṇa* performance, West Bengal, March 27, 2019

The economic and political side to Śītalā's performances was also readily apparent on the bodies of the goddess. Offerings to both performers and the images were covered in money; audience members at any time could interrupt the flow of the performance to have the goddess' whisk placed on their heads in blessing as rupees were pinned to her costume. This set of cosmetic gestures (*āhārya-abhinaya*) was so startling for me but quickly became apparent as a way of supplying the performers with the majority of their income. At the first performance, a collection for the *jātra-pāla* troupe was offered twice as the goddess held positions in familiar poses for devotees to "take *darśan*." This entailed a direct gaze with the goddess as she shifted from various forms—including Dūrga, the ten-armed protector of *dharma*, the fearsome Kālī with her head-chopping sword, and even a vision of Pārvatī holding a child Śiva to her lactating breast. This last tableau in particular failed spectacularly as the performer's costume had a stream of milk rigged in the chest which squirted all over the tarp-covered ground of the stage. Musicians, mouths agape, tried to mop up the liquid and were shooed offstage by the performers and concert master as they impeded the view of the goddess for the audience. Yet the substance itself could also have been considered *prasād* or

vibhūti, the "remainder" of her food empowered through direct bodily contact. Other foods were thrown by audience members into the crowd as part of a communal partaking; I was hit in the head repeatedly with sweet rice cracker treats and they were pelted haphazardly into the awaiting arms of children. This circulation of affective forms therefore was a part of the vital sustenance of the community as well as the livelihoods of the performers. Yet Padmini's words that this was no longer her "profession" (*peśā*) suggested a change of living as well. Śītalā-*pālagaṇa* singing appeared to be a different form of earning a living compared to her ritual duties as a *hijra* or another modern occupation. As one group whose performance style (*vṛtti*) is recognized for its "troubling bodies," perhaps there is a reconnection to a different form of sexualized economy kinship or portrayal of the goddess offers that might eclipse the common dispositions available to *hijras*?[3]

While I have described the affective ecology of Bharata's system in the *Nāṭya-sāstra*, the Śītalā-*jātra* performances add an additional layer to the *vṛtti* of this genre of embodied activity. As a goddess who controls poxes and pestilence, Śītalā was invoked to protect the children of the worshipers.[4] My own choice of red clothing for the evening put me in her "camp" as red signaled the equality of her devotees as well as the auspiciousness flowing throughout the material world. As I mentioned in Chapter One, I have resisted translating *bhāva* as "emotion" precisely because of the role illness, madness, and even death play as one of the various affective "phases" undergone in a ritual or performed in a dramatic setting.

The prophylactic effect of Śītalā *jātra*s was a form of communal inoculation against diseases; by propitiating her as a control over the agents who possess and inhabit the bodies of the sick, Bengali ritualists attempted to circumvent the personal experience of illness. Since the Bhāvamiśra's century Āyurvedic medical text *Bhāva-prakāśa* ("Illumination on

Affects,"), Śītalā's worship has been included in the treatment of certain forms of smallpox.[5]

This suggests that *vṛtti* can also be an engagement with the communal health of a group.

While individuals fit their personal history into a "meta-history" by imbuing illness into

larger patterns of social belonging, it also engages performances as methods for connecting

to divine figures' affects.[6] Like the Bengali communities, ritualists need to pool resources

and share in the performance's results for the group even if they are relegated to the fringes.[7]

When figures in authority reject Śītalā's sovereignty, her affects are furious until they

transform the normal human landscape into a nightmare marketplace. For instance, in this

eighteenth-century *maṅgala līlā,* Virāṭa does not fare well:

> Śītalā, in great good humour, attended by her male and female servants, established a
> marketplace for ghouls. In heaven, the sun, the moon, Death, and the gods of the ten
> directions trembled when they say her play…Having gathered all the corpses, male
> and female ghouls put them on abundant display in shops, and bought and sold.
> Getting the stench, crows and kites in hundreds of thousands came, and flies buzzed
> around.[8]

While certain people seem to almost "deserve" their illness, Śītalā's resonance with suffering

mothers induces her to bring her worshipers back to life in the stories. In this case, "grace"

(*dayā*) becomes the dispositional matrix that can overcome the social injustice that destroys

society in its economically-unstable balance.[9]

Figure 6.5 Śītalā-*pālagaṇa* performer and author, West Bengal, March 23, 2019

If I were to extend this idea from Śītalā performances into the other dramas and theories explored in this dissertation, it suggests that we as scholars are making rigid distinctions between forms of affectivity that simply do not exist for our informants. If a drama can be healing, or a dance can unite groups of people who had never met before, then affects are not only aesthetic or cosmetic gestures but can drastically alter people ripe for these experiences. Caitanya's acting and dancing in Gauḍīya communities appears to heal a rift between the world of Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes (*nitya-līlā*) and the everyday world of life (*laukika*). *Bhāva*s offered them one avenue to repair this rupture. T. Balasaraswati's dance likewise offered the possibility of regrowth and development for subaltern communities such as *devadāsī*s when their dancing connected to other marginalized performers outside their local contexts. The alternative forms of sovereignty experienced in the commanding forms of

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these scenarios also posited a drastic contrast to the state: Kṛṣṇa, Śītalā, and Bala's goddess Karumāriyamman all appeared as not only salvific figures but alternative sources of power, legitimacy, and tradition to ground modern styles of living.[10] As affects, *bhāva*s therefore have power not only as emotional "states" but the very power to upend the fixity of any given state.

To conclude, the embodied and textual theories of performance I have explored all suggest an affective body shared between persons and places, other beings, and invisible forces that move us. We contain latent dispositions (*sattva*s) waiting to manifest based on our unique personal histories as well as the larger cultural configurations in which we find ourselves. *Bhāva*s are not only what we "are" but what we "become" as it emerges from the realm of possibility. I have translated this term as character at times for its relation to the uniqueness it affords us: when we are playing a recognizable persona, its characteristics are self-evident. *Līlā*s extend this process into manifestations without compromising the tentativeness of its potential as *sattva*s cross down onto the material stage. As images or sensations that jump off a page, canvas, or stela, they link us together in an intersubjective experience of art or ritual performances. We become enmeshed in the landscape they evoke even when that location is projected onto a physical geography as its material ground. Pilgrimage locations and works are art therefore function in a similar way to facilitate memorialization with the divine as it cannot manifest directly in the world.

Moving to the corporeal side, affective habits (*vṛtti*s) or styles link us to a shared human corporeal stratum. Our very way of living is grounded and permeable to influence outside or agentive control as we become possessed, shaped by the roles (*bhūmikā*s) or expectations in our given society. We inherit these affordances of our bearing, carriage, and

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way of moving through the world from those around us, picking up quirks of habit from others as well as cultural norms. We have the option to divest from them (*nivṛtti*) by renouncing these patterned behaviors or to reinforce them as we progress (*pravṛtti*) in our lives. Lastly, gesture (*abhinaya*) allows us to take the "lead" in controlling affective force. While traditions of performance shape our bodily contours and frames, they also enable actors, dancers, and ritualists the tools necessary to exert volition and agency. These gestures induce affects in audiences and ourselves as they reach out and extend the body's influence into material forms such as writing, painting, or dancing. The capture of these gestures in their medium (paper, canvas, or air) determines the longevity of their legacy while the body continues to store this repertoire of movements and add to it with novel techniques and histories. South Asian performances offer a range of ways we become opened to the world's possibilities, and in turn add to our own capacities to live in it with others.

<u>Endnotes</u>

Introduction

[1] *Caitanya Caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja: A Translation and Commentary*, trans. Edward C. Dimock, Jr, ed. Tony Stewart (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 552. Citations after the page number include book (*Madhya-līlā* sections), chapter, and verse. For citations from dramas, act then verse or prose section is given. When I quote the translator and editor's notes on the text, I refer to it as Dimock and Stewart 1999.

[2] Douglas Knight Jr, *Balasaraswati: Her Art and Life* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 2010), 17.

[3] W.H. Johnson ed, *A Dictionary of* Hinduism, s.v. "Caitanya (Kṛṣṇacaitanya), Oxford University Press, online edition, 2009). See Rembert Lutjeharms, *A Vaiṣṇava Poet in Early Modern Bengal: Kavikarṇapūra's Splendour of Speech* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 20-21 for a brief description of Caitanya's career. See Knight 2010: xvii for Bala's dates.

[4] See Tony K. Stewart, *The Final Word: The Caitanya Caritāmṛta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 264 maps out the emerging hagiographical project among the Gauḍīyas.

[5] See Dimock and Stewart 1999: 30 for dating the *carita*.

[6] Dimock and Stewart 1999: 35: "People move back and forth between the human and divine, the finite and the infinite, with breathtaking ease, and as this is a characteristic of the faith as a whole, so it is a characteristic of this book, and *historical fact loses its significance*. For devotees, of course, historical and other differentiations are not only insignificant but totally irrelevant, for when they hear the name of Caitanya they automatically hear those of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

[7] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 365, 22.68-72.

[8] See T. Balasaraswati, "Bharata Natyam." *National Centre for the Performing Arts Quarterly* 5:4 (Dec. 1976), 1. I shall examine this link in more detail in Chapter Four.

[9] Anna Kisselgoff, "Balasaraswati is Dead at 64; Classical Dancer from India," *New York Times* Feb. 10, 1984: B4.

[10] S. V. Shesadri, *Shankar's Weekly*, August 18, 1963.

[11] T. Balaasaraswati, *Bala on Bharatanatyam*, compiled and translated by S. Guhan (Madras: The Sruti Foundation, 1991), 6.

[12] Bala's grandson Aniruddha Knight would go on to use this theme for his memory of the style. See Aniruddha Knight, *Mad About Dance* 1 (May 2017), 1.

[13] See Donovan Schaefer, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 1 who begins his account with Jane Goodall's description of the waterfall dance among chimpanzees. See Goodall with Phillip Berman, *Reason For Hope: A Spiritual Journey* (New York: Warner Books, 1999), 189: "There is a great roar as the water cascades down through the soft green air from the stream bed some eighty feet above. Over countless aeons the water has worn a perpendicular groove in the sheer rock. Ferns move ceaselessly in the wind created by the falling water, and vines hang down on either side. For me, it is a magical place, and a spiritual one. And sometimes, as they approach, the chimpanzees display in slow, rhythmic motion along the river bed. They pick up and throw great rocks and branches. They leap to seize the hanging vines, and swing out

over the stream in the spray-drenched wind until it seems the slender stems must snap or be torn from their lofty moorings. For ten minutes or more they may perform this magnificent "dance." Why? Is it not possible that the chimpanzees are responding to some feeling like awe? A feeling generated by the mystery of water; water that seems alive, always rushing past yet never going, always the same yet ever different."

[14] Mahendravarman, *Bhagavadajjuka-prahasana* and *Mattavilāsa-prahasana*, ed. and trans. Michael Lockwood and A. Vishnu Bhat (Madras: Tambaram Research Associates, 1994), 3 for an introduction to the play.

[15] See *Nāmaliṅgānuśāsana* of Amarasiṃha (Krishna Govind Oka, ed. Poona: Law Printing Press, 1913), 3.3.785: *bhāvaḥ sattāsvabhāvābhiprāyaceṣṭātmajanmasu*. See Johnson, *Dictionary of Hinduism*, s.v. "Amarasiṃha," Oxford University Press, online edition, 1999) for his dates.

[16] See June McDaniel, *The Madness of the Saints: Ecstatic Religion in Bengal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 3. McDaniel points out that while *bhakti* might appear as "ecstatic" in the Eliadean sense of "standing outside oneself," instead she claims it also afford relationality to the divine, confusing distinctions. This region was the home of Caitanya when we was a householder by the name of Viśvambhara.

[17] See Amanda Bailey and Mario DiGangi, eds, *Affect Theory and Early Modern Texts: Politics, Ecologies, and Form* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): John Corrigan, *Feeling Religion* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017): Monica Greco and Paul Stenner, eds, *Emotions: A Social Science Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2008): Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, eds, *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010): Alex Michaels and Christopher Wulf eds, *Emotions in Rituals and Performances* (New York: Routledge, 2012): Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010): Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007): Julie Taylor ed, *Modernism and Affect* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015). Similarly Michelle Voss Roberts, *Tastes of the Divine: Hindu and Christian Theologies of Emotion* (New York: Fordham University, 2014) examines theological comparison using *rasa* theory among Indian Christians and Western Christian theories of emotion. Contrast Ruth Leys, *The Ascent of Affect: Genealogy and Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017) on how affect is a culturally-loaded word due to its use in psychological discourses starting from Freud through Ekman. Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 1 contrasts the two as separate affordances. See below.

[18] See Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012): Viciane Despret, "The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthropo-zoo-genesis." *Body and Society* 10:2-3 (2004): 111: Schaefer 2015 on affectivity and animals. See Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman, *Material Feminisms* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2008): Lisa Blackman, *Immaterial Bodies: Affect, Embodiment, Mediation* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012): Sue L. Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: A Study of Sensitive Space: Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Embodiment* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993): and Eve Kosofky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003) on feminist framings of affectivity.

[19] See José Ignacio Cabezón, "The Discipline and Its Other: The Dialectic of Alterity in the Study of Religion." *JAAR* 74:1 (2006):21 on this approach to the project of cultural comparison.

[20] See Chaktravarti Ram-Prasad, *Human Being, Bodily Being: Phenomenology from Classical India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 51. Ram-Prasad notes the link between comportment and health in Āyurveda as well. This link posits that the personal style of the patient is implicated in a "skein of relationships woven between what it is to be to one self and what it is to be with others."

[21] James A. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception,* reprint (London: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, 1986), 127 describes the ecology of perception as a function that connects environment and the body. Saadi Lahlou "How Agency is Distributed through Installations," in N. J. Enfield and Paul Kockelman, eds., *Distributed Agency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 221 also uses Gibson's term affordances to show how agency becomes a function of the materiality of built environments.

[22] See Sheldon Pollock, *A Rasa Reader: Classical Indian Aesthetics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 48.

[23] See Kapila Vatsyayan, *Bharata's The Nāṭyaśāstra* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996), 25.

[24] Vatsyayan 1996: 42.

[25] See Ram-Prasad 2019: 5 on the particular intersubjective phenomenology of the term ecology.

[26] See Wendy Doniger, "Medical and Mythical Constructions of the Body in Hindu Texts," in Sarah Coakley, ed. *Religion and the Body* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 168-169. The debate occurs in *Caraka-saṃhitā* 1.1.15.3-34. The debate involves a host of opinions on the causes of disease but is simplified by the end with the final position that good food causes the growth of the body (and development) by turning into "chyle" (*rasa*). Bad food, on the other hand, leads to the imbalances (*doṣa*) of the bodily humours: *vāta, pitta,* and *kapha*. See Daniel C. Tabor, "Ripe and Unripe: Concepts of Health and Sickness in Ayurvedic Medicine," *Social Science and Medicine* 15B (1981): 439 for more on Āyurvedic theories of development (*paka/kaccha*) for similar ideas of bodily and comestible articulations. Paul M. Toomey, "Krishna's Consuming Passions: Food as Metaphor and Metonym at Mt. Govardhana," in Owen Lynch, *Divine Passions: The Social Construction of Emotion in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 223 uses the theory of food and *bhāva* in the worship of Kṛṣṇa at Mt. Govardhana in the Braj area of Uttar Pradesh.

[27] *The Nāṭyaśāstra: A Treatise on Ancient Indian Dramaturgy and Histrionics Ascribed to Bharata-Muni*, ed. and trans. Manomohan Ghosh, 2 vols, reprint (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 2016), 82: *na hi rasādṛte kaścid api arthaḥ pravartate*: "If there is no *rasa*, then no goal will occur."

[28] Pollock 2015: 52, 342 ft. 28. See *Amarakośa* 1.7.442: *śṛṅgāra sucirujjvalaḥ*, "decorous means radiant, glorious." While it derives from a stabilizing affect (*sthāyi-bhāva*) of *rati* (pleasure, joy), this is not the same as the maligned *kāma* or "desire," which functions in many religious situations as an obstacle to worldly and otherworldly happiness.

[29] Contrast Pollock 2015: xvi. Even Pollock in his recent work assumes that *bhāva* is an emotion while *rasa* functions at an otherwise transcendent level to normal experience.

[30] Charles Altieri, *The Particulars of Rapture: An Aesthetics of the Affects* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 47. His example of how affect mediates between sensation

and belief: "consider the difference between noticing a bird and noticing that the bird's *way of running* evokes a certain person or state of mind."

[31] Altieri 2003: 4-5, 31-32 and chapter 5 addresses Nussbaum's work directly. See Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). This instrumentalization of affect, he argues, should be countered with an arts-based approach that shows how people enjoy and are compelled to linger, "to dwell fully within these dispositions of energies and the modes of self-reflection they sustain."

[32] Altieri 2003: 10-11.

[33] See Sarah Coakley ed., "Introduction," in *Religion and the Body* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3 on this assumption prevailing on Western theorizations of the body as "natural." By extension, emotions are seen as one of the affordances of the body as a material, feminine-inflected space.

[34] Altieri 2003: 110.

[35] Jorella Andrews Simon O'Sullivan, *Visual Cultures as Objects and Affects* (London: Sternberg Press, 2013), 72. Simon O'Sullivan mentions it in one interview: "I don't think this intention comes from the artists really, it's more that the object, the artwork itself, has a kind of intention–often one that's hard to fathom in fact. Like a move in a game for which the rules are not entirely known."

[36] See Andrews and O'Sullivan 2013: 55. Recounting a discussion led by Kaja Silverman, Jorella Andrews also points out how the self is an artistic creation: "You remind us that the ego is in fact a form, although we don't usually think about it that way.…There is a lot to be gained through thinking about the ego in formal terms. First, it's deanthropomorphizing. It permits us to begin conceptualizing relationality outside of the usual human categories, which have become very reduced in recent years through the insistence upon race, class, gender, etc. It helps us to understand that what we are at the level of the ego may be a much more complex issue than we are accustomed to imagining, having to do not only with mothers, fathers, lovers, etc., but also with line, shape, composition, color.

[37] See Blackman 2012: 3 on the "immaterial" affordances of affects.

[38] Andrews and O'Sullivan 2013: 18.

[39] See Susan Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953) for more on this phenomenon. See Lahlou 2017 on distributed agency. See Harshita Kamath, "Bodied, Embodied, and Reflective Selves: Theorizing Performative Selfhood in South Indian Performance," in Barbara Holdrege and Karen Pechilis eds, *Refiguring the Body: Embodiment in South Asian Religions* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2017), 109 on the temporary shifting of agentive control between different levels of the self.

[40] See Damien Freeman, *Art's Emotions: Ethics, Expression and Aesthetic Experience* (Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 6-7. This insistence on a psychologizing of art reaches a high point in analytic philosophies of aesthetics. Damien Freeman's work in this area is instructive. In Freeman's phenomenological account of art's emotional impact, he views affect as grounded in the subject as "a psychological property." This sense of property aligns with his discussion of ethics and value for art-derived emotions as opposed to those in the world. Art can have both senses of these emotional properties which Freeman draws from theories of art and Freudian (post-Klein) psychology. We can perceive emotion as an externalization of a subject, such as a baby crying, or as an object upon which we can project

emotion. However, this assumes a subject-object dichotomy that affects cannot follow, as opposed to the capturable subject-positionings fixed by emotional scripts. Affects bleed over these boundaries, by showing they are already fields and flows. Hence what could be a "projective" property ignores the fact that a rock could have an agentive presence inside it as a deity, spirit, or ghost for instance. Likewise, we often experience "other" sensations than what we can explain as coming from ourselves; "phantom" limbs, inexplicable feelings of being watched, or strangely permeable moods that come from nowhere in particular. These affective forms have a presence even when they remain invisible or latent within other features of bodies, landscapes, and persons. We can be surprised at seeing a normally calm person becoming angry, or watching a friend act as a character with vastly different life experience. Affects, therefore, have their own properties that do not necessarily align with tidy lines of Western subjects.

[41] Freeman 2012: 34-36. See also Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies." *Social Text,* 79, 22:2 (2004): 117-139: Sarah Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010): Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011): John Corrigan, *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002): Ann Cvetkovich, *Depression: A Public Feeling* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012): Brian Massumi, *The Power at the End of the Economy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 5: Andrea Muehlebach, "On Affective Labor in Post-Fordist Italy," *Cultural Anthropology* 26:1 (2011): 59-82: Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005): Analiese Richard and Daromir Rudnyckyj,"Economies of Affect," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15:1 (2009): 57-77 on affectivity in modern assemblages with economic ties.

[42] Freeman 2012: 75-79. The first he calls infection: we perceive emotion in the world and we feel it ourselves. In communication, the person experiencing the emotion affects what is transmitted, and responds in a different manner than the source. Hence a person seeing an enemy or rival cry might take delight in it, while watching a friend grieve causes their own grief to manifest. The third alternative, articulation, allows one to experience the emotions in the world in relation to one's own without triggering their effect at that time, a kind of meta-emotive affect which distances one from the experience of the affects on perception. An experience of grief might put us into a philosophical or artistic mood that expands to broader concepts around mortality, such as our place in the universe, which could help us understand specific culturally-inflected affects like that of the sublime. Freeman further subdivides infection into resonance, when we experience the feelings of another subject, and correspondence, when we are affected by a projected property in an object such as a landscape.

[43] Freeman 2002: 116-118.

[44] See Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Architectural Body* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2002): Anurima Banerji, "Dance and the Distributed Body: Odissi, Ritual Practice, and Performance," *About Performance* 11 (2012): 7-39: Theresa Brennan, *The Transmission of the Affects* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004): Chen 2012: Enfield and Kockelman 2017: Anahid Kassabian, *Ubiquitous Listening: Affect, Attention, and Distributed Subjectivity* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013): Randy Martin, "The Composite Body of Dance: Re(w)rapping the Multicultural Nation," in *Critical Moves: Dance Studies in Theory and Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 107-150: Christian Meyer, Jurgen Streeck, and J. Scott Jorden, eds, *Intercorporeality:*

Emerging Socialites in Interaction (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017): Nigel Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect* (New York: Routledge, 2008). See also Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible: Followed By Working Notes*. Claude Lefort ed, Alphonso Lingis trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968) for more on intercorporeality and Gibson 1986: 127 on ecology and perception.

[45] See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art* (New York: Dover Publications, 1934), 144-145 and Chapter Two below. When paintings are created, however, their affective tonalities and textures can be "raised," "stumbled over," and able to sink our attention into their seeming depths.

[46] See Coakley 1997: 3 for this history in modern Western theories of the body as implicitly layered with religious meaning. I'd argue this also allows for previous theories of affectivity to continue into the modern period.

[47] See Ann Taves, *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building-Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 14. Taves regards religious experience in cognitive science terms as part of the process of attribution. The approach affords both a recontextualization of religious experience-e.g. who deems something "religious" can be approached from various theological, historical, social, and cultural forms of determining authority–as well as the mechanisms by which we attribute statuses to experience within larger cross-disciplinary studies. Affects fall into this category we shall see, since they are deemed ordinary (*laukika*) and extraordinary (*alaukika*) based on patterns of what is commonly accepted by people in the world (*loka*).

[48] See Cataldi 1993: 71, Thomas Fuchs, "Intercorporeality and Interaffectivity," in Christian Meyer, Jurgen Streeck, J. Scott Jorden, eds, *Intercorporeality: Emerging Socialites in Interaction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3; Gibson 1986: 126; and Mayra Rivera, *Poetics of the Flesh* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 4 on intercorporeality and texture. All these theorists engage in some way with Merleau-Ponty 1968: 11 on a similar point: "suddenly there breaks forth the evidence that yonder also, minute by minute, life is being lived: somewhere behind those eyes, behind those gestures, or rather before them, or again about them, coming from I know not what *double ground* of space, another private world shows through, *through the fabric of my own*, and for a moment I live in it; I am no more than the respondent for the interpellation that is made to me. To be sure, the least recovery of attention persuades me that this other *who invades me* is made only of my own substance: how could I conceive, precisely as *his, his* colors, *his* pain, *his* world, except as in accordance with the colors I see, the pains I have had, the world wherein I live? But at least my private world has ceased to be mine only; it is now *the instrument which another plays*, the dimension of a generalized life which is grafted onto my own."

[49] Delanda 2016: 19-20 describes how assemblages function from the theories of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari:

1) Assemblages have a fully contingent historical identity, and each of them is therefore an *individual entity*: an individual person, an individual community, an individual organization, an individual city.

2) Assemblages are always composed of heterogeneous components…[including] *material and expressive* objects.

3) Assemblages can become components of larger assemblages. Communities can form alliances or coalitions and become a larger assemblage, a social justice movement…

4) Assemblages emerge from the interactions of their parts, but once an assemblage is in place it immediately starts acting as a source of limitations and opportunities for its components (downward causality)…this double determination is important: wholes emerge in a bottom-up way, depending causally on their components, but they have a top-down influence on them. The upward causality is necessary to make emergent properties immanent: an assemblage's properties may be irreducible to its parts but that does not make them transcendent, since they would cease to exist if the parts stopped interacting with one another. The downward causality is needed to account for the fact that most assemblages are composed of parts that come into existence after the whole has emerged.

[50] Levine 2015: 7.

[51] Levine 2015: 5. Affordance is first introduced in Gibson 1986: 126. Assemblage comes from the Deleuzian-Guattarian theories of Brian Massumi 2002: 25. See also Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Brian Massumi trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 5.

[52] Gibson 1986: 127: "The *affordances* of the environment are what it *offers* to the animal, what it *provides* or *furnishes*, either for good or ill. The verb *to afford* is found in the dictionary, but the noun *affordance* is not. I have made it up. I mean by it something that refers both to the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment."

[53] Donovan Schaefer's example of the waterfall dance among chimpanzees shows that there are certain affordances between the environment and the bodies affected by it. Schaefer 2015: 3. Schaefer's driving questions include: "In what ways is religion–for humans and other animals–about the *way* things feel, the things we want, the way our bodies are *guided* through thickly *textured*, *magnetized* worlds? Or the way our bodies *flow into relationships*– loving or hostile–with other bodies? How is religion made up of clustered material forms, aspects of our embodied life, such as other bodies, food, community, labor, movement, music, sex, natural landscapes, architecture, and objects? How is religion defined by the *depths of our bodies*–our individual and species histories that we know only by their *long shadow*s but that *shape the contours* of our everyday experience? How is religion something that puts us in continuity with other animal bodies, rather than something that sets us apart? How is religion something that *carries us* on its back rather than something that we think, choose, or command?" These themes will return throughout discussions of affective forms.

[54] Schaefer 2015: 4. See Swati Johar, *Emotion, Affect and Personality in Speech: The Bias of Language and Paralanguage*, SpringerBriefs in Electrical and Computer Technology: Speech Technology, (Springer, 2016), https://doi-org.proxy.library.ucsb.edu:9443/10.1007/978-3-319-28047-9 for the paralinguistic study of affectivity in speech recognition.

[55] Levine 2015: 1-2.

[56] Levine 2015: 3. Levine's general definition for forms is close enough to work for Sanskrit *episteme*s as well: "an arrangement of elements, an ordering, patterning, or shaping, " which include "patterns of repetition and difference."

[57] Levine 2015: 3.

[58] Levine 2015: 4-5. See Foucault 1995 on discipline as a regime of affective shaping on the body.

[59] Levine 2015: 6-7.

[60] See Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 2-3 where he draws on the work of Alfred North Whitehead and William James on the singularity of relation.

[61] Massumi 2011: 20 uses the example of current molecular theory. Molecules are formed by the field effect of moving electrons between the mostly fixed nuclei of component atoms. Electrical fields therefore emerge in the movement and relational sharing as these electrons are distributed around the field of the molecule, which in turn can become linked into larger patterns of chemicals at higher tiers of arrangements.

[62] Levine 2015: 7-9. For instance, how might a *bhakti* ("devotion") trope of "loving the divine Lord as one's beloved" create tensions? If the promulgators of the group are predominantly elite men in a patriarchal, heteronormative culture, and the supreme deity is gendered as male, there would appear to be layers of formal collision which would relegate their own status as men in relation to a beloved male deity. Does this make them "less" masculine since the form of heteronormativity requires one member of a lover-beloved dyad to be feminine? What consequences would this create for women in the community to hear their leaders espousing a love for a masculine deity: would the binary structure of gender suggest women therefore have an easier access to the divine, or would this tension create ripple effects where other variations on gender emerge? And how would this create tension in a patriarchical hierarchy where elites tend to be men, and mediate the relationship between the divine and the larger group?

[63] Levine 2015: 10.

[64] Levine 2015: 11.

[65] See Massumi 2002, ibid 2011, ibid, *Power at the End of the Economy*, 2015 and ibid, *Politcs of Affect*, 2015 for more on the virtual in Deleuze's philosophy.

[66] Levine 2015: 13-14. For instance, a theater is a recognizable location as well as a form of performance, arranged in various ways but having similar principles and qualities. On the one hand, a genre of theater might offer more leeway to understanding based on subjective preferences. Once you recognize the formal structure of a sonnet, Levine argues, you can see where sonnets appear in plays even if you didn't know they were present before. However, you can't argue *if* they are sonnets. On the other hand, you can argue that Sanskrit does not have real "tragedy" as a genre of drama since there are conventions of Greek drama that would not translate over into the conventions of South Asian theater. Levine therefore offers the difference as genres are "defined as customary constellations of elements into historically recognizable groupings of artistic objects, bringing together forms with themes, styles, an situations of reception, while forms are organizations or arrangements that afford repetition and portability across materials and contexts."

[67] Levine 2015: 16.

[68] Langer 1953: 121: "Once the essential musical form *is found*, a piece of music exists in embryo; it is implicit there, although its final, completely articulate character is not determined yet, because there are so many possible ways of developing the composition [e.g. styles of playing it, with their particular gestures]."

[69] Langer 1953: 122-123.

[70] Langer 1953: 139-140.

[71] Langer 1953: 148.

[72] See Ahmed 2003: 119, Analiese Richard and Daromir Rudnyckyj, "Economies of Affect," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15:1 (2009): 57.

[73] See Levine 2015: 113-114.

[74] Levine 2015: 82.

[75] Chen 2012: 39-42. Positioning seems to be the key to understanding these relationships. "Subjects" in the higher registers tend to have more affective force than that attributed to lower end "objects." For instance, men tend to be seen as agents compared to women who are desired as socially-constructed "objects," while able-bodied individuals are considered able to affect dis-abled persons in ways that deny the subject–potential of the latter. For example, people in long-term comas or with reduced ability to communicate are called "vegetables."

[76] Pollock 2016: 111.

[77] Pollock 2016: 155.

[78] Pollock 2016: 190.

[79] Pollock 2016: 302. See David Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001), 70 for more on this system and its history among Vaiṣṇavas.

[80] Pollock 2016: 269-270.

[81] Lutjeharms 2018: 42.

Chapter 1

[1] For a recent example, see Amanda Lucia, "Guru Sex: Charisma, Proxemic Desire, and the Haptic Logics of the Guru-Disciple Relationship," *JAAR* 86:4 (Dec 2018): 969-970 on the haptic logics of embodied conduct involved with charisma (*śakti*) between gurus and devotees.

[2] See Manuel A. Vásquez, *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 211 on the eclipse of practice.

[3] For a comparable approach in the psychology of religion, see Ann Taves and Egil Asprem, "Experience as Event: Event Cognition and the Study of (Religious) Experiences. *Religion, Brain & Behavior* 7:1 (2017): 43-62.

[4] This is paralleled in the South Asian commentarial tradition in discussions of *rasa* as a formal, ritual-esque characteristic of texts attached within its own delimited world (*laukika*), while the reception-response school derived from Mīmāṃsā shifted the terms to a sincerity paradigm of evoking in the elite audience the proper analogous affects in the form of a universalized *rasa*.

[5] For example, see Patañjali's *Yoga-sūtra* 2.17: *daṣṭṛ-dṛśyayoḥ saṃyogo heya-hetuḥ*: "The cause to be avoided is the conjunction between the seer and what is to be seen." The "seer" in this case is the masculine, transcendent *puruśa* while "that which is to be seen," or sometimes called the "field" (*kṣetra*) is *prakṛti*. See Bryant 2009: 213-216 on this verse who claims this process is at the most sublte level of "intelligence" (*buddhi*). Having its major affordance as *sattva* (one of the three elemental qualities, *guṇa*s, of *prakṛti*), intelligence can shape itself to any object by carrying *puruśa*'s affordance of awareness into materiality. By doing so, it strengths the unseen and eternal "conjunction" (*sam-yoga*) between the two by mistaking materiality for its innate state of isolation (*kevala*).

[6] See chapter 2 for more on the gendered division of dispositional matrices, and chapter 3 and 4 for more on the material body in gendered forms. *Sattva* is most frequently explored in Āyurvedic texts on personality, which has garnered the attention of scholars of medicine and psychology. See Gerrit Jan Meulenbeld, *History of Indian Medical Literature* (Groningen

Oriental Studies, vol 2A: Groningen: Egbert Forsten: 1999), 82 ft. 112. See Frederick Smith, *The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 480-481 on this idea of personality in his work on possession and *bhūtavidyā* ("demonology). Additional perspectives on Āyurvedic theories of *sattva* take Freudian or less comparative approaches than these sources. K.C. Dube, Aditya Kumar, and Sanjay Dube, "Personality Types in Ayurveda." *American Journal of Chinese Medicine* 9:1-4 (1983): 31, 34 suggests persons with *sattvic* personality types are most often susceptible to "affective disorders" to the prominence of desire as their dispositional matrix. Satya Pal Gupta, *Psychopathology in Indian Medicine (Āyurveda) with Special Reference to its Philosophical Bases* (Aligarh: Ajaya Publishers, 1977), 330 translates *sattva-prakṛti* as "mental temperament."

[7] Sheldon Pollock, ed. and trans, *A Rasa Reader: Classical Indian Aesthetics.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 5. After the development of *dhvani* theory by the 9th c. Kashmiri scholar Ānandavardhana, who was also a formalist in his own right, the style of interpretation changed dramatically as Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's Mīmāṃsā-derived theory of reception would dominate, becoming most recognizable in the figure of Abhinavagupta. Bhoja is a fascinating outlier in that he continued to develop the formalist tradition of analysis several centuries after reception theory came to dominance. This suggests an uneven distribution of texts and performance practices. See Pollock 2016: 106-107 for a similar stance taken by Mahima Bhāṭṭa in his *Vyaktiviveka* (c. 1050) which treats its eponymous aesthetic process as a "linguistic modality" (*śabdavṛtti*) beneath resonance (*dhvani*) rather than an "affective modality" (*cittavṛtti*) as assumed in Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka or Abhinavagupta's later work.

[8] See Donovan Schaefer, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 23-24. His definition of affects is revealing: "As a provisional locus, affect or affects can be understood as the propulsive elements of experience, thought, sensation, feeling, and action that are not necessarily captured or capturable by language or self-sovereign "consciousness"…The *shapes* and *textures* that inform and structure our embodied experience at or beneath the threshold of cognition are affects…Affects are the deep, recalcitrant *textures* of our embodied animality."

