



Rays of
The Harmonist



Editorial

Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's *līla* and Their vision of each other is described as *nitya navīna*, eternally fresh and new. When Rādhā sees Kṛṣṇa She thinks, "Who is this wonderfully attractive dark complexioned boy? I have never seen Him before!" Similarly, on the *sādhaka's* journey he experiences newer and deeper realizations concerning the *tattvas* of the Absolute, such as his understanding regarding the identity of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and whether it was for primary or secondary reasons that Mahāprabhu decided to answer Śrī Advaita Ācārya's thunderous calling and inaugurate the auspicious *San̄kīrtan yajña* on earth 513 years ago.

As our genuine love deepens, the covering veils of illusion and misconceptions fall away, revealing finer and eternally ever fresh perceptions to be experienced and tasted by the *sādhaka*.

Bhakti devi Herself is described as that dynamic current of positive loving service to our *iṣṭadevas*—Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—and just as any strong current surges to cover newer ground churning the depths of the river bed, so our appreciation of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as *jagad guru* and *bhajana śiksā guru*, guiding us to the lotus feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa becomes clearer. What was the primary reason for His advent at this time? To taste for Himself that highest conception of Rādhā's own '*unnatojvalla prema*.' And what was the 'treasure' He came to give to the bound *jīvas*? The beauty of His own bhakti, '*unnatojvalla rasām sva bhakti śriyam*,' that most intimate service to Śrī Rādhikā Herself, *rādhā-dāsyam*.

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojvalla-rasām sva-bhakti -śriyam
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śaci-nandanah*

anapita-not bestowed; *carīm*-having been formerly; *cirāt*-for a long time; *karuṇayā*-by causeless mercy; *avatīrṇaḥ*-descended; *kalau*-in the age of Kali; *samarpayitum*-to bestow; *unnata*-elevated; *ujjvalla-rasām*-the conjugal mellow; *sva-bhakti*-of His own service; *śriyam*-the treasure; *hariḥ*-Lord Hari ; *puraṭa*-than gold; *sundara*-more beautiful; *dyuti*-of splendor; *kadamba*-with a multitude; *sandīpitaḥ*-lighted up; *sadā*-always; *hṛdaya-kandare*-in the cavity of the heart; *sphuratu*-let Him be manifest; *vaḥ*-your; *śaci-nandanah*-the son of mother Śacī.

"May that Lord who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacīdevī be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the Age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant spiritual knowledge of the mellow taste of His service".

This *śloka* has been taken from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Vidagdha Mādhava*, and quoted by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja three times in his *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, *Adi 1.4*; *Adi 3.4*; *Antya 1.132*.

By our developed love and affection towards the Divine Couple through service to Guru and Vaiṣṇavas and our steady progressive *sādhana bhajana* securly aimed at the *prema-prayojana*, the highest conception, which, in the *Gauḍīya* tradition is service in the personal camp of Rādhā, our success is assured. It is only then that we can experience the full dynamism of bhakti devi's ever fresh current. At that time our hearts and minds can be immersed in that *nitya-navīna* river of divine *hari-kathā* as spoken by our *ācārya* preceptors.

We sincerely hope that our readers will be inspired by the *siddhāntas* revealed by our *ācārya's* words, and in particular at this auspicious time relish the contemplation of the Golden Avatāra, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.



First Ray ❁ **Publications**

- Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 5
*Commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura
& Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja*

Second Ray ❁ **Forum**

- Taking Śrīla Prabhupāda Straight 10
Bhakti Vidāgdha Bhagawat Mahārāja
- Condolences 20
Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Third Ray ❁ **Guru-tattva**

- The Charm And Superiority 21
of the Bhagavad-paramparā
Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
- Religion of Nothingness 27
Introduction to Being And Nothingness
- Being And Nothingness 30
Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Fourth Ray ❁ **Parikramā**

- Ārcumambulation of 32
Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda

Fifth Ray ❁ **Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nītai**

- Essay on Śrī Caitanya-caritamṛta 36
Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svamī Mahārāja
- Śrī Śaci-Tanyāṣṭakam 40
Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya

Sixth Ray ❁ **Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa**

- Vṛśabhānu-nāndinī 42
Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Front cover: Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, given by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svamī Mahārāja to Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭh, Mathurā.

