Raseśvaradarśanam

Some Māheśvaras (followers of Śaivadarśanam) while accepting the identity of Jīvātmā with Parameśvara, proposed that if the body is made imperishable through Rasa (mercury) then one can get Jīvanmukti (Mokṣa while living). The system advanced by such Śaivas is called Raseśvaradarśanam.

More

The followers of Raseśvaradarśanam hold that there is, no doubt, identity (Tādātmyam) between Jīva (a living thing) and Īśvara, i.e. both are one and the same, but it is not Mokṣa after death that is required. The Jīva should attain Mokṣa / Mukti while living itself and for this one should make the body imperishable with the help of Rasa or Pārada (Mercury). It is clearly stated that

> संसारस्य परं पारं दत्तेऽसौ पारदः स्मृतः।
> saṃsārasya paraṃ pāraṃ datte'sau pāradaḥ smṛtaḥ।
>
> It is called Pārada (Pāra = shore, da = reaches) because it reaches one the shore of (the ocean of) worldly miseries.

In Rasārṇava also it is stated (this is a discussion between Śiva and Gaurī) –

> पारदो गदितो यस्मात् परार्थं साधकोत्तमैः।
> सुप्तोऽयं मत्समो देवि मम प्रत्यङ्गसंभवः॥
> मम देहस्य यस्मात् रसस्तेनायमुच्यते।
> pārado gadito yasmāt parārthaṃ sādhakottamaiḥ।
> supto'yaṃ matsamo devi mama pratyaṅgasaṃbhavaḥ॥
> mama dehasya yasmāt rasastenāyamucyate।
>
> Devi! this is said to be useful for Mokṣa, by great performers. Therefore, this is called Pārada. It is born out of all my limbs and during the state of sleeping it is equal to me. Since it is the Rasa (essence / juice) of my body it is called "Rasa".

In all the six Darśanas, Mokṣa is said to be after death. But this is different. In Rasārṇava itself it is clarified –

> षड्दर्शनेऽपि मुक्तिस्तु दर्शिता पिण्डपातने।
> करामलकवत्सोऽपि रसैश्चैव रसायनैः॥
> ṣaḍdarśane'pi muktistu darśitā piṇḍapātane।
> karāmalakavatsā'pi rasaiścaiva rasāyanaiḥ॥
>
> In all the six Darśanas, Mukti is proposed after death. The same is also not easily available. Therefore, the body should be protected by mercury and tonics.

Even Govindabhagavatpādācārya (Guru of Saṃkarācārya) says –

इति धनशरीरभोगान्मत्वाऽनित्यान् सदैव यतनीयम्।
मुक्तौ सा च ज्ञानात्, तच्चाभ्यासात्, स च स्थिरे देहे॥
iti dhanaśarīrabhogānmatvā'nityān sadaiva yatanīyam।
muktau sā ca jñānāt, taccābhyāsāt, sa ca sthire dehe॥

Thus having known that wealth, body and comfort are non-eternal, one should always try for Mukti. Mukti is through Jñānam (cognition), Jñānam is through regular practice (Abhyāsa) and Abhyāsa is possible when the body is eternal.

The body is made of six Kośas (basic materials) – tvak (skin), raktam (blood), māṃsam (flesh), medaḥ (fat), asthi (bone) and majjā (marrow of bones). The first three of the above are inherited from mother whereas the last three are from father (the above six along with śukram = sperm are called saptadhātus in Āyurveda. Pañcakośas are described in Ānandavallī of Taittirīyopaniṣat). Such a body is perishable. Then how can one take it as imperishable? –

Rasa / Pārada (mercury) is created by Śiva whereas Abhraka (mica) is by Gaurī. When the body is born out of the combination of Rasa and Abhraka then it will be imperishable. This aspect is clearly stated in Rasahṛdaya –

ये चात्यक्तशरीरा हरगौरीसृष्टिजां तनुं प्राप्ताः।
मुक्तास्ते रससिद्धाः मन्त्रगणः किङ्करो येषाम्॥
ye cātyaktaśarīrā haragaurīsṛṣṭijāṃ tanuṃ prāptāḥ।
muktāste rasasiddhāḥ mantragaṇaḥ kiṅkaro yeṣām॥

Those who, before leaving the body, get the body born out of the creation of Śiva and Gaurī, who are served by the gamut of Mantras are "Rasasiddhas" and they are Muktas (those who get Mukti / Jīvanmukti).