[9] This imagery comes from Janet Cardiff's sound sculpture "Forty Part Motet" at the North Carolina Museum of Art in 2018 as part of their exhibition "You Are Here." Cardiff's 2001 piece premiered at the Tate Museum in London. It has an evocative quality to have the sound "go totally into you, reverberates in your body." See TateShot, "Janet Cardiff and the Forty Part Motet." July 7, 2017: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38ORiaia9r8.

[10] Julie Taylor, "Introduction," in *Modernism and Affect,* ed. Julie Taylor (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 3.

[11] See Teemu Paavolainen, *Theatricality and Performativity: Writings on Texture from Plato's Cave to Urban Activism* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 16 on the definition of dramaturgy.

[12] See *Nāṭyaśāstra* 151, 6:45 on the "decorous" *rasa*: *tatra śṛṅgāra nāma rata-sthāyibhāva-prabhāva ujjvalaveṣātmakaḥ*: "Therefore the *rasa* named "decorous" is empowered by the stabilizing affect of pleasure (*rati* also), and has its form in brilliant garments."

[13] Pollock 2016: 2016: xvi.

[14] Pollock 2016: 2016: 50.

[15] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 1.6: *nāṭyavedaṃ* and 1.15: *nāṭyākhyaṃ pañcamaṃ vedaṃ setihāsaṃ karomyaham*. The god Brahmā is speaking and says he will create a fifth Veda called "Drama" with epic tales (*itihāsa*).

[16] See the introduction for more on affordances, in particular Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 5. Affordance is first introduced in James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception, r*eprint (London: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, 1986). Assemblage comes from the Deleuzian-Guattarian theories of Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 25. See also Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), and Manuel Delanda, *Assemblage Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 3 on assemblage theory.

[17] See Delanda 2016: 20-21 and the introduction for the features of assemblages.

[18] Francis Clooney, *Thinking Ritually: Rediscovering the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā of Jaimini*, (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 46-47, 108. *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* 2.1.1: *bhāvārtha karmaśabdās*. On dramaturgy in Western accounts see Teemu Paavolainen, *Theatrical and Performativity: Writings on Texture from Plato's Cave to Urban Activism*, (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 16.

[19] Massumi 2002, Delanda 2016, Deleuze and Guattari 1987.

[20] See the epigraph and Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 78, 80. The *bandhu*s are literal "links" in a chain as well as the family resemblance created in ritual to ontological "kin." An assemblage in ritual therefore functions when these ontogenetic articulations "place different elements "in bondage" to one another" that were not previously connected. In this way, the inaccessible, latent, or virtual sides of reality are made accessible through the material, embodied, and delimited forms in a play of appearances.

[21] Massumi 2002: 5.

[22] Dube et al 1983: 26 refer to *prakṛti* as "the entire material assemblage" which is "put into action" by *puruṣa*. This ignores the fact that activity is the principle affordance of *prakṛti* while *puruṣa* maintains its reflexive self-awareness. Ibid 29 refers to the *guṇa*s as "not onl the properties of a 'material' but the 'attitude' with which mind functions." The relationship forged through the qualities determines both the self-disposition (*svabhāva*) of the person and the potential invading agent (*bhūta*, *graha*) of mental disorders/negative possession.

[23] See Michael Puett, "The Ethics of Responding Properly: The Notion of *qing* in Early Chinese Thought," in Halvor Eifring, ed. *Love and Emotions in Traditional Chinese Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2004: 37-43 for a comparable difficulty translating the early Han usage of the word *qing*, which can mean "essential, genuine qualities" according to A.C. Graham or a form of "reality-input, feedback" according to Chad Hansen. In this theorization, *sattva* functions as the matrix for the qualities or characteristics while its affective form in itself, *sāttvika-bhāva*, affords the feedback being verisimilar.

[24] Delanda 2016: 113 calls this the unchanging feature of an assemblage.

[25] See Massumi 2002: 7. Rather than seeing change as an epiphenomenon assuming permanency as its foundation, what would happen if we start from change and have to make sense of stability?

[26] This is the position of Kapila Vatsyayan, the historian of Indian art history. See Kapila Vatsyayan, *Bharata's The Nāṭyaśāstra* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996), 25 and chapter 4 for a critique of this position.

[27] For the changeability of these terms, see Meulenbeld 1999, vol.2a: 82, ft 12 in *Suśruta-samhitā* 4.81-98ab and *Saṃgītaratnākara* 1.2.72-74: "*surasvabhāva, narasvabhāva, rakṣaḥprakṛti, piśācaprakṛti, and tiryakprakṛti* ("self-dispositions of gods and men, the matrix of demons, flesh-eaters, and animals"). Note that both self-disposition and matrix can refer to *sattva* as the more general term denoting a particular collation of characteristics.

[28] Schafer 2015: 12.

[29] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 106. Affects can be, and are, attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things, *including other affects*. Thus, one can be excited by anger, disgusted by shame, or surprised by joy.

[30] See Massumi 2002: 36.

[31] See Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 40. What makes affect (*bhāva*) fascinating in this account is that it cuts across the registers of this hierarchy, which Chen studies in terms of "leakages" and residues left by its logic by bodies crossing over these defined borders of individuality.

[32] See Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 2003), 70-71.

[33] See Harshita Kamath, "Bodied, Embodied, and Reflective Selves: Theorizing Performative Selfhood in South Indian Performance," in Barbara Holdrege and Karen Pechilis, eds. *Refiguring the Body: Embodiment in South Asian Religions* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 109.

[34] See Erin Manning, *Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 5: "Affect in this context can be understood as the preacceleration of experience as it acts on the becoming-body. Preacceleration refers to what has not yet been constituted but has an effect on actualization. In the context of movement, it is the virtual experience of a welling into movement that precedes the actual displacement. Affect moves, constituting the event that, in many cases, becomes-body."

[35] Hence "with affect" (*bhāvena*) in the instrumental sense can mean "heartfelt, truthfully, innately" while it also reveals something about how the culture views its members.

[36] Adam B. Seligman, Robert P. Weller, Michael J. Puett, and Bennett Simon, *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4: "this orientation suffers from an overly subjectivist and individualist emphasis on meaning and interaction. Such a view sees the "essential" or constitutive arena of action (often read as intention) as something within the social actor or actors, with the external, formal ritual seen as but the marker of these internal processes. We will refer to this attitude toward self and world as "sincerity."

[37] Seligman 2008: 4.

[38] Seligman 2008: 5: People "see ritual as a particular *form of orientation* to action, a frame…many diverse forms of behavior and action can usefully be understood as ritualistic precisely because the term "ritual" frames actions in certain, very specific ways. It is this framing of the actions, not the actions themselves, that makes them rituals."

[39] Patrick Olivelle, *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India: Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*. A New Annotated translation, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 120. Citing *Arthasāstra* 2.10.16: *tatra nāma sattva abhidhāyi*.

[40] Attributing animacy seems to become harder when things appearing to possess less "animacy" are put into the nominative case endings (*vibhakti*s) in Sanskrit. Powerful emotions and places are described in the *Mahābhārata* as "entering" (*ā-viś*) the body at times due to the gravity of their affective force. For example, see Frederick M. Smith, *The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 251.

[41] See Chen 2012: 26-27.

[42] Chen 2012: 30.

[43] Chen 2012: 39-42. Likewise see Dube 1983: 32 on the *tamasic* disorder called *vanaspaty*a ("vegetable king").

[44] Likewise see Smith 2006: 583. Affects can be viewed in both registers as embodied and subjective (as emotions) or as abstract and objective (substances, entities).[44] Embodiment in possession reveals a materiality "dominated by intentionality, emotion, desire, aversion, physical need, subtle essences, a tendency to action, and cyclical or ritual modes of functioning."

[45] See Lawrence Grossberg, "On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10:2 (June 1986): 53-54. Hall distinguished between articulation as expression and as ligatures: "An articulation is thus the form of the connection that *can* make a unity of two different elements, under certain circumstances. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time…the theory of articulation asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it." Hall attributes religious connections to politics as articulations in this sense: "Since those articulations are not inevitable, not necessary, they can potentially be transformed, so that religion can be articulated in more than one way."

[46] Kapil Kapoor, *Literary Theory: Indian Conceptual Framework,* (New Delhi: Affiliated East-West Press Private Limited, 1998), 104.

[47] Kapoor 1998: 106.

[48] Kapoor 1998: 106. Likewise the *Bhagavad-Gītā* mentions *bhāva* primarily in relation to *sat* (2.16, 8.3, 10.11, 17.26, 18.20) as well as with "quality," *guṇa* (7.12, 7.13, 8.4), and "self-disposition," *svabhāva* (7.15). I shall return to how these affordances of quality and adverbial self-direction function in *sattva*.

[49] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.1-2.

[50] Patrick Olivelle, *The Early Upaniṣads.* Annotated Text and Translation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 580.

[51] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 84.

[52] Bharata goes on in 6.22 to list the *sāttvika-bhāva*s alone, without any mention of the *vibhāva*s or the more general category of *anubhāva*s in which the former participate.

[53] See the section below on Bhoja, as well as Kavikarṇapūra in chapter 2.

[54] I shall return to this point further in chapter 4. For other references to the historiographical role of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, see Avanti Meduri, "Nation, Woman, Representation: The Sutured History of the Devadasi and Her Dance," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, Performance Studies, 1996: 84, 184. Abhinavagupta's theorization of the text also impacted

the debate as it combined his intellectual heritage with his devotional preferences to Śiva. This allowed nationalists to link the representation of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*'s fourth chapter on the Tāṇḍava dance to the local embodiment of the deity at Cidambaram (Nāṭarājā).

[55] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6:15-17. In contrast, see *Nāmaliṅgānuśāsana* (*Amarakośa*), Amarasiṃha (Krishna Govind Oka, ed. Poona: Law Printing Press, 1913), 1.7.440-449 where the *sthāyi-bhāva*s are not listed at all.

[56] *The Nāṭyaśāstra: A Treatise on Ancient Indian Dramaturgy and Histrionics Ascribed to Bharata-Muni*, ed. and trans. Manomohan Ghosh, 2 vols, reprint (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office 81, 2016), 6:15-17. 71, 6.46; 84, 7.9. Page numbers correspond to this edition when I compare against Ghosh's translation.

[57] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 84: *na hi rasādṛte kaścidapyarthaḥ pravartate*.

[58] B. M. Chaturvedi, *Some Unexplored Aspects of the Rasa Theory*, trans. P. Sri Ramachandrudu (Delhi: Vidyanidhi Prakashan, 1996), 37.

[59] Clooney 1990: 106-107.

[60] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 82.

[61] This process also assumes each of the components is itself an assemblage, fitting into each stacked level. See Delanda 2016: 14.

[62] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 148.

[63] Pollock 2016: 51 favors this interpretation.

[64] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 149.

[65] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 93.

[66] See *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 150, and *Nāṭyaśāstra* 84.

[67] Susan Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), 121. While she argues the musical composition has its conception only within the composer's mind, affect would seem to locate disposition more diffusely in relation with composer's habits, bodily movement, and ongoing appearances as well as already-exist dispositions taking hold of them.

[68] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 93, 7.8: *yathā narāṇāṃ nṛpatiḥ śiṣyāṇāṃ ca yathā guruḥ | evaṃ hi sarvabhāvānāṃ bhāvaḥ sthāyī mahān iha*: "Just like a king is greater than men, and like a teacher is greater than his students, indeed, the stabilizing affect is greater than all the affects in the play."

[69] Ghosh translates this phrase as "an instrument of causation," however this ignores the word order of the Sanskrit. Bharata offers none of the words to suggest synonyms, denotation, or other scholastic tools to suggest these two terms are equated, but instead are part of a compound.

[70] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 92.

[71] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 93, 7.1-3.

[72] See Pollock 2016: 50 and *Nāṭyaśāstra* 165.

[73] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 150, 6.38.

[74] See chapter 2 for more on semblances.

[75] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 92.

[76] *Amarakośa* 1.1.36: *vibhūtir bhūtir aiśvarya maṇimādikam aṣṭadhā*: "Pervasion, welfare, majesty, the jewel, etc. are the eight-fold powers of Śiva."

[77] See *Nāṭyaśāstra* 7.4: "As many things are pervaded by this through what dwells in the vocal and bodily gestures, it has the name "pervading affect." *Bahava arthā vibhāvyante vāgaṅgābhinayāśritāḥ | anena yasmāt tena ayaṃ vibhāvaḥ iti saṃjñitaḥ*

[78] Pollock 2016: 50.

[79] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 165.

[80] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 92, *anubhāvyate anena vāgaṅgasattvaiḥ kṛta abhinaya iti*.

[81] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 92, 7.5: *vāgaṅgābhinayena iha yatas tu artha anubhāvyate | vāgañgopāṅgasaṃyuktas tu anubhāvas tataḥ smṛtaḥ*.

[82] See *Nāṭya-śāstra* 84-85.

[83] Kapoor 1998: 105.

[84] Delanda 2016: 3.

[85] Chapter 4 explores the possibility of creating distance within oneself as a performer. I argue that the ritual affordances of mirroring and reflection in *devadāsī* performance carried over into Bharatanāṭyam's gestural regime.

[86] Animals at times seem to exhibit similar tendencies in poetry, although they are denied the full status of experiencing *rasa* in most commentators on the subject. Chapter 2 discusses this in terms of animal affects as semblances of proper *sthāyi-bhāva*s and *rasa*s.

[87] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 166, 7.6: *lokasvabhāvasaṃsiddhā lokayātrānugāminaḥ | anubhāvavibhāvāśca jñayās tu abhinayaiṛ buddhaiḥ*.

[88] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 166: *atiprasaṅga-nivṛti arthaṃ ca*. The first term means "prolixity" according to Bharata, meaning the rule would cover too wide a range of things.

[89] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 166.

[90] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 166, 7.7: *yo artha hṛdayasaṃvādī tasya bhāva rasodbhavaḥ | śarīraṃ vyāpyate tena śuṣkam kāṣṭham iva agninā*.

[91] Pollock 2016: 51, on *Nāṭyaśāstra* 6.34-38. "Affects" (*bhāva*s) are so called by the creators of drama because when conjoined with the various registers of acting they bring into being (*bhāvayanti*) the rasas. Just as various substances bring a new flavor into existence, so the emotions with the aid of the registers of acting bring the rasas into being. There is no rasa without the emotions and other aesthetic elements, and no emotions with rasa. Their production is mutually effected in the course of acting. Just as the conjunction of condiments and spices makes food savory, so the emotions and rasas bring each other into being. Just as a tree grows from a seed, and flower and fruit from a tree, so rasas are a root, and the emotions and other elements are all determined from them."

[92] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 1066, 35.26.-27.

[93] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 173.

[94] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 174.

[95] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 193-194, 7.83.

[96] Seligman 2008: 26.

[97] See Joseph Roach, *It* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 4-7 on how early Hollywood star-makers introduced the term to the movie industry with Clara Bow, the original "It Girl." It looped back around from accounts of stage actresses in the court of the English monarch Charles II.

[98] See Ann Taves, *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building-Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 161.

[99] Smith 1989: 92-93. For instance, birth by a mother leaves the child unformed, including the fontanelle at the top of the head. As the child develops and learns their required duties, they become more "fully formed" by the cultural knowledge of their teachers (*guru*s) and are ritually said to be born a second time (*dvi-ja*) at their initiation rites, *upanayana*, in which the

mantras describe the guru carrying the student in his belly like an embryo (*garbha*). Tthe *upanaya* rite of initiation for a twice-born (*dvija*) boy, in Manu, is said to be his "real birth-a blatant move to devalue the products of women and extol the cultural/ritual labor of men. This second birth was thus claimed to be a socio-ontological birth standing in radical opposition to the defective natural birth, and was designed to rectify biological faults and constructs a higher ontological existence for the young boy."

[100] One contested etymology for the term comes from Latin *re-ligāre*, "to link again." On affective ligatures, see Schaefer 2015: 187.

[101] Smith 1989: 46.

[102] Smith 1989: 47. In fact, we shall see that Bharata uses this term for the social construction of character (*sattva*) that manifest in affective forms of gesture.

[103] Schaefer 2015: 185. Schaefer draws these common themes from the works of Erin Manning, Donna Haraway, and Elizabeth Grosz.

[104] Schaefer 2015: 191: "Dance coalesces as a torrent of forms that connect bodies to religious histories, practices, and affective technologies. These ligaments form a historically mediated set of power relations, simultaneously etching and reformulating women's bodily relationships with historical traditions and global migrations."

[105] Schaefer 2015: 192: "An affective, radically embodied encounter with the world, our histories, our relationships, and the semistable forms of our bodies. Dance is more than corporeal knowledge or a uniquely inefficient replica of human language used to transmit cosmologies. Dance, for Narayanan, correlates bodies and spaces, producing affective economies that constitute religious worlds…Like bowerbirds dancing in their lek, bodies in the world play with the array of forms presented to them to produce streams of affect."

[106] Seligman 2008: 32.

[107] See Puett 2004: 42 for similar patterns of interlocking thought in the Chinese term *qing*.

[108] Seligman 2008: 7-8.

[109] Seligman 2008: 32. In a comparable cultural example from 4th century BCE, the Confucian text "Nature Emerges from the Decree" (*Xing Zi Ming Chu*) claims emotions and affects have energies which emerge from a dispositional matrix (*svabhāva* in Sanskrit): "The energies of joy, anger, sorrow, and sadness are given by nature. When it comes to their being manifested on the outside, it is because things have called them forth." Movement emerges from mind when things, "each with its own nature, affect each other." Our particular patterns of movement, this drawing out, are called dispositions.

[110] Seligman 2008: 33. In this manner, "the rites arise from the dispositions" in early Confucian and Daoist thought.

[111] Seligman 2008: 34. See Orsi 2015.

[112] See Giorgio Agamben, *Karman: A Brief Treatise on Action, Guilt, and Gesture*. Translated by Adam Kotsko. Crossing Aesthetics Series (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017), 31-32: "the perfect exhibition of the pure potential [*sattva*] of the human body, so also could one say that, in gesture, each member, once liberated from its functional relation to an end–organic or social–can for the first time explore, sound out, and show forth all the possibilities of which it is capable, without ever exhausting them...In the same sense Mallarmé, watching Loie Fuller dance, could write that she was like "the inexhaustible surging forth of herself"…Praxis–human life–is not a trial (an *action*), but rather a *mysterion* in the theatrical sense of the term, made of gestures and words."

[113] Seligman 2008: 23: "We cannot actually share (as opposed to simply describing) our desire or hate or frustration with another soul; we cannot produce in another our own desires, hates, or frustrations. We can, however, attempt to evoke the same *sets of feelings or experiences through a shared "could be.*" Our individual experience of an "is" (the very real feeling of desire, hate, or even hunger and poverty) can only become social through the imaginative act, the "as if." Such diverse phenomena [of different rituals] all involve this construction of (and by) a subjunctive universe, which creates a community of empathy at the same time. What we share as symbolic beings is potentiality."

[114] Seligman 2008: 37. The French sociologist Roger Callois' 1958 work *Les jeux et les hommes*, which posits a typology of forms of playing. Callois' system focuses on how roles are defined in each, with an added dimension of whether the self is in control or cedes control to another force. Their formulation below is helpful to understanding certain formulations of ritual we'll examine. Sacrifice, battles, and magic fall into *agôn*, where the self retains control and affirms one's social role. We saw this in the Vedic *yajña* ceremonies. Drama works to retain control while also subverting one's social role, which Callois links to rites of reversal. *Alea* and *ilinx* function on the other hand to give up self-control in the form of gambling, beseeching, or taking a charismatic leader as one's guide in the former while spirit possession, intoxication, and dizziness characterize the latter.

[115] Adapted from Seligman 2008: 78.

[116] Seligman 2008: 84.

[117] Vatsyayan 1996: 22.

[118] Vatsyayan 1996: 23. *Ṛg-veda* 10.90.3.

[119] Vatsyayan 1996: 23-24.

[120] Vatsyayan 1996: 24.

[121] Vatsyayan 1996: 41: "The twin demands of 'impersonality' and 'intensity' and authenticity and of negative capability and sensitivity are stressed. Internal discipline and concentration (*tapas*) is of essence…With extraordinary finesse and skill, Bharata, brings his exposition to culmination by restating the totality of the original inspiration, the process of transference from the unified and undifferentiated state to expression through concrete form and multiple forms, the dimensions and levels of communication and the demands of depersonalization, humility, training and discipline of the artist. But as said and done, the creative act is a mystery and there are many aspects, which are secret (*guha*)."

[122] Vatsyayan 1996: 26.

[123] Clooney 1990: 47 on *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* 2.1.5: *codanā punar ārambhaḥ*.

[124] Vatsyayan 1996: 42. See Clooney 1990: 113.

[125] Theorists such as Kavikarṇapūra who attempt to number the total combinations of affective structures in a play reach numbers that evoke Puranic lengths of the eternal cosmos at times!

[126] Sreenath Nair, *The Nastyasastra and the Body in Performance: Essays on Indian Theories of Dance and Drama*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2015), 4: "The body in performance produces perceptible knowledge. This knowledge of the body is produced through the body's constant engagements with physical objects and mental objects in the world. However, the knowledge that the body in performance produces is not only the by-product of the object relationship of the body in a performance world, but rather beyond the level of a rational understanding of the body as a physical object, the *whole relationship* of the body in performance is situated in the *transitive* dynamics of the production and

reproduction of cultural artifacts. The body in performance operates in multiple dimensions and on multiple pathways. One the one hand, the body in performance is firmly positioned in the corporeal logic and physical objectifications of techniques and principles [*abhinaya*]. On the other hand, the body in performance replaces itself through *a series of transitions* [*vṛtti*] during the performance from actor through character to the audience transporting cultural objects and forms into performative experience. The entire discourse of the Natyasastra is about this transitive experience of the body and, the rasa theory in particular, offers a profound conceptual explanation as well as the methodological clarity into this performative experience. According to Abhinavagupta, rasa is the purpose and the product of *natya*, the performance."

[127] Nair 2015: 4.

[128] Nair 2015: 6. I shall return to how this functions to link bodies into ensembles in chapter 2.

[129] Nair 2015: 6: "The invisible, here, is the reason for the visible and the 'visible' emerges and submerges into the 'invisible.'" For instance, a poet might start from their disposition (*sattva*) as it generates a commanding form into a semblance (*līlā*). Nair calls this the implicit functioning of *rasa* as the "expressive order." These virtually expressed forms then become bodily encoded, carrying their virtual share into the material domain via gestures of speaking, writing, painting, sculpting, decorating, or otherwise fashioning (*abhinaya*). In this way they become "vessels" (*pātra*s) for the affective forms. An audience member, meanwhile, might start with a common affective expectation (*sattva*) of what they will see, which they see emerge in the characteristic style of the actors (*vṛtti*). This, in turn, leads to their own gestures of reception and articulation with the affects portrayed making them into an audience (*sa-hṛdaya*s, those "with hearts" turned toward the affects). Actors, meanwhile, start by learning a style, Nair claims, which manifests as the *vṛtti*s that move "mechanically," showing an autonomy of affective control, which links to a commanding form (*sattva*). In turn, it can inaugurate novel gestures (*abhinaya*) in their techniques. These become the semblances (*līlā*s) or the "world of the play" which Nair refers to as the "illusory" world of the characters.

[130] Nair 2015: 7.

[131] Vatsyayan 1996: 26.

[132] Vatsyayan 1996: 38.

[133] Vatsyayan 1996: 34: "This moves not in an ascending line of beginning, conflict, climax and denouement, but in a circular fashion with a series of concentric circles, all over layered and connected to each other…*bija* (seed), suggesting growth, and *bindu* (drop of a liquid and point of a gnomon of early geometry), indicating structure and dimension." One last note about how story is related to affect will help our charting of Bharata's theory of performing affects. Many characteristics of South Asian narrative seem opaque to Western audiences which seem to be due to missing cultural cues. For instance, character development seems to function in a unique way within Sanskrit plays or Bollywood movies compared to contemporary ("realistic") standards of creating narrative plotlines. Bharata's plot development (*itivṛtta*) in chapter 20-21 of the *Nāṭya-śāstra* does not function like the linear graphs of Aristotelian action. Instead, the "seed" (*bīja*) develops dimensionality as it transforms into a drop (*bindu*). Vatsyayan describes it in this rippling, non-linear fashion. These forms afford qualities of growth as well as development in the moving contours of their unfolding potential. The events in a story do not develop outside the ecology of affects but instead are constantly transformed

by the potential of the plot's dispositional matrix. The parts of the plot work in tandem to create the conditions for *rasa* to emerge through the *bhāva*s.

[134] See Langer 1956: 66: "In the phenomenon we call "life," both continuous change and permanent form really exist; but the form is made and maintained by complicated *disposition* of mutual influences among the physical units (atoms, molecules, then cells, then organs), whereby changes tend to always occur in certain pre-eminent ways."

[135] Vatsyayan 1996: 26.

[136] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 531, 21.121-124, ft. 1.

[137] See Vatsyayan 1996: 35.

[138] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 587, 24: 1.

[139] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 198. See chapter three for more on *vṛtti* in its modalities of "turning forward" (*pravṛtti*) or turning inward (*nivṛtti*) toward the latent disposition of a matrix.

[140] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 198, 7.94.

[141] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 202, 7.118: *ye tu ete sāttvikā bhāvā nānābhinayasaṃśritāḥ | raseṣu eteṣu vijñeyā nāṭyayoktṛbhiḥ*: "The performers of drama know that dispositional affects are found among all these *rasa*s, and which are connected with various gestures."

[142] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 203, 7.122.

[143] *Amarakośa* 1.3.29: *viśeṣaḥ kālikovasthā guṇāḥ sattvaṃ rajastamaḥ*, "Distinction are temporal states; the qualities include *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*."

[144] *Mahābhārata* 12.308.16-19. Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad, *Human Being, Bodily Being: Phenomenology from Classical India*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 70. See also David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 141-151. White distinguishes that Sulabhā penetrates Janaka with her entire personhood, including her disposition as one facet among many.

[145] Ram-Prasad 2019: 82. Ram-Prasad argues that this version of *sattva* is linked to the *triguṇa* theory of Sāṃkhya. Even if this is the case, it also appears not to be a fixed state but instead a quality which has the ability to inhabit bodies to greater or lesser degrees. As a "variable presence," *sattva* is not merely a universal aspect of the psycho-physical being but instead an affective form that affords "calmness" and "illumination."[145] I would argue that the affects, while remaining separated, are placed into a common dispositional matrix (*prakṛti*) in which the outcome of the event bubbles up and percolates, waiting for the contouring of the experience to shape its eventual form.[145] Sulabhā also describes *sattva* as nested "within" the intellect (*buddhi*), the principle that governs judgment and rests at a subtler level than the mind (*manas*) in Sāṃkhya cosmology. She claims this quality is quiescent (*apāra*) in various ways (*nānā*), and "a living thing is judged to possess much of this quality or little of it (*mahāsattvo' alpasattvo vā*). Ram-Prasad argues the functions of the mind are distributed across these various strata in which *sattva* contains the "moral-phenomenal character" of the person. While I disagree with calling it an "essence," it has characteristics which seem to afford experience with a quality that makes them powerful, verisimilar, and able to affect others, which could be deemed "essential."

[146] See Dube 1983: 31. Individuals with a *sattvic* self-disposition or matrix (*prakṛti*) "enjoy pleasure immensely," but "this is only from the unsatiable [*sic*] knowledge of the object of enjoyment." Likewise ibid 34 suggests that the *sattva* personality types are more prone to affective disorders in Freudian psychotherapeutic terms. I disagree with the authors' attempts to map the two systems exactly onto one another.

[147] This form of affectivity could be seen in modern encounters between seated figures and guests in highly visible settings in performance such as Marinaa Abrahmović's *The Artist is Present*. See Gordon Coonfield, ""Marina Abrahmović Made Me Cry": Performance and Presence Work in the Affective Economy," *Text and Performance Quarterly* (online Aug 28, 2019): 2 for more on the affective economy of this piece.

[148] *Mahābhārata* 12.308.167-174, in Ram-Prasad 2019: 90. Sulabhā argues that she can affect the king while remaining unaffected herself as a renunciant. While he styles their "conjoining" of dispositions as erotic, she argues that his body is, in fact, "an empty house," within which ascetics are allowed by custom to dwell. Since her disposition entered into him, not her physical form, she has not come in contact with him in any way, yet he shamefully makes out the experience to have "violated" his bodily integrity. No other person experienced this joining, and hence she argues "A far-sighted man from a good family who has a sense of shame should not say such a thing in public." Diverging from Ram-Prasad's explanation, I see this as her way of asserting her agentive control in the flow of affectivity. She dwells in his *sattva* as an affective body without touching his physical form, "as a drop of water on a lotus leaf stands on the leaf without touching it." It is not her fault, she argues, if the king feels his ego-boundary crossed, which he claims to have eliminated by removing his karmic "seeds" (*bīja*s) through austerities (*tapas*).

[149] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 587, 24: 1.

[150] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 170, 24:2.

[151] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 170, 24:3.

[152] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 170, 24:5.

[153] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 170, 24:6: *dehātmakaṃ bhavet sattvaṃ sattvād bhāvaḥ asmutthitaḥ | bhāvo hāvaśca helā ca parasparasamutthitāḥ.*

[154] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 170: 24, 7.

[155] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 170: 24, 8.

[156] See *Nāṭyaśāstra* 24:100 gives the list, and *Nāṭyaśāstra* 183, 24:144: "Women are known to have various modes of comportment, due to being equally founded in their various dispositions directed toward their selves." *nānāsīlāḥ striyo jñeyāḥ svaṃ svaṃ sattvam samāṣritāḥ.*

[157] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 34:1. See also Ghosh 1041.

[158] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 24: 72. See also Ghosh 601.

[159] While Bharata never explains why these gestures in particular are not explored in full, the types of characters he elaborates suggests that each disposition will have particular contours that distinguish it from others, giving a play a particular feel when they are added to the assemblage. This set of fixed identities, however, seems to contradict somewhat the normal state of the world he also suggests as a source for the performance. In this tension we can see the ritual framework of an "as-if" world playing out alongside the encyclopedic claims of the author to having made his text at new Veda, a religious source of authority in its enactment. In this way, while stereotypical, the *sattva*s offer another "commanding form" alongside the stabilizing affects to shape the overall feel of a performance within the nodes of its characters. This is not just listing in a drive toward classification however; it always assumes performance as the reason for giving these types.

[160] See Vatsyayan 1996: *Bharata*, Chapter 3: The Primary Text; on the *Abhinavabhāratī,* and ibid 34. Vatsyayan describes the manuscript history of the text and its rediscovery in the late 1800's through the 1920's when the *Abhinavabhāratī* was first found in Kerala. Chapter four

examines this process during the colonial era alongside related trends in Orientalist philology and its impact on performance practices in Tamil Nadu.

[161] Pollock 2016: 35.

[162] See Pollock 2016: 224. Mammaṭa's vision of all literary art would be adopted by most later theorists. On Bhoja see ibid 111, and for Bharata ibid 47-49. Chapter seven in the *Nāṭya-śāstra* in particular has no commentaries available, according to Pollock, and hence my major focus in the previous sections is speculative at times.

[163] Pollock 2016: 285 on Vopadeva's *Bhāgavaṭa-muktāphala* (c. 1300). I shall discuss Pollock's other two sources regarding *bhakti* versions of aesthetics, Rūpa Gosvāmin and Kavikarṇapūra, as well as the latter's teacher Śrīnātha Pāṇḍita in chapter two.

[164] See Neil Delmonico, *Sacred Rapture: A Study of the Religious Aesthetic of Rūpa Gosvāmin*. Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, 1990; David Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001) and *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* of Rūpa Gosvāmin. 2003. *The Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu of Rūpa Gosvāmin*, ed. and trans. David L. Haberman (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 2003), preface.

[165] Clooney 1990: 137. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka repurposed Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā concepts including "actualization" (*bhāvanā*). Mīmāṃsā as a philosophic "school" (*darśana*) attempted to explain the force of Vedic commands in performance (*prayoga*), the common theme of Bharata's text.

[166] Pollock 2016: xv.

[167] Pollock 2016: 12.

[168] Pollock 2016: 3.

[169] Pollock 2016: 8.

[170] See Pollock 2016: 9: "rasa was an emotional state in the character that "arises" when the various formal components of the drama enumerated are successfully "conjoined" in performance."

[171] Pollock 2016: 10.

[172] Pollock 2016: 25-26. Quoting the phenomenologist of aesthetics, Mikel Dufrenne, he writes: "Feeling is as deeply embedded in the object as it is in the subject, and the spectator experiences feeling because *affective quality* belongs to the object."

[173] Pollock 2016: 33. However, Pollock likewise asserts that we are not developing empathetic situatedness in another person's life in literary imagination; instead we seem to be "applying the narrative to one's own life by assimilating its notions of propriety…A narrative has an essence, to which there is a "proper" way to respond." Literature seems therefore not to question social mores, but instead to reify the correct answers they give in their denouements. In this way, there are specific, socially-sanctioned ways of understanding the affects and these become pivotal places where the aesthetic structures flexes, bends, and articulates with other systems of thought. While outside the scope of this study, "propriety" (*aucitya*) functions as a commanding form in Pollock's work.

[174] According to David Gordon White in a personal communication, this tracks with his heavily Sāṃkhyan *Rājamārtaṇḍa* commentary on the *Yoga-sūtra*.

[175] Pollock 2016: 111. One is by Bhaṭṭa Nārasiṃha and the other by an anonymous author.

[176] Pollock 2016: 111.

[177] Pollock 2016: 112.

[178] Pollock 2016: 112.

[179] Pollock 2016: 113.

[180] Pollock 2016: 124.

[181] *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.24, cited in Pollock 2016: 112, 356 ft. 11: "Sense of self is the awareness that one is empowered to act with respect to one's experiences or thoughts; that one is capable of doing so; that phenomenal objects are meant for oneself, that no one but oneself is empowered to act upon them; accordingly, that one exists. Sense of self is equated with ego because it is unique to oneself. It is in dependence on one's sense of self that the intellect comes to determinations, that is, reaches decisions such as the thought 'I must do this.'"

[182] Pollock 2016: 112. This would lead later *bhakti* theorists to supply the idea that the source of this consciousness was a divine, personal being, the *sattvin*, Kṛṣṇa.

[183] Pollock 2016: 112.

[184] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 149.

[185] *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.4, in Lutjeharms 126.

[186] *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.3, in Lutjeharms 126.

[187] *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 687, in Lutjeharms 126.

[188] See Rembert Lutjeharms, *A Vaiṣṇava Poet in Early Modern Bengal: Kavikarṇapūra's Splendour of Speech*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 126-127.

[189] *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.10, in Lutjeharms 2018: 127.

[190] See Lutjeharms 2018: 127-128: "In the first stage *rasa* exists only in its potential. It is singular and a particular aspect of consciousness that manifests as ego (*ahaṃkāra*), passion (*śṛṅgāra*), and a specific self-understanding (*abhimāna*). From this mental state, triggered by the presence of their proper excitants, the stable emotions arise and reach their climax in their corresponding *rasa* experience. This is the second stage. Finally, the diversity of the various emotions that arose in the second stage coalesce into a homogeneous, single *rasa* experience."

[191] See Pollock 2016: 119. *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.4.

[192] Pollock 2016: 120. *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.9.

[193] Pollock 2016: 120. *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.10.