Back cover: Lotus, the representation of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode.

English titles

published by the
Gauḍīya Vedānta Publications

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
His life and precepts

The Vedānta
Its Morphology & Ontology

Vaiṣṇavism
Real & Apparent

Rai Rāmānanda

Nām Bhajan

The Bhāgavat
Its Philosophy, Theology & Ethics

The Nectar of Govinda-Līlā

Going Beyond Vaikunṭha

Bhakti-Rasāyan

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

Venu Gīta

Manaḥ Śikṣa

Śrī Bhakti rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu

Life History of Impersonalism
Victory of Vaiṣṇavism

Prabandhāvalī

Pinnacle of Devotion

Kṛṣṇa, the Ocean of Rasa

Their Lasting Relationship

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta

The Essence of All Advice

The True Conception of Guru-tattva

Available from:
Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭh
Mathurā (U.P.) 281001, India
E-mail: order@igvp.com

Rays of The Harmonist

Published by the

Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti:

Founder-*ācārya*

Nityā-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupada paramahansa 108
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmi Mahārāja.

President-*ācārya*

Tridandi svāmi

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja.

Vice-President

Founder of *Rays of The Harmonist*

Tridandi svāmi

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Narāyaṇa Mahārāja.

Chief Editor

Tīrthapāda Dāsa

Editor

Nānda Kīśora Dāsa

Associate Editor

Śyāmala Dāsī

Contributing Editor

Vaijāyanti-mālā Dāsī

Proofreaders

Vicitra Dāsī

Madhurikā Dāsī

Layout &

Managing Editor

Kaliya-damana Dāsa

Our purpose is to spread rays of illumination from the spirit of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, as desired by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. Our heritage is the *Harmonist*, or *Śrī Sajjanatoṣaṇī* journal, founded by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, later edited by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. May the present day Vaiṣṇavas bestow their divine grace upon our attempts to please them.

Rays of The Harmonist

Girirājajī Mandira, Sevā Kuñja

Vṛndāvana 281121

Mathurā Dist., U.P., India

Phone/Fax: +91 / (565) 445-294

E-mail: rays@igvp.com

Web Site: www.igvp.com/rays

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā

"Innermost Intentions"

Commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura
& Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Śloka 1

*dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca —
dharma-kṣetre kurukṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva kim akurvata sañjaya*

Anvaya

Natural sequence of words according to the translation: *dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ uvāca* —Dhṛtarāṣṭra said; *sañjaya*—O Sañjaya; *kim akurvata*—what did they do?; *māma-kāḥ*—my sons; *ca*—and; *pāṇḍavāḥ*—the sons of Pandu, the Pāṇḍavās; *eva*—after that; *samavetāḥ*—assembled; *dharma-kṣetre kurukṣetre*—in the land of religion, Kurukṣetra; *yuyutsavaḥ*—desirous to fight.

Translation

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: "O Sañjaya, what did my sons and the sons of Pandu do, having assembled at Kurukṣetra, the land of religion, desiring to fight?"

Translation of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's Sārārthavarṣiṇī-bhāvānuvāda (commentary)

*gaurāṅśukaḥ sat-kumuda-pramodī
svābhikhyayā gos-tamaso nihantā
śrī kṛṣṇa-caitanya-sudhānidhirme
mano' dhitiṣṭhan svaratim karotu
prācīnavācaḥ suvicārya so'ham-
ajño' pi gītāmṛta-leśalipsuḥ
yateḥ prabhoreva mate tadatra
santaḥ kṣamadhvaṁ śaraṇāgatasya*

May Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who dispelled the darkness of the earth by distributing His own name (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), who is increasing the bliss of the lotus-like devotees, who is the storehouse of the nectar of *prema*, who is the bestower of *unnata-ujjvala-rasa* which is the most elevated relationship of divine conjugal love, perform His playful pastimes in my heart.

Although I am devoid of knowledge, by deliberating on the thoughts expressed by previous Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, I have become greedy to taste a drop of nectar in the form of the *Gītā*, according to the doctrine of Śrī Gaurāṅga-sundara, the crest jewel of all *sannyāsīs*. Therefore saintly people should excuse this surrendered soul.

