This anthology of the Love Lyrics of three Indian poets from the fourth to the eleventh centuries CE conjures up an atmosphere of love both sensual and social, ever in tension with love's rejection or repression.

Ámaru's sophisticated seventh-century CE "Hundred Poems" are as much about the social aspects of courting, betrayal, feminine indignance and masculine self-pity as about sensuality.

Bhartrihari's anthology "Love, Politics, Disenchantment" is the oldest of the three, from the fourth century. Interwoven throughout his three hundred idiosyncratic stanzas is a constant sense of skepticism about sensuality and love, economic and social power, and rejection of society and culture.

In the eleventh century, Bílhana composed his intense "Fifty Stanzas of a Thief." The poem is a thief's rhythmic remembrance, in the moments before his execution, of robbing a princess's affections, and the clandestine pleasures of their love in both separation and enjoyment.

The flavor of all these poems is the universalized aesthetic experience of love.
CONTENTS

Sanskrit alphabetical order 7
CSL conventions 7

LOVE LYRICS

Introduction by Greg Bailey 13

Bhartrī-hari 27
Politics 27
Passion 83
Disenchantment 139

Āmaru 205
Hundred Verses 205

Introduction by Richard Gombrich 277

Bīlhana 285
The Fifty Stanzas of a Thief 285

Notes 313
Index 317

A sandhi grid is printed on the inside of the back cover
A dy’ api tam kanaka/campaka/dams/gaurum
phull’/arvinda/vadanam tan/roman/sajim
supr’/othita/madana/vihvala’s/alas’/angim
vidya/m pramadagailam iva cintayami.

A dy’ api tam sasi/mukhim navayauvan’/adhym
pinastan/m punar aham yadi gaurakantim
pa’syami manmathas/ar’/anala/pidit’/angim
gatrai samprati karomi sujitalani.

A dy’ api tam yadi punah kama/aya/ksim
pa’syami pivarapayodharabhara/khinnam
sampidya bahu yugala/pibami vaktram
unmattan madhurakam/kama yath’/esatham.

A dy’ api tam nidhuvanaklama/nihsah/angim
apanduganda/pit’/alaka/kuntas/alim
prachanna/papakrta/manthram awhanti/m
ka nth’/vasakamtdubahu/atala/m smarami.

**BILHANA: THE LOVE THIEF**

Still I recall her, golden as a wreath
Of champaka flowers, her full-blown lotus face,
Her slender line of down, her limbs confused
By Passion, faint from passionate embrace;
I recollect her as she rose from sleep
Like knowledge carelessness has failed to keep.

Still when I see the richness of her youth,
The moon her face, the swelling of her breast.
Her beauty’s pallor, and her every limb
By Kama’s fire-bearing darts distressed,
Even today as I recall that sight
My limbs grow cold and shiver with delight.

Still when her eyes, as lotus petals long,
Like Fortune’s, goddess lotus-born, I see,
And see her wearied by her bosom’s load,
With both my arms clasping her close to me
As honey-bee his darling lotus sips
I would grow drunk on mead within her lips.

Still I remember how her body lay
Exhausted by our love, her pale cheeks lined
With tumbled locks of hair, and round my neck
The tendrils of her arms she tightly twined;
Held me so close as if she bore within
Her heart concealed some secret deed of sin.
Still I remember sleepless nights we passed
In pleasure; her long eyes at break of day,
Tremulous roving stars, threw sidelong looks
Towards me, as in shame she turned away.
A swan princess into a lotus bed
Upon a lake of love inclined her head.

Still, could I once again behold my love,
Her eyes so long they seemed to touch her ears,
Could I behold my darling’s slender form,
Long racked by parted lovers’ tender fears,
I’d clasp that body wasted by love’s fever
And close my eyes, and never more would leave her.

Still I recall that lovely full-moon face,
The disarray of her dishevelled tresses,
The weight of ample hips and bosom, which
Herdainty, passion-weary limbs depresses;
These attributes her leading role enhance
In love’s ecstatic, earth-dissolving dance.

Still I recall the grace of her repose
As she reclined, with perfume all around
Arising from the fragrant musk of deer
Blended with smoothest sandal finely ground.
Her eyes in lovely fluttering imitate
A curve-beaked wagtail billing with his mate.
Still I recall her flushed with love and wine,  
Great eyes in which the darting pupils swim,  
Her slender body and her sportive lips;  
On a ground of Kashmir saffron every limb  
With figures in black deer-musk ornamented;  
Her mouth with camphor and with betel scented.

Still I remember my beloved’s face  
Gleaming with pearls of sweat and saffron’s gold;  
The abundant moisture and her wandering eyes  
All the fatigue of love’s fulfillment told.  
No brighter does the full-faced moon appear  
When from Eclipse’s jaws she frees her sphere.