[194] Delmonico 1990: 121.

[195] Delmonico 1990: 127, ft.20. Bhaṭṭa Nṛsiṃha, the commentator on the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa*, glosses the term as *yena śṛṅgaṃ ucchrayo rīyate*, "that by which one is raised to the peak" while Wendy Doniger suggested translating it as "peak experience," suggesting affordances from Abraham Maslow's theory of stacking needs.

[196] Qtd. in Delmonico 1990: 130-131.

[197] Delmonico 1990: 139.

[198] If we see this aspect of the magnanimous expansion of *preman* in Gauḍīya discourses, for instance, this might seem to be carrying over Bhoja's affordance into Rādhā's dispositional matrix as *mahābhāva*.

[199] Delmonico 1990: 140 ft. 42 calls attention to this karmic structure.

[200] Delmonico 1990: 141. In *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* 5:13-23, we can see that Bhoja uses the Sāṃkhya framing to showcase how disposition manifests itself as the quality (*guṇa*) of material reality to enhance the dispositional matrix of the main character: "A *rasa*, when it awakens in the form of desire, for example, through its specific foundational factor, is defined as stable emotion… "Stable" emotions are those that "stay" permanently in the consciousness, come to be conjoined with adjuncts, and when amplified, become the particular rasas. The mind

untouched by volatility [*rajas*] and stolidity [*tamas*] is here called "sensitivity" [*sattva*]; the emotions, thanks to their connection with sensitivity, have the capacity to contribute to the production of rasa are themselves called the psychophysical responses, or "sensitivities." The "transitory" emotions are so called because they cause a stable emotion to constantly "transit" around in the body, and thereby become the causes of the physical reactions.[200] Or perhaps they are so called because once present, they do not remain; transitory emotions like remembrance come into existence and go out of existence in love and its various rasas. However, we ourselves insist not only that *all* the stable emotions can become transitory in the case of desire but also that the transitory emotions pride, attachment, satisfaction, and sagacity can become stable emotions in the case of four additional rasas respectively: vainglory, affection, peacefulness, and nobility."

[201] Pollock 2016: 117.

[202] Pollock 2016: 119, *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.3.

[203] Sedgewick 2003: 19: "Affects can be, and are, attached to things, people, ideas, sensations, relations, activities, ambitions, institutions, and any number of other things, *including other affects*. Thus, one can be excited by anger, disgusted by shame, or surprised by joy."

[204] Pollock 2016: 124.

[205] Pollock 2016: 119. *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.4.

[206] Pollock 2016: 120, *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.9.

[207] Pollock 2016: 120, *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.10.

[208] Pollock 2016: 135; Clooney 1990: 107.

[209] Pollock 2016: 135-136.

[210] Pollock 2016: 130.

[211] Pollock 2016: 120, *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* 1.11-12: "If desire and the other stable emotions are to be counted as rasas when they achieve full development, then what crime are joy and the other transitory emotions guilty of that they should not get the name *rasa*, since as emotions they are no different from desire and the rest? If it is because they are supposed to be ephemeral, then, pray tell, how long do fear, grief, anger, amusement, and the other "stable" emotions really last? If an emotion's stability is thought to derive from the preeminence of its object or the nature of its substratum, then what about "transitory" emotions such as anxiety and the like? As for the substratum, that is, the hero's temperament, it remains the same in the case of both "stable" and "transitory" emotions with respect to his self; as for the object, the capacity to excite predispositions is something common to both "stable" and "transitory" emotions."

[212] Pollock 2016: 126.

[213] See the previous section on Sulabhā and Janaka from the *Śānti-parvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.

[214] Pollock 2016: 136.

[215] Pollock 2016: 138-139: ""so the stable emotions condition the transitory emotions and the reactions, and by the same infusion with the sense of self are tasted by the mind and so become *rasa*s in the plural."

[216] See Pollock 2016: 126-127: "Rasa that remains in the form of an emotion is what a supporting character experiences and is not fully developed."

[217] Pollock 2016: 145.

[218] Pollock 2016: 146.

[219] Pollock 2016: 146. An outcome of this theory is the entire work of art now becomes equivalent to a sentence. which seems to create issues in that *rasa* is now the verbal power of the sentence and the nouns become functionally ways of modifying it like the *bhāva*s.

[220] Pollock 2016: 147. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka was so successful that Sanskritic discourse–and commentators outside Indian culture–retroactively viewed all previous aesthetics as reader-oriented.See David Mason, *Theatre and Religion on Krishna's Stage: Performing in Vrindavan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 3 for a similar theory in performance studies: "theatre is religion by making the unmanifest manifest-the fundamental thing that both theatre and religion try to do."

[221] Pollock 2016: 155.

[222] Pollock 2016: 158, *Avaloka* 4.1: "The stabilizing affect…becomes almost present within the minds of readers and viewers, and when brought within the sphere of savoring–a state of intensely blissful consciousness–it becomes *rasa*."

[223] Pollock 2016: 156.

[224] Pollock 2016: 158. *Avaloka* on *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.2: "Now these pervading affects attain their respective states as conditions without reference to any entity actually existing outside the text, but precisely through their embodiment in language [*śabdopadhānāt*]. They thereby take on a general form and come to be conceived of by each person "actualizing the emotion" [*bhāvaka*] in such a way that is connected with himself; they become almost present in his mind and thereby attain the virtual form of either a foundational or a stimulant factor. Hence they are not in the least devoid of their own reality."

[225] Pollock 2016: 159, *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.4ab.

[226] Pollock 2016: 159, *Avaloka* 172.

[227] Pollock 2016: 160.

[228] Pollock 2016: 160, *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.7

[229] Pollock 2016: 175, 380 ft.217. *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.40-41ab.

[230] Pollock 2016: 176, *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.41cd-42ab. This idea resonates with the illusory nature of semblances, which I shall discuss in chapter two.

[231] Pollock 2016: 177-178, 381-382 ft. 236. On *Daśa-rūpaka* 4.43-45ab.

[232] See Ram-Prasad 2019: 70.

[233] Pollock 2016: 189.

[234] Pollock 2016: 188.

[235] Pollock 2016: 190. As a form of "knowledge of a knowledge," this seems to function similarly to how affect works in Massumi's reading of Spinoza, as a change which registers a bodily feeling of its own feeling. See Massumi 2002: 32. This is, in fact, the "business" of the text (Hindi, Marathi *vyavasāya*). As "exertion, perseverance" it acts as a synonym for the moving and "turning" (*vṛtti*) of a particular style of living, thinking, and doing

[236] Pollock 2016: 190-191.

[237] Pollock 2016: 191: "It is of the nature of human awareness to be constrained by the primary categories of space and time, by our identities, by the phenomena of our everyday lives. Drama is designed precisely to counteract our natural proclivities to toward distraction, disbelief, and the like by such strategies as the use of plausible narratives or the neutralization of the actors' space-time constraints through the use of costumes. In fact, Abhinava's phenomenological description of the transformation of the viewer's awareness through the magic of drama as it unfolds step by step offers some of the most penetrating accounts of aesthetic psychology available anywhere. He makes subtle observations on the

fact that rasa is "a process of tasting" (*rasyamāna*) and not some substantial thing tasted, thereby attempting to address (or so it seems to a non-professional philosopher) what Wilfrid Sellars called "the notorious 'ing/ed' ambiguity of experience,'" between acts of experienc*ing* and the contents experienc*ed*."

[238] Pollock 2016: 191.

[239] Pollock 2016: 201.

[240] Pollock 2016: 203: ""The very essence of rasa, or "taste," is a *state of being tasted*; its nature is not that of a cognizable *object*."

[241] Pollock 2016: 203.

[242] Pollock 2016: 205. *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.283.

[243] Propriety (*aucitya*) is a major topic in its own right and beyond the scope of my argument here. For Abhinavagupta's aesthetic disciple Kṣemendra's work on the title for poets, see *Aucityavicāracarcā*. On Kṣemendra, see Suryakantha Sastri, *Kṣemendra Studies,* R. K. Panda ed. (Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, 2010), 133.

[244] Pollock 2016: 206.

[245] See Pollock 216: 209: "Now, given the varying degree of their heart's concurrence, those who hear a reading or watch a play can have a highly differentiated appreciation, depending on its clarity or obscurity to them. Someone whose heart is by nature like a spotless mirror has, for that very reason, a mind no longer subjected to anger, confusion, craving, and so on typical of this phenomenal world; for such a person, the cluster of rasas–the defining feature of drama–will be entirely clear and cognized by a relishing that is essentially a tasting of their commonality."

[246] Pollock 2016: 386, ft.83.

[247] Pollock 2016: 194: This experience is the *rasa*, which is unencumbered by attempts to prolong or foreshorten it: "In this state of fear the viewer's self is neither completely displaced nor prominently referenced, and the same holds for every other person." Hence the entire audience can experience this simultaneously.

[248] Pollock 2016: 207-208.

[249] Pollock 2016: 208, *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.260.12.

[250] On terminus, see Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 32: "A terminus is like a basin of attraction that draws you toward it, as by a gravitational pull, but no sooner spins you off, as by a centrifugal force. The world doesn't stop at your anger. An angry word or deed snowballs into an unfolding drama sweeping you and all around you along. You are always really living in a centrifugal hurtle to a next effect…Rather than arriving at end-objects, or fulfilling objective ends, we are carried by wavelike tendencies, in a rollover of experiences perpetually substituting for each other…*participation precedes cognition*. This is the sense of James's famous saying that we don't run because we are afraid. We are afraid because we run." If this fits in cases of *bhāva*, then we can say *the gesture precedes awareness*, at least in the participant. Kinesthetic awareness is on-going, intentional, or at the very least is modulated by forces and potentials (*śakti*s) present in various degrees and vectors which can cancel one another out, proceed along synergistically, or gently nudge a primary *bhāva* slightly among other possibilities.

[251] Pollock 2016: 196: "At all events, what is grasped by this apprehension–which is freed from all hindrances, and is essentially the *process* of tasting–is the stable emotion, and thus grasped, the stable emotion *is* rasa."

[252] Pollock 2016: 209.

[253] See Pollock 2016: 195: "Rapture" is said to be an experience in which one is immersed without interruption, given the absence of any feeling of dissatisfaction: "'Rapture' (*camat-kāra*) is the 'action' (*karana*) of someone 'enjoying' (*camatah*)," that is, when one is immersed in a pulsation of a fanstastical experience. It may be of the nature of a visualization, a conviction, an imagination, or a memory–though this is a memory of a sort that does not emerge as normal memory does."

[254] Pollock 2016: 211, 391, ft. 207, from *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.287.21-22: "To say that rasas cause emotions to come into being is to say they make them, that is, enable them to be identified as aesthetic elements." Pollock 2016: gives the example of a tropic usage in Sanskrit logic (*nyāya*) of the son is the cause of the father being a father.

[255] Pollock 2016: 211, *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.286.8.

[256] Pollock 2016: 213, *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.289.13. This seems to mirror the argument of Dhanaṃjaya and Dhanika.

[257] Pollock 2016: 194-195: "The whole assemblage of theatrical components, from the actor onward, conduces to this process of visualization. In this assemblage, all sources of delimitation–time, place, perceiving subjects, both those that really exist and those made available through the literary work–are expunged by canceling each other out; and thereby the communization just mentioned is enhanced all the more. For this reason, the audience members all share a homogeneous comprehension thanks to the concurrence of their predispositions–everyone's mind being studded with an infinite array of such predispositions–and this supplies even greater enhancement to the rasa."

[258] Pollock 2016: 218-219, *Abhinava-bhāratī* 1.35.12.

[259] Pollock 2016: 219.

[260] See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977) and Monique Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieusian Approach to Understanding Emotion," *History and Theory* 51:2 (2012): 193 on *habitus* in relation to affects. Chapter three examines the idea of *vṛtti*.

[261] Pollock 2016: 219. In Sanskrit there is only a singular "heart" for the event, a core experience that becomes modulated and affectively tied to every person there, making them a *dividual* part of the process.

[262] Pollock 2016: 394, ft. 285.

[263] Pollock 2016: 219-220.

[264] Pollock 2016: 221.

[265] Pollock 2016: 197, 387 ft.107.

[266] Pollock 2016: 197.

[267] Pollock 2016: 209.

[268] *Yoga-sūtra* 1.2.

[269] Pollock 2016: 204-205. David Gordon White in a personal correspondence points out this seems to align with the yogic goal of *nirvikalpa-samādhi*.

[270] Chapter 2 examines this idea in more depth under *līlā*.

[271] Pollock 2016: 194: "Here the qualified individual…first comprehends the literal meaning [of a poetic verse]. Then there arises another comprehension in the mind, a kind of direct visualization, in which all the distinctions employed in this or that verse–distinctions of tense, for example–are eliminated…what appears in the second form of comprehension here

is, accordingly, a pure kind of fear–the cognition "afraid"–untouched by time and place…And this stable emotion of fear, when it penetrates the heart almost visibly and becomes present before one's very eyes, just *is* the fearful rasa. In this state of fear the viewer's self is neither completely displaced nor prominently referenced, and the same holds for every other person. For this reason, the "communization" should be seen as *not* restricted to a single person but as extending beyond him, like the grasping of the invariable concomitance between fire and smoke, or fear and trembling."

[272] See *Nāṭyaśāstra* 154, 6.51-52: "The comic *rasa* is mostly to be seen in women and men of the inferior type, including six varieties…two belong to the superior, the average, and the inferior respectively.

[273] *Nāṭyaśāstra* 171, 7:22: "Fear should be shown among women and inferior men."

[274] Pollock 2016: 302. See Haberman 1985 for more on this system and its history among Vaiṣṇavas.

[275] Pollock 2016: 261.

[276] See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 274-275, 2.4.2: *unmajjanti nimajjanti sthāyinamṛtavāridhau | urmivadvardhayantyenaṃ yānti tadrūpatāñca te*: "Like waves the fluctuating affects emerge out of and disappear back into the immortal ocean that is the stabilizing affect. In this way they enhance the stabilizing affect and eventually approach a virtual unity with its form."

[277] Delmonico 1990: 121.

[278] Delmonico 1990: 145.

[279] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 1.2.2.

[280] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 98, 2.3.1.

[281] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 112.

[282] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 98, 2.3.2-3.

[283] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 98-99, 2.3.4.

[284] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 99, 2.3.5.

[285] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 111, 2.4.1.

[286] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 125, 2.1.2.

[287] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 125, 2.1.5.

[288] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 125, 2.1.6.

[289] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 125-126, 2.1.7-8.

[290] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 126, 2.1.9.

[291] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 126, 2.1.14-16.

[292] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 128-129, 2.1.17-20.

[293] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 186-187, 2.1.241.

[294] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 232-233, 2.2.1-3.

[295] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 274-275, 2.4.1-3.

[296] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 354-355, 2.5.1-2.

[297] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 354-355, 2.5.3-5.

[298] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 354-355, 2.5.6.

[299] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 354-355, 2.5.7.

[300] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 362-363, 2.5.38.

[301] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 364-365, 2.5.39, 42.

[302] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 364-365, 2.5.44-45.

[303] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 376-377, 2.5.92.

[304] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 376-379, 2.5.94-95.

[305] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 384-385 2.5.132-133.
[306] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 242-245, 2.3.1-12.
[307] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 244-245, 2.3.15.
[308] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 244-245, 2.3.16-19.

Chapter 2

[1] *Caitanya-candrodaya (A Devotional Drama) of Kavikarṇapura*, ed. Kedāranātha and Wāsudev Laxman Śāstrī Paṇśīkar, 2nd edition. Kāvyāmālā 87 (Bombay: Nirnaya-Sagar Press, 1917), 2.

[2] *Caitanya Caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja: A Translation and Commentary*, trans. Edward C. Dimock, Jr, ed. Tony Stewart (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 187-188.

[3] Sue L. Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: A Study of Sensitive Space: Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Embodiment* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993), 168. Deep emotions grab us from the side, laterally, as well as from hidden dimensions. We are "intervolved" to use Cataldi's phrasing as they become more locative dwelling spaces of affects. Hence we appear to be part of a larger body or eventful arising "in-corporating us in *its* depth or as a whole."

[4] See Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 1. My first-person forays into affectivity have been inspired by Stewart's "experiment" in performative ethnography.

[5] See Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 2: "I am interested in how happiness is associated with some life choices and not others, how happiness is imagined as being what follows being a certain kind of being. The history of happiness can be thought of as a history of associations."

[6] Stewart 2007: 2-3. On bloom space, see Kathleen Stewart, "Afterword: Worlding Refrains," in
Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, eds, *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 340. Affects are labor-intensive: "All the world is a bloom space now. A promissory note. An allure and a threat that shows up in ordinary sensibilities of not knowing what compels, not being able to sit still, being exhausted, being left behind or behind ahead of the curve, being in history, being in a predicament, being ready for something-anything-to happen, or orienting yourself to the sole goal of making sure that nothing (more) will happen. A bloom space can whisper from a half-lived sensibility that nevertheless marks whether or not you're in it. It demands collective attunement and a more adequate description of how things make sense, fall apart, become something else, and leave their marks, scoring refrains on bodies of all kinds- atmospheres, landscapes, expectations, institutions, states of acclimation or endure or pleasure or being stuck or moving on. Affect matters in a world that is always promising and threatening to amount to something. Fractally complex, there is not telling what will come of it or where it will take persons attuned."

[7] Lutjeharms 2018: 42.

[8] Lutjeharms 2018: 6.

[9] See Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text,* 79, 22:2 (2004): 119.

[10] Brian Massumi, *Politics of Affect* (Malden, MA: Polit Press. 2015), 4.

[11] See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art* (New York: Dover Publications, 1934), 208, ft 86: "His intrinsic manifestation (*svarūpa*) is the manifestation of very different things (*viśvarūpa*)."

[12] Stewart 2003: 344.

[13] See Benjamin Smith, "Distributed Agency in Play," in N. J. Enfield, and Paul Kockelman, eds. *Distributed Agency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 192. Benjamin Smith describes the Peruvian game of marbles played by a group of alpaca-herding brothers in the Aymara-speaking region of the Andes. He focuses on the agency of the material objects in play—the marbles and landscape with its obstacles, contours, and surfaces—to show how agency extends into the *field of play*. In designing the field of play, the landscape, he argues, becomes a semiotic actor which exerts agency in the play itself, giving children a way to make sense of the world outside play within the play itself: "it is not just the case that children play with toys and the material context of those toys. Material things, also, play with children."

[14] See Graham Schweig, "Līlā," Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism Online, Edited by: Knut A. Jacobsen, Helene Basu, Angelika Malinar, Vasudha Narayanan, 795: http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2212-5019_beh_COM_2050170.

[15] See Paul C. Adams, "Place and Extended Agency," in in N. J. Enfield, and Paul Kockelman, eds. *Distributed Agency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 213. Paul C. Adams argues in his chapter on the agency of places that we can bypass mind-body dichotomies by viewing all action as *emplaced*: "According to a long tradition, we think of place as a simple vessel or site for agency while neglecting the ways in which place profoundly *affects* what we are able to do."

[16] Rembert Lutjeharms, *A Vaiṣṇava Poet in Early Modern Bengal: Kavikarṇapūra's Splendour of Speech* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 45-46.

[17] In a personal communication, David Haberman points out the aspect of Gauḍīya theology relevant to crossing boundaries: "As this is grounded in the non-dual theological context of *bhedābheda* in which firm boundaries so not exist. Thus anything *laukika* can be an opportunity for revealing the *alaukika*." *Bheda-abheda* can be translated in various ways, but suggests the paradoxical union ("non-difference," *abheda*) in "difference" (*bheda*) or distinction.

[18] For more on pilgrimage and Gauḍīya worship in Braj, see David Haberman, *Journey Through the Twelve Forests: An Encounter with Krishna* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 124-125.

[19] I found this idea of "jumping out" as a possible translation for Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* on the affective ecology of *rasa* which appears as *niṣ-patti*. While in chapter one I have translated this term as "falling" ($\sqrt{pat}$) "out" (*niś*), this is due to its dispositional affordances as a latent type of affect. Semblances, on the other hand, only emerge in movement and during performances and hence require more of a "launching" capacity. The root can also mean "to fly, soar, or rush on" suggesting upward mobility. See Sam Gill, *Dancing Culture Religion* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 82-84 on similar practices of gesturing among Australian aboriginal groups.

[20] Stewart 2007: 3.

[21] I shall return to this point in more detail in chapter four on Balasaraswati's influence on Bharatanāṭyam.

[22] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 2, I.3.

[23] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 2, I.3.

[24] Ahmed 2010: 23.

[25] See James Carse, *Finite and Infinite Games: A Vision of Life as Play and Possibility* (New York: Random House, 1986), 16-17.

[26] See Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 20: Field effects appear like a flash of lightening appearing as the charged particles in the atmosphere condition it as "an extra-effect: an dynamic unity that comes in self-exhibiting excess over its differential conditions. In the immediacy of its own event, the lighting is absolutely, self-enjoyingly absorbed in the singularity of its own occurrence, and that's what shows…The event transpires *between* the differential elements that set the conditions for it…The flash is the eventful resolution of the tension. It is how the field shows, in excess to itself, as an extra-effect…The intensive envelopment of the contributing elements constitutes a *relational field*-but only for the strike of this event…The relation and the flash of eventful resolution are one. The flash is the *being of the relation.*"

[27] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 5: *ataḥ khalu kalua nāma nāmasaṃkīrtanam eva puruṣārthasādhakatātiraskāri puraskāri ratyākhyabhāvasya* ("In this Kali age, by chanting the name of the lord becomes the means of accomplishing the ends of life preferred above all others, overshadowing all others: the affect known as *rati*."

[28] His project parallels Rūpa Gosvāmin's task in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*. See chapter one.

[29] He can appear as Brahman, the unmanifested peace of reality (*śānta-rasa*); as a ruler for his servants (*dāsya-rasa*); as a friend among equals (*sakhya-rasa*); as a beloved child to a parent (*vātsayla-rasa*); or a paramour enthralled by the sweetness of their longing (*mādhurya-rasa*).

[30] The language of this process comes from the experimental architects Arakawa and Gins. See Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Architectural Body* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2002), 7: "Attaching a grappling hook of a perceptual landing site to a vaguely sketched-in rope of an imaging landing site, a dimensionalizing landing site, in landing, hooks onto the environment to gain traction on it. With the hook-and-rope ensemble flung out and an availing surface caught hold of, there comes to be an as-if-tugging-back-to-the-body that conveys a sense of (kinesthetic) depth." Since these sites can overlap, nestle within each other, and work at every level of sensory perception (haptic, tactile, olfactory, visual, auditory, gustatory, and mental), they show that our way of interacting with the folds of the world is via grasping (*graha*). This suggests both a performative context, as movement interacting with world using specific techniques, as well as a ritual formation, where perceptual and imagistic apparatuses combine in action.

[31] See Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 54. This theory takes many of the insights from Tweed's theorization of religions as "confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries."

[32] See Susan Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 121: "Once the essential musical form *is found*, a piece of music exists in embryo; it is implicit there, although its final, completely articulate character is not determined yet, because there are so many possible ways of developing the composition [e.g. styles of playing it, with their particular gestures]."

[33] See Carse 1986: 71: "This is why every new participant in a culture both enters into an existing context and simultaneously changes that context. Each new speaker of its language both learns the language and alters it. Each new adoption of a tradition makes it a new tradition—just as the family into which a child is born exited prior to that birth, but is nonetheless a new family after the birth. The reciprocity of this transformation has no respect to time…This reciprocity works backwards as well as forward. Each person whose horizon is affected…affects of the horizon in turn."

[34] Langer 1954: 120.

[35] Lutjeharms 2018: 230.

[36] Langer 1954: 121. While she argues the musical composition has its conception only within the composer's mind, affect would seem to locate disposition more diffusely in relation with composer's habits, bodily movement, and ongoing appearances as well as already-exist dispositions taking hold of them.

[37] Langer 1954: 139-140. See Massumi 2011: 24. Semblances' power, likewise, to affect without appearing, to act without actualizing, is due to the nature of temporal influence. Time acts differentially; past and future are forces conditioning every event. But they cannot be experienced exactly as sensuous present moments are: instead they differentiate reality: "A semblance is always an expression of time, though its nonsensuousness gives it an aftertaste of eternity…The semblance is a lived expression of the eternal matter-of-fact that is time's passing." Massumi's example of Proust' madeleine conjuring a semblance of the past has elements of tasting, memory, and time which go together in a form of expansion of the present moment, a kind of *smaraṇa* which gives an "aftertaste." Here we can see how *rasa* and *bhāva* can also function with memory and *smaraṇa* to call forth semblances of the ongoing, unmanifest (and hence semblant) Vrajaloka and the ongoing transcendent play taking place therein.

[38] Massumi 2011: 11 claims this is the event itself seeking its own ends: "Sometimes at the culmination of the experience, the drama appears for itself. It is *seen*. Not actually, if that means corresponding to a sense impression striking the body's visual apparatus. Actually: as in *in act*. This appearing of the drama of an event's self-enjoyment in the act is the semblance…If the arc of the event is seen, it is seen *nonsensuously*, as an abstract line…It is seen as in an immediate abstraction in a specious moment of fear."

[39] See Sukanya, Sarbadhikary, *The Place of Devotion: Siting and Experiencing Divinity in Bengal-Vaishnavism* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 4: "My two fieldwork aims thus ultimately merged because distinctive dimensions of place-experience and sensuous apprehensions of divinity through varied spiritual practices overlap, such that devotees experience sacred geography not only in external physical sites but also *in interiorized affective spaces of their bodies, minds, imagination, and sense*. So my concern is what the exact nature of the rigorous affective and bodily disciplines enacted by different Vaishnavas through regimes of personal and collective practice, and the significant relationships of these practices with the cultivation of senses of place."

[40] David Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgānugā Bhakti Sādhana* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001), 49-50 for how the characters of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* become the paradigmatic figures for the tradition. Vraja, Kṛṣṇa's childhood home, is considered the most affectively-charged landscape in this system due to the power of the friends and family's *bhāva*s who dwell there.

[41] David V. Mason, *Theatre and Religion on Krishna's Stage: Performing in Vrindavan*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 9-10. While the children actors, called *svarūp*s or "self-forms" of Kṛṣṇa and his companions lack technical skills at times, "the patrons' own devotional investment combine to easily overshadow the performers' (mis)steps." Mason argues that *rāsa-līlā* audiences invest so much devotional energy into the performance they effectively become performers: even off-stage, "patrons develop and play characters of their own."

[42] See Barbara Holdrege, *Bhakti and Embodiment: Fashioning Divine Bodies and Devotional Bodies in Kṛṣṇa Bhakti*. New York: Routledge, 2015), 199. For more on Vraja and the historical area of Braj in Uttar Pradesh today for Gauḍīyas, see Haberman 1994: 56-57. Kṛṣṇa extols the virtues of the area to the sage Nārada in Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's story. He claims to "dwell eternally" in Vraja.

[43] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 177-178, 1.3.9-19.

[44] Mason 2009: 3.

[45] *The Nāṭyaśāstra: A Treatise on Ancient Indian Dramaturgy and Histrionics Ascribed to Bharata-Muni*, ed. and trans. Manomohan Ghosh, 2 vols, reprint (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 2016), 129.

[46] Tweed 2006: 99: ""The body is the *actual Here* that surveys other spaces, both close and distant; it is the *actual Now* from which humans narrate the past and imagine the future."

[47] See *Caitanya-candrodaya* 24 in Act Two for a few examples in the stage directions.

[48] See Sheldon Pollock, ed. and trans, *A Rasa Reader: Classical Indian Aesthetics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 264. This quote comes from Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 3.2-3: "What we call *rasa* is an indivisible whole, self-revealing, and consisting of blissful consciousness, completely insulated from any other object of perception, and thus akin to savoring supreme being. Its life force lies in supermundane rapture. It is savored by special people when they cognize it through a superabundance of sensitivity, as being something identical to themselves, like their own bodies."

[49] Massumi 2011: 49-50: "Take the way a simple object is double by its own "likeness." You don't just have an experience of the single present thing. You at the same time experience what it's like to experience its presence. That "likeness" marks the objects as a variation on itself. You perceive what it's like because in your life there have been other appearings "like" this one, and you implicitly anticipate more will come. The likeness is the invisible sign of a continuing. This puts a certain distance between the object and itself. A kind of self-abstraction. Because in time it will appear episodically, under variation. It holds these variations-on in the present, which is why it is a kind of immediate, lived abstraction. This haloes the object with certain genericness, extending what it is beyond its own particularity. The thing is both itself and a placeholder in life's process for others like it. The semblance is the leading edge, in the present, of future variation, and at the same time a Doppler from variations past. It is the thing's perceived margin of changeability, the thinking-feeling of potential appearings of particulars belonging to the same genre, appearing in the same style. A semblance is a direct perception of a life *style*. It is like an intuition of the thing as a life motif—a pattern of varied repetitions."

[50] Mason 2009: 125.

[51] See Holdrege 2015, in particular chapter 5: "Vraja-*Dhāman* as Place-*Avatāra*," and Haberman 1994 on the pilgrimage route of the Bān-Yātrā.

[52] Coomaraswamy 1934: 190 ft. 21.

[53] See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu of Rūpa Gosvāmin*, ed. and trans. David L. Haberman (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003), 648-649, 4.9.1. Rūpa Gosvamin in the *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*, "The Ocean of Devotional *Rasa*," saves semblances for his final chapter as the text's culminating discussion. Rūpa requires his audience to fathom the entire scope of his cultural and ritual system in order to describe the nuances of *ābhāsa*.

[54] See Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, Thought in the Act (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 1-2. A Minor gesture "is a force that *courses through it*, unmooring its structural integrity, problematizing its normative standards…The minor is a continual variation on experience. It has a mobility not given to the major: its rhythms are not controlled by a preexisting structure, but open to flux. In variation is in change, indeterminate…The minor isn't known in advance. It never reproduces itself in its own image. Each minor gesture is singularly connected to the event at hand, immanent to the in-act…The minor invents new forms of existence, and with them, in them, we come to be…In its movement, the minor gesture creates sites of dissonance, disturbances, that open experience to new modes of expression."

[55] Susan Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), 45: "It is not the percipient who discounts the surroundings, but the work of art which, if it is successful, detaches itself from the rest of the world; he merely sees it as it is presented to him. Every real work of art has a tendency to appear thus dissociated from its mundane environment. The most immediate impression it creates is one of "otherness"—the impression of an illusion enfolding the thing, action, statement, or flow of sound that constitutes the work. Even where the element of representation is absent, where nothing is imitated or feigned—in a lovely textile, a pot, a building, a sonata—this air of illusion, of being a *sheer* image, exists as forcibly as in the most deceptive picture or the most plausible narrative."

[56] Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 34.

[57] André Couture argues the verbal form has links to acting (*ava-tṝ*) as well as a manifesting from the virtual as a "step down" like an actor entering an arena or stage in-the-round. See André Couture, "From Viṣṇu's Deeds to Viṣṇu's Play: or Observations on the word Avatāra as a Designation for the Manifestations of Viṣṇu," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 29 (2001): 322-325.

[58] C. Z. Minkowski, "Janamejaya's *Sattra* and Ritual Structure," *JAOS* 109:3 (1989): 402.

[59] See Okita Kiyokazu, "The Influence of Śiṅgabhūpāla II on Bengali Vaiṣṇava Aesthetics." *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 64: 3 (March 2016): 1082. See also the translation in progress of Rūpa's later work on the *ujjvala* or "enflaming" affect of the *gopī*s: Neil Delmonico and Elizabeth Delmonico eds. and trans., *Śrī Ujjvala-sāra-saṅgrahaḥ or Tasting Kṛṣṇa's Love: Poems from Rūpa Gosvāmin's* Blazing Sapphire *(Kṛṣṇa in Love)* (Kirksville, MI: Blazing Sapphire Press, 2018), xxxvii-xxxviii.

[60] Pollock 2016: 27.

[61] See Sheldon Pollock, "The Social Aesthetic and Sanskrit Literary Theory," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 29 (2001): 212-213.

[62] Pollock 2016: 28, 116, 5.9-12. Pollock's examples range from the literary ornament school (*alaṃkāra-śāstra*) to Ānandavardhana who claims propriety is essential to the functioning of the aesthetic assemblage in manifesting *rasa*. In a more positive light, Bhoja's *Sarasvatī-*

kaṇṭhābharaṇa presents semblance as one of the "twenty-four powers ensuring the presence of *rasa*." Pollock summarizes this trend in its negative light: "From the late ninth century on, lists of the standard topics of aesthetics begin to include, along with rasas and emotions, the "semblance" of rasas and of emotion. The technical term, *ābhāsa*, is also used of the image of, say, a horse in a painting (*turagābhāsa*), or of a misleading reason in a syllogism (*hetvābhāsa*); something comparable to but not itself the authentic entity, and sometimes even fraudulent. In the case of "semblance of a rasa," modern scholarship is uncertain about the matter, and it is unclear how far back in the tradition this uncertainty extends. The phrase "semblance of rasa" was first used (and probably invented) by Udbhata (c. 800) to character narrative that was "contrary to social propriety" and thereby violated a core feature of rasa, its ethical normativity. In the erotic, for example, the mutuality of desire would obviously be violated in the case of sexual assault. Ubhata offers as illustration a poem (of his own) where the great go Shiva is so overcome with desire for the goddess Parvati that he is on the point of taking her by force. However "contrary" such an act is in itself, there may nevertheless be good narrative reasons for relating it. Without Ravana's violent abduction of Sita there would be no *Rāmāyaṇa*. What Udbhata and Valmiki's poems describe is a semblance of legitimate sexual desire; what they offer, however, is decidedly not, as some contemporary scholars have described it, only a semblance of aesthetic experience.

[63] See chapter 1 for more on Bhoja's tripartite dispositional matrix.

[64] Pollock 2016: 117, 5.24-34.

[65] *Sūktimuktāvalī* 249, cited in Pollock 2016: 139, 366, ft. 215: "With one red eye filled with anger she stares at the setting sun / in the sky, and with the other, engulfed in tears, at her beloved. /At the close of day, fearful of separation from her lover, / the *cakravāka* bird displays two rasas mixed, like a skilled actress."

[66] See Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 26-27.

[67] Pollock 2016: 373 ft. 91.

[68] Pollock 2016: 158. They act "precisely through their embodiment in language [*śabdopadhānāt*]. They thereby take on a general form and come to be conceived of by each person "actualizing the emotion" [*bhāvaka*] in such a way that is connected with himself; they become almost present in his mind and thereby attain the state of being either a foundational or a stimulant factor. Hence they are not in the least devoid of their own reality."

[69] *The Nāṭyaśāstra: A Treatise on Ancient Indian Dramaturgy and Histrionics Ascribed to Bharata-Muni*, ed. and trans. Manomohan Ghosh, 2 vols, reprint (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 2016), 150.

[70] Pollock 2016: 212-213, 1.289.13.

[71] Pollock 2016: 213.

[72] Pollock 2016: 213-214: "We similarly have a semblance of the peaceful rasa leading to the comic when something is not actually a source of liberation but a mere semblance of one. The dramatic form of the farce (*prahasanna*) in particular provides the instruction that impropriety with respect to all the ends of man be avoided."