The Supreme Absolute Truth, Parabrahman Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *bhājana* (devotional service) to whose lotus feet is the intended aim of all *śāstra*, appeared as Śrī Vasudeva-nandana, the son of Śrī Vasudeva, in Śrī Gopāla-purī, in His original human-like form. Although He is supremely inconceivable and beyond the cognition of material senses (*adhokṣaja*), He nevertheless became visible to the eyes of common men by the medium of His *yogamāyā* potency. He imparted the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*, thus delivering the *jīvas* of this world, who were drowning in the ocean of birth and death. He submerged them in the great ocean of *prema* (divine love), by giving them a taste of the sweet-

ness of His beauty (*saundarya mādhuryā*) and other qualities. He appeared in this world, being bound by His promise to protect the saintly people and annihilate the demoniac. But on the pretext of removing the burden of the earth, He in fact gave supreme protection—in the form of awarding liberation (*mukti*) to miscreants, to those who were antagonistic towards Him and to all those *jīvas* drowning in this vast ocean of material existence which is just like the Kumbhīpākānaraka, a hellish planet where sinful people are cooked in boiling oil.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed *Bhagavad-gītā* so that even after His disappearance pastime conditioned *jīvas*, who are influenced by ignorance since time immemorial and who are completely subject to lamentation, illusion, etc., could be delivered. Another purpose was to uphold His glories sung by *munis* as found in the *śāstra*. He directed these instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna, His very dear associate (*priyaparikara*), who had voluntarily accepted a veil of lamentation and illusion.

This *Gītā* has three divisions: *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*. By endowing the purport of all the *Vedas* in eighteen chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā* as eighteen types of knowledge, Śrī Kṛṣṇa thus ascertained the *parama puruṣārtha*, the supreme objective. *Niṣkāma-karma-yoga* (working without attachment to the fruits of one's prescribed duties) has been described in the first six chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *jñāna-yoga* (yoga through knowledge) in the last six chapters. The six chapters on *bhakti-yoga*, which is more confidential and more rare than *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*, have been kept between them. *Bhakti* is the elixir vitae for *karma* and *jñāna*. Without *bhakti*, both *karma* and *jñāna* are fruitless, and are partly acceptable only when mixed with *bhakti*.

Bhakti is of two types: *kevalā* (exclusive) and *pradhānībhūtā* (with *bhakti* predominating). *Kevalā-bhakti*, being independent and supremely powerful, does not need any assistance from *karma* and *jñāna*. Therefore it is also known as *parama-prabalā* (supremely valorous), *akiñcanā* (Kṛṣṇa being his only possession), *ananyā* (exclusive) and so on. On the other hand, *pradhānībhūtā-bhakti* remains mixed with *karma* and *jñāna*—this will later be deliberated upon in more detail.

To explain the nature of Arjuna's lamentation and illusion, the speaker of *Mahābhārata*, Śrī Vaiśampāyana, a disciple of Vyāsadeva, has introduced the Bhīṣma-parva section to the listener, Janamejaya, by speaking the sentence '*dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca*' etc. Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked Sañjaya, "O Sañjaya, desiring to

fight, what did my sons and the sons of Pandu do, having assembled at Kurukṣetra?" Here a question arises. Dhṛtarāṣṭra has mentioned that his sons and the Pāṇḍavas have assembled with the sole purpose of fighting, so it is certain that they will fight. What then is his intention in asking, "What did they do?" Just to answer this, Dhṛtarāṣṭra has used the word *dharma-kṣetre*, the land of religion. It is said in *śruti: kurukṣetram devayajanam*—"Kurukṣetra is the sacrificial arena of the *devas*," therefore, this land is famous as a promotor of religion. Thus the influence of association with this land can subdue the anger of irreligious persons like Duryodhana and others, who may then become inclined to *dharma*. The Pāṇḍavas are already *dhārmika* by nature. The influence of Kurukṣetra may arouse the faculty of discrimination and the consideration that the massacre of one's own relatives is improper, and thus both parties may agree to a peaceful settlement. Outwardly Dhṛtarāṣṭra is pretending that he will be happy with a peace treaty, but internally he is feeling great dissatisfaction. He considers that if they call a peace treaty, the kingdom will continue to remain an impediment for his sons. Dhṛtarāṣṭra thinks, "The warriors on my side, like Bhīṣma, Droṇa and others, cannot be conquered even by Arjuna. Therefore since our victory is certain, it will be beneficial to fight." These internal sentiments of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, however, are unintelligible to others.