Still I remember how one night, offended,  
The princess would not speak, and so refrained  
When I had sneezed from the auspicious words “Long life!,” by which such omens are restrained,  
But wordlessly upon her ear reset  
The golden leaf which was her amulet.
LOVE LYRICS

*Still I recall the graceful coquetry
Of those curved limbs, the loving sidelong look,
The golden earrings beating on her cheeks
As sweat-pearl glistening her body shook.

Still I recall my darling’s hands, as red
As when the *asoka* tree new buds unfurls.

Still I recall when I am alone
The jet-black eyes collyrium had kissed;
Her braided hair, one mass of full-blown flowers;
And golden bangles dangling from each wrist.

Still I remember when I am alone
The jet-black eyes collyrium had kissed;
Her braided hair, one mass of full-blown flowers;
And golden bangles dangling from each wrist.

BILHANA: THE LOVE THIEF

*Still I recall the gold-anointed thigh
On which her gold-embroidered garment glinted.

Still I remember when I am alone
The jet-black eyes collyrium had kissed;
Her braided hair, one mass of full-blown flowers;
And golden bangles dangling from each wrist.

*Still I recall the graceful coquetry
Of those curved limbs, the loving sidelong look,
The golden earrings beating on her cheeks
As sweat-pearl glistening her body shook.

Still I recall my darling’s hands, as red
As when the *asoka* tree new buds unfurls.

Still I recall when I am alone
The jet-black eyes collyrium had kissed;
Her braided hair, one mass of full-blown flowers;
And golden bangles dangling from each wrist.

Still I remember when I am alone
The jet-black eyes collyrium had kissed;
Her braided hair, one mass of full-blown flowers;
And golden bangles dangling from each wrist.
Still when alone I recollect the smile
Which tasted nectar-sweet upon her lip;
I see the fastenings of her braided hair
Slip from their place, and see the garlands slip;
The wandering gaze, the string of pearls which rests
Kissing a pair of full uplifted breasts.

Still I recall how wreaths of jewel lamps,
Garlanded round us in that palace white,
Fragmented darkness with their mass of rays;
Her eyes were pained in modesty and fright
When I surprised her bending over me
To spy her sleeping lover secretly.

Still I remember in her slenderness
The only vessel of my tender pleasure,
Her limbs on fire with separation's flame,
Her teeth as lovely as the various treasure
Of ornaments with which her body shone;
Eyes of a deer, and movements of a swan.

Still I recall my darling as she came,
Bent by her bosom's weight, to pleasure's bower,
House of the god who wounds with fiery darts,
Herself a beautiful and full-blown flower.
Her smile at me was radiance to bedeck
The clustered pearls which gleamed upon her neck.
**Love Lyrics**

Ady’ āpi cātuṣṭaḍurāḷit’oṣcit’ārthaṃ
tasyāḥ smarāmi surataṃklaṃvaḥśivalśāḥ
avyaktāṇiṣvanitaṃkāτaraṃkathyaṃmāṇāḥ
saṃkīrṇaṃvarṣajruciraṃ vacanaṃ priyāyaḥ.

Ady’ āpi tāṃ surataṃghūṛṇānimilīt’āksīṃ
tsraṣṭ’āṅgayaṣṭigalit’āṃśukaṃkēśapāśāṃ
tsṛṅgāra-vāri ruhaṃkāṇanaṃ rājakhaṃṣīṃ
tjanm’antare ’pi nidhane ’py anucintayāmi.

Ady’ āpi tāṃ prañayinīṃ mṛgāśāvak’āksīṃ
tpiyūṣapūrṇa-kuca jumbhayuṣgam vahantiṃ
tpaśyāmy ahaṃ yadi punar divaśāvasāne
tsvargāpavargainaraṃ rajasukhaṃ tyaṃjīmi.

Ady’ āpi tāṃ kṣīrāṭale varaṅkāminināṃ
tsvaṅgaṃsundaratayā pratham āikaṃ rekham
ntsṛṅgara-nāṭakaṃras’vottama pānapiṭṛṇāṃ
tkāntaṃ smarāmi kusumāyudhaṃ bāṇaṃ khinnāṃ.

**Bīhāna: The Love Thief**

Still I recall how my beloved spoke
When weary with our play; her tongue, confused,
Wished to assure me of her wild delight
But stumbled on the batteries she used.
With timid murmurings and accents blurred
How charmingly she jumbled every word.

Still in another life I shall recall
What I recall at this my hour of dying:
The slender body of my royal swan
Amid love’s lotus clusters languid lying;
Her eyes were closed in pleasure as we revelled,
Her garment loosened and her hair dishevelled.

Still could I see once more, as day declines
My loving mistress of the fawn-like eyes,
Carrying like two nectar-laden jars
Her swelling breasts, I would for such a prize
Renounce the joys of royalty on earth,
Heavenly bliss, and freedom from rebirth.

