

Chapter 5.

Conclusion.

5.1. Theory of self fulfilment in theatre.

What has been attempted, in the last four chapters, is to get a clarity about the distinctive features of *Rās Līlā* performances. It has also been attempted to try to catch the whole range of the feeling behind insistence of (for example, Fateh Krishna's, as mentioned in the introduction) **not** calling *flasi//a* performances as Drama or any such thing. However, use of the axis of self fulfilment, in this attempt, seems to have given rise to a theory of theatre centred around self fulfilment which can **accommodate** the theories of Western Drama, traditional Sanskrit plays of sex, power and spiritual liberation, and *Rās Līlā*-s of Vrindavan into a single framework. This theory seems to be able to work as a touchstone against which the distinctions of all these different kinds of theatre, along with that of *Līlā*, can come out.

The **idea** behind bringing out these distinctions has been to try to sensitize the student of Drama to the fact of Drama, 'Nāṭya' and 'Līlā' being categories rooted in different cultural or **worldview** settings. One way in which such a sensitization, it has been considered here, can be achieved is to first trace the worldview underpinnings of these categories and the notions related to each of them, and show the results of the application with these underpinnings to the facts being covered under the other categories. That the application of one category born out of a worldview, to the facts covered under the other has always been questioned, is also true. The analysis, here, has been done with a care to **verify** and validate such an applicability, by going to the universal rock bottoms of meanings of each of these **categories**. What has come out of this process is not the confirmation of the inapplicability of categories crossculturally, but the necessity of a greater care in such a crosscultural description. The definition of self used

throughout this work is consistently that of the Deers, i.e., the idea of 'who am I?' in relation to oneself, in relation to others, and in relation to nature, and the idea of a human individual, subject and so on (1.1 & 1.3). And the definition of self fulfilment also is just that of the Deers, i.e., the idea of realization of one's notion of 'who am I?' (self knowledge) (1.1). But what inconvenienced the application of this category to Indian material of *Natya* and *Lilā* is the availability of concepts like *guṇa-s* (2.4), *purusārtha-s* (2.5) and *ātman* (2.5.2), which are centered around concepts like *prakṛti* - nature, including human nature (2.5.2), *purusa* = human being (2.4) and *ātman* = self itself, respectively. Though, it is the word *ātman*, which is the third person form of the first person pronoun *aḥam* = I, which appears closest to the 'self' of the Deers (2.5), which also has a similar grammatical function, even *prakṛti*, here, human nature, and *purusa*, human being, also have translatability with the self of the Deers which, as the Deers themselves make it dear, is used in the sense of human individual, subject and so on, also (1.1). Now juxtaposing this notion of self with these related ideas of the *guṇa-s* (2.4), the *purusārtha-s* (2.5) and the *ātman* of Indian Philosophy (2.5), and putting the theones of *Drama*, *Nāṭya* and *Lilā* together, has been shown to be giving rise to a self fulfilment theory of theatre which can be summarized as follows : Each form of a theatre acquires its character based on the depiction of notions of self and self fulfilment in it. Theatre, in which self which IS (perennially) in search of self fulfilment and which lacks self knowledge and (hence) each time fails in self fulfilment is depicted, becomes a (form of) Tragedy,' and all 'serious' Western Drama is a good example of this (1.3). Theatre, in which both kinds of selves with and without self knowledge and consequently succeeding and failing in self fulfilment of these two kinds of selves, respectively, are depicted, with a focus on the success of self fulfilment, becomes a *subhānta* or happy ending theatre (2.1, 2.4 & 2.5). Traditional Indian theatre, which is given the name *Natya*, is a good example for this. These *subhanta* plays again differ from each other depending on the kind of self and self fulfilment depicted in them (3.6). If the protagonist self depicted is a *ṭnvarga* seeking self and is depicted to be succeeding in self fulfilment, it becomes *Nāṭya* for *ṭnvarga* (2.5 & 3.6). As