Here, by the component '*kṣetra*' in the word '*dharmakṣetre*,' Sarasvatī-devī is indicating a special meaning. '*Dharma*,' that is, the incarnation of *dharma*, Yudhiṣṭhira, along with his associates, are like plants of rice, and their maintainer, Bhagavan Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is like a farmer. The various kinds of assistance given by Kṛṣṇa to the Pāṇḍavas are likened to the watering of the crop, making a cause-way around the field. The Kauravas, headed by Duryodhana, are like the *śyāmā* (blackish) weeds which grow in the rice field. This indicates that as the *śyāmā* weeds are uprooted from the rice field; similarly Duryodhana along with the other Kauravas will be uprooted from this *dharma-kṣetra*.

Translation of

Śrīla B.V. Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's

Sārāthavarṣinī-prakāśikā-vṛtti (commentary)

*om ajñāna timirāndhasya jñānāñjana śalākayāḥ
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ*

I offer my most humble obeisances unto Śrī Gurudeva, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

*namaḥ om viṣṇupādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrī śrīmad bhakti prajñāna keśava iti nāmine
atimartya-caritrāya svāśrītānāñca-pāline
jīva-duḥkhe sadārttāya śrī nāma-prema-dāyine*

I offer obeisances unto the lotus feet of Om Viṣṇupāda Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktiprajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is a completely divine personality, who nurtures those who have taken shelter of him with great affection. He feels aggrieved upon seeing the suffering of those *jīvas* who are averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and he bestows the holy name along with *prema*.

*namaḥ om viṣṇupādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrīmate bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatīti nāmine*

I offer my obeisances unto Om Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, who is so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*namo bhaktivinodāya saccidānanda nāmine
gaura-śakti-svarūpāya rūpānuga-varāya te*

I offer my obeisances unto Saccidānanda Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who is the foremost of *rūpānuga* devotees and the embodiment of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *śakti*.

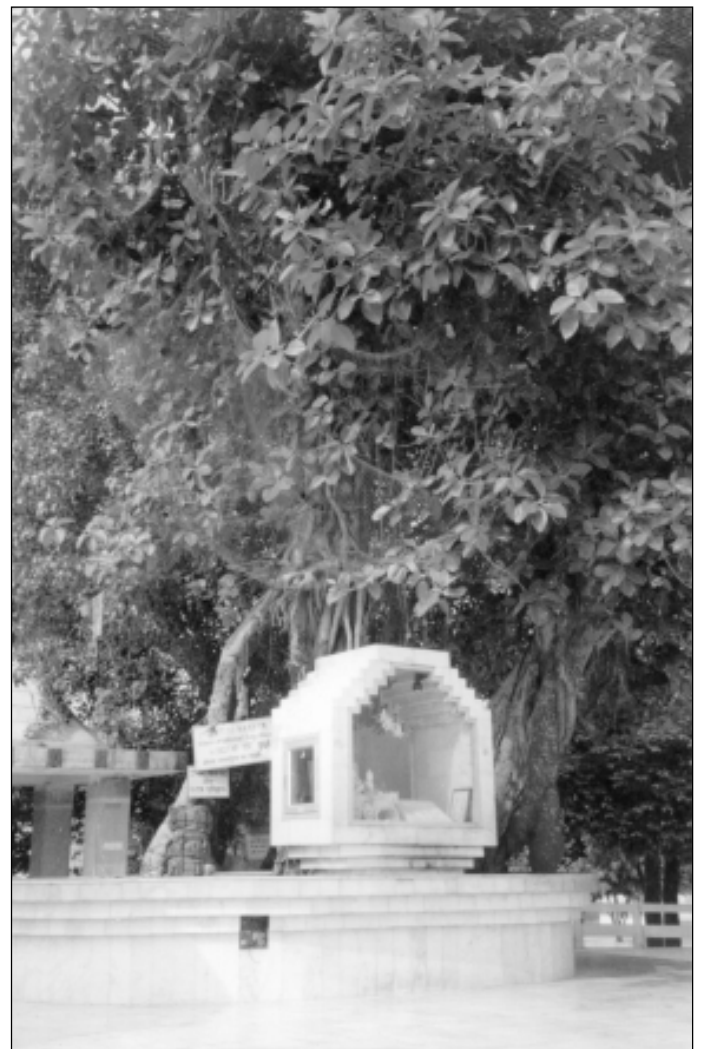
*viśvanātha-rūpo'sau bhakti-vartma pradarśanāt
bhakta-cakre varttitoāt cakravartyākhyayābhavāt*