Therefore, a Yogī, who wants Jīvanmukti should in the first place, get the divine body. Bhartṛhari in his Nītiśatakam (verse 20) indirectly refers to this aspect of Rasasiddhi –

जयन्ति ते सुकृतिनः रससिद्धाः कवीश्वराः।
नास्ति तेषां यशःकाये जरामरणजं भयम्॥
jayanti te sukṛtinaḥ rasasiddhāḥ kavīśvarāḥ।
nāsti teṣāṃ yaśaḥkāye jarāmaraṇajaṃ bhayam॥

The great poets, who performed good Karma in their earlier incarnations and got Rasasiddhi (Jīvanmukti from Rasa, i.e. with mercury or Śṛṅgāra etc.) do live in great joy. There is no fear of old age and death to their body of fame.

Rasasiddhi, i.e. Jīvanmukti from the combination of Rasa and Abhraka is clearly mentioned –

अभ्रकस्तव बीजं तु मम बीजं तु पारदः।
अनयोर्मेलनं देवि मृत्युदारिद्र्यनाशनम्॥
abhrakastava bījaṃ tu mama bījaṃ tu pāradaḥ।anayormelanaṃ devi
mṛtyudāridryanāśanam॥

O! Gauri! mica is your seed whereas mercury is my seed. The blend of both these things would destroy death and poverty.

Raseśvarasiddhānta of Somadeva says that some Devas, Daityas, Munis and human beings have attained divine body by Rasa –

देवाः केचिन्महेशाद्याः दैत्याः काव्यपुरस्सराः।
मुनयो वालखिल्याद्याः नृपाः सोमेश्वरादयः॥
गोविन्दभगवत्पादाचार्यो गोविन्दनायकः।
चर्वटिः कपिलो व्यालिः कापालिः कन्दलायनः॥
एतेऽन्ये बहवः सिद्धाः जीवन्मुक्ताः चरन्ति हि।
तनुं रसमयीं प्राप्य तदात्मककथाचणाः॥
devāḥ kecinmaheśādyāḥ daityāḥ kāvyapurassarāḥ।
munayo vālakhilyādyāḥ nṛpāḥ someśvarādayaḥ॥
govindabhagavatpādācāryo govindanāyakaḥ।
carvaṭiḥ kapilo vyāliḥ kāpāliḥ kandalāyanaḥ॥
ete'nye bahavaḥ siddhāḥ jīvanmuktāḥ caranti hi।
tanuṃ rasamayīṃ prāpya tadātmakakathācaṇāḥ॥
Maheśa etc. Devas, Śukrācārya etc. Daityas, Vālakhilyādyāḥ etc. Munis (sages), Someśvara etc. kings, Govindabhagavatpādācārya (Guru of Śaṃkarācārya), Govindanāyaka, Carvaṭi, Kapila, Vyāli, Kāpāli, Kandalāyana, these and many Rasasiddhas, having attained the body made of Rasa, being popular as scholars, in Rasa, are living as Jīvanmuktas.

By "Maheśāyāḥ devāḥ" (Maheśa etc. devas) the Vidyeśvaras enumerated in Bahudaivatya of Śaivadarśanam are meant –

अनन्तश्चैव सूक्ष्मश्च तथैव च शिवोत्तमः।
एकनेत्रस्तथैवैकरुद्रश्चापि त्रिमूर्तिकः॥
श्रीकण्ठश्च शिखण्डी च प्रोक्ता विद्येश्वरा इमे।

anantaścaiva sūkṣmaśca tathaiva ca śivottamaḥ।
ekanetrastathaivaikarudraścāpi trimūrtikaḥ॥
śrīkaṇṭhaśca śikhaṇḍī ca proktā vidyeśvarā ime।

Ananta, Sūkṣma, Śivottama, Ekanetra, Ekarudra, Trimūrtika, Śrīkaṇṭha, Śikhaṇḍi – are called Vidyeśvaras (literally propagators of Śaivadarśanam).

The same concept is narrated to Gaurī by Īśvara –

कर्मयोगेण देवेशि प्राप्यते पिण्डधारणम्।
रसस्य पतनश्चेति कर्मयोगो द्विधा स्मृतः॥
मूर्छितो हरति व्याधीन् मृतो जीवयति स्वयम्।
बद्धः खेचरतां कुर्यात् रसो वायुश्च भैरवि॥
karmayogeṇa deveśi prāpyate piṇḍadhāraṇam।
rasasya patanaśceti karmayogo dvidhā smṛtaḥ॥
mūrchito harati vyādhīn mṛto jīvayati svayam।

baddhaḥ khecaratāṃ kuryāt raso vāyuśca bhairavi॥

O! Deveśvari! holding the body becomes possible through Karmayoga, which is of two types – Rasa and Vāyu (mercury and air). Bhairavi! both Rasa and Vāyu, having mūrchita (liquid without being solid and movement) kills the diseases, perished makes one live, confined gives the capacity to fly.