mentioned in the second chapter (2.5), most of the Sanskrit plays of authors such as Kalidasa and Bhasa are good examples for this. If the self depicted is a *brahmadvaita* seeking self and is depicted to be succeeding in self fulfilment, the play becomes *NShya for Jñāna* (2.5, 3.4 & 3.6). As mentioned in the second chapter (2.5), Sanskrit plays such as *Bhartrhan Nirvādam* and *Prabōdha Candrōdayam* are good examples for this. Finally, if the self depicted is a *pīti* seeking self and is depicted to be succeeding in self fulfilment, the play becomes *Nātya for Bhakti* or *Līlā* (3.6). *nas Līlā* performances of Vrindavan are good examples for this.

Each kind of depiction of self and the theatre based on it have kinds and notions of *rasa* associated with them. If *rasābhāsa* is associated with the (forms of) Tragedy (2.6.3), eight *rasa-s* listed by Bharata are associated with *Nātya for Trivarga* (2.6.1), *santa* with *Nātya for Jnana* (2.6.1 & 3.4), various kinds of *bhakti rasa-s* are associated with *NShya for Bhakti* or *Līlā* (3.7). In the course of presenting *Līlā* as different from Drama and *NShya*, the analysis in this book has come up with certain important observations which missed the attention of the earlier scholars. For example, the list of *rasa-s* as nine became so much routine that, the fact that *santa* among these nine got added into this list only later was not carefully observed by many scholars (2.6.1). Those who took note of this fact, plunged into polemics about whether the inclusion of *santa* into this list was right or wrong (2.6.1). It may be observed that the categorization of *Nātya* into *NShya for Trivarga* and *NShya for Jñāna*, by recognizing the two different worldviews underlying the two, has automatically shown that the eight *rasas* sans *santa* and *santa* belong to these two categories respectively (2.6.1). If the issue of *rasa* is being discussed keeping *Natya for Trivarga* in mind, it is very much justified to keep out *santa* from among the list of *rasa-s* (2.6.1). But if the issue of *rasa* is being discussed keeping *Natya for Jnana* in mind, *santa* essentially gets its place in the list and moreover becomes the principle *rasa* in this *Nātya* (2.6.1). In the same vein, it may be seen how recognition of the underlying worldviews of *Natya for Trivarga/Jnana* and *Līlā* has facilitated to view the polemics about the status of *rasa* to *bhakti* in a better perspective (3.7).

For example, taking into account of the underlying worldviews in this work has shown how not giving the status of *rasa* to 'bhakti' in *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga* is justified from the perspective of the worldview underlying *Natya* for *Tnvarga* (3.7). But, if the issue of *rasa* is being discussed keeping *Līlā* in mind, *bhakti* should not only be given a status of *rasa*, but should also be recognized as the only *rasa*, for which all the seven *rasa*-s other than *fyhgara* and *santa* become secondary aspects (37).

In fact, the Deers have already come out with the Drama/Tragedy part of the fullfledged self fulfilment theory being discussed here (1.1 & 1.3). What has been done in this work is to extend the theory to *Līlā* via *Natya* for *Tnvarga* and *Natya* for *Jñāna*. Aurthur Miller's consideration that the depiction of failure in self fulfilment is an essential and defining quality of Drama, and his observation that a perennial search for newer and newer laws of determinism with hitherto inexplicable effects' is also a characteristic of Drama (1.1) provides an explanation for the motive behind the perennial search for self fulfilment in Drama. The motive behind the depiction of success and failure in self fulfilment in *Nāṭya* is shown in this work to be based on the idea of theatre as a presentation of models for emulation (2.4), according to the laws of nature believed to be once for all revealed (in *Vedas*) (2.3). These laws of nature are shown in this work to be according to their interpretation found in *Karma Kanda* (2.5.2), *Advaita Vedanta* (3.4) and *Bhakti Vedanta* (here, *Gauḍīya Vaisnava* school of *Bhakti Vēdānta*) (3.5), respectively.

