

# Vaishnavism as Fine Literature

Yale University (New Haven, CT)

May 27-29, 2022

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*Praising Kṛṣṇa, Not Kings: Rūpa Gosvāmin's Repurposing of the Virudāvalī Genre*

Rūpa Gosvāmin's (16th century) Govindavirudāvalī served as a model for at least four subsequent Vaiṣṇava poems written in the same virudāvalī genre, defined by its phoneto-metrical structure. Against SK De and Brzezinski, I offer evidence that Rūpa did not invent this genre, suggesting that he rather repurposed a genre that had likely been developing in the 14th-16th centuries around Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. This paper will look at some of the playful features of the genre which contributed to its appeal as a form of royal and divine panegyric and allowed it to serve as an avant-garde of Sanskrit poetry in the early modern period.