Stability of body can be achieved by Rasa and Abhraka, which are the creations of Śiva and Gaurī. But how to get both the items. There are eighteen Saṃskāras (activities useful to refine something) that are enumerated in Śāstram and one should try to know them –

स्वेदनमर्दनमूर्छनस्थापनपातननिरोधनियमाश्च।
दीपनगगनग्रासप्रमाणमथ जारणपिधानम्॥
गर्भद्रुतिबाह्यद्रुतिक्षारणसंरागसारणाश्चैव।
क्रामणवेधौ भक्षणमष्टादशधेति रसकर्म॥
svedanamardanamūrchanasthāpanapātananirodhaniyamāśca।
dīpanagaganagrāsapramāṇamatha jāraṇapidhānam॥
garbhadrutibāhyadrutikṣāraṇasaṃrāgasāraṇāścaiva।
krāmaṇavedhau bhakṣaṇamaṣṭādaśadheti rasakarma॥

The terms being technical, are pregnant with meaning and hence cannot be translated – 1. Svedanam, 2. Mardanam, 3. Mūrchanam, 4. Sthāpanam, 5. Pātanam, 6. Nirodhaḥ, 7. Dīpanapramāṇam, 8. Gaganagrāsapramāṇam, 9. Jāraṇam, 10. Pidhānam, 11. Garbhadrutiḥ, 12. Bāhyadrutiḥ, 13. Kṣāraṇam, 14. Saṃrāgaḥ, 15. Sāraṇām, 16. Krāmaṇam, 17. Vedhaḥ, 18. Bhakṣaṇam

It should not be misunderstood that Rasaśāstram is for Dhātuvāda (converting iron etc. elements into gold) only. Because Mokṣa is the very purpose of Dehavedha (making the body hard by injecting Rasa). This is said in Rasārṇava –

लोहवेधस्त्वया देव यदर्थमुपवर्णितः।
तं देहवेधमाचक्ष्व येन स्यात् खेचरी गतिः॥
यथा लोहे तथा देहे कर्तव्यः सूतकः सता।
समानं कुरुते देवि प्रत्ययं देहलोहयोः॥
पूर्वं लोहे परीक्षेत पश्चाद्देहे प्रयोजयेत्।
lohavedhastvayā deva yadarthamupavarṇitaḥ।
taṃ dehavedhamācakṣva yena syāt khecarī gatiḥ॥
yathā lohe tathā dehe kartavyaḥ sūtakaḥ satā।
samānaṃ kurute devi pratyayaṃ dehalohayoḥ॥
pūrvaṃ lohe parīkṣeta paścāddehe prayojayet।

(Pārvatī says to Śiva): O! Deva! tell me about Dehavedha, which taking as the main purpose, Lohavedha is explained and by which one can attain the capacity to travel in the space. A wise person should use mercury in the body also, just like he does with regard to Loha (iron). He would treat both Deha and Loha equally. First ,one should test with Loha and then use on the body.

There will be a question – while Mokṣa is available through the realization of Ātmā, in the form of Sat, Cit and Ānanda, why to take this trouble of getting a divine body? This question does not arise while there is going to be a "real body". It is explained in Rasahṛdaya (1.20, 29) –

गलितानल्पविकल्पः सर्वाध्वविवक्षितश्चिदानन्दः।
स्फुरितोऽप्यस्फुरिततनोः करोति किं जन्तुवर्गस्य॥
यज्जरया जर्जरितं कासश्वासादिदुःखविशदं च।
योग्यं तन्न समाधौ प्रतिहतबुद्धीन्द्रियप्रसरम्॥
बालः षोडशवर्षो विषयरसास्वादलम्पटः परतः।
यातविवेको वृद्धो मर्त्यः कथमाप्नुयान्मुक्तिम्॥
galitānalpavikalpaḥ sarvādhvavivakṣitaścidānandaḥ।
sphurito'pyasphuritatanoḥ karoti kiṃ jantuvargasya॥
yajjarayā jarjaritaṃ kāsaśvāsādiduḥkhaviśadaṃ ca।
yogyaṃ tanna samādhau pratihatabuddhīndriyaprasaram॥
bālaḥ ṣoḍaśavarṣo viṣayarasāsvādalampaṭaḥ parataḥ।
yātaviveko vṛddho martyaḥ kathamāpnuyānmuktim॥

Even if the Cidānanda (Brahman), that has overcome all objections and being taught in all Siddhāntas (conclusions), continuously strikes the mind, what can it do to the group of beings which have a body without consciousness? What is the use? The body, which is worn out due to old age, shaken off by problems of breath and cough and in which the movement of intellect and sense organs has come to a standstill, is not suitable for Samādhi. Till sixteen years of age man is a boy. After that he will be interested in enjoying the mundane comforts. He would be without wisdom during old age. How such a person can get Mokṣa?