Nature of each form of theatre is determined by the nature of self in it. For example, it has been shown that if the tragic nature of Drama (forms of Tragedy) is rooted in the passionate but failing self in it (1.3), the happy ending nature of *Natya* for *Jñāna* is rooted in dispassionate and tranquil self (2.5 & 3.4); and finally the 'playful' nature of *Natya* for *Bhakti* is rooted in the dispassionate and 'playful' self in it (3.5). One feature which has been in all the forms of *Natya*, including *Līlā*, is the consideration of theatre as a means of self fulfilment for its participants (2.7.2 &

4.3.2). It is as part of this consideration that *Lie* is looked at as the **'playful'** process for self fulfilment.

Eugene O'Neill justifies the choice of a passionate but failing self throughout different forms of Drama by saying that the most tragic character is the noblest. Only as long as he strives towards the unattainable 'does man achieve a hope worth living and dying for - and so attain himself (1.3). It has been shown, as mentioned above, in parallel, in different forms of *Nāṭya* including *Līlā*, the consideration of theatre as a presentation of models for emulation (2.4 & 3.5.3) leads to the choice of successful self. Here, it may be noted that, the distinction of *Lie* has been shown, in this regard, to be the presentation of a multiform variegated system of self knowledges structured in a schematic choice (3.5).

It has been shown, how *rasa* and *Lie* are the two vital and key concepts of the theory of *Līlā* from a *Gaudiya Vaisnava* perspective (3.10). Showing that these two concepts are, in fact, pivotal and all-pervading within the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* theology (underlying the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* poetics of *Lie*) itself, it has been shown that almost all the distinctive features of *Līlā* can be explained on the basis of these two categories (Ch.4). From the discussion in the third chapter (3.5.2 & 3.9), it comes out that it is the use of *rasa* language to talk about the spiritual realm (3.5.2), the content of *Līlā*-s, which makes *rasa* attain a distinct significance in the theory of *Līlā* vis-a-vis the theory of the other two forms of *Nāṭya*, that is *Nāṭya* for *Trivarga* and *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna*. The consequence of this in *Līlā* has been shown to be importantly the consideration of possibility of *rasa* in activities of daily life too (3.9). The concept of *Lie* as **'playfulness,'** which has been one of the most discussed concepts in the past literature, has been shown to have a hitherto unexplained significance in the schematic choice of a variegated system of *rasa*-s, which has been shown to be another distinct feature of the theory of *Līlā*-s (3.5.3) The identification of closeness' as another meaning of **'playfulness,'** other than the meaning of 'not motivated by gain/ purpose/

use' (3.10), recognized in the past literature, has helped in the recognition of this significance (3.5.3). Recognition of this additional meaning of playfulness' has opened many more knots like the understanding of affinity for the simple, rural and rustic *Brsjvasi* culture in the theory of *Lilā-s*, in terms of playfulness' (4.1).

Two clarifications need to be given here with regard to the concept of laws of nature used in this work. Firstly, though both in Drama (1.3-4) and in *Nāṭya for Tnvarga* (2.2-5), self is considered to be governed by laws of nature and in both, where ever there is a depiction of violation of laws of nature, self is depicted to be punished for such violation, the laws of nature being discussed in these two cases need not be the same. As already mentioned (1.4), the laws of nature in Drama have been considered to be explored freshly **everytime** for each form of Drama and the laws of nature, which are believed to be once for all revealed through the *Vedas* in the case of different forms of *Nāṭya* including *Nāṭya for Tnvarga* (2.2-5), need not be the same as any of the laws applicable to any one form of Drama. But what is common between Drama and *Nāṭya for Tnvarga* is the principle that violation of laws of nature where ever committed leads to punishment of the self (2.2.2).