Because he illuminates the path of *bhakti* for everyone, he is known as Viśvanātha. And because he has attained the foremost position among the community of devotees, he is known as Cakravartī. From the meaning of both these words, his name has become significant as Viśvanātha Cakravartī.

The great preceptor, *mahā-mahopādhyāya*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, an eminent *ācārya* and great scholar of *Vedānta* in the Śrī Gauḍīya-sampradāya, and the crest-jewel of *rasika-bhaktas*, has compiled a commentary (*ṭīkā*) on *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* called *Śrī Sārārthavarṣiṇī*, which is invaluable and full of essential meanings. This commentary was written in Sanskrit and was previously only available in Bengali scripts. Consequently, the Hindi-speaking audience has been completely deprived of reading this invaluable treasure. Thus, for the comprehensive welfare of faithful people, I am beginning to translate the above said commentary into Hindi. The style and *bhāva* of the commentary are extremely deep and enriched

with exalted philosophical conclusions (*siddhānta*). To make the translation simple, easy, and comprehensive, I considered it necessary to write a *prakāśikā-vṛtti*, a further explanation to illuminate the commentary. This arduous task is not possible without the mercy of Śrī Guru, Vaiṣṇavas and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura himself. Therefore I, full of distress, first of all pray at their lotus feet for their mercy and blessings.

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā is the compilation of the essence of all *śrutis*, *Upaniṣads* and *Purāṇas*. Based on sound evidence from Vedic literature received through *guru paramparā* (*amnāya pramāṇa*), it is concluded that Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of the King of Vraja, Himself is Svayaṁ Bhagavān, the Original Personality of Godhead. He is the embodiment of all nectarean mellows (*akhīla rasāmṛta murti*). He is the omnipotent (*sarva śaktimān*), non-dual absolute reality (*advaya jñāna para-tattva*). Among His unlimited potencies three are prominent: *cit-śakti* (*svarūpa-śakti*), *jīva-*



The place where the Gītā was imparted by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna.

śakti (*taṭasthā-śakti*) and *acit-śakti* (*māyā-śakti*). By the will of Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vaikuṅṭha, Goloka and Vṛndāvana are transformations of His *cit-śakti*. All *jīvas* are a transformation of His *jīva-śakti*, and the material creation is the transformation of His *māyā-śakti*. The *jīvas* are of two types: *mukta* (liberated) and *baddha* (bound). The *mukta-jīvas* are eternally engaged in relishing the bliss derived from serving Bhagavān in Vaikuṅṭha, Goloka and various other *dhāmas* (spiritual abodes). They never become bound in this material world, the prison house of *māyā*; hence, they are called *nitya-mukta*, eternally liberated. Sometimes by the will of Bhagavān they appear in this illusory world as His associates for the sole purpose of giving welfare to the people of the world. The other type of *jīva* is called *anādi-baddha*, or bound since time immemorial. Being enveloped by *māyā* since beginningless time they are suffering the three types of miseries while wandering in the cycle of birth and death.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is an ocean of compassion, seems to have created illusion (*ajñāna*) in the heart of His eternal associate (*nitya-siddha-parikara*) Arjuna, by the influence of His *acintya-śakti* (inconceivable potency). Thus, on the pretext of dispelling this illusion, He spoke this *Bhagavad-gītā*, the determinant of *ātmatattva*, the true nature of the soul, for the deliverance of all *jīvas* under the grip of *māyā*. The subject ultimately established in *Bhagavad-gītā* is *viśuddha-bhagavad-bhakti*, supremely pure devotional service to Bhagavān. Only by taking shelter of *śuddha-bhakti*, as described in the *Gītā*, can the *jīvas* under the influence of *māyā* become situated in their pure constitutional position (*viśuddha-svarūpa*) and render service to Śrī Bhagavān. Besides this there is no other beneficial path for the *baddha-jīvas*.

