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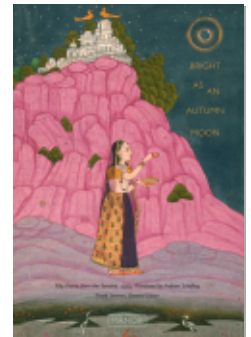
She's in My House

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Manoa, Volume 25, Issue 2, 2013, pp. 22-23 (Article)

Published by University of Hawai'i Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/man.2013.0053>



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FROM THE AMARUŚATAKA



प्रसादे सा दिशि दिशि च सा पृष्ठतः सा पुरः सा
 पर्यंके सा पथि पथि च सा तद्वियोगातुरस्य ।
 हंहो चेतः प्रकृतिरपरा नास्ति मे कापि सा सा
 सा सा सा सा जगति सकले कोऽयमद्वैतवादः ॥
 [AD p121]

prasāde sã diśi diśi ca sã prṣṭataḥ sã puraḥ sã
 paryañke sã pathi pathi ca sã tadviyogāturasya
 haṁho cetaḥ prakṛtir aparā nāsti me kãpi sã sã
 sã sã sã sã jagati sakale ko'yam advaitavādaḥ

prasāde. in front (or, in the house)
sã. she (is)
diśi diśi. direction direction (in every)
ca. and
sã. she
prṣṭataḥ. behind (west)
sã. she
puraḥ. in front (east)
sã. she
paryañke. on (my) bed, couch
sã. she
pathi pathi. path (after) path
ca. and
sã. she
tad-viyoga-āturasya. (bv. compd.
 with *me*) of this feverish separation
 from her

tat. (pronoun) from her
viyoga. separation
āturasya. (*ātura*) sickness, disease
haṁho. (excl.) oh, ah
cetaḥ. heart
prakṛtir. Nature, primal matter
aparā. apart from
na asti. there is no
me. for or of me
kã-api. some woman
sã sã sã sã sã sã. she she she she she she
jagati. in the universe
sakale. entire, whole
ko'yam. so what (is this)
advaita-vādaḥ. creed (*vāda*)
 of the Non-dualists

She's in my house
she's west and east
she trails behind me she goes
out ahead
she's in my bed on path
after path
what a fever—I can't
even see Nature now that she's left me—
just she she she she she she
across the whole wheeling planet.
And Non-dualism
they say is for yogins.



The *Amaruśataka* shows up in at least four versions, differing in what poems they present and in what order. Each version is associated with a region or direction in India. This poem only appears in a Western manuscript. If the entire Amaru collection were not comprised of erotic or love poetry, one could read this as a devotional poem to the Great Goddess. Its language plays off philosophical and religious terms. *Prakṛtī* (Nature) refers to primal matter or the feminine principle; *a-dvaita* is a principal school of belief, Non-dualism. Even the complaint at the woman's (or Goddess's) distance and the devotee's obsessive illness, *ātura*, is completely in line with Śākta or Kālī worship. The poetry of Rāmprasād Sen and Kamalakanta Bhattacharya in Bengal of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rests on a similar edge between praise and complaint, sometimes called *nindā-stuṭi*, praise in the form of abusive reproach.

The cry *sā sā sā sā sā sā* is unlike anything else I've seen in Sanskrit poetry. Repetition, however, is a standard practice in religious verse, as it is in song traditions. Repetition taken to non-sensical lengths is common to mystical and tantric texts, mantra and *dharanī*. I cannot tell if the poet is being ironic, or feeling devastated, devout, mocking, heartbroken, or is speaking from some extreme state in which all these emotions meet.