[73] See Pollock 2016: 213. Semblance here creates a paradox for Abhinava's system. A semblance of the aesthetic elements creates an entire semblance framework, one in which the savoring and rasa therefore become semblances as well. Thus, according to his previous argument that the "process" (*vyāpāra*) of savoring creates an experience that is not perceived

as illusory following its occurrence, the character feeling such emotions can't recognize the impropriety that can create such issues. For instance, Rāvaṇa in the *Rāmāyaṇa* woes Sītā despite lacking the main qualifications for being a *nāyaka*; he has too many heads and she does not mutually love him. However he never realizes this, and hence the audience could continue feeling his erotic *rasa* is in fact true. This creates a problem, since Abhinava argues that the comic *rasa* does not arise for us while seeing and listening to Rāvaṇa's semblance of being a lover. What causes the comic is a further step into the ridiculous or incongruous. Rāvaṇa is "out-of-character," which makes him into a foundational pervading affect for the comic (*ālambana-vibhāva*). In other words, semblances are created when one goes "against the grain" of one's dispositional matrix. This "impropriety" (*anaucitya*) is the basis for the comic in Abhinava's thought, but it does not resolve why Rāvaṇa does not become comic. Perhaps it is the background fact of his demonic disposition (*rākṣasa-bhāva*) that makes him too terrifying even as a semblance of a lover?

[74] Pollock 2016: 248-249. Vidhyādhara in the *Ekāvalī* (c. 1300) is the first person to explicitly argue that animals can be proper containers for *rasa*, and hence qualify for legitimate aesthetic representation of their emotional lives, as opposed to relegation as mere semblances of emotional beings.

[75] Pollock 2016: 197.

[76] Pollock 2016: 204-205. In this way, Abhinavasgupta draws on Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā theories of Vedic injunction (*vidhi*) to authorize how *rasa* transforms the individual's perception of a character (dispositional matrix) played by an actor into a "bare apprehension": "In this connection we may not say that the actor is an object of meditation analogous to that used by meditators. In the latter case we do not of course have the apprehension that it is the very Vasudeva Krishna before us, painted with vermillion, whom we are to call to mind; the apprehension is rather that the particular deity, when come within the ambit of a conceptualization made especially vivid thanks to the physical medium, will reward those who meditate on him. In the same way, the content of a drama can become the object of an identification made especially vivid thanks to the actor's procedures, while remaining completely untouched by any particularization of time or space pertaining to actors or characters. The content is thus comparable to a Vedic commandment in providing moral instruction to the effect that such and such a reward comes from such and such an act; and comparable as well in view of the fact that in neither case does a subsequent perception ever arise to negate it, whether with respect to the law that *something must be either what we are seeing or something else*, or in the spectator's subsequent mental state. Quite the contrary, the apprehension is veridical and complete. Accordingly, we have the bare apprehension "Rama," and never later the idea, "This person before my eyes was not Rama but someone else.""

[77] Pollock 2016: 269-270.

[78] Okita 2016: 1081.

[79] Pollock 2016: 271.

[80] See chapter one for more on this section.

[81] Pollock 2016: 271. Numbers added in my translation.

[82] Pollock 2016: 271-272, 405 ft. 183.s

[83] Pollock 2016: 268.

[84] Manning 2016: 1-2.

[85] Pollock 2016: 272.

[86] Pollock 2016: 273.

[87] Pollock 2016: 273.

[88] Pollock 2016: 274.

[89] Pollock 2016: 28. Pollock argues "Far from marking failure to become a "genuine aesthetic experience," semblance of *rasa* offers an experience of another order, at once morally problematic, psychologically subtle, and aesthetically complex and one that great literature cannot forgo."

[90] I examine the shared affective terrain of audiences and performers in chapter three under the idea of *vṛtti*, "style."

[91] Pollock 2016: 275: "as foundational factor, "Sītā" relinquishes the various specific properties—being a daughter of Janaka, the wife of Rāma, and so on—that would inhibit the arising of *rasa*, and is taken as differentiated by other properties—being graceful, brilliant, pure, beautiful. It is as such that the factor is able to communicate that sense of "woman" in general, not because of its being a mere species of woman herself. In this way all is in order."

[92] Pollock 2016: 274.

[93] Massumi 2011, 107. Daniel Stern's notion of continuities, Massumi argues, develops by sharing "activation contours" or "a continuous *rhythm* of seamlessly linked accelerations and decelerations, increases and decreases in intensity, starts and stops." Hence the felt *shaping* of an event as it unfolds has affective *contours*. In this sense, movement has its own autonomy outside the particular instances of movement. Awareness towards this semblance, much like in vision, is what Erin Manning calls *movement-moving*, perception of moving within and during movement. See Erin Manning, *Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 5 on movement: "Affect in this context can be understood as the preacceleration of experience as it acts on the becoming-body. Preacceleration refers to what has not yet been constituted but has an effect on actualization. In the context of movement, it is the virtual experience of a welling into movement that precedes the actual displacement. Affect moves, constituting the event that, in many cases, becomes-body."

[94] Langer 1954: 400.

[95] Langer 1954: 401.

[96] Adam B. Seligman, Robert P. Weller, Michael J. Puett, and Bennett Simon. 2008. *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2008), 148.

[97] See Schechner 2003: 34.

[98] In fact Rūpa Gosvāmin makes this point explicitly, in his chapter on the *vibhāva*s, wherein Kṛṣṇa is said to be the "king of protagonists" (*rāja-nāyaka*) and can encompass all the different dispositions of a leading man. See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 186-187.

[99] Pollock 2016: 291.

[100] Pollock 2016: 224-225 on "emotional poetry."

[101] Lutjeharms 2018: 135.

[102] Pollock 2016: 291. Pollock sees Kavikarṇapūra's theory in the *Alaṃkārakaustubha* as derived more from Mammaṭa's *Bhāva-prakāśa* than the works of the Gosvāmins, despite some similarity in their overall interpretation of *rasa*, including a reliance on Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*.

[103] *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 18-19, 1.2.2: "Devotion that achieves a stabilizing affect through physical effort is called *sādhana*. Its goal is the manifestation in the heart of an eternally perfected affect (*nitya-siddha-bhāva*)."

[104] Lutjeharms 2018: 177, citing *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 238, v. 72.

[105] See Olivelle 2013 for more on the link between business and jurisprudence in Kauṭilya's *Artha-śāstra*. Chapter 3 examines the link between the litigation of ownership in the *dāna-vinoda* episode of Act Three's *upāṅkhā* one-act inset play.

[106] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 30, v.121-121, in Lutjeharms 2018: 135.

[107] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 32, v.131, in Lutjeharms 2018: 166.

[108] See Pollock 2016: 291, 409 ft. 77, 78.

[109] Pollock 2016: 410, ft. 86.

[110] Pollock 2016: 293, citing *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.63.

[111] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 30, v.121, in Lutjeharms 2018: 136.

[112] Lutjeharms 2018: 136.

[113] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 32-33, v.137, in Lutjeharms 2018: 137-138, ft.74.

[114] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 32, v.130, in Lutejharms 139.

[115] Lutjeharms 2018: 140-141.

[116] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 33, v.140, in Lutjeharms 2018: 141.

[117] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 32, v.135 and 30, v.122 in Lutjeharms 2018: 140-141.

[118] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 32, v.136 in Lutjeharms 2018: 140.

[119] See Kamath 2017: 125 for an example from Kuchipudi.

[120] Chapter three examines this issue in more detail. See Smith 2006: 251. Powerful emotions and places are described in the *Mahābhārata* as "entering" (*ā-viś*) the body at times due to the gravity of their affective force.

[121] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 30, v.122 in Lutjeharms 2018: 141.

[122] Lutjeharms 2018: 12.

[123] See Lutjeharms 2018: 148, ft. 117.

[124] Pollock 2016: 261.

[125] See *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* 1.3 in Lutjeharms 2018: 148, ft. 120.

[126] Lutjeharms 2018: 149.

[127] See Holdrege 2015: 71: "Kṛṣṇa is the container of *avatāra*s."

[128] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 320, 1.17.84-92. On reading the thousand names of Viṣṇu in the *Mahābhārata*, Caitanya becomes possessed hearing the name of Nṛsiṃha, the Half-Man Lion: "he took a club into his hand and ran to the city to beat the disbelievers. Seeing him, possessed by Nṛsiṃha, full of great radiance, the people left the road and fled in great fear. Seeing the fear of the people, Prabhu regained consciousness, and going to the house of Śrīvāsa he threw away his club."

[129] See Holdrege 2015: 46-47 for more on Kṛṣṇa in Gauḍīya theories as the *avatārin*.

[130] Lutjeharms 2018: 155-156. He draws mostly from CMM 11.12.8's commentary on BP.

[131] Lutjeharms 2018: 158-159, ft. 163. The final quote is from an unknown source: *bhaktir eka-rasā nāsti na bhakto 'py eka-bhaktimān / vidhānatvaṃ yadā yasya tathāmnātaṃ vinirdeśet.*

[132] Lutjeharms 2018: 159. See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 354-355, 2.5.2: "The stabilizing affect here is declared to be *rati* that has Śrī-Kṛṣṇa as its object. Those knowledgeable in *rasa* proclaim it to be twofold: primary and secondary."

[133] *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* 1.1.3, qtd in Lutjeharms 2018: 160: "*he bhāvukā bhāvakā vā, he kuśalā he bhāvanā-caturā vā.*"

[134] Lutjeharms 2018: 160-161, ft. 168.

[135] Qtd in Lutjeharms 2018: 161, ft 170.

[136] Note that Kavikarṇapūra's spelling of the *rasa*s differs somewhat from Rūpa Gosvāmin's work. See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 508-509, 3.4.1 where the stabilizing affect of *vātsalya* becomes *vatsala-bhakti-rasa* when fully developed. Kavikarṇapūra's terms match this in *Caitanya-candrodaya* 44, 3.7. The six "utmost" *bhakti-rasa*s are listed as *ujjvala, adbhuta, śama, hasa, prema,* and *vatsala*. Chapter three examines this scene in more detail.

[137] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 28, v.78, in Lutjeharms 2018: 162-163. Lutjeharms points out that this matches Bhoja's basis for *sneha*, "affection."

[138] See Lutjeharms 2018: 165, ft. 184. The first is a stabilizing affect of devotional *rasa* ("affection"), or the devotional semblance that cannot become a *rasa* in previous theories for the second. The third is more in line with Rūpa's theory as a particular "stage" of the developing stabilizing affect of *preman*.

[139] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 36, v.147, in Lutjeharms 2018: 165.

[140] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 37 v.150, in Lutjeharms 2018: 165.

[141] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 36, v.147, in Lutjeharms 2018: 166.

[142] See Lutjeharms 2018: 167 where he claims they have a distinct "ontological nature," which I modify as ontogenetic.

[143] Pollock 2016: 294, *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.65-67.

[144] Pollock 2016: 294.

[145] See Haberman 2001: 70-71. The imitation requires a model in the perfected passions (*rāga-ātmika*s) of Kṛṣṇa's eternal companions (Vrajaloka).

[146] Pollock 2016: 294.

[147] Pollock 2016: 295, *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 5.71.

[148] Lutjeharms 2018: 168.

[149] Schweig 2005: 44.

[150] See Schweig 2005: 63-66.

[151] Schweig 2005: 26.

[152] See Lutjeharms 2018: 170-171 on how Kavikarṇapūra develops this idea from Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*.

[153] See Manning 2016 for more on this idea in terms of gesture.

[154] Pollock 2016: 295.

[155] Pollock 2016: 295.

[156] Pollock 2016: 295.

[157] Pollock 2016: 295.

[158] See Carse 1986: 21: "A script is composed according to the rules but is not identical to the rules. The script is the record of the actual exchanges between players—whether acts or words—and therefore cannot be written down beforehand. In all true finite play the scripts are composed in the course of play…That the outcome is not known is what makes it a true game."

[159] Pollock 2016: 296. See Schweig 2005: 111 on this "play" within the *Bhāgavaṭa-purāṇa*.

[160] Pollock 2016: 297: "Thereby the aesthetic elements, factitious thought they may be, are not apprehended as such—they are like images perfectly painted in a picture…As a result of this process, the minds of the audience members, their stolidity and volatility cleansed by

their innate predispositions for *rasa*, are rendered as pure as possible, and a self-identical bliss is generated."

[161] Pollock 2016: 297: "It is not possible for *all* the various stable emotions, desire and the rest, to inhabit one and the same mind of the viewer; being mutually dissimilar, they cannot possibly coexist at the same time in the same location."

[162] Pollock 2016: 297-298.

[163] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 3, v.11 in Lutjeharms 2018: 230.

[164] See Pollock 2016: 298.

[165] See Massumi, *Politics of Affect*, 2015: ix: "To affect and to be affected is to be open to the world, to be active in it and to be patient for its return activity. This openness is also taken as primary. It is the cutting edge of change. It is through it that things-in-the-making cut their transformational teeth. One always affects and is affected in encounters; which is to say, through events. To begin affectively in change is to begin in relation, and to begin in relation is to begin in the event."

[166] Pollock 2016: 411-412, ft. 119. The emotions begin with Bharata's eight, to which Karnapura adds the peaceful (*śānta*), parental affection (*vātsalya*), love (*preman*), and devotion itself, which is twelfth. The stabilizing affect for the parental is "possessiveness" (*mamakāra*); for love, "tenderness" (*cittadrava*); and for the peaceful, "asexual" delight.

[167] Lutjeharms 2018: 169. Viśvanātha Kavirāja however claims in his commentary that only transcendent (*alaukika*) *rasa*s are possible in Kavikarṇapūra's theory. Jīva Gosvāmin takes a similar line of thinking in his *Prīti-sandarbha* that any affects not directed toward Kṛṣṇa should only produce the awful (*bībhatsa*) *rasa*.

[168] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 35, v.145, in Lutjeharms 2018: 170, ft. 200. This mirrors the same term in Abhinavagupta's novel dramaturgy since *rasa* is not an object but a total process of savoring. See chapter 1 for more on his use of *vyāpāra*.

[169] Sarbadhikary 2015: 81.

[170] See Abhinavagupta's *Abhinava-bhāratī* and chapter 1 for more on this process.

[171] See Haberman 2001 and *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 98-99, 1.3.6: "*Bhāva* is born in two ways: either from diligent dedication to spiritual practices (*sādhana*), or for the very fortunate, by the grace (*prasāda*) of Kṛṣṇa or His devotees. The first, however, is more common; the second is rare."

[172] Sarbadhikary 2015: 90.

[173] For more on the hagiographic project of the community, see Stewart 2010: 99 on the early formal theories of manifest divinity.

[174] Donovan Schaefer, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 191. He claims in terms of dance that "These ligaments form a historically mediated set of power relations, simultaneously etching and reformulating women's bodily relationships with historical traditions and global migrations."

[175] Stewart and Dimock discuss this at greater length in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 115-119 on the Gauḍīya concept of time. I prefer to see the implications of Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya as an actor, as a *nāyaka*, instead, overlapping his role as character (*bhāva*) and actor portraying the character, assuming the role.

[176] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 127, from 3.5.99-102. In the *antya-līlā* section of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Svarūpa Dāmodara read any poems or plays meant for Caitanya's eyes first to keep away his anger. Any hint that there was merely "a semblance of *rasa*" (i.e. *rasābhāsa* in its technical sense) was dependent on how well the tradition's theological and doctrinal

points were conveyed as much as in the ornamentation and skill of the playwright. Here the community modulated its own norms of affective regulation, monitoring how and which *bhāva*s are produced by measuring them against the truth value of their central doctrines while also technically assessing the quality of how well those tenants are conveyed (*abhi-√nī*, the root for "gesture," *abhinaya*).

[177] Lutjeharms 2018: 52, ft. 144 from *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 1.20.46

[178] Lutjeharms 2018: 52-53, Stewart 2010: 128.

[179] Lutjeharms 2018: 6.

[180] Lutjeharms 2018: 42.

[181] Stewart 2010: 128.

[182] Lutjeharms 2018: 51.

[183] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 8: 1.18-20.

[184] *Gauragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 6-8, qtd. in Stewart 2010: 129.

[185] G*auragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 10-11, qtd. in Stewart 2010: 130.

[186] He specifically attributes this framework to Svarūpa Dāmodara. In contrast see Stewart 2010: 133 where the author argues the community continued to discover these identities over time from the core group of Caitanya's followers to their immediate disciples and until later generations of Gauḍīyas.

[187] Stewart 2010: 132.

[188] I shall return to how clothing functions as a form of habit-making affects (*vṛtti*s) in chapter 3.

[189] *Gauragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 15, qtd. in Stewart 2010: 130.

[190] *Gauragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 18, qtd. in Stewart 2010: 131.

[191] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 45.

[192] Qtd. in Lutjeharms 2018: 76.

[193] Lutjeharms 2018: 72.

[194] Lutjeharms 2018: 80, quoting *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 78, 224.

[195] Lutjeharms 2018: 81.

[196] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 56, v.157-158, qtd. and trans. in Lutjeharms 2018: 86.

[197] Qtd. in Lutjeharms 2018: 87.

[198] Holdrege 2015: 50, 60-64 discusses Rūpa's *Laghubhāgavatāmṛta* as well as *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 1.5, 2.20.255-56: "The *līlā-avatāra*s of Kṛṣṇa are beyond counting…the numbers in the writings cannot be counted."

[199] Holdrege 2015: 62-63. Chapter 3 shall deal more with this concept of "investment" for *āveśa*. See Frederick M. Smith, *The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) for more on this term as "possession."

[200] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 13, v.35-36 qtd. in Lutjeharms 2018: 95.

[201] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 36, 2.24.

[202] See Schweig 2005 on this ability for the prefix *vi-* to mean a "lack" or an "enhanced" version of the noun.

[203] Lutjeharms 2018: 42-43.

[204] Haberman 2001: 64 makes this point to argue against previous definitions of *bhakti* as faith or graced by the divine figure at the center of analysis. Rūpa claims in *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 1.3.6 that Kṛṣṇa and his *bhakta*s can also grant the affective goal of the *sādhana* as "grace" (*prasāda*) but it is incredibly rare.

[205] Tony K. Stewart, *The Final Word: The Caitanya Caritāmṛta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) explores the production of hagiographies in the community leading up to the ecumenical model of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* became the paradigm. Kavikarṇapūra's text contributed mostly to the *mādhya-līlā* sections of the saint's lifetime.

[206] Lutjeharms 2018: 47.

[207] Lutjeharms 2018: 24-25.

[208] Lutjeharms 2018: 28.

[209] Lutjeharms 2018: 29, 63, ft. 205. Lutjeharms disagrees with Stewart's assessment of how Kṛṣṇadāsa and Kavikarṇapūra were engaged in parallel projects or competition within the community, since the former adopted wholesale the dramatic episodes from the *Caitanya-candrodaya* for the middle and late play passages of his hagiography (*madhya-līlā, antya-līlā*). See Stewart 2010: 248-249 for passages Kṛṣṇadāsa adapts from other Gauḍīya sources in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

[210] Qtd. in Lutjeharms 2018: 29.

[211] Lutjeharms 2018: 30, where he quotes it from Kavikarṇapūra's *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 93, v.294: "*śravasoḥ kuvalayam akṣnor añjanam uraso haendra-maṇi-dāma / vṛndāvana-ramaṇīnāṃ maṇḍanam akhilaṃ harir jayati*. The blue lotus on their ears, the kohl on their eyes, the sapphire necklace on their chest— / All glories to Hari, the entire ornament of the women of Vṛndāvana!"

[212] Lutjeharms 2018: 30.

[213] Amanda Lucia, "Guru Sex: Charisma, Proxemic Desire, and the Haptic Logics of the Guru-Disciple Relationship," *JAAR* 86:4 (Dec 2018): 953.

[214] See Lutjeharms 2018: 31-32 for citations from his Bengali translator, Premadāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa and Viśvanātha Cakravartī respectively.

[215] Lutjeharms 2018: 33, ft. 55 for the Bengali. Note that his virtual disposition as a poet is being referenced from the abstract suffix *-tva*.

[216] See Lutjeharms 2018: 36-37 for these accounts from Priyādāsa's commentary on the *Bhakta-mālā* and the Sahajiyā *Vivarta-vilāsa* by Akiñcanadāsa.

[217] See Holdrege 2015: 250-254 and Haberman 1994 for more on Vraja/Braj.

[218] From *Gauragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 67, qtd. in Lutjeharms 2018: 55.

[219] *Śrīla Kavi Kavikarṇapūra's Śrī Caitanya-candroaya: The Rising of the Moon of Śri Caitanya*, Kuśakrathadāsa, trans. The Kṛṣṇa Library, vol. 2 (Culver City, CA: Kṛṣṇa Institute, 1989), 13, v.15.

[220] Translated in Lutjeharms 2018: 57, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 115, v.332.

[221] Cited in Lutjeharms 2018: 110.

[222] Cited in Lutjeharms 2018: 111.

[223] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 3, 1.6 qtd. in Lutjeharms 2018: 99.

[224] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 136, v.393 trans. in Lutjeharms 2018: 105: "Some are in servitude, some dear ones are in friendship, those devoted to Rādhā and Mādhava are in both, a few in friendship and so on with the king of Śrī Dvārakā. Some (have devotion) for both (the king of Dvārakā and Rādhā-Mādhava) while others have (that) for other descents. Let me make all whose hearts are fixed on me cling to Vṛndāvana."

[225] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 91.

[226] See Haberman 1994 and 2001, Holdrege 2015 for more on *smaraṇa*.

[227] Walter O. Kaelber, *Tapta Mārga: Asceticism and Initiation in Vedic India* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1989), 90.

[228] Cited in Lutjeharms 2018: 108.

[229] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 28, v.78, in Lutjeharms 2018: 162-163.

[230] Cited in Lutjeharms 2018: 111.

[231] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 5: "In the Kali-yuga one attains the affect known as *rati* distinguished by being uneclipsed by all other ends of life by means of *nāma-saṃkīrtana*."

[232] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 39.

[233] See Lutjeharms 2018: 119.

[234] See Jan Gonda, *The Meaning of the Sanskrit Term Dhāman* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1967), 14, 19, where the Indo-European suffix *-man* denotes "power."

[235] Haberman 2001: 51, 70.

[236] See Massumi 2011, 109. Objects can be traced in what Massumi borrows from Michotte called "world-lines," in which they move along set trajectories, from one spot and event to another. However, activation contours jump across world-lines to "yoke extremely diverse events." This "transversal linkage" across worldliness give sense to a *universe*, "a qualitative order" of "nonlocal linkages" connecting "manners of movement" which is governed by its own spontaneity.

[237] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 593, 2.192-197.

[238] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 375, 2.3.118-120: "Mukunda knew well the heart of Prabhu, and he began to sing a verse of the appropriate *bhāva* [*viraha*]. The Ācārya raised up Prabhu, to make him dance; and hearing the verse, Prabhu could not control his limbs. Tears, trembling, thrill of gooseflesh, sweat, a choking voice, one moment rising up, the next falling, now wailing aloud."

[239] Diana L. Eck, *India: A Sacred Geography* (New York: Harmony Books, 2012), 9-10: "The *tirtha māhātmyas* also make clear that going to a *tirtha* is not only a matter of the feet, but also a matter of the heart. The "*tīrtha*s of the heart" (*mānasatīrtha*s) are as important as a geographical *tirtha*s. These *tirtha*s, too, are enumerated first in the *Mahābhārata* and then in many of the Purānas: truth, charity, patience, self-control, celibacy, and wisdom—these are the *tirtha*s in which one must bath to become truly clean.

[240] Lucia 2018: 953-954: "Because they are believed to be physical embodiments of the sacred, they are also believed to be able to transmit that *śakti* to their followers through their social and physical interactions. This perceived ability to transmit this powerful force to their followers catapults the guru's social status. It also cultivates followers' desire for proximity to the charismatic leader that they might gain access to the perceived source of sacred power."

[241] Eck 2012: 40 recognizes this implicitly when she calls Hinduism "a radically locative worldview" which can function at multiple tiers of the individual, community, region, or nation in South Asia or in diaspora. She links emotional (hence affective) relations to cartography in a general manner, rather than just as visualizations of maps: "But all of us, individually and culturally, *live in the mappings of our imagined landscape*, with its charged centers and its dim peripheries, with its mountaintops and its terrae incognitae, with its powerful sentimental and emotional three-dimensionality, with its bordered terrain and the loyalty it inspires, with its holy places, both private and communally shared."

[242] Eck 2012: 41.

[243] Gerald Thomas Carney, "The Theology of Kavikarnapūra's "Caitanyacandroaya," Act II." Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 1979: 224-239 gives a summary of all ten acts of the play. I've also consulted Kuśakranthadāsa for an ISKCON interpretation of the text. Both have a tendency to elide important portions of the Sanskrit at times, which I translate as integral to Kavikarṇapūra's verbal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*).

[244] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 23-26, 2.1-9.

[245] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 24. These six schools are the Nyāya (Logicians), who focus on scholarly argumentation to the detriment of learning about the Bhagavān. Next, he encounters Vedāntins, whom he calls *māyāvādins*, who think the divine's ultimate reality is formless and are hence hostile toward the undivided body (*vigraha*) of Bhagavān. Their denial of his virtual attributes (*guṇa*) kills the pleasure (*rati*) experienced by his inconceivable potentials (*acintya-śakti*). Virāga likewise dismisses the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsa (followers of Jaimini), Yoga (Patañjali), Vaiśeṣika (Kaṇāda), and Sāmkhya (Kapila) since they cannot agree on anything about the divine.

[246] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 26. When Dispassion reaches this "realized" (*sādhu*) being, who practices internal yogic control over the forces in the subtle channels ("stopping the course of the nectar from the moon-born in the forehead with the tip of the tongue"), the ascetic's concentration is broken. Trying to find what causes the distraction, he suggests the *sādhu* heard the conch of Viṣṇu—finally a fellow Vaiṣṇava!—only to be distraught that it was only the conch-shell bracelets of young women coming to his river.

[247] See Carney 1979: 260-261 for this interpretation.

[248] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 26, 2.9.

[249] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 26, 2.11.

[250] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 26-27, 2.12.

[251] *Caitanya-caritāmrta* 814-815, 3.3.75-77: "And in that way you will fill the Brahmā-world as before. For as Raghunātha took all of Ayodhyā and went to Vaikuṇṭha, and Ayodhyā was filled with other *jīva*s, now you have appeared and spread out a market, and no one understands this profound play."

[252] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 28, 2.15. Bhakti's lines in this passage are spoken in Sanskrit, shifting the register and the contours of her speech on behalf of the audience, who are otherwise obliged to infer her Prakrit answers from Virāga's queries.

[253] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 30, 2.17.

[254] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 30, 2.29. Carney 1979: 279 seems to argue that the *sāttvika-bhāva*s and dancing Caitanya displays are meant to be "merely worldly," but this contrasts with Kavikarṇapūra's statement in the *Vṛndāvana-ānanda-campū* that Kṛṣṇa's "extraordinary ordinary play" (*alaukika-laukika-līlā*). See Lutjeharms 2018: 97, 119.

[255] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 31.

[256] Holdrege 2016: 68 likewise maps Jīva Gosvāmin's hierarchy of blissful forms in a similar manner.

[257] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 32-34.

[258] This list draws from *Caitanya-candrodaya* act 3, section 12. I go into greater detail on this act in chapter 3.

[259] See Clifford Hospital, "*Līlā* in Early Vaiṣṇava Thought," in Sax, *The Gods at Play*, 2005: 27.

[260] Neither of these two seem to fit the dispositions left in Kavikarṇapūra's enumeration but a case could be made that this is why they are relegated after Varaha. They veer too far into the

magisterial side (*aiśvarya*) of the divine matrix while likewise embodying secondary moods more closely such as the virile (*vīrya*) and the ferocious (*raudra*).

[261] John Stratton Hawley, "T*he Bhāgavata-Māhātmya in Context*," in *Patronage and Popularisation, Pilgrimage and Procession: Channels of Transcultural Translation and Transmission in Early Modern South Asia,* eds. Monika Horstmann and Heidi Rika Maria Pauwells. Papers in Honour of Monika Horstmann. Studies in Oriental Religions 58 (Harrassowitz Verlag: Wiesbaden. 2009), 81.

[262] Hawley 2009: 82.

[263] Qtd. in Hawley 2009: 81.

[264] This draws on the work of Graham Schweig, *Dance of Divine Love: India's Classic Sacred Love Story: The Rasa Lila of Krishna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). To reach its highest expression, however, it modulates from karmic disposition (ego, *ahaṃkāra*) to habitus of desire (*kāma*) in the sensuality that links bodies to places physically, then to gestures of love (*śṛṅgāra-abhinaya*) in the bodily presence of the lover. When he disappears, however, they move to reenacting his *līlā*s, creating semblances from their gestures in acts of memorializing (*smaraṇa*) which then can transcend their ego-attachment in humility as a form of separation from the beloved (*viraha*). This likewise removes any lingering affective ties to the self-desiring object-subject division that lingered, giving way toward a renunciation that creates new avenues for dispositions (*sattva*) to emerge as proper forces (*svabhāva*s) for re-enactment as well. This differentiates affective semblances from other modalities of renunciation (*tyāga, saṃnyāsa*) since they move through appearances rather than being reduced to mere illusions (*māyā*). Most renunciants attempt to go from the habituated technicity of a ritual regime (*karma-yoga, jñāna-yoga*) which goes directly from stylized patterning of affect (*vṛtti*) to disposition as freedom (*mokṣa*). The *gopī*s who take this path through yoga are prohibited from making overt or imaginative bodily gestures and instead burn away their karma through internal practices. This brings them back to a dispositional state of Kṛṣṇa's form as *brahman*, the absolute non-different ground of reality, without approaching a bodily-without-material essential form (*svarūpa*) which is at the center of the transcendent realm of Vraja. The other *gopī*s, meanwhile, not only dwell in that realm but allow that indivisible body (*vigraha*) to permeate them (*vāsana*) as they no longer find themselves attired (*vasana*) in their usual affective positions or latent drives (*vāsanā*). *Viraha* as the most radical state of this process therefore functions to reach *sattva* but creates new dispositional flows to reach it, making the *gopī*s in the process more essentially involved in the process of Kṛṣṇa's realm or *dhāman* than even Kṛṣṇa!

[265] Eck 2012: 372-373 and Haberman 1994.

[266] Eck 2012: 374.

[267] Eck 2012: 354.

[268] Eck 2012: 349. For instance, two depictions of Mathurā show it as both a geographic city as well as the center of a *maṇḍal* ("circle, world" in Hindi) which is the semblance of the original, eternal (*nitya*) play happening in Kṛṣṇa's self-form (*svarūpa*). The chart seems to have been an image produced within the lineage and was not reproduced en masse.

[269] See Eck 2012: 354: "Braj embraces the villages, groves, rivers, and ponds where Krishna spent his childhood and youth...." The role of "encompassing affects" (*anubhāva*) is also present as various distinctive places within the larger environment that takes place, suggesting ways that these levels of responsive interaction can fold over into one another as depicted in visual semblances as lotus petals.

[270] Sarbadhikary 2015: 1.

[271] Sarbadhikary 2015: 4: "My two fieldwork aims thus ultimately merged because distinctive dimensions of place-experience and sensuous apprehensions of divinity through varied spiritual practices overlap, such that devotees experience sacred geography not only in external physical sites but also *in interiorized affective spaces of their bodies, minds, imagination, and sense*. So my concern is what the exact nature of the rigorous affective and bodily disciplines enacted by different Vaishnavas through regimes of personal and collective practice, and the significant relationships of these practices with the cultivation of senses of place."

[272] Sarbadhikary 2015: 4-5.

[273] Sarbadhikary 2015: 35.

[274] Sarbadhikary 2015: 70.

[275] Sarbadhikary 2015: 72.

[276] Sarbadhikary 2015: 73.

[277] Sarbadhikary 2015: 73. This term is borrowed from Thomas Csordas, "Somatic Modes of Attention," *Cultural Anthropology* 8:2 (1993): 135. The *mañjarī-sādhanā* of Sarbadhikary 2015:'s informants gives their roles as predominantly the young attendants to Rādhā as she engages in the love play (*prema-līlā*s) with Kṛṣṇa. As *her* go-betweens, this places her as the supreme object of worship in certain ways and thereby distances practitioners from seeking to desire Kṛṣṇa for themselves as well as inculcating service (*sevā*) as their primary activity.

[278] See Sarbadhikary 2015: 75.

[279] See *Caitanya-candrodaya* 45, ft. 2 in act 3. Maitrī asks, "Tell me, who will assume which guise (*bhūmikā*)?" which the editors gloss as *veṣa*.

[280] Rūpa in fact makes the argument that following the ritual injunctions can prohibit Kṛṣṇa-*rati*, the stabilizing affect and dispositional matrix of his entire aesthetic assemblage, from manifesting. Instead, it shifts *rati* into varieties of semblances, due to proximity with devotees or chance associations which can also manifest in *sāttvika-bhāva*s. See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 106-111, 2.3.41-59, and 258-269, 3.3.61-96.

[281] Lutjeharms 2018: 50.

[282] See Massumi 2011:144 on "pure" in this sense from Alfred North Whitehead's philosophy of process: ""Pure" does not mean homogeneous or simply nonrelational. "Pure" means: having the compositional power to mutually include; to bring differentials of experience together across their disjunction, to unitary experiential effect; to effectively convert heterogeneous outside factors into immanent force of singular-generic expression." The pure disposition of *bhāva* here means it functions amodally toward its stylistic force: it turns other arts, features of sense data, into its own mode. It converts *śakti*s toward its own valency. Massumi calls this "effectively fusional."

[283] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 3, I.5.

[284] Caitanya is referred to in the stage directions as Viśvambhara while in the dialogue he speaks as Bhagavān. Kavikarṇapūra immediately presents us with two separate semblances of the same dispositional matrix for the character in this way.

[285] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 37.

[286] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 37.

[287] Kuśakrathadāsa, v.2, 55, 107.

[288] Carney 1979: 302.

[289] Oliver 1998: 99.

[290] See Schweig 2005 for more on this episode.

[291] See Lutjeharms 2018: 177 on this formulation. I return to this image in more detail in chapter 3.

[292] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 37.

[293] See Coomaraswamy 1934: 138, and 210 ft. 95. Likewise Gonda 1967: 23-26 discusses this at length in Vedic examples. He cites Karl Friedrich Geldner's translation of Ṛg-Veda 1.144 for *dhāman* as "manifestation," (semblance is part of the German compound word), *Er-schein-ungsformen*.

[294] Carney 1979: 304.

[295] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 37.

[296] See Holdrege 2015: 32-33 and Lutjeharms 2018: 87.

[297] See Holdrege 2015: 50 for the Gosvāmins taxonomy on this point.

[298] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 37.

[299] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 37: *sa-avahittham,* "with dissimulation" a possible corruption from *a-bahir+stha*, "with nothing external to stand on." Advaita is equated to Sadāśiva with his five faces who is mentioned previously as his dispositional matrix in Kavikarṇapūra's other works.

[300] *Gauragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 10-11, qtd. in Stewart 2010:130.

[301] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 38.

[302] Carney 1979: 307.

[303] Lutjeharms 2018: 99.

[304] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 38.