Secondly, what is intended in this work is only to bring out the fact and to discuss the consequences of the belief in laws of nature in different forms of theatre and not to take the position in favour of the validity of any one of the laws of nature, relevant to any one form of theatre. In a similar vein, it need also to be clarified here, that what is intended through out this work is to bring out the fact and discuss the consequences of various notions such as self without self knowledge' (1.1), '*Tnvarga* seeking self (2.5) and self as Self (*tnguna* - free self) (2.5 & 3.5) underlying each form of theatre, but not the validity of any of these notions.

The discussion in the last chapters not only has run on the basis of, but also has established the

dependence of each of the concepts of the previously discussed ones. It is **partly** linked with the Chronological and hence polemical **order of Karma Konda, Advaita Vēdānta, and Gaudīya Vaisnava Vēdānta**. It is **partly** linked with the order of **familiarity** of a student of Drama which is as follows : the **familiarity** with the notions of Drama greater than with those of *Natya* for *Tnvarga*, greater than with those of *Nāṭya* for *Jñāna*, greater than with those of *Līlā*. It may be noted that to make provisions for the convenience of crosscultural comparability mentioned above, the notions in the later discussions have been anticipated in the previous part. For example, it is with this purpose that the urges of self for 'sex,' 'power,' 'order,' 'liberation' and 'conflict-free relations' (1.3) have been brought out of the theory of Drama, though these are not directly discussed there. This anticipation can be seen to be justifying itself each time. For example, when the concept of self in terms of the urges for 'sex,' 'power,' 'order' and 'liberation' is seen in the second chapter (2.5) to be the pivotal in the theory of *Natya*, the anticipation of these notions in the first chapter (1.3) stands justified. This facilitates the discussions of issues such as failures and successes in self fulfilment to run on common axes.

It may be noted that if in the first chapter, the 'self fulfilment' and the 'fulfilment of urges by the self' have been shown to be two not necessarily the same ideas (1.3), in the second chapter onwards, since the self is described as having innate urges (2.5 & 3.5.1), these two ideas become one and the same.

The convenience provided by the recognition of the concepts of *puruṣārtha-s* in defining the self (2.5 & 3.5) and the *guṇa-s*, in discussing the possibility of the self fulfilment (2.4 & 3.5), can be noted to be a consequence of recognizing the often ignored locale of *Nāṭya* for *Tnvarga*, *Natya* for *Jñāna* and *Līlā* in the Vedic worldview. Though, the underlying Vedic nature of *Nāṭya* has been noted through some scarce passing remarks, the far reaching implications of such assumptions were not fully explored by the previous scholarship of *Natya* (2.1). Such an exploration attempted

here is, on the one hand, an essential requirement for axis of **comparision** and on the other, a tremendous advantage in dwelling deep into the intricacies of almost all the crucial problems of **Drama-Nāṭya** for *Trivarga-Nāṭya* for *Jñāna - Līlā* polemics. It may also be noted that, the use of Indian mythology as a narrative form presentation of Vedic worldview has been common to all the different forms of *Nāṭya* (2.3, 3.5.1 & 4.3.5.2). It may also be noted that, the narration of this mythology by *Vyāsa* has been from a **Vedic worldview** and each **form of Natya** adapts it to **suit** to its specific perspective within Vedic worldview (3.6).

5.2. A critique of certain modern uses of terms.

It may also be noted that the identification of the self of tragic hero in a tragedy as predominant in *rajas* (2.4), and the aesthetic experience resulting from watching a Tragedy as *rasābhās* (2.6.2) and so on, have no value intentions. It may be true that from the point of view of a subscriber to the Vedic worldview, *rajas* (2.4) has an inferior value connotation than *sattva* (2.4) and *rasābhās* (2.6.3), an inferior value than *rasa* (2.6 & 2.7.1). But, it goes without saying that, whatever be the name given by a subscriber of Vedic worldview to it, the passionate personality of a tragic hero is heroic and positive for a subscriber to the theory of Drama such as O'Neill, because as mentioned earlier, such a self "pushes to a greater failure" ... by seeking "the unattainable" (1.4). It may also be said that a hero, who rests on the laurels of his success, from the point of view of philosophy of Drama, at least according to Eugene O'Neill, "pursuing the mere attainable," is a spiritual middle classer and hence is not worth imitating (worth presenting in a Drama) (1.4). Neither *rasa* is talked about as the intended aesthetic experience of Drama in the theory of Drama nor purgation as that of *Natya* in the theory of *Natya*. The comment that the aesthetic experience given by Drama is not *rasa*, but only *rasābhās* (illusion of *rasa*) (2.6.3), is true for the audience who are subscribers to Vedic worldview. It is as much a negative or neutral statement as the statement of a subscriber to the philosophy of Drama that