Still I recall my darling, whom the shafts
Of love, the flower-arrowed god, distress;
Above the choicest beauties of the earth
She shines with rays of flawless loveliness
As the new moon, the cup from which I savor
Where love is played the play’s essential flavor.
LOVE LYRICS

25 Ady’ āpi tāṃ stīmitāvastram īv’ ātigālagnātm
prauddhāp ratsāpamadā’jānaalaptādehām
bālām anāthaśa ranām anuka mānpānyām
prān’ādhikāṃ kṣaṇam ahaṃ na hi visma rāmi.

Ady’ āpi tāṃ prathomato vara sundarīnāṃ
sneh’āikapātra ghitām avan’āsaṅputrim
tapo jānā viraha jāṣukumāragṛtyāḥ
sodhumnaḥ sākyata iti pratīcintayāmi.

Ady’ āpi vismayākariṃ tridaśāṃ vihāya
buddhir balāc calati me kīṃ ahaṃ karomi
jānann āpi pratimuhurtam ih’ ānta kāle
kānt’ ēti vallabhar’ ēti mam’ ēti dhīra.

Ady’ āpi tāṃ gamanam ity uditaṃ madiyām
śrūv’ īva bhīr uharināṭīṃ i va caṅcal’ākṣīṃ
vacaḥ skhaladvigalastraugal’ākulu’ākṣīṃ
saṃcintayāmi guruṣokāvinamra vaktrām.

Still I recall her, clinging close to me
As a wet garment, while the furious flame
Of passion seared her body, a mere girl
Who more to me than life itself became.
No moment fails the piteous recollection
Of her distress, who lacks her lord’s protection.

Still, though I know this is my final hour,
O my bewilderer—what can I do?—
My thoughts are ever and again constrained
To leave the unaging gods and fly to you.
My constant one, I think of you alone
As dearest, as beloved, as my own.

Still I recall her in whose eyes I saw
The shy mobility of a gazelle.
When she had heard that I must go from her
Her tongue would falter on the word “Farewell”;
From brimming eyes water of tears would flow,
And with the weight of grief her head hung low.

BĪLHANA: THE LOVE THIEF
Ady’ āpi jātu nipuṇaṁ yatata may” āpi
dṛṣṭaṁ dṛśa jaγati jaṭi vidhe vadhuṇām
saundaryāṁ nirjitaṁ ratēdvijārājākānteḥ
kāṁ” Jaṇanasya sadrśāṁ vadanāṁ guṇaṁ na.

Still, though my eye may diligently search
This world, which is so full of every kind
Of comely woman, yet the counterpart
Of my beloved’s face I cannot find.
She conquers by the beauty of that face
Both Love’s beloved and the moon in grace.

Still I recall the white-toothed girl, from whom
It was poison for a moment to be parted;
Then in renewed embrace anointing me
With copious nectar, she new life imparted,
Herself fatigued by love; if she is mine,
Why do I need the trinity divine?

Still my mind flinches at the memory
How from the royal palace I was led
By fearsome men, who, ineluctable,
Seemed envoys from the ruler of the dead.
In grief I cannot tell how for my sake
There was no effort that she did not make.

Still does it pain my heart by night and day
That I before me may no longer see
At every step I take my darling’s face
In full-moon beauty shining upon me.
The god of love is wounded in his pride,
For she is far more charming than his bride.
This anthology of the Love Lyrics of three Indian poets from the fourth to the eleventh centuries CE conjures up an atmosphere of love both sensual and social, ever in tension with love’s rejection or repression.

Greg Bailey is Reader in Sanskrit at La Trobe University, Melbourne.

Richard Gombrich has for the past twenty-eight years been Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University. He is General Editor of the Clay Sanskrit Library.

The Clay Sanskrit Library is a unique series that, through original text and English translation, gives an international readership access to the beauty and variety of classical Sanskrit literature.

For a full list of titles, a searchable corpus of CSL texts and translations, and further information about the series, please visit: www.claysanskritlibrary.com

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS Washington Square New York, NY 10003 www.nyupress.org

Here is a new Clay Sanskrit Library translation of the Love Lyrics of three ancient Indian poets.

Ámaru’s sophisticated seventh-century CE “Hundred Poems” are as much about the social aspects of courting, betrayal, feminine indignance and masculine self-pity as about sensuality.

Bhārtṛhari’s anthology “Love, Politics, Disenchantment” is the oldest of the three, from the fourth century. Interwoven throughout his three hundred idiosyncratic stanzas is a constant sense of skepticism about sensuality and love, economic and social power, and rejection of society and culture.

In the eleventh century, Bīlhana composed his intense “Fifty Stanzas of a Thief.” The poem is a thief’s rhythmic remembrance, in the moments before his execution, of robbing a princess’s affections, and the clandestine pleasures of their love in both separation and enjoyment.

The flavor of all these poems is the universalized aesthetic experience of love.