[305] For an alternative theory of religious affectivity, see Schaefer 2015: 39: "affects are not simply to be understood as passive channels activated by the play of language hovering over them. Rather, affects *surge through bodies*, producing semistable structures that become the tough, raw materials of religion. Tracing these embodied affective templates advances the understanding of religion not only as a set of private experiences but as an engine that penetrates systems of power and produces widespread, subdiscursive effects within those matrices. If the phenomenological is political, the way things feel is not the window dressing of power, but the substance of its material dimensions."

[306] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 39, 2.25.

[307] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 39. He calls Caitanya's bluff: "Lord, this is your play (*tava eva nāṭyam idaṃ*). We cannot see what you do not manifest externally. Your form is our great treasure (*tava eta deva rūpa mahā-dhanam*)."

[308] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 39, 2.26.

[309] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 39, 2.27.

[310] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 40, 2.28-29.

[311] See Carney 1979: 314-315, ft.3 for a different approach on this idea.

[312] See Lutjeharms 2018: 29.

[313] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 41, 2.32.

[314] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 41, 2.33.

[315] Carney 1979: 317-318, ft. 4 points out the Vedāntic implications of this term.

[316] See Kauṭīlya's *Artha-śāstra* 1.15.6-10, in Patrick Olivelle trans., *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India: Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 84: "He should exterminate anyone who divulges counsel. Now, counsel is divulged by the gestures [*iṅgita*] and bearing [*ākṛti*] of envoys, ministers, and the lord. Gesture is acting in a

non-normal way [*iṅgitam anyathā vṛttiḥ*]. Bearing is putting on an expression [*ākṛti grahaṇam ākāraḥ*]. All that should be concealed…"

[317] See Carse 1986: 21.

[318] See Schechner 2003: 118-121.

[319] See Schweig 2005: 28.

[320] See Minkowski 1989: 402 sees this framing as an affordance of the *brāhmaṇa* and *śrauta* texts embedding of rituals together in the later Vedic model.

[321] Schechner 2003: 119.

[322] Schechner 2003: 120.

[323] Lutjeharms 2018: 36-37.

[324] See Carse 1986: 90-91 mentions touch as innately surprising and spontaneous. This relates to *bhāva*'s definition in Bengali as a form of divine madness (*divya-unmada*). See June McDaniel, *The Madness of the Saints: Ecstatic Religion in Bengal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 6-9. McDaniel points out that the experience of ecstatics does not match the normal progression of religious stages of development found in most South Asian traditions of ritual. In this way, the rituals are indeed meant to contain and convert chaos by creating a semblance of order for the affects. This allows for affective priming of situations before they emerge among other persons who manifest these forms of madness. McDaniel calls the two approaches *śāstrīya* and *aśāstrīya dharma*s, with affective potency emerging in the latter as the carrier for "direct experience of the divine" uncontrolled by ritual lineages of teachers since it can appear "spontaneously" (*sahaja*) out of the unique dispositional matrix (*svābhāvika*) of a person. The innate dispositions (*sāttvika-bhāva*s) therefore are especially important since they give religious authorities clues as to the validity of the madness versus whether it comes from faults in the body (*doṣa*s in Āyurveda) or non-voluntary possession (*āveśa*) by invasive spirits. The Gauḍīyas in particular have multiple stories of non-initiated persons mistaking Caitanya for a corpse, possessed by a *bhūta*, or otherwise suffering from bodily conditions of excess wind (*vāta*) which were treated with *nīm* leaves in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

[325] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 39.

Chapter 3

[1] *Caitanya-caritāmrta* 814-815.

[2] Ta-Nehisi Coates, *The Water Dancer* (New York: Random House, 2019), 82.

[3] See Ann Taves, *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building-Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011) for how religious phenomenon are cognitively tagged as "special."

[4] See Hajo Adam and Adam D. Galinsky, "Enclothed Cognition," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 48 (2012): 918 which builds on the cognitive science idea of embodied cognition to suggest that the social parameters of a particular role shape our experience. Similar studies have found that hearing words associated with age, for instance, shape our conduct and style of bearing when participants were observed to walk more delicately or with stooped backs.

[5] See Brian Masumi, *The Politics of Affect* (Malden, MA: Polit Press, 2015), 64-65.

[6] *Amarakośa* 1.6.365.

[7] *Amarakośa* 2.8.1174-1175: *ājīvo jīvikā vārtā vṛttir veta[varta]ṛnajīvane* (all mean livelihood);

striyāṃ kṛṣiḥ pāśupālyaṃ vāṇijyaṃ ceti vṛttayaḥ, "The ways of living (in feminine) are cultivation, animal husbandry, and forestry].

[8] Sūśruta, *Caraka-saṃhitā* 11.4, translated in Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad, *Human Being, Bodily Being: Phenomenology from Classical India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 32: "When the life-breath is lost, everything is lost. So it can be safeguarded by a health person continuing a healthy regimen (*svastha-vṛtta-anuvṛtti*), the sick one by carefully attending to relieving the disorder."

[9] Ram-Prasad 2019: 32.

[10] See Walter O Kaelber, *Tapta Mārga: Asceticism and Initiation in Vedic India* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1989) for more on *tapas*. *Amarakośa* 3.1.178: "*parikṣiptaṃ tu nivṛttaṃ mūṣitaṃ muṣitārthakam* (abandoned, turned back, robbed, bereft of purpose."

[11] See Frederick Smith, *The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) for more on the relation between "positive" and "negative" forms of *āveśa* in Sanskrit discourses.

[12] *Amarakośa* 3.3.767: *śīlaṃ svabhāve sadvṛtte sasye hetukṛte phalam.*

[13] *Nāṭya-śāstra* 534, 22.11.

[14] *Nāṭya-śāstra* 535, 22.12-15.

[15] See *Nāṭya-śāstra* 546, 23.2-3.

[16] See *Nāṭya-śāstra* 562, 23.83-85.

[17] See Harshita Kamath, "Bodied, Embodied, and Reflective Selves: Theorizing Performative Selfhood in South Indian Performance," in Barbara Holdrege and Karen Pechilis, eds, *Refiguring the Body: Embodiment in South Asian Religions* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2017), 120-121 on Kathakali styles of resisting emotional moments in actors' training. Chapter four explores this idea in more detail with Bharatanāṭyam in the life of Balasaraswati.

[18] See Lila Prasad, *Poetics of Conduct: Narrative and Moral Being in a South Indian Town* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007) on conduct in a Karṇataka performance tradition associated with receiving guests. See also Lila Prasad, "Co-being, a Praxis of the Public: Lessons from Hindu Devotional (Bhakti) Narrative, Arendt, and Gandhi," *JAAR* 85:1 (2017): 2020 for an extension of this idea into colonial encounters in ethical philosophy. Mayra Rivera, *Poetics of the Flesh* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015) develops an embodied form of poetics from the trans-Atlantic tradition of philosophy. See Sue L. Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: A Study of Sensitive Space: Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Embodiment* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993), 3: "*Flesh* incorporates our bodily being, but it is not confined to it. It is a surface to which we, as embodied perceivers, always already belong or are "of," a surface from which we cannot be thought as entirely separate. I argue that 'Flesh' and Depth cannot be thought apart from each other. The Flesh ontology is a Depth ontology."

[19] Monique Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion," *History and Theory* 51:2 (2012): 194 develop this line of thought in Bourdieu's philosophical terms. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72 on *habitus* as a non-mechanical feature of societies: "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to

rules…collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor."

[20] See William Sax, *God of Justice: Ritual Healing and Social Justice in the Central Himalayas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 43-45 for a picture of the gestures used by possessed persons. The line of a character's dialogue in this ritual which triggers possession by the god Bhairav in the Dalit audience is always the same: "I have no one."

[21] Smith 2006: 119-120, 161 ft. 49. This is derived from the Sanskrit root √*bhṛ*, "to bear, weight down."

[22] See June McDaniel, *The Madness of the Saints: Ecstatic Religion in Bengal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 19-20. Rituals as devotion (*bhakti yoga*) also is affectively linked to the spontaneity of manifestations of self-dispositions (*svābhāvika*). While the ritual practice of devotion attempts to gradually transform the disposition through the person's style of conduct (*vṛtti*), divine madness (*divyonmāda*) expresses this dispositional matrix into semblances that then become gestural regimes. It takes several additional steps for this to be converted back into ritual as *vṛtti*, but in turn each develop alongside the other. Rituals for ecsatics, whose madness might feel uncontrollable, offers a path to regulate, harmonize, and eventually domesticate these upswelling affects.

[23] *Mahābhārata* 12.308.16-19. Ram-Prasad 2019: 70. See chapter 1 for more on this episode.

[24] See Sue L. Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: A Study of Sensitive Space: Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Embodiment* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993), 168. Deep emotions grab us from the side, laterally, as well as from hidden dimensions. We are "intervolved" to use Cataldi's phrasing as they become more locative dwelling spaces of affects. Hence we appear to be part of a larger body or eventful arising "in-corporating us in *its* depth or as a whole."

[25] See Lisa Blackman, *Immaterial Bodies: Affect, Embodiment, Mediation* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 26.

[26] See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* Colin Smith trans (New York: Routledge, 2002), and Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible: Followed By Working Notes*, Claude Lefort ed, Alphonso Lingis trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 136 on this aspect of the flesh to "cross-over": "we mean that carnal being, as a being of depths, of several leaves or several faces, a *being in latency*, and a presentation of a certain absence, is a prototype of Being, of which our body, the sensible sentient, is a very remarkable variant, but whose constitutive paradox already lies in every visible…What we call a visible is, we said, *a quality pregnant with a texture*, the surface of a depth, a cross section *upon a massive being*, a grain or corpuscle *borne by a wave of Being*." I shall return to this image at the end of the chapter. On additional corporeal structures revealing hidden layers, see J. Calvin Coffey and D. Peter O'Leary, "The Mesentery: Structure, Function, and Role in Disease," *Lancet: Gastroenterology and Hepatology* 1:3 (Nov. 1, 2016): 238 on the mesentery, the intestinal lining which develops as the two sides of squamous cells grow at different lengths at was only recently discovered within the double folds of the peritoneum.

[27] See *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.22: "Just as one, abandoning worn-out garments, acquires new ones, so the embodied (*dehin*) abandoning worn-out bodies (*śarīraṇi*), acquires some other new ones."

[28] See Brian Massumi, *The Power at the End of the Economy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 8: "Beneath the microeconomic level of the individual there is the infra-economic level. At that level, an affective commotion intra-churns. Its variations are so

immediately linked that we cannot parse them out into separate occurrences. The individual, speaking infra-ly, is not one. It may collect itself as one. It may figure as one, for higher levels. But in itself, it is many. Many *tendencies*: potential expressions and orientations held together in tension. The individual is buffeted by these tendencies' coming turbulently together, divide among them in its relation to itself. Divided among them, awaiting their complex playing-out in a shift in general orientation, the "individual" is the *dividual*. The dividual is the individual as affective infra-climate, in relation to itself, commotionally poised for what may come, storm or shine, doldrums or halcyon days." McKim Marriot and Louis Dumont develop this idea as well in South Asian studies of personhood.

[29] Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "hearse," accessed July 1, 2018 http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/hearse gives one synonym as "harrow," an instrument used to turn fallow ground (as in "harrowing experience"). If the definition carries over into acting terminology, then "re-hearsing" is a way of undergoing harrowing experiences repeatedly.

[30] See *Yoga-sūtra* 1.2: *yoga-citta-vṛtti-nirodha*: "Yoga is the cessation of the business of the heart." Inspired by similar manner to Puritan asceticism in colonial Boston in John Corrigan, *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[31] For the difference between "playing at" and the more nuanced definitions of play as *līlā*, see Carse 1986: 19: "To be playful is not to be trivial or frivolous, or to act as though nothing of consequence will happen. On the contrary, when we are playful with each other we relate as free persons, and the relationship is open to surprise; *everything* that happens is of consequence…To be playful is to allow for possibility whatever the cost to oneself."

[32] Lutjeharms 2018: 45-46.

[33] See *Caitanya-candrodya* I.2, 2 and chapter two for more on the *bīja* or "seed" for the play.

[34] See Pabitra Sarkar, "Jatra: The Popular Traditional Theatre of Bengal," *Journal of South Asian Literature* 10:2/4 (Winter-Summer 1975): 88. Sarkar claims the "old" style (*prachin*) was focused on traditional moral themes, which would register somewhat with Kavikarṇapūra's allegorical frameworks in the *Caitanya-candrodaya*.

[35] David V. Mason, *Theatre and Religion on Krishna's Stage: Performing in Vrindavan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 3.

[36] Mason 2009: 17.

[37] Mason 2009: 18.

[38] Mason 2009: 2: "Devotees regard the presence of God in *rās līlā* performances as a matter of fact. His appearance does not happen by way of trance or mystical projection, but simply *is*, in a way that devotees regard as literal."

[39] Mason 2009: 24. Not all forms are considered equal though. On the level of iconographic theory, only *arcā*s can embody a Vaiṣṇava deity. All other mūrtis are mere representations.

[40] McKim Marriott, "Constructing an Indian Ethnosociology." *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 23:1 (1989): 7-8.

[41] Harshita Kamath examines this process in Kuchipudi dance in more detail. See Kamath, *Aesthetics, Performativity, & Performative Māyā: Imagining Gender in the Textual and Performance Traditions of Telugu South India*, Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2012), 289 on non-gender normative role distributions.

[42] In a sense, they "em-body" (*ni-rūpya*) the character by "un-inhabiting" (*nir-vṛtti*) their normal way of being to make room for a different set of affects. Kavikarṇapūra uses *nirūpya*

throughout his stage directions. See *Amarakośa* 1.7.440 on divesting: *nirvṛtte tvaṅgasattvābhyāṃ dve trisvāṅgikasāttvike*: "Two types of "turning out" (*nir-√vṛt*) are of the bodily and dispositional kind, and among the three are known as "bodily, dispositional, [and vocal]."

[43] *Amarakośa* 1.7.430: *strīveṣadhārī puruṣo nāṭyoktau gaṇikāñjukā*: "A male actor bearing a female role is called a courtesan (*ajjukā*). See *Bhagavadajjuka-prahasana* for more on this character type.

[44] For instance, in Kuchipudi male Brahmin dancers embody the *bhāva*s of female characters such as Satyabhāmā while others can shift personas to access different strata of the self through "impersonations" or "guising" (*vēṣam*). See Kamath 2017: 64-65, and Kamath, *Impersonations: The Artifice of Brahmin Masculinity in South Indian Dance*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 6 for more on "guising" and "impersonation" for the term *vēṣam* in Kuchipudi discourses.

[45] See Anurima Banerji, "Dance and the Distributed Body: Odissi, Ritual Practice, and Mahari Performance," *About Performance* 11 (2012): 8. Banerji sees both dancers, temples, and icons as bodies sharing in a distributed form of embodiment common to the matrix of devotional worship of Odissi dance at the Jagannātha temple in Puri.

[46] See Massumi, *Power at the End of the Economy*, 2015: 8 on the dividual in affective economies. Massumi most likely encountered Louis Dumont's French anthropology of religion in South Asia. As far as I am aware, he had not encounter McKim Marriot's South Asian ethnographic version of the concept. Marriott 1989: 17: "'Individuals' are indivisible, integrated, self-developing units, not normally subject to disjunction or reconstitution…The Hindu postulations of mixing, unmarking and unmatching instead assert that persons are in various degrees nonreflexive (not necessarily identical with or otherwise related only to themselves), nonsymmetrical (not necessarily equal), and nontransitive (not necessarily consistent) in their relations. They emphasise that persons are composite and divisible (what one might better call 'dividuals') and that interpersonal relations in the world are generally irregular and fluid, if not entirely chaotic."

[47] See Kamath 2019: 68. For Kuchipudi dancers from the village, for instance, the famous impersonator Satyanarayana Sarma *is* Satyabhāmā and the role cannot be divorced from the particular gestures that make up his style of donning her guise.

[48] See Graham Schweig, *Dance of Divine Love: India's Classic Sacred Love Story: The Rasa Lila of Krishna.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 2 offers a brief description of the central episode.

[49] Mason 2009: 11-12.

[50] Mason 2009: 85. For further comparisons of Stanislavky and Gauḍīya theories of *bhāva*, see Haberman 2001: 67-70.

[51] Mason 2009: 86-87: "a great and infinitely complicated acting exercise, which churns up a communal memory and associates that memory with every seemingly insignificant activity of living, such that the feelings associated with that memory become part of the actors'-and other Vrindavan residents'- every day lives. In fact, the sort-of-System-atic actor training Vrindavan gives to *rās lila* audience members, as opposed to the actors, may be more significant to the *reality* of a given performance than any onstage technique employed (or not) by the actors themselves."

[52] See McDaniel 1989: 23 and Paul M. Toomey, "Krishna's Consuming Passions: Food as Metaphor and Metonym at Mt. Govardhana," in Owen M. Lynch ed, *Divine Passions*: *The*

Social Construction of Emotion in India (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 223 on the gustatory levels of feeling in Bengal and Kṛṣṇa worship at Mt. Govardhana respectively.

[53] Mason 2009: 112.

[54] See Mason 2009: 34 on Shakespeare's characters: "Each of our individual notions of who Hamlet *is* reaches in some measure into this dim world behind the descriptions to provide us with a vague standard to which we measure each performance of the role we encounter."

[55] Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Architectural Body* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2002), 10-15 develop this theory in more detail. Suffice it to say, perception not only attaches to physical objects but also to imaginary ones. When the two overlap, such as in performance, a third space or "dimensionalizing land site" becomes activated.

[56] Mason 2009: 19. See Arakawa and Gins 2002: 6-7.

[57] Mason 2009: 117: They declaim in tedious singsong, assume stylized postures iconographically representing emotional states, interact directly with audience members, forget their lines, forget their blocking, visibly tire of the action, and direct their attention everywhere, anywhere but the story in which they play."

[58] Mason 2009: 9-10.

[59] Mason 2009: 10.

[60] Delanda 2016: 3. Carse 1986: 18-19 reveals how Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*s might be seen as a reminder of the infinite play central to his theory: "Seriousness is always related to roles, or abstractions…Seriousness always has to do with an established script, an ordering of affairs completed somewhere outside the range of our influence. We are playful when we engage others at the level of choice, when there is no telling in advance where our relationship with them will come out—when, in fact, no one has an outcome to be imposed on the relationship, apart form the decision to continue it."

[61] Mason 2009: 17.

[62] Mason 2009: 132-133.

[63] Mason 2009: 111.

[64] Mason 2009: 35. Carse 1986: 15.

[65] See Mīrābaī's *Caturvedi* 37 in John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer trans, *Songs of the Saints of India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 134: "I'm colored with the color of dusk, oh *rana*, colored by the color of my Lord."

[66] Chapter 4 will discuss this at greater length on *abhinaya*. See Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 2.

[67] See Scheer 2012: 195 and Bourdieu 1977: 72 on habitus and its relation to affectivity.

[68] John Stratton Hawley, "Every Play a Play Within a Play," in William Sax ed, *The Gods at Play: Līlā in South Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 115.

[69] Mason 2009: 41.

[70] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 69.

[71] Jayasree Mitra puts its date composition at 1549 CE. See Mitra, *The Dānakelikaumudī* (Kolkata: Sanskrit Book Depot, 2003), 3, 38-39.

[72] *Dānakelikaumudī* v.1. Likewise *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 447-449, 2.8.135-136 "With the *sāttvika-bhāva* she is *sūddūpta* ["a condition in which the conflict of the various *bhāva*s is most intense," according to Rādhāgovinda Nātha's Bengali commentary], and with *harṣa* and the other *sañcārī-bhāva*s; her body is covered with the ornamentation of all these *bhāva*s.

And decorated with the *kilañcita bhāva* ["when delight, pride, desire, anger, laughter, malice, fear, and weeping all arise at once] and the others of the twenty [which cause her body to glow in proximity to her lover] these clusters of *guṇa*s blossomed on her whole body like garlands of flowers."

[73] *Dānakelikaumudī* v.2.

[74] Lutjeharms 2018: 177 on *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 2.5, where poetry is described as a man (*kāvya-puruṣa*): "Sound and sense form his body; resonance is his life-breath; *rasa* is his soul…style is his well-proportioned body." See ibid 186 in *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 1.3: "Glory to the flute song of Mura's foe which surpasses Vaikuṇṭha's divine realm and *brahman*'s bliss, and washes away the kohl of the *gopī*s' eyes / like suggestive verse which reaches beyond words and their meaning and makes the perceptive poets aware of its suggested sense, like divine sound in which word and meaning lie latent and which make manifest he material world to the wise."

[75] *Caitanya-caritāmrta* 814-815, 3.3.75-77.

[76] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 42.

[77] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 42-43, 3.1: "A blissful form like liquid nectar, spreading a radiance full of *rasa* from its limbs in all directions, with compassionate side-long glances, utterly purifying the heart, she comes now before us all."

[78] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 43

[79] Lutejharms 2018: 42, ft. 92 mentions that Kavikarṇapūra was most likely influenced by a play written among the Puri court of Pratāparudra by Jīvadeva, *Bhakti-vaibhava* similar to that borrowed from Kṛṣṇamiśra's play *Prabodha-candrodaya*.

[80] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 43-44, 3.2-7.

[81] We could also read these divisions of the *bhakti*s as stemming from whether they are "natural" (*svabhāva*) or "pure" (*śuddha*) affects based on Friendship's siblings, both of whom appear in the neuter and therefore don't seem to fit Kuśakrathadāsa's translation as "sons." See ibid vol. 3, 6.

[82] See Sara Ahmed, "Affective Economies," *Social Text* 79, 22:2 (2004): 119 on the idea of economies as affording "adherence" to communities via sticky affects: "My economic model of emotions suggests that while emotions do not positively reside in a subject or figure, they still work to bind subjects together. Indeed, to put it more strongly, the nonresidence of emotions is what makes them "binding.""

[83] Lutjeharms 2018: 166, ft. 187 on *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 36, 147.

[84] Lutjeharms 2018: 164-165. See chapter 2 for more on this process.

[85] *Caitanya-matamañjuṣā* 11.12.8, in Lutjeharms 2018: 155, ft. 153.

[86] Lutjeharms 2018: 156, ft. 156.

[87] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 44, 3.8-9.

[88] Premabhakti's vocal gestures (*vācika-abhinaya*) layer sounds over the meaning to suggest that the circulatory potential of affects works in liquid affordances. The repetition of rhythmic syllables (*vṛtta*) creates patterns that emphasize "j" and "kh" sounds, as well as nasals ("n," "m") and retroflexes ("ṇ," "ḍ"). These phonemes emphasize soft sounds at first before taking on a lapping quality as the tongue dances forward and backward in the mouth. This set of vocal gestures allows Kavikarṇapūra's word choice to create a rich texture of flowing movement that mirrors the concepts of his verse. See Kamath 2019: 65-66 on *vācika-abhinya* in the female guising style of Kuchipudi.

[89] See *Caitanya-matamañjuṣā* 10.22.12, Lutjeharms 2018: 260 ft. 167.

[90] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 28, 78, Lutjeharms 2018: 163

[91] *Caitanya-matamañjuṣā* 11.12.8, Lutjeharms 2018: 161, ft.170.

[92] Lutjeharms 2018: 158-159, ft. 163. For instance, Śrīnātha argues that Arjuna feels *bhayānaka-rasa* for Kṛṣṇa's Viśvarūpa, "Universal Form," in the 10th chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This is a manifestation of a devotion tinged with fright, since Arjuna still worships Kṛṣṇa in this moment. However, his self-dispositional (*svabhāvika*) *rasa* is friendship (*sakhya*).

[93] *Caitanya-caritāmrta* 814-815, 3.3.75-77.

[94] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 44.

[95] See Stewart 2010: 171 where he translates the goddess's replay as "I am going where Viśvambhara is beginning to act in that *bhāva*," supplying the character's name. Lutjeharms 2018: 36-37. See Kuśakrathadāsa, v.3, 11: "To the place where the Lord, the well-wisher of all the worlds, will act Her part in a play to bless the great devotees."

[96] See Schechner 2003: 34.

[97] Stewart 2010: 170.

[98] See *Amarakośa* 1.4.304: *bhāvukaṃ bhavikaṃ bhāvyam kuśalaṃ kṣemamastriyām*.

[99] See chapter 2 for more on this term (*bhāva-cakṣu*) in Act Two.

[100] See *Caitanya-candrodaya* 29, v.79, in Lutjeharms 2018: 121. Contrast this with the translation into English dramatic terminology offered in Lutjeharms which removes most of the alliterative force of Kavikarṇapūra's style: Caitanya "will play her (Rādhā's) role, and will endear the entire world by becoming fair with the felicity of her passion." This suggested reading is much more accessible to devotees who have knowledge ahead of time of what the *līlā* will be. If we assume a fixed viewpoint for the audience, though, the range of affective vantages for dwelling in the scenes to come will ignore those for whom this will be a transformative experience.

[101] *Amarakośa* 1.7.484: *svarūpaṃ ca svabhāvaśca*.

[102] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 45.

[103] See Stewart 2010: 170 on the iterative levels.

[104] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 45.

[105] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 45.

[106] See chapter 1 for more on Abhinavagupta and Rūpa's theories on latent karmic impressions.

[107] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 46. Lutjeharms 2018: 121 also translates the term *adhikārī* as a prerequisite "eligibility" for the audience.

[108] See Bourdieu 1977: 72.

[109] See Carse 1986: 11 and Massumi, *Politics of Affect*, 2015: 51 on this distinction: "Everything re-begins."

[110] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 48-49, 3.19. See also Lutjeharms 2018: 237-238.

[111] See Kamath 2017: 109-110 on one formulation of these overlapping "selves."

[112] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 46, 10-13.

[113] This term appears frequently in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* when *bhāva*s overwhelm Caitanya's normal persona. See CC 945, 71-77, 3.15.51: Requesting a song to calm his heart, Caitanya hears Svarūpa sing a *pada* of Jayadeva which entrances him in *āveśa*: "On his body the eight *sāttvika* (signs) appeared; *harṣā* and the rest of the *vyabhicārī* (*bhāva*s) all rose up. Rising *bhāva*s, a sea of *bhāva*s, powerful *bhāva*s; there was a great

struggle between *bhāva* and *bhāva*, and all were very powerful. He had each *pada* sung again and again, and again and again he tasted it, and his dancing grew (in intensity).”

[114] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 46, 3.14.

[115] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 47.

[116] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 19, 2.8.233. As facilitators of these affects, especially in Caitanya’s later life, certain devotees would become central to this process. Another episode in Caitanya’s life, under scrutiny in all the hagiographies, is his meeting with the Andhran *bhakta* Rāmānanda Rāya, a member of Pratāparudra’s high court and a *śūdra*. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja and Kavikarṇapūra both showcase Rāmānanda’s revelation that Caitanya has a hidden dimension to his Kṛṣṇa-*avatāra*: that of “Rādhā-*bhāva*, his personality as Rādhā.” Stewart and Dimock argue Rāmānada and Caitanya’s meeting causes Rādhā’s persona to manifest more and more frequently until overwhelming Caitanya’s body, thoughts, and heart completely by the end of his career. The final secret, hinted at in the play within Act Seven but only deliberately revealed in Kṛṣṇadāsa’s hagiography, is revealed to Rāmānanda: “Then, smiling, Prabhu showed to him his true form (*svarūpa*)-Rasarājā (Kṛṣṇa) and Mahābhāva (Rādhā), the two in one form (*rūpa*).”

[117] See *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 151 where Kṛṣṇadāsa explicitly states that Caitanya is the result of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s wish to manifest “in order to attain to non-duality and oneness: I praise the true form of Kṛṣṇa enveloped in the radiance of the *bhāva* of Rādhā.”

[118] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 151.

[119] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 187-188, 1.4.17-18: “When one considers me as Īśvara and himself as insignificant, I am not subject to control by his *prema*. For in whatever *bhāva* a *bhakta* worships me, I reciprocate to him in that same *bhāva*- for this is my nature.”

[120] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 189, 1.4.25-27.

[121] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 193, 1.4.56-57

[122] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 193 and ft on *śloka* 10.

[123] See Lutjeharms 2018: 103. Kavikarṇapūra and Śrīnātha justify citing *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* 9.24.61: “the devotees that will be born in the Kali age.”

[124] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 220-221, 1.5.114-120: “When Kṛṣṇa becomes incarnate, he is the container of all his parts; all the parts having come together are merged in Kṛṣṇa. He who knows a certain form, he calls him that; *all are potential in Kṛṣṇa*, and none of them are false. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Gosvāmī revealed to everyone the full range of the activities of all the *avatāra*s [act two]. In this same way is Nityānanda the manifestation of Ananta, and in that *bhāva* (he said), “I am called the servant of Caitanya.” Sometimes his *līlā* is that of *guru*¸ sometimes that of friend, sometimes that of servant, as formerly he played in Vraja *in all three bhāva*s. Pretending to be a bull, he locks horns in battle with Kṛṣṇa; sometimes Kṛṣṇa massages his feet. He knows Kṛṣṇa to be Prabhu, and himself as servant, and he considers himself to be only a part of a part [*kalāra kala*] of Kṛṣṇa.”

[125] Agamben 2015 develops this term “mode of living” in relation to his larger genealogical project of investigating secularity. See also *Amarakośa* 2.6.294: *dharmadbajī liṅgavṛttiravakīrṇī kṣatavrataḥ*, all forms of “making a living via falsehood”; 2.8.1174: *ājīvo jīvikā vārtā vṛttir veta[varta]ṛṇajīvane*, “livelihood”; 2.8.1178: *satyānṛtaṃ vaṇigbhāvaḥ*, “a merchant’s affects include truth and falsehood”; 3.1.203: *siddhe nir*

[126] See Massumi, *Power at the End of the Economy*, 2015: 8 for the infra-dividual level of affects in economic networks.

[127] *Nāṭya-śāstra* 1063, 35.2-3: "After ascertaining their natural apititudes (*svabhāvaja*), the director is to distribute roles to different actors." This means he picks ones that are not innately suited but carry some proper "fit."

[128] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 36, ft. 2 mentions this terminology. See *Nāṭya-śāstra* 105, 3.2.234: *avadānaṃ karma vṛttam kāmyadanamṃ pravāranam*, "achievement, action, business, voluntary gift, fulfilment of a vow."

[129] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 46, 3.15-16. The first portion: "Victory to He who lives among living beings, known to be born to Devakī, who slays *adharma* with his own arms who are the best among the Yādus, straightening the crookedness of moving and immobile creatures, with a blessed face smiling beautifully, and increases the god of desire (*kāma-devam*) of the women of Vraja/who long for Vraja. // With a face like the full moon, eyes like water-born lotuses, and breasts reddened like a goose, smiling like a white lotus, her neck like a conchshell, the scourge of all the Ocean-Born goddess Lakṣmī's pride: like a invocation (*nandī*) furnished of various properties like all auspicious things…"

[130] See *Nāṭya-śāstra* 21.1-5: "The plot has been called the body of the drama (*kāvyasya śarīra*)…the overriding plot (*ādhikārika*) is an assemblage of acts fabricated to allow for the attainting of some result (*phala*). This overriding plot is attained with the result by means of the heroes (*netṛ* acting by the rules (*vṛttaṃ vidhi apāśrayāt*); their goals and exaltation are due to the ingenuity of the playwright's schemes (*prayatna*)."

[131] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 48, 3.17.

[132] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 48, 3.18.

[133] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 49.

[134] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 49, 3.22.

[135] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 50, 3.23.

[136] Harshita Kamatha argues that a similar go-between in Kuchipuḍi dances allow for an emic critique of gender performativity. See Kamatha 2010: 253.

[137] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 50, 3.24.

[138] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 51, 3.25.

[139] Eck 2001: 380-381.

[140] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 51, 3.27.

[141] Schweig 2005: 26.

[142] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 91.

[143] Delanda 2016: 20.

[144] *Nāṭya-śāstra* 1055, 34.70-74. They can include "Old Brahmins who are clever and free from sexual passion." See Patrick Olivelle, "Explorations in the Early History of *Dharmaśāstra*," in Olivelle ed, *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 178. While the tradition in Brahminical literature was to see the *snātaka* as a temporary status in a sequential order of stages of life (*āśrama*s), this role is a powerful one of *choice* according to Patrick Olivelle's reading of early *dharma-śāstra* literature. In an oblique fashion, Time returns again to interfere with the plotline as a character accompanying Nārada, the sage famous for his devotional zeal. Paradoxically these *snātaka*s can be old or new, on the threshold of sexual maturity or past its prime. In ritual instance, as a person whose destiny will unfold based on the actions they take, *snātaka*s are named for the ritual bath completed after their studies with a Vedic master (*snāha*). In their next formal *varṇāśrama-dharma* "stage of life," this person would then progress to the status of a householder from a celibate (*gṛhastha* and *brahmacārin* respectively). In certain texts

legal texts (*dharma-śāstra*s) however, the *gṛhastha* is the principle figure of the Vedic world. The other three groups of celibates, forest-dwellers (*vanaprastha*) and renunciates (*saṃnyāsin*s) were options available to a person upon reaching adulthood.

[145] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 51, 3.28. Nārada's traits include carrying his *vīna* slung across his shoulder, wearing a Śaiva-*māla* as a bracelet, and with his hair wildly flying out and gleaming like lightning on Mount Kailasa

[146] See chapter two for more on how these two identities are seen as affectively linked as the personification of the community of devotees seen in the *pañca-tattva*.

[147] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 52. These compound phrases with *yathā* are important markers of the shift in narrative layers as well. As such, they function as vocal gestures that articulate the two tissues of the storyline into a close-knit flesh. "Accept what appears properly to you (*tat tvayā yathā-dṛṣṭam eva pratītyatām*)."

[148] See Carse 1986, Langer 1953, and Massumi 2011 for this set of affordances in play.

[149] See Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 5 for more on this phenomenon. I explore this link between *vṛtti* and *abhinaya* in more detail in chapter four.

[150] *Amarakośa* 3.3.767: *śīlaṃ svabhāve sadvṛtte sasye hetukṛte phalam*.

[151] See Smith 2006 on *āveśa* in this sense.

[152] This term derives from a different Sanskrit root √*vās* than the root for perfuming.

[153] For instance, see Charles Malamoud, *Cooking the World: Ritual and Thought in Ancient India.* David Gordon White trans. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 167. Following Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 2.1.2.13, a purificatory bath takes place during the *dīkṣā* when the sacrificer dons a linen top to "become complete." Malamoud translates the following story as the origin of human skin: "It is verily his own skin that he puts on. For this same skin that is presently on the body of the cow was originally on man. The gods had said, 'Everything on earth rests upon the cow; let us give it the skin that is presently on man: in this way, it will be able to bear the rain and the cold and the heat.' Man was thus skinned. It is for this reason that when a piece of straw or some thing scrapes hi, he beings to bleed. One thus places this skin upon him, which is his clothing. And for this reason none but man wears clothing: clothing is a skin for him. And for this reason as well, one should be attentive to dressing suitably, so as to be completely clad in one's own skin. And for this reason again, it is pleasure to see a man, even if he be ugly, suitably dressed, for thus is he clad in his own skin. And thus, a man should not go naked in the presence of a cow. For the cow knows that it is wearing the man's skin, and it flees for fear that man will take his skin back. This is also why cows affectionately approach the man who is suitably dressed."