there is no **Drama** in the Sanskrit plays belonging to *Nāṭya*, keeping in mind that there is not enough thrill of conflict in the action or plot of these plays. Probably, depicting a self predominant in *rāgas* can be said to be the sought after norm of Drama. It is more appropriate to talk about Drama in terms of purgation and *Nāṭya* in terms of *rasa* only, but again as mentioned above, this whole exercise of crosscultural application of categories is aimed at pointing the incorrectness in the method of application of this kind, done by some scholars (2.6.3).

One good example for such wrong crosscultural descriptions done in the past, is to theorize that Hamlet and other tragedies give *santa rasa*, and also that giving *santa rasa* is their defining quality (2.6.3). It has been shown how according to the theory of *santa rasa*, usages of this kind of the word *santa rasa* are wrong, and it is in this context that it becomes necessary to clarify that if at all there is any word in *rasa* poetics that suits to talk about Hamlet and other tragedies, it is *rasābhās* but not *santa rasa* (2.6.3). Similarly, it has been shown that to talk about *Lilā-s* in terms of Dionysian element is wrong, keeping in view the internal evidences from within the *Ras Lilā* text (4.3.5.2.II). It is in this context that Dionysus has been shown to be comparable to *Indra* of *Gōvārdhana Lilān* that, both are gods who avenge the disobedience to them (4.3.5.2.III).

It may appear from the point of view of non-singularity of the meaning of a text, that the discussion, here in this work, is an attempt to talk about something like the single meaning of *Lilā*. But, it may be noted that one of the important objectives of the present work has been to show how the same theme or form may look differently to different viewers. For example, talking about Drama through the categories such as *rasa*, *rasābhās* (2.6.3), *guṇa-s* (2.4) and *purusaṁtha-s* (2.5) is one such attempt to show what Drama means to the participants of *Nāṭya*, especially *Lilā*. In the same way, it has been shown how the same themes of Indian mythology may be taken up for *Nāṭya* for *Invarga* (for example, Veniśamharam as discussed in 2.3), for *Nāṭya* for *Jriana* (as shown earlier in 2.6.2) and for *Lilā* (3.5.1 & 3.6). Similarly, it has been analysed how the same *urn*

performance may give different meanings to the audience coming from different cultural backgrounds (4.3.5.3). It may also be noted that atleast the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* poetics of *Līlā* allow the various identifications by the audience, by allowing the possibility of each audience identifying with one of the self knowledges of *das* type being depicted. Thus, if anyone takes 'instinctual gratification' as the meaning of *Līla* (4.3.5.2.11), it falls under Drama interpretation of *Līlā* and may be valid within that paradigm (4.3.5.3). But what is intended is to show that that is not the meaning taken by *Braṇvāsi* participants of *Līla* at least, as long as they hold philosophies like *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* school.

It may be noted that the position taken in this work is that reading of West born categories into Eastern material is as much wrong or right as the reading of East born categories into Western material. Both these kinds of readings are found in modern writings on Drama, *Nāṭya*, and *Līla*. In fact, the exercise of showing the distinct statuses of the categories such as Drama, *Nāṭya* and *Līlā* by tracing their cultural and worldview settings (which as seen above helps in tracing the perspectives behind the various meanings), is an attempt to bring out the tendencies of wrong **crosscultural** readings exemplified above, which are found in these modern writings.