**Abstract: Rasas in the Ramcharitmanas**

This research project will analyze and compare the various rasas represented in the Ramcharitmanas, focusing on *bhakti* *rasa* as a newer outlook, as well as *veera, karuna*, and *shaanta* *rasa*. *Rasa* is a Sanskrit word that can be loosely translated as essence or flavor, referring to a concept in aesthetic theory that is present in visual or literary arts (Britannica). *Rasa* was first mentioned in Bharat’s *Natyashastra*, in the verse 1969:79, where he states, “*Vibhavaanubhaava vyabhicarisamyogata rasanispattih*” (The Rasa Theory and Literary Appreciation). This loosely translates to the idea that aesthetic pleasure or *rasa* is created when external factors, the actor’s experience, and transient emotions come together (The Rasa Theory and Literary Appreciation).

I will contrast the portrayal of these *rasas* in the text itself versus in performance, and examine how certain *rasas* are enhanced or muted by the transition into a performance from written text. I will examine Tulasidas*’* *Ramcharitmanas* and contrast it with Valmiki*’s* *Ramayana*. The use of poetic language, like metaphors, similes, analogies, imagery, and how it enhances the presence of *rasas* will also be studied. In particular, I am interested in the expression of *bhakti rasa* in text and in performance. *Bhakti rasa* refers to devotional or spiritual emotions, and manifests in the text and performance primarily through verses that are sung in praise of certain deities. I will first summarize the various *rasas* I have observed, particularly *bhakti rasa*, in the text of the *Ramcharitmanas*, then note my observations about the performance of *Ramlila* and the role of *bhakti rasa* in performance, and finally conclude by discussing the interplay between the various texts and performances of this historical epic.