[154] See Adam and Galinksy 2012 on their concept of "enclothed cognition." Arakawa and Gins 2002 call this the "biocleave" in relation to the body's sensory "chunking" of reality into layers. See also Manning 2013 and Manning and Massumi 2014 on this process of affective "cutting" of perception.

[155] *Nāṭya-śāstra* 23.1-2: *āhāryābhinayaṃ viprāḥ pravakṣyāmi anupūrvaśas / sarve eva prayogo 'yaṃ yatastamin pratiṣṭhitaḥ || āhāryābhinayo nāma jñeyo nepathyajo vidhiḥ | tatra kāryaḥ prayatnastu nāṭyasya śubhamicchatā*: "The sages asked of cosmetic gestures in proper order: 'Among all things, this performance is established on this [cosmetic gesture] in such a way. Cosmetic gesture is named for the knowledge of makeup. Therefore its proper application brings about the desired success of a play."

[156] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 52, 3.30.

[157] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 52

[158] See Leonard C. Hawes, "Becoming-other-wise: Conversational Performance and the Politics of Experience," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 18:4 (1998): 281-282 on this facet in the affectivity of normal conversation. See Viciane Despret, "The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthropo-zoo-genesis," *Body and Society* 10:2-3 (2004): 113 on this process in mutual affectivity between species: "the horse could not count, but he could do something more interesting: not only could he read bodies, but he could make human bodies be moved and be affected, and move and affect other beings and perform things without their owners' knowledge."

[159] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 3, v.9, in Lutjeharms 2018: 276.

[160] Lutjeharms 2018: 277.

[161] Sarbadhikary 2015: 216.

[162] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 53. See Sarbadikhary 2015: 208-209. The musicians in Nadia also see the instruments and ornaments present on the bodies of the deities as actors in their own rights. While the associates of the divine couple manifest on earth as *śakti*s, Kṛṣṇa's flute and Rāhdā's anklets appear as the material and sonic forms of the flute and cymbals (*kartal*s) or drums. When the feminine ornament-instrument playing, then, the female dispositions developed by devotees awaken as semblances, as if Rādhā herself were running to a tryst. The flute, on the other hand, becomes equated with the body, as having nine holes (*nava-dvāra*) or as five holed (senses). Chanting and playing the flute therefore are ways devotees feel the breath of Kṛṣṇa vitalizing them and activating their dispositional matrices. The body becomes an instrument: "I will play as he wants to play me. He chooses to touch any pore in me, and my body sings along."

[163] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 53, 3.32.

[164] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 53-54, 3.33.

[165] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 54, 3.34.

[166] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 54, 3.35.

[167] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 54, 3.36.

[168] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 55, 3.37.

[169] See G*auragaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 10-11, qtd. in Stewart 2010: 130.

[170] See Patrick Olivelle, *A Dharma Reader: Classical Indian Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 7, 219. Langer 1953: 307 discusses how drama takes on a semblance of causality as Destiny or Fate. Tragedy and comedy differ in her estimation of Western art forms only insomuch as they view this force of the future in a decisive split with the past or a recuperation of the past. This fits appropriately as the linguistic basis for the idea of causality comes from the juridical sphere, according to Giorgio Agamben, meaning "what give rise to a suit." See Giorgio Agamben, *Karman: A Brief Treatise on Action, Guilt, and Gesture*, Adam Kotsko trans., Crossing Aesthetics Series (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017), 2.

[171] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 60: *ayi lalite, durlalite aduḥ ke tava sāhasikya-śikṣatām etām. Kas te mado mad-okasi vṛndāvane kathaṃ svātantryam ālabhyate.*

[172] Patrick Olivelle, *A Dharma Reader: Classical Indian Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 210.

[173] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 60.

[174] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 60.

[175] See Kuśakrathadāsa v.3, 77.

[176] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 61.

[177] Trees (*druma*) are masculine in Sanskrit grammar while vines (*latā*) are feminine. See Schweig 2005: for this imagery in the *rāsa-līlā* episode. The poetic imagery conjures the semblance of husband and wife, with vines "clinging" like enthralled lovers to the abdomen-trunks of their beloveds.

[178] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 140, v.395: *kecit tu varṇayanti, tayor īśvaratvād devatātvāṃ neti*. In Lutjeharms 2018: 285, ft. 31 and ft. 36 for Śrīnātha's citations.

[179] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 32, v.133, in Lutjeharms 2018: 286, ft.38.

[180] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 46. See also Lutjeharms 2018: 121.

[181] Wendy Doniger, "Speaking in Tongues: Deceptive Stories about Sexual Deception," *Journal of Religion* 74:3 (1994): 321-322. Doniger's example is Saraṇyu, the wife of the sun, who could not bear her given husband Vivasvat's presence. She created a copy named Chāyā, "Shadow/Counterpart" who bore his children instead. Thanks to William Elison for pointing out in Tulsidās's *Rāmcaritmanas* that Sītā also has a *chāyā* or shadowclone who is kidnapped by Rāvaṇa while she endures in a ritual fire.

[182] See *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 47, v.181-182: *māyā-kalita-tac-chāyānuśīlanena tad-aṅga-saṅgamāt*, in Lutjeharms 2018: 286-287, ft. 41.

[183] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 47, v.181, in Lutjeharms 2018: 287.

[184] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 62, 3.50, ibid 4.46-47.

[185] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 63, 3.51.

[186] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 63.

[187] See *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 878, 126-129. Two of Caitanya's followers are contrasted for the direction of their affects. Jagadānanda Paṇḍita's *bhāva* was "profound/contrary" (*vāma*), meaning literally "left, counter-clockwise." Gadādhara Paṇḍita's *bhāva*, on the other hand, was "yielding" (*dakṣiṇa*, "right, clockwise").

[188] See Kamath 2012: 197 on the example of Satyabhāmā.

[189] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 63-64, 3.52.

[190] See Lutjeharms 2018: 69-70 and *Caitanya-candrodya* Act 6 for more on Sarvabhauma's conversion from "dry" Vedāntin to bhakti-inflected philosopher.

[191] See Malamoud 1998: 247 and *Amarakośa* 1.1.54: *kandarpo darpako 'naṅgaḥ kāmaḥ pañcaśaraḥ smaraḥ*, The Enflamer, Haughty, Bodiless, Desire, He of the Five Arrows, Memory."

[192] See Haberman 1994: 161-162 where Kṛṣṇa is seen among the inhabitants of Braj as the form of Kāmadeva who emerges from the crucible of Śiva's *tapas* newly empowered to bring love to the *gopī*s.

[193] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 64.

[194] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 65.

[195] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 66.

[196] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 67, 3.54.

[197] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 67, 3.55.

[198] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 68, 3.56-58.

[199] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 68, 3.59. Kuśakrathadāsa v.3, 102-103 describes these at length:

> *vaktraṃ yo dvijarāja-himśi madirālole dṛsau rociṣā*
> > *mūrtiḥ kāñcana-hāriṇī na viramo gurv-aṅganā-saṅgataḥ*
> *saṅgī pañcama eṣa pañca-viśikhaḥ śuddhis tathāpīha yo*
> > *yan-nāmāpy akhilāgha-nāśi sa paraṃ duṣṭo 'smadīyaḥ sakhā*

[200] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 68.

[201] As this seems to prolong the play for its own sake, it would fall into what Carse 1986: 8 calls an infinite game: "There is no spatial or numerical boundary to an infinite game…While finite games are externally defined, infinite games are internally defined. The time of an infinite game is not world time, but time created within the play itself. Since each play of an infinite game eliminates boundaries, it opens to players a new horizon of time."

[202] While there is little information about the makeup of audiences in Karṇapūra's time, Lutjeharm's initial discussion of Svarūpa Damodāra's gatekeeping of sensibilities toward poetry suggests that internal authorities in the community expected their audience to be theologically subtle and intellectual enough to recognize advanced poetic techniques. See Lutjeharms 2018: 1-3. I am unaware of historical sources for audience membership at similar plays.

[203] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 69, 3.60: "*svato balīyān sahajo hi bhāvaḥ sa kṛtrimaṃ bhāvam adhaḥ-karoti / agny-ātapābhyāṃ janito jalānāṃ naivoṣṇa-bhāvāś cira-kāla-vartī.*"

[204] See *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu* 374-375, 3.5.77-78: "Happy emotions are generally cool and the sad emotions are generally hot. What is amazing here is that even though love is a concentration of the highest joy it can appear to be hot. When nourished by powerful cool emotions love becomes cooling, but when nourished by hot emotions it appears very hot, as if it were heating. Therefore, in separation it is called the semblance of the burden of sorrow."

[205] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 69.

[206] *Caitanya-caritāmrta* 814-815, 3.3.75-77.

[207] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 69.

[208] See *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 945, 71-77. Requesting a song to calm his heart, Caitanya hears Svarūpa sing a *pada* of Jayadeva which entrances him in *āveśa*: "On his body the eight *sāttvika* (signs) appeared; *harṣā* and the rest of the *vyabhicārī* (*bhāva*s) all rose up. Rising *bhāva*s, a sea of *bhāva*s, powerful *bhāva*s; there was a great struggle between *bhāva* and *bhāva*, and all were very powerful. He had each *pada* sung again and again, and again and again he tasted it, and his dancing grew (in intensity)."

[209] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 31, v.127, in Lutjeharms 2018: 164.

[210] See Lutjeharms 2018: 164-166.

[211] *Caitanya-candrodaya* 48, 3.18.

[212] See *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 352-353, 2.2.2-13 where he appeared like a tortoise with his limbs withdrawn, and ibid 932, 60-63 when his joints appeared blown-out after he washed up on the beach near Puri appearing to be boneless.

[213] *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 359, 2.2.44-45.

[214] Lutjeharms 2018: 280: "for Kavikarṇapūra the focus is indeed on the being [disposition] of the leading characters themselves, and the action of the narratives primarily deals with their emotional states [affects]. The two—character and action—are therefore very closely related in Kavikarṇapūra's poetics, because the action of the characters is dependent on their being [disposition]."

[215] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 44, v.173, in Lutjeharms 2018: 281, ft. 16.

[216] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 43, v.169, in Lutjeharms 2018: 281, ft. 17.

[217] *Alaṃkāra-kaustubha* 44, v.173, in Lutjeharms 2018: 281-282, ft. 19.

[218] See Diane Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), ebook, introduction for the initial framing

of this concept in performance studies: "Embodied performances have always played a central role in conserving memory and consolidating identity in literature, semiliterate, and digital societies. Not everyone comes to "culture" or modernity through writing."

[219] See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, Richard Nice trans. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), on the class distinctions recorded in *vṛtti*s in mid-twentieth century France as Bourdieu was writing.

Chapter 4

[1] T. Balasaraswati, "Music and Dance," *National Centre for the Performing Arts Quarterly* 2:4 (1973): 44.

[2] T. Balasaraswati, "Bharata Natyam." *National Centre for the Performing Arts Quarterly* 5:4 (Dec. 1976), 1.

[3] Douglas Knight Jr., *Balasaraswati: Her Art and Life* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press: 2010),Knight 2010: xxi. Both forms of Balasaraswati's name are common and respectful ways of referring to her as a historical figure in South Asian discourses. The more familiar Balāmma ("mother Bala") is used by her family members and in Knight's biography throughout. By emphasizing the non-goddess portion of her name, this study also attempts to foreground her humanity and affective labor as a translocal dancer. See Priya Srinivasan, *Sweating Saris: Indian Dance as Transnational Labor* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 8-9.

[4] Mark Franko, *Choreographing Discourses: A Mark Franko Reader*, Mark Franko with Allesandro Nicifero eds. (New York: Routledge, 2019), 13.

[5] See Teemu Paavolainen, *Theatricality and Performativity: Writings on Texture from Plato's Cave to Urban Activism* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 16 on texture and dramaturgy.

[6] Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of Historym" in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, 4: 1938–1940*, Howard Eiland trans and ed. (New York: Belknap Press, 2006), 391.

[7] See Victoria Phillips, *Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), Kindle edition, Introduction: "In 1955, while Japan was the "mega-domino," India was of particular concern as a lead nation in the foundation of the Bandung Conference, which sought nonalignment for nations in Asia and Africa in the Soviet-US rivalry."

[8] Knight 2010: 166, 236.

[9] Anna Kisselgoff, the *New York Times*' lead dance critic, who claims Americans in particular called her this. See Kisselgoff, ""Balasaraswati Dances into Ecstasy." *New York Times*, Aug. 9, 1977: 28.

[10] See Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino, Theory Out of Bounds (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 55 for this formulation.

[11] Anurima Banerji describes this process in the Odissi style of Nrityagram in more detail. See Banerji, "Nrityagram: Tradition and the Aesthetics of Transgression," in Violaine Roussel and Anurima Banerji eds, *How to Do Politics with Art* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 90: "we can envision how classical dance's allegedly apolitical/normatively political status simultaneously creates a void, an empty locus, that paradoxically grants to it great political possibility, the potential for and actualization of mobilization."

[12] See Rebekah Kowal, Rebekah Kowal, *Dancing the World Smaller: Staging Globalism in Mid-Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), Kindle edition, Introduction: "practices of dancing, dance making, performance, and viewing are all means of producing meaning, and thus modes of theorization, in this instance, leading to instantiations, enactments and/or engagements with and within what we might imagine as the habitus of mid-century globalism."

[13] I examine *vṛtti*s in more detail in chapter three. On the intransigence of affects, see Donovan Schaefer, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 39: "affects are not simply to be understood as passive channels activated by the play of language hovering over them. Rather, affects *surge through bodies*, producing semistable structures that become the tough, raw materials of religion. Tracing these embodied affective templates advances the understanding of religion not only as a set of private experiences but as an engine that penetrates systems of power and produces widespread, subdiscursive effects within those matrices. If the phenomenological is political, the way things feel is not the window dressing of power, but the substance of its material dimensions."

[14] See Phillips 2020: Introduction regarding Martha Graham: "her choreographic choices demonstrated that Western ideals could be held as universal truths once they were extracted by a modernist and "stripped to the bones," as she said. Khrushchev proclaimed at the end of his tirade against modernism, "Art should ennoble the individual," and, in a twist, Graham fulfilled his proclamation with her heroic characters."

[15] See Selma Jeanne Cohen, ed., "The Caterpillar's Quest," In *The Modern Dance: Seven Statements of Belief* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1966), 8-13. Cohen collected statements from the second generation of modern dancers who followed Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, Martha Graham, and Doris Humphries. The affordances she sees in the category of modern American dancing suggests parallels we shall see with Balasaraswati's approach to her art. Modern dance in the first wave rejected the repertoire of ballet to abstract emotion into movement. This entailed a return to the microgestural aspects of movement, such as Martha Graham's exploration of breath for her movement technique of contraction. See Martha Graham, *Blood Memory: An Autobiography* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 46: "I see what the body does when it breathes. When it breathes in, it is a release and when it breathes out, it is a contraction. You breathe in and you breathe out, in and out. It is the physical use of the body in action. My technique is based on breathing." Cohen also mentions minimal stage decoration, bare feet used percussively on dance floors, minimalist costumes, a focus on pure dance without narrative accompaniment, and the weaving of allegory in Graham's work. We shall see Balasaraswati's style aligns particularly well with Graham's movement techniques and performance presentation, as well as her focus on breathing. In an interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 6, 2019, he told me that Bala would frequently sing and dance entire *pallabi*s ("choruses") of songs in complex meters without pausing for breath. Cohen's remarks on the second wave of modern dancers that included Donald McKayle also appears to have aligned Balasaraswati's aesthetic reception in the United States with audience expectations by the early 1960s. This second wave deemphasized personal allegory for abstracted qualities of movement, removing emotion even further from personal expression. The randomness and mechanization of other modern art forms played a part in this process, as well as the aesthetic goal of shocking audiences into recognizing the reality behind accepted symbols. This process "that startles

into awareness," could be adapted for other styles, including ballet, as long as the *way* and process of dancing accepted iconoclastic tendencies. We shall see that the improvisational core of *abhinaya* in Balasaraswati's dancing allowed her to perform characters and affects that the traditional dramaturgical models would consider iconoclastic. See chapter 2 for how semblances (*līlā*s) could manifest and modify received aesthetic models.

[16] Joan L. Erdman, "Performance as Translation: Uday Shankar in the West." *Drama Review TDR* 31:1 (Spring 1987): 64. On Gopal and his contentious relationship with Ruth St. Denis, see Rebekah Kowal 2020: Introduction.

[17] Avanthi Meduri, "Nation, Woman, Representation: The Sutured History of the Devadasi and Her Dance," Ph.D. diss, Department of Performance Studies, New York University, 1996: 407-408.

[18] Joan L. Erdman, "Circling the Square: A Choreographed Approach to the Works of Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan and Western Dance History," *Dance Research Journal* 32:1 (Summer 2000): 88.

[19] See Kapila Vatsyayan, "Introduction," in Margaret H. Case ed, *Govindadeva: A Dialogue in Stone* (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts, 1996), 3: "The multiple dimensions of the monuments and the region form in fact a single unified whole. The encompassing vision, the process of expression and the final artistic forms have to be studied not only singly but together."

[20] Kapila Vatsyayan, "Dance or Movement Techniques in Sanskrit Theater," in Rachel Van M. Baumer and James R. Brandon eds, *Sanskrit Drama in Performance* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1981), 45-46.

[21] Vatsyayan, "Introduction," 1996, 7-8.

[22] Uttara Asha Coorlawala, and Kapila Vatsyayan, "Kapila Vatsyayan: Formative Influences," *Dance Research Journal* 32:1 (Summer 2000): 103-105.

[23] Ibid 107.

[24] See ibid 107-108: "We are with the form of these dances, but we are not even in the dynamics of the movement at the technique level." Kapila Vatsyayan, *Indian Classical Dance* (New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1974), 24: "It is the dilution in the quality of the technique which is the cause of some concern. Although the dance style has gained in popularity during recent years, it is in danger of losing its quality."

[25] Kowal 2020: Introduction: "Staging the global, therefore, did not always or even necessarily lead to greater intercultural understanding, forge pathways to empathy, and/or address sociopolitical and/or economic inequities; rather, performances afforded opportunities for embodied and discursive articulations of a national identity formed in relation to performative foils of cultural otherness."

[26] See Erdman 2000: 91 where she links this to the idea of "world dance" and a "cultural ethos" in late 1990s dance history. For a rebuttal of this position, see Janet O'Shea, *At Home in the World: Bharata Natyam on the Global Stage* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007), 7. O'Shea compares the goals of modern European dancers such as Anna Pavlova, Ted Shawn, and Ruth St. Denis with Bharatanātyam revivalists in India during the first half of the twentieth century. Each group mutually "strove to validate dance, describing it as a 'high,' *autonomous* art that expressed creativity and engaged with serious intellectual and philosophical concerns."

[27] Kapila Vatsyayan, "The Future of Dance Scholarship in India." *Dance Chronicle* 18:3 (1995), 489-490: "Any incisive investigation into these forms will show that they are the bedrock of forms called "classical dance" and that they are the doors of perception for understanding the cultural dynamics of a community."

[28] See Kowal 2020: Introduction: "What are problems involved in 'dancing the world smaller,' a concept that imagined that single dancing body could contain and/or stand for multitudes of other bodies and, presumably other peoples?"

[29] See Phillipps 2020: Introduction.

[30] For more on this formulation, see Alexander Wendy and Raymond Duvall, "Sovereignty and the UFO," *Political Theory* 36:4 (August 2008): 608.

[31] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," *Ideology and Consciousness* 6:5 (1979): 11.

[32] Ananya Chatterjea, "How Can the Brown, Female, Subaltern Feminist Speak?" in Sharon E. Friedler and Susan B. Glazer, eds., *Dancing Female: Lives and Issues of Women in Contemporary Dance* (Amsterdam: Overseas Publishing Association, 1997), 293.

[33] Ananya Chatterjea, *Butting Out: Reading Resistive Choreographies through Works by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Chandralekha* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), xii where a contemporary dance colleague's inability "deconstruct the sari on my body" prevented him from realizing the radicalness of her practice.

[34] See Meduri 1996: xi-xii: "I explain how I dealt with the questions relating to historical method, and the chameleon presence of the devadasi's living ghost alive in the structural constitution of Bharatanatyam, and still haunting the travelling study of the national representation that I was trying to compose." On ethnographies that I discuss in more detail below, see Lucinda Ramberg, Given to the Goddess: South Indian Devadasis and the Sexuality of Religion (Durham: Duke University Press: 2014) on devadāsīs dedicated to the goddess Yellāmma. She was inspired by Jacky Assayag, *La colère de la déesse décapitée: Traditions, cultes et pouvoir dans le sud de l'Inde* (Paris: CNSR Éditions, 1992). Davesh Soneji, Unfinished Gestures: Devadasis, Memory, and Modernity in South India. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 2-3 on courtesan dancers in South India. Soneji calls these women "unintegrated individuals" since the promised modern citizenship of the "reform" campaigns have transformed them from regionally diffusive ritual and secular performers into a new category: *devadāsī*s. By disenfranchising this new group, which was said to have been responsible for the "moral decline" of dancing in South India, a process of modernizing could take place against the fixed historical background they represented. Soneji's study attends to these "loose ends" of the modernizing storyline told about India's status as a nation-state while revealing "historical fissures and uneven movements" where affects are most profoundly discovered and felt.

[35] Anurima Banerji, "Odissi Dance: Paraptropic Performances of Gender, State, and Nation," Ph.D. diss, Department of Performance Studies, New York University, 2010: 1-2, 28.

[36] Banerji 2010: 6-7.

[37] Banerji 2010: 9: "When looking closely and critically at Odissi's principles, themes and techniques, it became apparent to me that the dancing body was performing a complex politic and aesthetic: it propagated a kinetic knowledge that defied appropriations of the traditional, the modern, and the national, that it choreographed a parallel regional identity that existed to dominant discourses, that it acted as a somatic repository of a past which held importance for the artistic and cultural communities it represented."

[38] Banerji 2010: 11.

[39] Banerji 2017: 89.

[40] Banerji 2017: 90-91.

[41] Banerji 2017: 93-94: "its politics are evident and embedded in its form-institutional and corporeal-and that it is through these forms that it expresses dissent by drawing on deep sources of Indian tradition to interrogate the existing limits of classical Odissi dance."

[42] Anurima Banerji, "Dance and the Distributed Body: Odissi, Ritual Practice, and Performance." *About Performance* 11 (2012): 8: "The distributed body, in contrast, shows how ritual practices contain and articulate the values of a local epistemology, opening up new possibilities for imagining notions of the subject on grounds different than those offered by the conventional narratives of Western modernity or dominant Indian paradigms."

[43] Banerji 2012: 28-29: "In speaking of a distributed body as it related to devadasi performance at the Jagannath temple, I am arguing that dance had a diffuse property—dispensed across bodies, spaces, and objects—even as it coalesced in the mahari's body, granting its bearer a complex intersubjectivity. Further, ritual dance mobilised the concept of the distributed body in perpetuating itself as tradition. For ritualisation created a principle of embodiment that is neither just singular nor plural, neither just one nor many, neither partible nor complete—it was one constructed liminally in-between these states. The distributed body was not a fragmented body, however: there was a wholeness and auspiciousness ascribed to it, and its sacredness derives precisely from its distributed capacity—its ability to enact, translate, and perpetuate the traditions associated with religiosity."

[44] Banerji 2010: 29: "choreography shares a metonymic and metaphoric relationship with the state, as what happens in aesthetic space becomes a mirror, model, and microcosm for what happens in the social order. Through a choreographic prism, dance and state become sites of scripted, embodied performance"

[45] Knight 2010: xv claims explicitly that when sources differ in the facts of Bala's life, he favors the performing lineage's "agreement within the family group recollection."

[46] For a sample of major theorists in feminist and subaltern analysis of dance and agency in South Asia, see Matthew Harp Allen, "Rewriting the Script for South Indian Dance," *Drama Review* 41:3 (1997): 63. Anurima Banerji, "Dance and the Distributed Body: Odissi, Ritual Practice, and Performance," *About Performance* 11 (2012): 7. Pallabi Chaktravorty, "Dance, Pleasure and Indian Women as Multisensorial Subjects," *Visual Anthropology* 17 (2004): 1. Uttar Asha Coorlawala, "Classical and Contemporary Indian Dance: Overview, Criteria and a Choreographic Analysis," Ph.D. diss., Department of Dance, New York University, 1994 and ibid "The Sanskritized Body," *Dance Research Journal* 36:2 (Winter, 2004): 50. Anusha Lakshmi Kedar, "On the Move: Transnational South Asian Dancers the 'Flexible" Dancing Body," PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2011. Purnima Mankekar, *Unsettling India: Affect, Temporality, Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). Seemanthini Niranjana, "Off the Body: Further Considerations of Women, Sexuality and Agency," *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 6:1 (1999): 1. K. B. Saxena, "Dalits and the *Devdasi* System: A dignified form of sexual slavery," in Ashok K. Pankaj and Ajit K. Pandey, eds., *Dalits, Subalternity and Social Change in India* (New York: Routledge, 2019): 181. Davesh Soneji, "Critical Steps: Thinking Through Bharatanatyam in the Twenty-First Century," In Soneji, ed., *Bharatanatyam: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), xii. Jeffrey L. Spear and Avanthi Meduri, "Knowing the Dancer: East Meets West," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 32:2 (2004): 435. Priya Srinivasan, "A 'Material'-ist Reading of the Bharata Natyam Dancing Body: The Possibility of the 'Unruly Spectator,'" In

Susan Leigh Foster, ed., *Worlding Dance* (New York: Macmillian, 2009), 53. Sitara Thobani, "Entertaining Subalternity: The Performance of Nation and the Politics of Indian Classical Dance," MA thesis, University of Toronto, Sociology and Equity Studies in Education, 2008. For a perspective on the male gendered nature of dance, see Harshita Kamath, *Aesthetics, Performativity, & Performative Māyā: Imagining Gender in the Textual and Performance Traditions of Telugu South India*, Ph.D. diss., Emory University, West and South Asian Religions, 2012 and Kamath, *Impersonations: The Artifice of Brahmin Masculinity in South Indian Dance*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019.

[47] Srinivasan: 2011: 8-9. Srinivasan reveals the affective contours that moved her to research the global circulation of dancers: "I cannot sit still as I note the hidden labor of dance, the migration patterns of dancers, and the connection between their successes or failures and immigration laws. In one respect, my body is involved in the research through the act of practicing the dance and through my kinesthetic responses to the information gathered. In another respect, I am restless as I find it imperative to unpack multiple points of view to reveal Indian dance within a broader political economy. For these reasons, throughout the book, I participate as the "unruly spectator.""

[48] See Amanda Weidman, "Gender and the Politics of Voice: Colonial Modernity and Classical Music in South India," *Cultural Anthropology* 18:2 (2003): 202.

[49] Knight 2010: xx.

[50] Agamben 2000:55-57. Agamben differentiates gestures from Varro's remarks on the Latin verbal form *gerere* as "pure means," of "carrying on or out." Actors can "enact" (*agere*) a play without producing it (*facere*) and vice versa playwrights can make a play without acting it out. Gesture breaks this dialectic tension as "something is being endured or supported." This enables a radical reexamination of dance as it has been framed as an end-in-itself rather than a pure means, of "mediality: it is the process of making means visible as such." This opens up an ethical dimension to living that cannot divorce *how* we live from *what* we should do. This opens up *abhinaya* to the dimension of *vṛtti*, as the political-ethical ramifications of every life layer meaning into latent possibility by our choices. See ibid 6: "A life that cannot be separated from its form is a life for which what is at stake in its way of living is living itself…in which the single ways, acts, and processes of living are never simply *facts* but always and above all *possibilities* of life, always and above all power." See ibid 9. Balasaraswati embodied what Agamben calls "*thought*" as an "inseparable context as form-of-life." Her responsiveness and surrender to tradition, in her own words, constitute what Agamben calls the ability "to be affected by one's own receptiveness and experience in each and every thing that is thought a pure power of thinking." This makes her dancing in *abhinaya* in particular "an experience of a common power."

[51] See Milton Singer, *When a Great Tradition Modernizes: An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization.* New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), 148. Singer's first impression was that the aesthetic practices around Madras in the 1950's were modern forms of performance–this included Bharatanāṭyam. Only after being exposed to the internalized Orientalist assumptions of his interlocuters, along with a hefty dose of ethnographic suspension of disbelief in his own cultural separation of religion from aesthetics, did he write: "These assumptions and interpretations were mistaken. In India, religion includes culture, and culture includes religion, even in a metropolitan center. Classical art, too, is a yoga." The articulation of yoga with art seems part of the Madras Music Academy's agenda and was promulgated by Balasaraswati herself.

[52] Ninotchka Bennahum, *Carmen: A Gypsy Geography* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2013), 135-136. The mythic figure of Carmen functions as a dispositional matrix (*sattva*) or character in the Orientalist assemblage that Bennahum reveals at play in Napoleonic Cairo.

[53] Davesh Sonej, *Unfinished Gestures: Devadasis, Memory, and Modernity in South India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 2012), 3.

[54] See J. Barton Scott, *Spiritual Despots: Modern Hinduism and the Genealogies of Self-Rule* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 2016), 90. Scott's use of the "reform assemblage" also showcases how reformers in South Asia treated persons not as individuals (as "private and discrete") but instead as constituted by "transnational networks of people, ideas, practices, objects, and institutions that were strung together by the shifting signifier *reform*," showing how "unstable" and fluid this network functioned as vectors, "lines of force, rather than constelled points or positions."

[55] Soneji 2012: 4.

[56] Soneji 2012: 10.

[57] Ramberg 2014: 27. This study attempts to find a balance between viewing the persons and bodies in question as either subjects or objects, fully autonomous decision-making rational actors or those exploited and oppressed with no hope for agency. This helps explain how feminists have viewed *devadāsī*s as "celebratorily recuperating" female agency outside patriarchical strictures of power while anti-caste and Dalit matrices are created around them as "tragically abjected."

[58] See Susan Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons: 1953), 175.

[59] Kalpana Ram, "Phantom Limbs: South Indian Dance and Immigrant Reifications of the Female Body," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 26:1-2 (2005): 135.

[60] See Soneji 2012: 6, 220-221.

[61] Soneji 2012: 13.

[62] Soneji 2012: 24.

[63] *Nātya-śāstra adhyāya*s (chapters) 8-13 all deal with *āngika-abhinaya* ("bodily gestures"), while 15-19 focus on *vācika-abhinaya* ("vocal gestures"), 23 on *āhārya-abhinaya* ("cosmetic gestures"). Chapter 24 includes discussions of *sāttvika-abhinaya* although its title is *sāmānya-abhinaya* ("universal gestures"). See Harshita Mruthinti Kamath *Impersonations: The Artifice of Brahmin Masculinity in South Indian Dance* (Oakland: University of California Press: 2019), 57 for more.

[64] Soneji 2012: 13-14.

[65] Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 2009), 2-3.

[66] Erin Manning, *Always More Than One: Individuation's Dance* (Durham: Duke University Press: 2013), 31 calls this field of agency without an agent "agencement."

[67] See Balasaraswati 1973: 43: "Jayammal taught us the close relationship of *abhinaya* to *rāga*–contour; she would say, "Your head, your whole body, must move with the *saṅgati* (melodic variation, lit. "going together, appropriateness"), with the *gamaka* (embellishment between notes in a *rāga*), and not just with the *tāla* (rhythm)."

[68] Soneji 2012: 14.s

[69] See Teemu Paavolainen, *Theatricality and Performativity: Writings on Texture from Plato's Cave to Urban Activism* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 11.

[70] Knight 2010: xxi.

[71] Allen 1997, O'Shea 2007.

[72] In a recording from December 6, 1962, for instance, Bala offered a demonstration to the crowd that the musicologist Robert E. Brown helped narrate at the University of Los Angeles. The audience members could be heard laughing as she performed an improvisation (*mano-dharma*) on the line, "I'm a stranger in a new land." This engagement by means of her gestures allowed audiences to see her mastery of the dance even while constantly articulating her subject position to them in a relatable manner. See Balasaraswati and ensemble 1962b, found at Wesleyan University's Music archives, WA7.1.171.

[73] See Agamben 2000: 9.

[74] Interview Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 7, 2019. While visiting the Balasaraswati Scripps Institute of Performing Arts in Chennai, his students ranged from young children who started at age 5 or 6 to adult dancers in their 20's. Only one of his students in the class out of nearly 70 was male and in the advanced course (that required 3-4 years of instruction).

[75] Bennahum 2013: 132.

[76] Katherine Zubko, "Dancing the *Bhagavadgītā*: Embodiment as Commentary," *Journal of Hindu Studies* 7:3 (2013a): 397-398: "A performed commentary refers to two aspects: The first pertains to layers of image and narrative that are danced to a single line of lyric sung in repetition as a way to expand on the interpretation of that one point. This is an overlooked feature of the technique of Indian classical dance that happens with the building of images around a seed narrative or embellishment of a character that puts dance choreography in conversation with South Asian commentarial traditions of philosophy that build off of linguistic and conceptual wordplay, and intertextual references. When pushed to image philosophical or abstract concepts, the idea of an embodied commentary of the text serves to clarify the comparison and becomes an apt way to frame or analyse what is being created within a danced performance… The second aspect of performed commentary I wish to draw attention to entails the interaction between texts and images through the lens of embodiment. Texts inform visual representations as we often identify different paintings, sculptures, and so on as an image from this or that specific narrative or mythology, which changes how we might identify and interpret the features. But this influence also works in the other direction—the choice of gestures, postures, facial expressions, and point of view that we see in an image, or embodied on stage, also inform how the text is understood."

[77] See Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 9-10.

[78] See Knight 2010: 83. In the program for Bala's performance at the Theresa L. Kaufman Concert Hall at the 92nd Street Y on October 21st, 1965 though, *Kṛṣṇa Nī Bēganē Bārō* is in the *padam* slot for the concert series. See New York Public Library Archives, Performing Arts Research Collections, [Programs] "Balasaraswati in a recital of Bharata Natyam, the Classical Dance of South India," *MGZB. October 21, 92nd Street Y. American Society for Eastern Arts and the Society for Asian Music.

[79] Katherine Zubko, "Krishna Come Soon: Bharata Natyam and the Bhāgavata Purāṇa on Stage," in Ravi M. Gupta and Kenneth R. Valpey, eds, *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa: Sacred Text and Living Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013b), 172.

[80] Jacob's Pillow Archives. Program collection. "Maria Tallchief and Scott Douglas; the First Chamber Dance Quarter; Balasaraswati." Object ID 4903. August 21-25, 1962. https://archives.jacobspillow.org/Detail/objects/4903. Digital page 4 includes the first night's

program, physical page 2. The same translation occurs on digital page 9, second night's program physical page 3.

[81] Knight 2010: 83

[82] John Lindquist, "Balasaraswati," photograph in Jacobs Pillow Archive, identifier # 001102, 1962: https://archives.jacobspillow.org/Detail/objects/13928.

[83] Zubko 2013b: 172-175 has also informed my interpretation of the dance although I disagree with her on several key points.

[84] Jacob's Pillow Dance Archives, Balasaraswati program, August 21-25 1962: 2, 3.

[85] See Zubko 2013b: 172.