There will be another question – Jīvātmā means to be a part of the material world whereas Muktatvam is quite opposite to it. Then how can two mutually hostile properties occupy a single base? This question is untenable. Mokṣa is acceptable to all Darśanas. Is it a thing to be known or not to be known? If it is the second one, then it is just like a hare's horn (i.e. does not exist). If it is the first one then one should not give up his life as a person who is without life cannot know anything. This is stated in Raseśvarasiddhānta –

रसाङ्कमेयमार्गोक्तो जीवमोक्षोऽन्यथा तु न।
प्रमाणान्तरवादेषु युक्तिभेदावलम्बिषु॥
ज्ञातृज्ञेयमिदं विद्धि सर्वतन्त्रेषु संमतम्।
नाजीवन् ज्ञास्यति ज्ञेयं तदतोऽस्त्येव जीवनम्॥
rasāṅkameyamārgokto jīvamokṣo'nyathā tu na।
pramāṇāntaravādeṣu yuktibhedāvalambiṣu॥
jñātṛjñeyamidaṃ viddhi sarvatantreṣu saṃmatam।
nājīvan jñāsyati jñeyaṃ tadato'styeva jīvanam॥

The Jīvanmukti described in Rasaśāstram only is there, but not otherwise. In other arguments, which follow other reasonings and follow other means of knowledge, also, note this point, it is to be known by the knower. This is

accepted in all Śāstras (systems). A man without life cannot know the thing to be known. Therefore, even during Mukti, life will be there.

One should not reject this theory as "not seen earlier" as the followers of Viṣṇusvāmī proposed immutability to the body of Narasimha (an incarnation of Viṣṇu in which he appears with the body of a man and lion). This is stated in Sākārasiddhi –

सच्चिन्नित्यनिजाचिन्त्यपूर्णानन्दैकविग्रहम्।
नृपञ्चास्यमहं वन्दे श्रीविष्णुस्वामिसंमतम्॥
saccinnityanijācintya pūrṇānandaikavigraham।
nṛpañcāsyamahaṃ vande śrīviṣṇusvāmisaṃmatam॥

I salute Narasimha, acceptable to Viṣṇusvāmī and having a body that cannot be guessed, is complete, blissful, existing during all times, cognition and immutable.

Here Garbhaśrīkaṇṭhamiśra took the following three Pramāṇas (Means of knowledge) in order to prove that the body of Narasimha is existing always etc. –

1. Sanaka etc. sages had perceived Narasimha
2. Śvetāśvataropaniṣat (3.14) says –
   सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः
   sahasra śīrṣā puruṣaḥ
   The person (Narasimha) has got many heads.
3. Bhāgavatapurāṇam (10.3.9) –
   तमद्भुतं बालकमंबुजेक्षणम्।
   चतुर्भुजं शङ्खगदादियुदायुधम्॥
   tamadbhutaṃ bālakamaṃbujekṣaṇam।
   caturbhujaṃ śaṅkhagadādyudāyudham॥
   Devakī saw a wonder-boy who was lotus-eyed, had four hands and was holding conch and Gadā (a weapon) etc. weapons.

The above concept is substantiated –

आयतनं विद्यानां मूलं धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणाम्।
श्रेयःपरं किमन्यत् शरीरमजरामरं विद्ययैकम्॥
āyatanaṃ vidyānāṃ mūlaṃ dharmārthakāmamokṣāṇām।
śreyaḥparaṃ kimanyat śarīramajarāmaraṃ vidyayaikam॥

Except a body that is devoid of old age and death what other auspicious thing is there that is the abode of knowledge systems and the root of the Puruṣārthas, viz. Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa?

And Rasa is the only thing that is capable of arresting old age and death –

एकोऽसौ रसराजः शरीरमजरामरं कुरुते।
eko'sau rasarājaḥ śarīramajarāmaraṃ kurute।

This Rasa only can make the body devoid of old age and death.

Therefore, having attained the divine body in the prescribed way, one, through Yogābhyāsa, should try for Mokṣa. Rasahṛdaya (1.23) is here –

> तस्मिन्नाधाय मनः स्फुरदखिलं चिन्मयं जगत्पश्यन्।
> उत्सन्नकर्मबन्धः ब्रह्मत्वमिहैव चाप्नोति॥
> tasminnādhāya manaḥ sphuradakhilaṃ cinmayaṃ jagatpaśyan।
> utsannakarmabandhaḥ brahmatvamihaiva cāpnoti॥
>
> Having fixed the unstable mind in that, looking the entire universe as a form of Brahman, having the Karmphala (bindings due to Karma) perished, one can achieve Mokṣa in this body only.

Taittirīyopaniṣat (2.7.1) clearly states –

> रसो वै सः रसं ह्येवायं लब्ध्वानन्दी भवति
> raso vai saḥ rasaṃ hyevāyaṃ labdhvānandī bhavati
>
> Rasa is nothing but Brahman only. This person having attained Rasa would have bliss.

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