[86] See Vilém Flusser, *Gestures*, Nancy Ann Roth trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 7-9. To "criticize affect" in its domain, aesthetics, we can't judge them as either true/false nor real/lie, but instead on a continuum of verisimilitude ("truth (authenticity) and kitsch"). This makes interesting dilemmas since something can be aesthetically authentic ("true") while being morally unacceptable ("dishonest") or epistemologically false.

[87] See Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, Thought in the Act Series (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 1-2: The minor "is a force that *courses through it*, unmooring its structural integrity, problematizing its normative standards…The minor is a continual variation on experience. It has a mobility not given to the major: its rhythms are not controlled by a preexisting structure, but open to flux. In variation is in change, indeterminate…The minor isn't known in advance. It never reproduces itself in its own image. Each minor gesture is singularly connected to the event at hand, immanent to the in-act…The minor invents new forms of existence, and with them, in them, we come to be…In its movement, the minor gesture creates sites of dissonance, disturbances, that open experience to new modes of expression."

[88] My analysis draws on T. Balasaraswati and ensemble, *Balasaraswati*, DVD, World Music Archive, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, 1998. The ensemble is credited after the performance and in the line notes inside the DVD case. My thanks to Josepha Cormack for providing me with this footage.

[89] See Graham Schweig, *Dance of Divine Love: India's Classic Sacred Love Story: The Rasa Lila of Krishna.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 26-27.

[90] See Hannah M. de Bruin, "Devadāsīs and Village Goddesses of Tamil Nadu," in Heidrun Brückner, Elisabeth Schombucher, and Phillip B. Zarrilli, eds, *The Power of Performance: Actors, Audiences and Observers of Cultural Performances in India* (New Delhi: Manohar 2007), 63-64.

[91] See Schweig 2005: 65. Kṛṣṇa says to the *gopī*s after their separation in *viraha*: "I an unable to reciprocate, your faultless love for me, your own purity. And all that you have sacrificed for me, even over the lifetime of a great divinity. Severing strong ties to your homes so difficult to overcome, you have lovingly worshiped me. May your reward be your own purity."

[92] Albeit with the caveat that the "West" is much a dispositional matrix in its own right as the "Orient" in Edward Said's work on the subject. Each is a *sattva* which one invests time and energy into cultivating for affective layering of histories into bodies. See Ananya Chatterjea, *Butting Out: Reading Resistive Choreographies through Works by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Chandralekha* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 3: "My usage of typically binarized terms such as West and non-West reflects the symbolic capital that has

accrued to the signifier "West" through historical, economic, and political processes, and the understanding that the West has come to signify, for "others," less a location than a set of relationships woven through unequally positioned histories." Bala's *vṛtti* is one such "unequally positioned history" woven through with relationships to modernity.

[93] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In Patrick Williams and Laura Hcrisman, eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 92 makes the case for the intellectual double-bind in this dispositional matrix: "White men are saving brown women from brown men." I disagree as I attempt to show throughout Chapters Four and Five. See Chatterjea 1997: 298 for a response to this as process: "How do we strip off the skins of history?" See Ananya Chatterjea 2004: xiii: "I have wrestled with a colleague who has repeatedly told me that the moment he sees me in a sari, he immediately reads me as "exotic," such is the context, and can I not "deconstruct the sari on my body?" Apparently, as long as I did not, there was no way to read the radicalness of my work."

[94] T. Balasaraswati, *Bala on Bharatanatyam*, S. Guhan trans. (Madras: The Sruti Foundation, 1991), 14. This speech comes from a different translation of her Tamil Issai Society Speech on December 21, 1975 in Madras.

[95] Gloria B. Strauss and Carl Wolz, "ADG/CORD Dance Conference August 1-7 1978: Reports/Program," *Dance Research Journal* 11:1/2 (1978): 69. The program puts this speech at 4:30-5:30pm on Monday, 7th August, 1978.

[96] Meduri 2004: 19. See Soneji 2012: 40 on why this was not marriage but a semblance of the marriage rite.

[97] Meduri 1996: 393-394.

[98] Leonard C. Hawes, "Becoming-other-wise: Conversational Performance and the Politics of Experience," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 18:4: 281: "Turns are values, and as such are sought, avoided, given, and taken, and the ways in which turn-taking distributes its participating members can be thought through in political-economic terms," and ibid 283: "turns are moves in relations of power." See Meduri 2004: 17: "Rukmini Devi was neither in conflict *nor conversation* with T. Balasaraswati."

[99] Meduri 1996: 434: "The modern and avant-garde questions remained sealed because both Sangeet Natak Academy officials and cultural practitioners did not appear to be interested in that question."

[100] Meduri 2004: 20.

[101] Meduri 1996: 343, 348-349.

[102] Meduri 1996: 152.

[103] Avanthi Meduri, "Bharatanaytam as a Global Dance: Some Issues in Research, Teaching, and Practice." *Dance Journal Review* 36:2 (Winter 2004): 12.

[104] See Henrietta Bannerman, "Martha Graham's House of the Pelvic Truth: The Figuration of Sexual Identity and Female Empowerment." *Dance Research Journal* 42:1 (Summer 2010): 34. Cohen 1966: 8.

[105] Meduri 2004: 12 advocates for a focus on "the large issues of comparative modernities including sociological studies of state, patriarchy, and national/global institutions of patronage in which Bharatanatyam circulates even today."

[106] This includes Matthew Harp Allen, Janet O'Shea, and Douglas Knight.

[107] Contemporary Bharatanatyam and other South Asian dancers in the diaspora undergo similar struggles under neoliberal labor policies. See Anusha Lakshmi Kedar, "On the Move:

Transnational South Asian Dancers the 'Flexible" Dancing Body," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Riverside, 2011.

[108] Meduri 2004: 15-16, 21: "Both women [Rukmini Devi and Bala] enlarged their individual identities by shouldering the weight of a larger collectivity, which they hailed variously as tradition, ancestry, and historical legacy. Why did the two women carry this weight of history on their backs? Why could they not shrug it off and speak freely as modern American dancers did in Europe and America of the 1930s?"

[109] Aparna Keshaviah "Decoding the Modern Practice of Bharatanatyam." *Congress on Research and Dance Proceedings* 41, Dance Studies and Global Feminisms. Hollins University, Roanoke, VA. November 14-16, 2008: 143.

[110] Keshaviah 2008: 146.

[111] See Medha Youdh, "Bharata Natyam: Dance and Identity," *Massachusetts Review* 29:4 (1998): 673-676.

[112] Keshaviah 2008: 145.

[113] Meduri 1996: 422 identities three main varieties of the dance. Balasaraswati's lineage is reduced to the placeholder for "sadir Bharatanāṭyam" of all *devadāsī* practices, which recent works such as Soneji and Ramberg demonstrate had a range of performance genres and styles. Bala characterizes her style as full of gestures that contain "minimal semblance" (Meduri ibid: 444). Next was the middle-class amateur style taken up by Brahmin women which Bala excoriated by linking to Rukmini Devi in parodic gestures (see Meduri ibid: 445). Lastly Rukmini Devi Arundale's own style and its sharp linear spread was named after her institution, Kalākṣetra- Bharatanāṭyam.

[114] I Meduri at length since this dissertation remains unpublished and is not addressed in her later published works to the same extent.

[115] Meduri 1996: 348-349.

[116] Avanti Meduri, "Labels, Histories, Politics: Indian/South Asian Dance on the Global Stage." *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 26:2 (Winter 2008): 228-229.

[117] Meduri 2008: 230.

[118] Meduri 2008: 231.

[119] See Meduri 2008: 231-232. Quoting from Raghavan's speech: "The new name which became settled invested it [Bharatanatyam] with the requisite status, which was needed in the circumstances of its revival, and served to underline its classical moorings. The name at once established the form in a historical continuity, which went up to Mohenjo-Daro and the Rig Veda." The neologism is a combination of several different names of the dance, including *nāṭyam* for dance-drama as well as Bhāratam, a term used for the performers themselves.

[120] Meduri 2008: 234.

[121] See below and Knight 2010: 177-178, 187.

[122] See Singer 1972: 182.

[123] Aniruddha Knight, interview with Jeremy Hanes, April 1, 2019.

[124] Clement Greenburg, "Avant Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* 1939: 15: kitsch "predigests art for the
spectator and spares him effort, provides him with a short cut to the pleasure of art that detours what is necessarily difficult in genuine art."

[125] Clement Greenburg, "Modernist Painting," in Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, eds., *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology* (New York: Sage, 1982), 5.

[126] Greenburg 1982: 6.

[127] Greenburg 1982: 9-10. In fact, Greenburg directly addresses a kind of strong "messianic" force in art reception: "Art criticism and art history lag behind Modernism as they lagged behind pre-Modernist art. Most of the things that get written about Modernist art still belong to journalism rather than to criticism or art history. It belongs to journalism -- and to the *millennial complex* from which so many journalists and journalist intellectuals suffer in our day -- that each new phase of Modernist art should be hailed as the start of a whole new epoch in art, marking a decisive break with all the customs and conventions of the past. Each time, a kind of art is expected so unlike all previous kinds of art, and so free from norms of practice or taste, that everybody, regardless of how informed or uninformed he happens to be, can have his say about it. And each time, this expectation has been disappointed, as the phase of Modernist art in question finally takes its place in the intelligible continuity of taste and tradition. Nothing could be further from the authentic art of our time than the idea of a rupture of continuity. Art is -- among other things -- continuity, and unthinkable without it. Lacking the past of art, and the need and compulsion to maintain its standards of excellence, Modernist art would lack both substance and justification."

[128] Greenburg 1982: 6. See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 131.

[129] Mark Franko, *Choreographing Discourses: A Mark Franko Reader*, Mark Franko with Allessandra Nicifero, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2019), 3.

[130] Franko 2019: 6.

[131] Franko 2019: 180.

[132] See Agamben 2000: 51-53.

[133] See Adam B. Seligman, Robert P. Weller, Michael J. Puett, and Bennett Simon, *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), x. See Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games,* Meyer Barash trans. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), x on *ilinx* for more on these affordances. See Franko 2019: 32 for Martin's interpretation of *Dark Meadow*.

[134] Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), 115 qtd. in Franko 2019: 179.

[135] See Franko 2019: 155, 163.

[136] See Brian Massumi, *The Power at the End of the Economy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 8: "Beneath the microeceonimc level of the individual there is the infra-economic level. At that level, an affective commotion intra-churns. Its variations are so immediately linked that we cannot parse them out into separate occurrences. The individual, speaking infra-ly, is not one. It may collect itself as one. It may figure as one, for higher levels. But in itself, it is many. Many *tendencies*: potential expressions and orientations held together in tension. The individual is buffeted by these tendencies' coming turbulently together, divide among them in its relation to itself. Divided among them, awaiting their complex playing-out in a shift in general orientation, the "individual" is the *dividual*. The dividual is the individual as affective infra-climate, in relation to itself, commotionally poised for what may come, storm or shine, doldrums or halcyon days."

[137] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Public Worlds vol. 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 3-4.

[138] Appadurai 1996: 8: "It is important to stress here that I am speaking of the imagination now as a property of collectives, and not merely as a faculty of the gifted individual (its tacit

sense since the flowering of European Romanticism)…These sodalities…are more volatile, less professionalized, less subject to collectively shared criteria of pleasure, taste, or mutual relevance. They are communities in themselves but always potentially communities for themselves capable, of moving from shared imagination to collective action."

[139] Appadurai 1996: 9.

[140] Appadurai 1996: 10.

[141] Appadurai 1996: 17.

[142] Appadurai 1996: 46.

[143] Balasraswati 1991: 6.

[144] See Appadurai 1996: 112.

[145] Franko 2019: 154.

[146] Agamben 2000 and Giorgio Agamben, *Karman: A Brief Treatise on Action, Guilt, and Gesture*, Adam Kotsko trans., Crossing Aesthetics Series (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017) for more on gesture as "pure means."

[147] Appadurai 1996: 75-76.

[148] See Gill 2017 for more on this process in Turkish postcolonial music.

[149] See Allen 1997: 63-64.

[150] Appadurai 1996: 140-141.

[151] See Varuni Bhati, *Unforgetting Chaitanya: Vaishnavism and Cultures of Devotion in Colonial Bengal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3.

[152] For example, see Graham Schweig, *Dance of Divine Love: India's Classic Sacred Love Story: The Rasa Lila of Krishna* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 65 where Kṛṣṇa claims he cannot reciprocate the affects of the *gopī*s due to the potency of their longing: "I am unable to reciprocate your faultless love for me, your own purity, And all that you have sacrificed for me, even over the lifetime of a great divinity. Severing strong ties to your homes so difficult to overcome, you have lovingly worshiped me. May your reward be your own purity." Note that Kṛṣṇa founds the *gopī*s' own dispositions (*sattva*) as pure (*śuddha*) by their own performances and affects. See ibid for *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* 10.32.22: *na pāraye 'haṃ niravadya-saṃyujaṃ sva-sādhu-kṛtyaṃ vibudhāyuṣāpi vaḥ | yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ saṃvṛścya tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā ||*

[153] Appadurai 1996: 146.

[154] Manning 2016: 1.

[155] Appadurai 1996: 152-153.

[156] Appadurai 1996: 153 and Massumi, *Power at the End of the Economy*, 2015: 8: "Beneath the microeceonimc level of the individual there is the infra-economic level. At that level, an affective commotion intra-churns. Its variations are so immediately linked that we cannot parse them out into separate occurrences. The individual, speaking infra-ly, is not one. It may collect itself as one. It may figure as one, for higher levels. But in itself, it is many. Many *tendencies*: potential expressions and orientations held together in tension. The individual is buffeted by these tendencies' coming turbulently together, divided among them in its relation to itself. Divided among them, awaiting their complex playing-out in a shift in general orientation, the "individual" is the *dividual*. The dividual is the individual as affective infra-climate, in relation to itself, commotionally poised for what may come, storm or shine, doldrums or halcyon days." The reason I draw this economic connection between the infradividual and *vṛtti*, besides the ongoingness present in both as economic and affective matrices, pertains to the former's status as a terminus for the system. Massumi argues the

infra-level acts as a limit point, where the economy curves but does not quite touch in tangent. Approaching this limit causes the affective load to rebound back, a kind of "movement of return." In this sense, the two share an affective contouring as "turning," with attendant powers of transformation (turn into), return (turn out of), and of churning beneath the surface (to turn over), as well as linguistic (turn a phrase, alliteration), performative-expressive (turning out), amassing or collecting (turn a profit), alimentary (stomach turns) and mental motion (turn over in one's mind). The Sanskrit has these allusions, as well as a sense of ongoingness of becoming (*vartana* is "what is becoming present") and allusions to manner (*vṛt* as "way" things are done, similar to the English suffix *-ward*). These directional cues and motility suggest an affective contouring of experience that cannot be contained in singular bodies but instead extends outward to encompass relationality itself. In this sense, the materiality at play is not a fixed substance but a more elemental (*dhātu*) matrix of forces coalescing in various iterations. This primordial, churning "groundless ground" in Sanskrit ontology is called *prakṛti*, and I suggest we can see it in similar veins of analytic discovery as Merleau-Ponty's idea of the flesh. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*: *Followed By Working Notes*, Claude Lefort ed., Alphonso Lingis trans. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 135 where Merleau-Ponty unites the investment of style into texture (*vṛtti*) from quality (*guṇa*) in a disposition (*sattva*): "What is indefinable in the *quale*, in the color, is nothing else than a brief, preemptory *manner* of giving in one sole something, in one sole tone of being, visions past, visions to come, by whole clusters. I who see have my own depth also, being backed up by this same visible which I see and which, I know very well, closes in behind me."

[157] Knight 2010: 3. Kay Poursine, "T. Balasaraswati in the US," *Nartanam* 9:4 (2009): 98.

[158] Lawrence Grossberg, "On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10:2 (June 1986): 53. Articulations are ligatures that do not have to be connected, similar to Manuel Delanda's explanation for assemblages. See Manuel Delanda, *Assemblage Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 32.

[159] Knight 2010: 1.

[160] Knight 2010: 2.

[161] Knight 2010: 4.

[162] Knight 2010: 5 and interview Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 3, 2019.

[163] Knight 2010: 5.

[164] Knight 2010: 4-5, 69-70 for Hindusthani performers that came to Vina Dhanammal's home.

[165] Knight 2010: 5-6.

[166] See Soneji 2012: 2-3.

[167] Knight 2010: 7; Ramberg 2014, Saxena 2019.

[168] Knight 2010: 7.

[169] Soneji 2012: 13; Ramberg 2014: 32.

[170] Knight 2010: 7.

[171] Knight 2010: 11-12.

[172] Knight 2010: 11-12, and Saskia C. Kersenboom, *Nityasumaṅgalī: Devadasi Traditions in South India*, (New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 2016).

[173] Soneji 2012: 4-5.

[174] Soneji 2012: 11.

[175] Grossberg 1986: 54.

[176] Soneji 2012: 28-29.

[177] Soneji 2012: 29.

[178] See Kamath 2019: 58 on the date of the *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*.

[179] Meduri 1996: 44-45. Meduri offers no evidence that only the *nattuvanar*s had the ability to teach and pass on texts. Vina Dhanammal's example cited below shows that they were frequently the recipients of teachings and compositions! See Soneji 2012: 58 for examples of texts codified by the *father* of the Tanjore Quartet. He gives one called the *Abhinaya Lakṣaṇamu* written by Ciṇṇaiyā, but dictated by Cupparāya Naṭṭuvanār, which was a Telugu reworking of the Sanskrit *Abhinaya-darpaṇa* ("Mirror of Gestures") of Nandikeśvara. See Meduri 1996: 241-242 on how A.K. Coomaraswamy's translation meanwhile was working in a similar style to popularize this same text in English during the 1930s. This section provides her assertion that gestures are infused with *bhāva*, which was already a given in Bala's family tradition.

[180] Ramberg 2014: 19.

[181] See chapter 3 and Giorgio Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 231.

[182] Soneji 2012: 30.

[183] Soneji 2012: 30-31.

[184] Soneji 2012: 33-34.

[185] Soneji 2012: 40.

[186] Soneji 2012: 41-42.

[187] Soneji 2012: 36-37.

[188] Soneji 2012: 48-49.

[189] Soneji 2012: 49-50.

[190] Soneji 2012: 51.

[191] Soneji 2012: 53.

[192] Soneji 2012: 54.

[193] Soneji 2012: 202.

[194] T. Balasaraswat, "On Bharata Natyam," *Dance Chronicle* 2:2: 11-15 (1978): 11-12.

[195] The four brothers included Vinnaiya, Ponnaiyā, Civānantam, and Vaṭivēl. See Soneji 2012: 55.

[196] Grossberg 1986: 54.

[197] Delanda 2016: 32-33.

[198] Soneji 2012: 56.

[199] Soneji 2012: 58.

[200] Soneji 2012: 59.

[201] Delanda 2016: 13.

[202] Soneji 2012: 61-62.

[203] Soneji 2012: 63-64. See Knight 2010: 164 on this December 26, 1956 performance. See "The Anguish of Art," *Swarajyam* (Madras), Feb. 9, 1957 for an additional local review of the performance.

[204] Keshaviah 2008: 145. Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 6, 2019.

[205] Soneji 2012: 65.

[206] Soneji 2012: 66.

[207] Soneji 2012: 67.

[208] Knight 2010: 12-13.
[209] Knight 2010: 13.
[210] Knight 2010: 14.
[211] Knight 2010: 20.
[212] Knight 2010: 20-21.
[213] Knight 2010: 47-48.
[214] Knight 2010: 59. This suggests both that Balasaraswati as a dancer in the traditional community would be considered an earner but also that she would be expected to care for others when they fell on hard times.
[215] Soneji 2012: 95.
[216] See Soneji 2012: 100-101 for an example
[217] Knight 2010: 14. Her *vīna* still sits in the Balasaraswati Scripps Institute of Performing Arts at the center of a large *pūjā* display, with a lithographic print of Vina Dhannamal above it.
[218] Soneji 2012: 101-102.
[219] See Kamatha 2019: 51.
[220] Dharmapuri Subbaraya Ayyar translated in Soneji 2012: 104-105.
[221] Soneji 2012: 105.
[222] Soneji 2012: 202.
[223] Meduri 1996: 151.
[224] Knight 2010: 47.
[225] Soneji 2012: 106-110.
[226] William Elison, *The Neighborhood of Gods: The Sacred and the Visible at the Margins of Mumbai* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018) describes the multiple visual cultures that can overlap as part of this process of layering the imaginative structure of Bollywood film onto the actual cityscape. See also See Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Architectural Body* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2002), xi on the affects of architecture: "Having observed near and far how the body moves through its surroundings, having thought lengthily of still other ways to surround it, and having built a few tactically posed surroundings, we notice ourselves to have been tracing an architectural body, or at least a landscape for one. We see architecture not merely as that which stands by and gets linked up with, as structures that life lightly avails itself of in passing; not passive, not passively merely hanging around to provide shelter or monumentality, architecture as we newly conceive it actively participates in life and death matters."
[227] Knight 2010: 16.
[228] Knight 2010: 16.
[229] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 1, 2019.
[230] Knight 2010: 23-24.
[231] Knight 2010: 37.
[232] Balasaraswati 1991: 16.
[233] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, April 3, 2019.
[234] Beryl de Zoete, *The Other Mind: A Study in Dance in South India* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1953), 17.
[235] I argue this point at greater length in chapter two.
[236] See Kamath 2019: 59 on *āhārya-abhinaya* for its relation to disguise. Balasaraswati invested the affective magic of the event in its full force into a theme and extended the

primary affective matrix (*sthāyi-bhāva*) into its corresponding "beguiling" affects (*vyabhicāri-bhāva*s).

[237] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 3, 2019.

[238] Knight 2010: 34.

[239] Ramberg 2014: 199.

[240] Ramberg 2014: 169.

[241] Ramberg 2014: 196-198. In Karnataka and other parts of southern India, cross-cousin marriage is encouraged and kinship networks have specific relations embedded for patrilinear and matrilinear families. So in Kannada linguistically, children of *devadāsī*s call male-sexed siblings *cakka*, "father's brother," rather than *mama*, "mother's brother."

[242] Ramberg 2014: 199.

[243] See Kamath 2012 for more on the discussion of gender in dance histories of South India. On "elsewise," see Hawes 1998: 280.

[244] Ramberg 2014: 211.

[245] Knight 2010: 25.

[246] See Knight 2010: 237 when she refused Satyajit Ray's request to film her morning *pūjā* routine.

[247] Knight 2010: 26.

[248] Kamath 2019: 59.

Chapter 5

[1] Meduri 2008: 232.

[2] T. Shankaran, interview with T. Viswanathan. in Knight 2010: 17. Interviews quoted from Knight's book are mostly from the family's recollection of events, as well as material from a now-defunct documentary by Smita Shah. Shah discusses this film with Celia Ipiotis on a WNYC television show, *Eye on Dance*, now archived at the New York Public Library's Jerome Robbins Dance Division. See Celia, Ipiotis, Interview with Smita Shah and Kamala Cesare, *Eye on Dance* 202, New York City Public Television, WNYC, 1986, New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, *MGZIC 9-2994.

[3] Ra Ganapati, personal notes given to Lakshmi Knight, qtd. in Knight 2010: 17-18, 268 ft. 3.

[4] Aniruddha Knight, *Mad About Dance* 1 (2017): 5. See also S. Anvar, T". Balasaraswati's Grandson Aniruddha Knight." March 5, 2011. Posted by Parisumuthu Kannan. Accessed Feb. 15, 2019: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbxWtEhQSME. Shveta Aror, "Aniruddha Knight: Any burden pushes us towards perfection," *Narthaki* (2017). Aniruddha Knight, *T. Balasaraswati*. Balasaraswati School of Music and Dance, 2016. Accessed March 1, 2019: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibSmDqm-k3o.
Anuradha Nagaraja, "I can't take my baggage up on stage." Interview with Aniruddha Knight. *The Q's, Artists Unplugged*, March 22, 2017. Accessed July 12, 2019: https://theaalaap.com/site/theqs/AniruddhaKnight?fbclid=IwAR00W_IukXos0JQxh4CLHVJf0CFJ8WvXGzxDEm7aSF7qIaOzX7vBLehFBX0#. Chitra Swaminathan, "Bani is Still Relevant Says Aniruddha Knight," *The Hindu*, May 12, 2016.

[5] For a comparable example in Bengal, see June McDaniel, *The Madness of the Saints: Ecstatic Religion in Bengal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 251. David Gordon White in a personal communication also points out that the Tamil Siddhas had their own traditions. See Kamil Zvelebil, *Poets of the Powers* (Rider: New York, 1973).

[6] See David Gordon White, *Kiss of the Yoginī: "Tantric Sex" in its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 167 for Siddhas as mountain deities. See also ibid *Sinister Yogis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 102, 149 on *yoga-siddha*s. Patañjali's third chapter in the *Yoga-sūtra*s enumerates *siddhi*s that are gained based on the object of meditation, allowing the material affordances of gross (*mahābhūta*) and subtle elements to permeate the psycho-physical form of the practitioner. For instance, see *Yoga-sūtra* 3:13: *etena bhūtendriyeṣu dharma-lakṣaṇavasthā-pariṇāmā vyākhyātāḥ*, "Due to this transformation, one discovers within sensory objects and organs, their essential qualities, their various characteristics, and their conditions that have undergone a transformation." Thanks to Graham Schweig for assistance in translating this passage.

[7] Knight 2010: 3. See Noland 2009 and the conclusion for these two affordances of gesture.

[8] Meduri 1996: 49 calls this time period "the inbetween place" of discursive capture of *devadāsī vṛtti*s as prostitution and the performative lives of the women as they went about making a living.

[9] Knight 2010: 26.

[10] Knight 2010: 27, Soneji 2012: 34. See Kersenboom 1984 and Ramberg 2014 for more.

[11] See David R. Kinsley, *Hindu Goddesses: Visions of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 103 for a Chola bronze of Durgā from c. 1000 CE located currently at the Government Museum, Madras. On Dasahara/Dassera, in Rajasthan in particular, see David Gordon White, "Digging Wells While Houses Burn? Writing Histories of Hinduism in a Time of Identity Politics." *History and Theory* 45:4 (Dec 2006): 113-114.

[12] Ramberg 2014: 2.

[13] See Kamath 2012: 315-320. As *śakti*, the goddess is energy or potential as a dispositional matrix, allowing the dormant forms of the masculine deities to activate their powers in the world. As *māyā*, she is the power of fabrication in all its aspects; as creation, magical activity, the formation of bodies, and the illusion that the world is formed of separate, atomized entities or beings rather than an enmeshed continuous process of becoming. In another direction, Kāmākhyā was "herself," a local/regional goddess of Gauhati in Assam. Thanks to David Gordon White for this point.

[14] Knight 2010: 28-29.

[15] Mylapore Gauri Ammal, interviewed by T. Shankaran, 1971, qtd. in Knight 2010: 30, 269 ft. 23.

[16] Nichoals B. Dirks, "Ritual and Resistance: Subversion as a Social Fact," in Douglas Haynes and Gyan Prakash, eds. *Contesting Power: Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 220.

[17] Scott 2016: 90.

[18] Manning 2016: 1.

[19] Soneji 2012: 117.1

[20] Soneji 2012: 118.

[21] Allen 1997: 64.

[22] Meduri 1996: 300 argues that Rukmini Devi Arundale followed in Coomaraswamy's wake by adopting Naṭarāja as the key divine figure in her "purification" of the *devadāsī* style of dance into her own form of Bharatanāṭyam.

[23] Allen 1997: 79-80.

[24] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 20, 202. As an "ensemble of relationships," Orientalism is shaped by the properties of its subjective disciplines that furnish it with an economy of forces. These forces constrain scholars using Orientalism from taking on arbitrary meanings outside its dispositional matrix. Its latency as a repeatable structure became sedimented with history after its inception. In other words, these assemblages worked as new ecologies of force to invest stereotypes of "Orientals" with traits and qualities. Orientalizing gestures were radical since only Western audiences started with these preconceptions. The exoticized performers were only latently able to access these matrices but were still shaped by them.

[25] Soneji 2012: 6-7.

[26] Soneji 2012: 113.

[27] Joan L. Erdman, "Performance as Translation: Uday Shankar in the West," *The Drama Review* 31:1 (Spring 1987): 65-66.

[28] Meduri 1996: 317-318.

[29] This also ignores the problematic manuscript history of the text which was only "rediscovered" by Orientalists, with the first complete Sanskrit edition published by the French scholar Joanny Grosset in 1898 {{on the earlier history of the work's chapter-by-chapter editions, recounted *in media res*, see Sylvain Lévi, *Le théatre indien* (Paris: Bouillon, 1890), vol. 1, xi. See Meduri 1996: 78-79.

[30] Balasaraswati 1991: 12.

[31] Knight 2010: 7-10.

[32] Coorlawala 2004: 53.

[33] See Mukund Lath, "Taṇḍu: The First Theoretician of Dance," In Jonathan Katz, ed., *The Traditional Indian Theory of and Practice of Music and Dance* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 174.

[34] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 5, 2019.

[35] See Fritz Staal, *Rules Without Meaning: Rituals, Mantras and the Human Sciences* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1990), 91.

[36] Coorlawala 2004: 55

[37] Knight 2010: 36.

[38] Knight 2010: 41.

[39] See Knight 2010: 46. As an authority figure, Balasaraswati claimed to one day surpass her grandmother Dhanammal's greatness.

[40] Knight 2010: 37.

[41] Knight 2010: 49.

[42] See Balasaraswati and ensemble at UCLA on December 6-8, 1962, Wesleyan University Music archives. WA7.1.171 and WA7.1.172.

[43] Radha Sarma, "The Presence of Dhanammal," Masters Remembered, *Indian Express*, July 28, 1979, qtd. in Knight 2010: 39.

[44] Knight 2010: 39.

[45] Knight 2010: 42.

[46] Knight 2010: 43, and Zubko 2013b: 171-172.

[47] Balasaraswati 1973: 43.

[48] Balasaraswati 1991: 18.

[49] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 1, 2019.

[50] See Knight 2010: 47-55 on the *guru* system. For Balasaraswati's brother Vishwanathan and his lineage of *nagaswaram* flute players, see T.R. Moorthy, "Parampara: Exemplars of a rare tradition," *Sruti* 297 (June 2009): 36.

[51] T. Viswanathan, interview with Jayammal, Government of India Census, 1961, qtd. in Knight 2010: 47.

[52] Knight 2010: 49.

[53] Knight 2010: 50 also recollects from Visvanathan that Kandappa was the only *nattuvanar* to attend Vina Dhanammal's concerts.

[54] K. P. Kittappa Pillai, interviewed by T. Shankaran, Jan. 7, 1989, qtd. in Knight 2010: 51.

[55] See Sally Ann Ness, "The Inscription of Gesture: Inward Migrations of Dance," in Carrie Noland and Sally Ann Ness eds, *Migrations of Gesture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 19: "Once again, then, in the case of ballet, what is inscribed in a classical ballerina's feet appears inwardly as far more than the natural consequences of a certain kind of physical training. The rounding of the bones, the stretching of the ligaments, all of the structural changes that will last a lifetime, preserve a way of defining a certain part of the body as ballet would have it defined and of using that bodily term *as a thoughtful agent* of methodological exploration and informed, cultural conduct…It is constantly being refined, revised, reformed, and *rethought* in an ongoing project of understanding what balance, western-style, can be and mean."

[56] Knight 2010: 52 corroborates the coal episode from two sources. B. V. K. Sastri, interview with Smita Shah. Maya Rao, *Illustrated Weekly of India* (Delhi), June 3, 1962.

[57] Knight 2010: 54.

[58] Qtd. in Knight 2010: 53.

[59] See Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 23-24.

[60] Knight 2010: 56.

[61] Knight 2010: 58.

[62] Knight 2010: 77, 214.

[63] Knight 2010: 85-87. See A. K. Ramanujan, Velcheru Narayana Rao, and David Shulman, trans., *When God is a Customer: Telugu Courtesan Songs by Ksetrayya and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) on *padam*s.

[64] Rao 1963, qtd. in Knight 2010: 69.

[65] Ranee Kumar, "Aniruddha Knight: A dialogue on mano-dharma," *Narthaki.* August 13, 2015: https://narthaki.com/info/intervw/intrv171.html.

[66] See Frédérique Apfell-Marglin, "Refining the Body: Transformative Emotion in Ritual Dance," in Owen M. Lynch, *Divine Passions: The Social Construction of Emotion in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 230-231.

[67] See Soneji 2012: 15.

[68] Knight 2010: 97.

[69] Knight 2010: 77-78.

[70] Amarakośa *khāṇḍa* (book) one, *adhyāya* seven is called the *nāṭya* section and begins with dancing terms.

[71] R. Krishnamurty, *Ananda Vikatan*, December 23, 1934. See Knight 2010: 83-85. I was unable to find an English translation of this Tamil weekly but the family's archive in Chennai has copies.

[72] Knight 2010: 64-65. Meduri 1996: 161-162.

[73] O'Shea 2007: 112-113, Knight 2010: 74-76.

[74] Ramberg 2014: 50-52.

[75] Knight 2010: 66-67.

[76] Compare Kamath 2012 and ibid 2019 on the role of Brahmin men to authorize Kuchipudi dance in Andhra Pradesh.

[77] Knight 2010: 76.

[78] Knight 2010: 83.

[79] Knight 2010: 93-95.

[80] Knight 2010: 96. Knight claims she most likely was the last person to perform it with *abhinaya* in 1936 at the National Congress Exhibition in Madras.

[81] Knight 2010: 97-98.

[82] Knight 2010: 103-105.

[83] Rukmini Devi Arundale, interview with Smita Shah, qtd. in Knight 2010: 105.

[84] Meduri 1996: 337 where she cites *Kalakshetra Quarterly* 7:3-4: 74: "The decadence in character that almost destroyed the art once has taken shape and may once again attempt destruction."

[85] See Ramberg 2014: 50-52, and Soneji 2012: 20-21.

[86] O'Shea 2007: 71-72.

[87] Knight 2010: 112-113.

[88] Knight 2010: 113.

[89] Knight 2010: 113-115.

[90] K. Krishnamurthy, *Ananda Vikatan*, October 15, 1939: "while performing *abhinaya*, the rapport between mother and daughter is visibly deteriorating. Her inspiration arises from Jayammal's singing that was once the root of the unique understanding between them. Yet lately they betray a woeful lack of cooperation, visible when Bala glares at her mother onstage. Net result: anger registers on her face when the context calls for pathos."

[91] Cited in Knight 2010: 115-116.

[92] Knight 2010: 118.

[93] Knight 2010: 126.

[94] Knight 2010: 121.

[95] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 7, 2019.

[96] Knight 2010: 121-122.

[97] See Banerji 2017: 98-100 on the *guru-kula* system adapted by Nrityagram. See Meduri 1996: 279 where Rukmini Devi Arundale's discursive body was seen as the "womb space" for the new nation.

[98] After scouring the New York Public Library's Jerome Robbins Dance Division archives, Jacob's Pillow, and the Balasaraswati-Scripps Institute for Performing Arts in Chennai, I have not been able to find a single photo of the all-female *abhinaya* dance troupe. The earliest Indian record of performance in the United States was a January 1956 program at the NYPL when Balasaraswati danced alongside Rukmini Devi Arundale at the Sharda Sangeet Mandir in Bombay.

[99] Banerji 2017: 93.

[100] Weidman 2003: 210.

[101] Knight 2010: 118.

[102] Knight 2010: 119.

[103] Cited in Knight 2010: 119-120.

[104] Soneji 2012: 25.

[105] See Soneji 2012: 224. He notes Bala is called the "queen of *abhinaya*" in coffee table books but contemporary Bharatanāṭyam dancers "usually mock her dancing as sloppy and unfinished."

[106] See Balasaraswati 1991: 15. While this speech is contested, I replicate the words attributed to Bala here: "*Abhinaya* is as far removed from acting as poetry is from prose…The deepest and weightiest of subjects are conveyed by suggestion more strikingly than the direct stage-acting. Dignified restraint is the hallmark of *abhinaya*. Even in the best of laughter there is a restraint of the mouth movement…It is this decency, decorum, and dignity that help to impart to bharata natyam its divine character…The divine is divine only because of its suggestive, subtle quality. In *abhinaya*, though the artist and audience have the direct inward experience of the divine, the outward expression which is so responsible for creating that experience is only suggestively and subtly so."

[107] *Amarakośa* 1.7.442: "decorous" (*śṛngāra*) can also mean "pure" (*śuci*) or "brilliant" (*ujjvala*).

[108] In this way, the proper translation would be "decorous," inasmuch as the style prides itself on suggestion and imagination rather than crass sexuality. While love was certainly an aspect of this process, it was not just any kind of love; it was highly refined, cultured, and urbane (*nāgārika*) courtship that was framed. This is why certain styles of expressing longing would become *ābhāsa*s, aesthetic semblances, as they did not fit the neat categorical definitions of what constituted *śṛngāra* as an affective matrix. See chapter two for more on *ābhāsa*.

[109] Knight 2010: 102. Note that this does not mean the reality of the divine was always masculine; the Devī could oftentimes be a vector for devotional offerings and affective engagement.

[110] Knight 2010:103. Soneji 2012: 191 calls the courtesan performances an "alternative mode of being, an identity that uses the past in order to establish a relationship with themselves in the present." In this way, *devadāsī*s create self-reflexive relations that fill in the gaps between their "unfinished" pasts and presents that fill with affective meaning. As modes that are filled with paradoxical fullness and emptiness at the margins of social acceptability, they are part of a constantly-fluctuating environment that is at the core of affective potential.

[111] Soneji 2012: 191. Meduri 1996: 16 claims that *devadāsī*s were unable to develop an identity outside of their "pseudo-names," which I believe she means as part of their relation to a male god. Yet Bala herself was not tied to a male deity but as the "child (*bālā*) of Saraswatī," the goddess of the arts.

[112] See Massumi, *Power at the End of the Economy*, 2015: 8. Massumi discusses how the economy is both macro- and micro-affectively charged with dividual potential, as the self is both filled beneath (at an *infra*-level) with various potential dispositions while also imbricated in macro-economic forces at play across the entire mode of life.

[113] See also Kamath 2017: 126 on the reflective self as the controller of previous layered selves.

[114] Soneji 2012: 163.

[115] See Soneji 2012: 213 and Denise Gill, *Melancholic Modalities: Affect, Islam, and Turkish Classical Musicians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 133: "The past is understood only by *an act of the imagination*, and made real only to the extent that it is performed."

[116] See O'Shea 2007: x: "dancers from the 1930s to the present have come up with remarkably different understandings of bharata natyam's identity and history, let alone how to perform allegiance to them. It is *this tendency within the form*–that of finding different solutions to the same question–that I want not only to foreground but also to support. For these reasons, I am inclined to accept change as part of this dance form's history."

[117] Knight 2010: 126.

[118] Meduri 1996: 216-217.

[119] Knight 2010: 130-132.

[120] Meduri 1996: 336-337 discusses how *cinnamelam* instructors were teaching middle-class dancers outside the Kalākṣetra institutional framework–and hence eliding Rukmini Devi Arundale's vision for the tradition.

[121] Knight 2010: 132-133.

[122] Knight 2010: 126, 141.

[123] Knight 2010: 142, 147.

[124] Knight 2010: 144.

[125] Meduri 1996: 346-347.

[126] Soneji 2012: 2-3.

[127] Knight 2010: 142. See de Zoete 1953: chapter 13 on Balasaraswati.

[128] Knight 2010: 143-144.

[129] Knight 2010: 262.

[130] Knight 2010: 133. For the link between Māryiamman and healing in particular in 1970's Madras, see Margaret Trawick Egnor, "The Changed Mother or what the Smallpox Goddess did when there was no more Smallpox," in E. Valentine Daniel and Judy F. Pugh eds., *Contributions to Asian Studies* vol. 18 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1984), 26.

[131] Knight 2010: 133-134. I visited this shrine in April 2019 with her grandson Aniruddha Knight and saw the family's devotion to this goddess inspired their performances even today. An ecumenical area, I was told that anyone could enter the main shrine, whether they were Buddhist, Hindu, Christians, or myself (an Anglo-American scholar) and the main statue was being augmented with a full compound of the ten *mahāvidyā* (forms of the goddess as "great knowledge"). *Vidyā* refers to the goddesses as embodiments of feminine mantras, called *vidyā*s in Hindu, Buddhist and Jain Tantra. As a group, the 10 Mahāvidyās didnot coalesce until a late date, perhaps the 16th century. See Gudrun Bühnemann's *Iconography of the Hindu Tantric Deities* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2001). I saw the medium frequently at the performing institute, sitting in the courtyard on a couch carried next to their cowpen. His image was hung on a calendar of the ritual season in the entryway as well. See David Kinsley, *Tantric Visions of the Divine Feminine: The Ten Mahāvidyās* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 9 on the *mahāvidyā*s.

[132] See Perundevi Srinivasan, "The Creative Modern and the Myths of the Goddess Mariyamman," in Diana Dimitrova, ed., *Religion in Literature and Film in South Asia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 83-84. The two forms of modernity in Srinivasan's analysis of Mariyamman in films places the biomedical project of smallpox eradication in the 1970's in the form of the "purposive rationality." On the other hand, the films also show that *ammai* as smallpox outbreaks filters this as an experience of this project. These experiences are affectively weighted encounters–between colonizing authorities and temple officiants, Brahmin parents and *dalit* lovers, as well as self-centered spouses and their caring husbands. See ibid 90. Balasaraswati's project aligned with the affordances of this second strain of

modernity embodied in the goddess as she fights "colonial ambitions, caste hierarchies, and self-centered interests located in the modern family."

[133] Srinivasan 2010: 87-88.

[134] Srinivasan 2010: 86.

[135] See Ramberg 2014: 9. Ramberg also notes that her *dalit* informants in Karṇataka were also responding to the conditions of modernity that denied them agency as *devadāsī*s.

[136] Knight 2010: 137. I confirmed this story in an interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 7, 2019.

[137] Knight 2010: 138.

[138] Knight 2010: 139.

[139] Knight 2010: 139. Balasaraswati 1973: 44 does not have the translation of "piercing" but appears to have elided certain Tamil passages. I was not able to confirm this with Bala's personal amanuensis S. Guhan in his translation of Balasaraswati 1991 due to the relative rarity of this publication.

[140] See White 2003: 68-73. Her language tracks more closely with that of Tamil women as "succubae" who drain men of their fluids. Note that the usually masculinized bee here is the subject "position" Balasaraswati takes, with her *guru* the receptacle for the tradition's nectar. Rather than suggest the Vaiṣṇava pattern of Kṛṣṇa as a beloved bee, instead it suggests the student's pointed interest opening up a flow of salvific knowledge from a *guru*. On "piercing" (*vedhana*) as a form of initiation, see David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 312-314.

[141] Knight 2010: 140.

[142] Schaefer 2015: 39.

[143] Knight 2010: 141.

[144] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 1, 2019.

[145] Vanita, "Whispertime," *Women's World* (Delhi), October 25, 1953, qtd. in Knight 2010: 153.

[146] Elison 2018: 150.

[147] Meduri 1996: xxv.

[148] Meduri 1996: 377-380. Rukmini Devi Arundale likewise appropriated the genre from Tanjore staging practices while adapting it to the Western model of *āhārya-abhinaya* in scenic design. Meduri claims this was one of the *devadāsī*'s "most cherished forms of representation. It embodied their free spirit and their marginality to domesticity and stable forms of reproduction."

[149] Knight 2010: 171.

[150] See section 1.5-9 for more on these dispositional matrices as singularities containing all others.

[151] Roshen Alkazi, interviewed by Luise Scrips, June 21 and 29, 1990, qtd. in Knight 2010: 173-174.

[152] See Elaine M. Fisher, *Hindu Pluralism: Religion and the Public Sphere in Early Modern South India* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 27.

[153] Knight 2010: 177.

[154] See O'Shea 2007: 71-72.

[155] T. Balasaraswati, *Balasaraswati (1918-1984)* (Hawaii: Congress on Research in Dance., 1985), 11.

[156] See Franko 2019: 13 and chapter four.

157 Balasaraswati 1985: 11. Abhinavagupta remarks in the *Abhinavabhāratī* on this phenomenon of dancing to help concentrate the audience's attention as well. See chapter 1 for more on this.

158 Balasaraswati 1991: 16.

159 See Delanda 2016: 113, and Arakawa and Gins 2002: 40: "Similarly to how she flexes her muscles, a person flexes her surroundings-both are with her and of her always…Moving within an architectural surround, a person fashions an evolving matrix, an architectural surround not entirely of her own making. Repeatedly, incessantly, a person surrounds herself by conforming in a particular set of ways to what surrounds her."

160 Balasaraswati 1985: 11.

161 Frédérique Apfell-Marglin, *Wives of the God-King: The Rituals of the Devadasis of Puri* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), and Kersenboom 1984.

162 See chapter two for more of the affordances of *līlā* to create novel configurations (*dis*-positions) of a *sattva*.

163 Banerji 2012 develops this idea further in terms of Odissi dance and the *māhārī*s at the Jagannātha complex in Puri.

164 Balasaraswati 1991: 12.

165 S. V. Shesadri, *Shankar's Weekly*, August 18, 1963, qtd. in Knight 2010: 128.

166 See Arakawa and Gins 2002): 70-71: "In cooperation with other organisms…the architectural body mediates the body-proper and the architectural surround, and it therefore ought to be viewed as communal."

167 Knight 2010: 128-129.

168 Balasaraswati 1991: 6.

169 See Kamath 2019 for more on this theme in relation to gender.

170 See Banerji 2012: 28 for more on the extending affordances of art making. See Chapter Two for more on this phase-shift between affective forms.

171 Knight 2010: 154.

172 Balasaraswati 1985: 11-12.

173 See Balasaraswati 1985: 12-13.

174 Balasaraswati 1985: 15.

175 See Fisher 2017: 27 for more on this process in early modern south Indian publics.

176 Contrast this with the fixed "womb" space Rukmini Devi Arundale's nationalist project in Meduri's discursive arguments. See Meduri 1996: 282.

177 K. Chandrasekharan (as Natya Priya), *The Hindu*, October 23, 1949, qtd. in Knight 2010: 143.

178 Sarojini Kumaraswami, interview with Smita Shah, qtd. in Knight 2010: 144.

179 Knight 2010: 149.

180 Roshen Alkazi, interview with Luise Scripps, 1987, qtd. in Knight 2010: 150.

181 Alkazi 1987, qtd. in Knight 2010: 151: "So that humility she had in regard to things like music was what the whole family had; and that was their secret…You never close your mind to that form…It's so enormous, and unless you understand that, how can you possibly even start to interpret? What the other dancers do (I'm not criticizing them) is dip a little, and take out something and think they've got the whole. And that limits them. And that's why whenever she performed, or sang, she was so frightened, because she knew she was attempting the impossible. Because it was so true, she revealed to us the possibilities and extent of that form, because she would do something (maybe she called it a drop) that was a

drop of truth. Then you began to realize the enormity of what it was and how great it was. That is our culture…The very fact that she did a line of *abhinaya* in so many ways shows that the truth is so mysterious, that it reflects so many things. The fact that she could capture those things and show them to you was so astonishing…It was difficult to say what it was, you can only feel it. And only to those who are receptive. But for everyone who knew anything of dance and had met or seen her, it seems to have left an indelible impression on their mind. It was as if they could relive that moment."

[182] See Balasaraswati 1991: 15: "The inner feeling of the dancer is the sixth sense which harnesses these five mental and mechanical elements to create the experience and enjoyment of beauty. It is the spark which gives the dancer her sense of spiritual freedom in the midst of the constraints and discipline of the dance."

[183] A flier for this concert is in the New York Public Library's Jerome Robbins' Division of Dance under *MGZR, "Sengeet Nritya Mahotsava: Sur Singar' Swami Haridas Sangeet Sammelan."

[184] Birju Maharaj, interview with Smita Shah, 1985, qtd. in Knight 2010: 158-159.

[185] Phillipss 2020: Chapter 2. Phillipps does not mention the company's meeting with Bala.

[186] Knight 2010: 161-163.

[187] See Susan Manning, *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), xxi.

[188] See Mark Franko, *Martha Graham in Love and War: The Life in the Work*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 31 on Graham's bones, nerves, and eyes connection to consciousness.

[189] Donald McKayle, *Transcending Boundaries: My Dancing Life* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 104.

[190] See McKayle 2002: 83.

[191] See Aniruddha Knight, "Performance at Jacob's Pillow," July 19, 1997: https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/aniruddha-knight/jatisvaram/.

[192] Rebekah Kowal, *How to Do Things with Dance: Performing Change in Postwar America* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2010), 216.

[193] Knight 2010: 161.

[194] Meduri 1996: 442 claims she was awarded the Padma Bhūṣaṇa in 1958 after Rukmini Devi Arundale received hers in 1956.

[195] Knight 2010: 166.

[196] See Vatsyayan 1974: 17 for a classic description.

[197] Maya Deren, *A Study in Choreography for Camera*, choreography by Talley Beatty, 1945, film. This still is from a shorter version edited and directed by Douglas Rosenberg in 1993 for the American Dance Festival. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dk4okMGiGic.

[198] Mark Franko, "Aesthetic Agencies in Flux: Talley Beatty, Maya Deren, and the Modern Dance Tradition in *Study in Choreography for Camera*," in Bill Nichols ed, *Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde* (New York, McPherson, 2001), 142-143.

[199] Mark Franko, "Aesthetic Agencies in Flux: Talley Beatty, Maya Deren, and the Modern Dance Tradition in *Study in Choreography for Camera*," in Bill Nichols ed, *Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde* (New York: McPherson, 2001), 132.

[200] Franko 2001: 135.

[201] See Erin Brannigan, "Maya Deren, Dance, and Gestural Encounters in *Ritual in a Transfigured Time*," *Senses of Cinema* 22 (October 2002), http:,"//sensesofcinema.com/2002/filmmaker-profiles/deren/.

[202] See the Jacob's Pillow archival version from July 1948. Talley Beatty, *"Mourner's Bench" from Southern Landscape*, https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/talley-beatty/mourners-bench-from-southern-landscape/.

[203] I diverge from Franko 2001: 138 here when he claimed "Graham's presence is monumental, Beatty's is mobile." While Graham's danced semblances were "ahistorical" and while Beatty's affective ecology was enmeshed in "historical" contexts, this does not render Beatty's dance less virtual potency. By making the bench central to the dispositional matrix of mourning, Beatty I argue can render it able to be memorialized (*smaraṇa*) since this step requires a transition from the dividual body of the dancer's corporeal form to the distributed body of an affective semblance (*līlā*). The relation held in tension between Beatty's body and the bench thus gives a semblance of the denied site of lamentation which historical fact could not convey with the same affective intensity.

[204] Franko 2001: 137.

[205] Meenakshi Puri, "*Padams* and *Javalis*," *Sunday Statesman* (Delhi), April 7, 1957, qtd. in Knight 2010: 164-165.

[206] Knight 2010: 177-178.

[207] Knight 2010: 187.

[208] Knight 2010: 166-168.

[209] The family has two videos in their collection, one shot at the Delhi studios of All India Radio from sometime in the 1950's, and one filmed by Samuel Scripps in the early 1970's. However both are lacking sound.

[210] Meduri 1996: 450.

[211] Knight 2010: 179-180.

[212] See Meduri 1996: 444: "if the idea of eroticism has itself been put under erasure in the performance space of sadir-Bharatanatyam, and if the social subjectivity of the dancing body has been rendered invisible in the bright lights of the proscenium since the 1920s, how can the devadasi as crossed woman or any woman for that matter become visible from within this blinding space? How can a spectatorial history of seventy years be rewritten?"

[213] Knight 2010: 181.

[214] Knight 2010: 181-182.

[215] Knight 2010: 183.

[216] Lakshmi Knight, interview with Douglas Knight, 1992, qtd. in Knight 2010: 183.

[217] Srinivasan 2011: 8.

[218] See Elison 2018: 81 and Delanda 2016: 13 on the contingency of assemblages to their parts. See also Grossberg 1986: 53 on articulations as contingent forms.

[219] Knight 2010: 183-184.

[220] Chaktravorty 2004: 3.

[221] Knight 2010: 177-178.

[222] Knight 2010: 177-178.

[223] See Meduri 1996: 435: "That rose was emblematic of the Bhushan (ornament), the vastharam (cloth) that the royal king carried on his person and gifted to deserving artists of his feudal territory. The middle class dancer wanted to travel to the national center which had

become the new court, and desired to receive the gifts and awards of merit that the central Government was giving out to deserving practitioners."

Singer 1972: 182 mentions that Bala found government officials were particularly less engaged than earlier royal audiences such as the Sardar-i-Rasat of Kashmir.

Knight 2010: 187.

Knight 2010: 189-190.

See Kedar 2011.

Knight 2010: 2.

Knight 2010: 191.

John Lindquist, "Balasaraswati," photograph in Jacobs Pillow Archive, object # 001102, 1962. Held by Harvard Theater Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University: https://archives.jacobspillow.org/index.php/Detail/objects/13928.

See the program notice for August 15-21, 1962, where she is listed as the "Incomparable Balasaraswati": https://archives.jacobspillow.org/index.php/Detail/objects/4903.

Knight 2010: 193-194.

Kowal 2020: Chapter Two.

See Keshaviah 2008: 146. This depended on location in the Bharatanāṭyam world: "Knowledge of cultural influences on Bharatanatyam was strongly tied to locale. Compared to 18 percent in Bangalore and 7 percent in Delhi, fully 42 percent of teachers in Chennai (closest to where the precursors of Bharatanatyam are believed to have originated) deny any influence from non–south Indian cultures, ignoring the lyrical content and musical formats that have permeated from northern India. When asked about influences from Europe and/or America, the denial was even stronger: 71 percent in Bangalore and 64 percent in Chennai reject "western" influence, compared to 30 percent of teachers in cosmopolitan Delhi."

Kapila Vatsyayan, interview with Smita Shah, qtd. in Knight 2010: 194.

See Knight 2010: on Bala's love for soap operas. Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 7, 2019. Aniruddha confirmed McKayle and Fonteyn as some of her favorite dancers.

Knight 2010: 240-241.

See New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division, Welland Lathrop Papers, (S) *MGZMD 265, box 6, letter from Anna Kisselgoff to Luise Scripps, September 24, 1976.

Knight 2010: 195.

Letter to Robert Brown, Box 122, Victor Lloyd Butterfield Papers, Special Collections & Archives, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, USA.

Knight 2010: 195.

Knight 2010: 197-198.

Yvonne Rainer and Ann Halprin, "Yvonne Rainer Interviews Ann Halprin," *Tulane Drama Review* 10:2 (Winter 1965): 142. See also Bennahum, Perron, and Robertson 2017 for more on this relation between San Francisco and New York-based dancers.

I found many of the Balasaraswati Institute of the Art's flyers and promotional materials at the New York Public Library's collection from Lathrop's papers.

Chatterjea 1997: 294.

Chatterjea 1997: 294.

Chatterjea 1997: 295.

Chatterjea 1997: 297.

[249] Lord Harewood, interview with Smita Shah, qtd. in Knight 2010: 198-199. I was able to view this recording at the Balasaraswati Dance Institute courtesy of Aniruddha Knight.

[250] Knight 2010: 200.

[251] Narayana Menon, interview with Smita Shah, qtd. in Knight 2010: 200.

[252] Knight 2010: 200.

[253] Reuters Historical Collection, "Edinburgh Festival – Technicolor (1963)," uploaded to Youtube on April 13, 2014: https://youtu.be/_JGJdXwAHIE.

[254] Knight 2010: 201.

[255] Balasaraswati and ensemble, *Balasaraswati*. World Music Archive, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, 1998), DVD of 1962 performance.

[256] Knight 2010: 205-206.

[257] Knight 2010: 170, 220

[258] Knight 2010: 205.

[259] Knight 2010: 204-205.

[260] Knight 2010: 206-208. See Jeffrey Kripal, *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[261] Most of the performance still of Bala's dancing were taken by Steward or Marilyn Silverstone.

[262] The Y Bulletin, "Thursday, October 21: Balasaraswati Dance Concert.," vol. 6, Wednesday, October 20, 1965.

[263] Knight 2010: 208.

[264] Knight 2010: 210-211.

[265] Shesadri 1963.

[266] Knight 2010: 211.

[267] V. Chandreshekaran, interview with Smita Shah, qtd. in Knight 2010: 211-212.

[268] Knight 2010: 213-214.

[269] Knight 2010: 212-213.

[270] Youdh 1998: 673-676.

[271] Knight 2010: 203.

[272] Knight 2010: 203.s

[273] Knight 2010: 204. Anna Kisselgoff, "Balasaraswati is Dead at 64; Classical Dancer from India." *New York Times* B4: Feb. 10, 1984.

[274] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 9, 2019.

[275] See chapter 1 on Abhinavagupta's formulation.

[276] Knight 2010: 204.

[277] Knight 2012: 214-215.

[278] Knight 2010: 226-228.

[279] See Knight 2010: 228.

[280] *Indian Express* (Bombay), April 6, 1971, qtd. in Knight 2010: 218.

[281] See chapter two for more on this process of *līlā* and *sattva*.

[282] See Massumi 2011: 50. Any existing thing (*sattva*) is real, with both the actual and virtual in its form, has *bhāva* in its *dis*position continually moving in its "likeness that will smudge strictly logical categories." The body "tends-to, moves on, transfers habits, reflexes, competencies, and thinking-feelings from one thing to the next, expands its repertory of dynamic postures…if you can call a disposition to moving in a certain style a posture…by mixing, matching and alloying them, explores its own living potential, strikes new postures-

invents new ways of affording itself of the world, in collaboration with the world, with what the world throws before it."

[283] Knight 2010: 218-219.

[284] Soneji 2012: 34.

[285] Knight 2010: 228.

[286] Knight 2010: 225.

[287] Knight 2010: 220-221.

[288] Donald McKayle and Bella Lewitizki, interview with Luise Scripps, American Dance Festival at Duke University, June 13, 1994.

[289] See McKayle 2002: 83.

[290] Knight 2010: 226.

[291] Mathur, "Bala: Dancing is a Joy to Me," *Patriot*, 1976, qtd. in Knight 2010: 234.

[292] Knight 2010: 235.

[293] Knight 2010: 233.

[294] See Padma Chebrolu, "A Remarkable Student of a Legendary Dance Genius." Interview with Kay Poursine. *Narthaki* (Feb. 2002). Poursine 2009: 98. Poursine was asked to play the cool, controlled Rāma in the drama as she herself was more disposed to emotionality.

[295] Poursine 2009: 96.

[296] Kay Poursine, "*Hasta* as Discourse on Music: T. Balasaraswati and Her Art," *Dance Research Journal* 23:2 (1991): 18.

[297] Poursine 2009: 100.

[298] Celia Ipiotis, Interview with Smita Shah and Kamala Cesare, *Eye on Dance* 202, New York City Public Television, WNYC, 1986.

[299] Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, interview with Luise Scripps, January 7, 1989, qtd. in Knight 2010: 236-237.

[300] See Ram 2015: 129.

[301] Poursine 1991: 20.

[302] For the relation of law and causality to gesture, see Agamben 2017.

[303] Nandini Ramani, "Interview." *Narthaki*, Nov. 2000. Accessed March 1, 2019. http://www.narthaki.com/info/intervw/intrvw8.html. See also Translator's Preface in V. Raghavan, *Journey through a Tradition: Kandappa – T. Balasaraswati Bharatanāṭyam Technique*, Nandini Ramani trans. (Chennai: Dr. V. Raghavan Centre for Performing Arts, 2010), and Nandini Ramani, "Lessons with Bala," In Ketu Katrak and Anita Ratnam, eds. *Voyages of Body and Soul: Selected Female Icons of India and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 101.

[304] Knight 2010: 223-224.

[305] Anna Kisselgoff, "Balasaraswati Dances in Classic Style," *New York Times*, Sept. 22, 1972: 38. Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 5, 2019. Knight explains this as dance audiences in Chennai today wanting to know the exact meaning of a dance without any interest in the nuances of performance.

[306] Knight 2010: 235.

[307] Knight 2010: 244.

[308] Knight 2010: 246.

[309] Knight 2010: 236.

[310] Knight 2010: 237.

[311] Knight 2010: 237.

[312] See Satyajit Ray, *Bala*, Chennai: National Centre for the Performing Arts and Government of Tamil Nadu, 1976. The film version is available online. Accessed April 4, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak_a1RJ2DZc.

[313] See Satyajit Ray, "Working with Bala," *National Center for the Performing Arts Quarterly Journal* 5:4: (1976), 29. *Balasaraswati*; Knight 2010: 238-239; Somdatta 2015: 61-62.

[314] Moira Sullivan, "Maya Deren's Ethnographic Representation of Ritual and Myth in Haiti," in Bill Nichols ed, *Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde* (New York: McPherson, 2001), 207. See Maya Deren, *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti* (New York: Thames and Hudson 1953). There appears to be some archival inconsistencies with the first edition and title of the book, although Sullivan gives the above citation as the original. See Sullivan 2001: 233.

[315] Sullivan 2001: 207.

[316] While Trinidad, Tobago, and other Caribbean islands hosted a wide range of South Asian populations from the subcontinent, I have not found any studies directly linking possession and ritual performances in Haiti to South Asia.

[317] Maya Deren, *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*. Edited from Deren's footage by Cherel Winnett Ito and Teiji Ito. Rhode Island School of Design Library RSD, DVD. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3o6HT-Gwa9k.

[318] Sullivan 2001: 216.

[319] Sullivan 2001: 216.

[320] Sullivan 2001: 217.

[321] See Jeremy Hanes, "Dance as Semblance in Gauḍīya Traditions," *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies* 27:2 (Spring 2019): 69 on Rūpa Gosvāmin's theory and the importance he places on dance: "The "embracing affects" (*anubhāva*s) are known as external variations (*bahir-vikriyā*) of modulations situated in the mind (*citta-stha-bhāvana*) and dancing (*nṛtya*) is their lead example."

[322] Knight 2010: 239, 284 ft. 18.

[323] Knight 2010: 245.

[324] See Ramberg 2014: 13-14.

[325] T. Balasaraswati, "Bharata Natyam." *National Centre for the Performing Arts Quarterly* 5:4 (Dec. 1976), 1.

[326] See Katherine Zubko, "Dancing the *Bhagavadgītā*: Embodiment as Commentary." *Journal of Hindu Studies* 7:3 (2013a): 392.

[327] Knight 2010: 239.

[328] Knight 2010: 243.

[329] Gloria B. Strauss and Carl Wolz, "ADG/CORD Dance Conference August 1-7 1978: Reports/Program," *Dance Research Journal* 11:1/2 (1978): 69. The program puts this speech at 4:30-5:30pm on Monday, 7th August, 1978.

[330] Knight 2010: 244.

[331] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 3, 2019.

[332] See Amanda Weidman, Gender and the Politics of Voice: Colonial Modernity and Classical Music in South India." *Cultural Anthropology* 18:2 (2003): 195.

[333] Spivak 1986: 66

[334] Balasaraswati, "Reflections: On the Art of Dancing, in General, and Bharata Natya in Particular." Prepared by Kapila Vatsyayan. Unknown publication of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 3:11 (1982): 1.

[335] Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*, John W. Harvey trans, reprint (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), x. See Balasaraswati 1982: 5 in Vatsyayan's wording: "Bharata Nātyam is an art oceanic in width and depth. I have taken you a few steps on its shore. I hope the vision you have had of this ocean will inspire you to dive into it and cull its pearls yourselves." See ibid 14 where the article wrongly claims Balasaraswati gave this speech directly to the CORD conference in Hawaii rather than her daughter Lakshmi. Compare with Kapila Vatsyayan, "Book Discussion," *India International Centre Quarterly* 38: 1 (Summer 2011): 51: "I wish I had another lifetime because only now I know that of the vast and deep ocean which we have, we can attempt to know only some of its waves. I hope that this volume will be the beginning of journeys for others."

[336] Balasaraswati 1982: 2.

[337] Balasaraswati 1985. A google search of the dancer will turn up passages from Vatsyayan's speech in quotes.

[338] Coorlawalal and Vatsyayan 2000: 107.

[339] Kedar 2011: vii.

[340] Knight 2010: 246. I met Cormack at Wesleyan's Music Archives while looking for performances by the family as part of my research in 2018. Cormack put me in touch with Douglas and Aniruddha Knight, the latter of whom agreed to speak with me at the family's Kilpauk studio.

[341] Knight 2010: 246.

[342] Knight 2010: 248.

[343] Knight 2010: 250. Aniruddha continues to patronize the temple, going every Sunday to see Karu Mari Amman manifest as the *śakti* within her medium. At a visit to the temple in April 2019, I visited the complex with him and an employee of the Dance Institute in Chennai. Aniruddha donated a large flower arrangement, along with several dozen garlands and a trunk full of loose flowers to a small shrine before the main area of the deity, he invited me to a relatively brief appearance of the goddess near the front of the crowd. The *pūjāri*s did not wear shirts and all were non-Brahmins wearing saffron lower garments. On the way back to the city, we stopped at a border shrine at the edge of Thiruverkadu to worship the local goddess of the boundary who protected the area (*devasthāna*). The priest there was familiar with Aniruddha, and welcomed a relatively small donation of flowers and camphor as we pressed *tilaka* marks of white ash and red vermillion onto our foreheads.

[344] N. Pattabhi Raman and Anandhi Ramachandran, "T. Balasaraswati: The Whole World in Her Hands," *Journal of the Sangeet Natak Akademi*, Special Issue (April-Sept., 1984): 72-73.

[345] Knight 2010: 250.

[346] Knight 2010: 247.

[347] See Mahendravarman, *Bhagavadajjuka Mattavilāsa-prahasana*, ed. and trans. Michael Lockwood and A. Vishnu Bhat (Madras: Tambaram Research Associates, 1994), 32.

[348] Knight 2010: 247-248.

[349] Knight 2010: 250-251.

[350] Knight 2010: 254.

[351] Interview with Aniruddha Knight, Chennai, April 7, 2019.

[352] Knight 2010: 250.

[353] See Chapter Three for more on how audiences and actors/dancers can be drawn toward performing in the other's roles during a performance.

[354] Knight 2010: 254.

[355] Thanks to David Gordon White for pointing me toward Christopher Pinney's work *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[356] Soneji 2012: 16.

[357] See Bennahum 2013: 135-136. Carmen functions as a dispositional matrix (*sattva*) or character in the Orientalist assemblage that Bennahum reveals at play in Napoleonic Cairo.

Conclusion

[1] Interview with Śītalā-*jātra* troupe, March 23, 2019.

[2] See Ralph Nichols, *Fruits of Worship: Practical Religion in Bengal* (New Delhi: Chronicle Books, 2003), Chapters 4 through 6, and Edward C. Dimock, Jr, "A Theology of the Repulsive: The Myth of the Goddess Śītalā," in John Stratton Hawley and Donna Marie Wulff, eds. *The Divine Consort: Rādhā and the Goddesses of India* (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1982), 188 on the earliest strata of Śītalā texts in Bengali.

[3] See Jessica Hincy, "Troubling Bodies: 'Eunuchs," Masculinity, and Impotence in Colonial North India." *South Asian History and Culture* 4:2 (2013): 196 and ibid "Obscenity, Moral Contagion and Masculinity: *Hijra*s in Public Space in Colonial North India." *Asian Studies Review* 38:2 (2014): 274 on *hijra*s. See Aniruddha Dutta, "An Epistemology of Collusion: *Hijra*s, *Kothi*s, and the Historical (Dis)continuity of Gender/Sexual Identities in Eastern India," *Gender and History* 24:3 (Nov 2012): 825 on the history of colonial formations of sexuality around terms for eunuchs.

[4] Fabrizio M. Ferrari, *Religion, Devotion, and Medicine in North India: The Healing Power of Śītalā* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 4. While I disagree with several of Ferrari's historical interpretations of Śītalā's worship, his ethnographic accounts suggest the goddess was being pacified into a Dūrga-like figure of maternal protection rather than a "frightening" figure seen in the Bengali materials I examined.

[5] *Bhāvaprakāśa of Bhāvamiśra*, K.R. Srikantha Murthy trans, vol. 2 (Varanasi: Krishnadas Academdy, 2000), 647-650 from 60.64-65: "*Masūrika* [smallpox] itself when invaded by the goddess Śītalā becomes known as (the disease) *śītalā*; it is associated with fever similar to intermittent/irregular (types) due to possession [by] *bhūta*s. Treatment of *śītalā* must be accompanied with protective rites against Śītalā; leaves of *nimba* should be tied around the house and also inside it; no *ucchista* [dirty, left over, rejected, inauspicious] material should be brought insight, any time."

[6] See Fabrizio M. Ferrari, ""Illness is Nothing but Injustice": The Revolutionary Element in Bengali Folk Healing." *Journal of American Folklore* 128: 507 (Winter 2015): 51 on Bengali ritual healers.

[7] See Tony Stewart, "Encountering the Smallpox Goddess: The Auspicious Song of Śītalā" in Religions of India in Practice, ed. Lopez, Donald S. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), 390 from the eighteenth-century *Mādanadāsa-pāla* episode: "Worship of the goddess, which seems do peak during [periods of drought, famine, and heavy taxation] belays anxiety and create a strong communal response that cuts across the traditional divisions of Bengali society. The natural world and the ills of society are

inextricably bound one to the other, and the goddess must in these times intervene to remind, reward, and punish, while the local population must work together to overcome the challenge to the normal order of things."

[8] Dimock 1982: 194. This is most likely from Kavi Vallabha's eighteenth-century *Virāta-pālā*.

[9] See Nichols 2003: 60-61 on Jagannāth's *pālā* on Bardhamān for the extensive family network of the Jāgātis who perish, as well as how the physicians' family dies. See ibid 65 for Śītalā's reaction to the dead prince and his mother: "Hearing [the mother's lamentations,] Śītalā turned Her face downward; grace (*dayā*) arose in Her; Her eyes filled with tears."

[10] On this modern adoption of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya's legacy by middle-class (*bhadralok*) Bengalis, see Varuni Bhati, *Unforgetting Chaitanya: Vaishnavism and Cultures of Devotion in Colonial Bengal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3.

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