On the basis of concrete śāstric evidences and invincible arguments Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and other prominent Śrī Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have clearly established that the speaker of *Bhagavad-gītā* is not *niḥśaktika*, devoid of potency; *nirviśeṣa* devoid of variety; *nirākara*, formless and *nirguṇa*, devoid of transcendental qualities such as transcendental mercy (*aprākṛta dayā*). The *jīva* is never *parabrahma* and, even in the liberated stage, can never become *parabrahma*. Even after attaining *mukti*, the *jīva* will remain a pure atomic spiritual particle only. However, at that time he is said to be a *bhagavat-parikara*, an eternal associate of Bhagavān.

In *śruti-mantras* it is proven that both Parameśvara and the *jīvātmā* are intrinsically qualified as knowledge (*jñāna-svarūpa*), the knower (*jñātā-svarūpa*), the enjoyer (*bhoktā-svarūpa*) and the doer (*kartā-svarūpa*),

and possessed of a pure spiritual ego (*cinmaya-ahaṅkāra*). Therefore, regarding their constitution, there is no difference between them from the perspective of *tattva*; but because the *jīva* is atomic spirit, his knowledge is limited and he can be over-powered by *māyā*. Parameśvara is the master of *māyā*. Although there is no difference between Īsvara and the *jīva* on the basis of *tattva*, the perception of this difference is real. This perception of difference is called *vaiśiṣṭya*, meaning speciality or having a unique distinguishing characteristic. Just as the sun and sun's rays are simultaneously the same and different, being the possessor of attributes and the attribute respectively, similarly the relationship between Parameśvara and the *jīva*, which is that of being one and different, is firmly proven in the *Vedas*. Since this relationship of simultaneous oneness and difference is beyond one's intellect and is only intelligible with the help of *śāstra*, it is therefore called *acintya*, inconceivable. Thus the subject matter of *Bhagavad-gītā* is the *nitya acintya-bhedābheda-rūpa para-tattva*, the eternal supreme reality, who is inconceivably one and different from His potencies.

Although it is accepted that the Supreme Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is simultaneously one and different from the *jīva* and the material world, which are both transformations of His *śakti*, it is the perception of difference which is eternal, i.e. predominant, not the perception of oneness. The knowledge of the *jīvātmā*, *paramātmā*, the abode of *paramātmā* and the means to attain *paramātmā* have been determined in appropriate places in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Although *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* have been explained as the three means of attaining Brahman, in fact *bhakti-yoga* is the only means to achieve Bhagavān. The preliminary stage of *bhakti-yoga* is called *karma-yoga*. When there is further progress, this intermediate stage is called *jñāna-yoga*, and in its mature and elevated stage, it is called *bhakti-yoga*. *Karma* in itself is not a direct *sādhana* to attain Bhagavān, but only a successive *sādhana*. When the heart becomes purified by following *karma-yoga* mixed with *bhakti* (*bhagavad-arpita-karma*, offering the fruits of one's activities to Bhagavān) as described in the *Vedas*, *tattva-jñāna*, true knowledge of spirit and non-spirit appears there. Both *jñāna* and *karma* devoid of a sense of *bhagavat-tattva* or God consciousness are futile. Along with the appearance of *tattva-jñāna*, *kevalā-bhakti* manifests in the heart simultaneously. When this *kevalā-bhakti* attains its mature stage, then *prema* manifests in the heart of the *jīva*. This *prema* is the only means of attaining and having direct realization of Bhagavān. This is the concealed mystery of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. One cannot achieve *mukti*

merely by *nirviśeṣa-jñāna*, featureless, impersonal knowledge. Only when *jñāna* is mixed with *bhakti-bhāva* (a devotional mood) can one obtain *mukti* in the form of *sālokya*, *sārūpya* etc., as the extraneous result. By performing *kevalā-bhakti* as described in the *Gītā*, one can attain *prema-mayī-sevā*, loving service unto the supreme absolute truth, Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in His supreme abode, Goloka-Vṛndāvana. When one attains this abode, there is no possibility of coming back to this material world. Achievement of this *prema-sevā* is the *prayojana*, the ultimate goal for the *jīvas*.

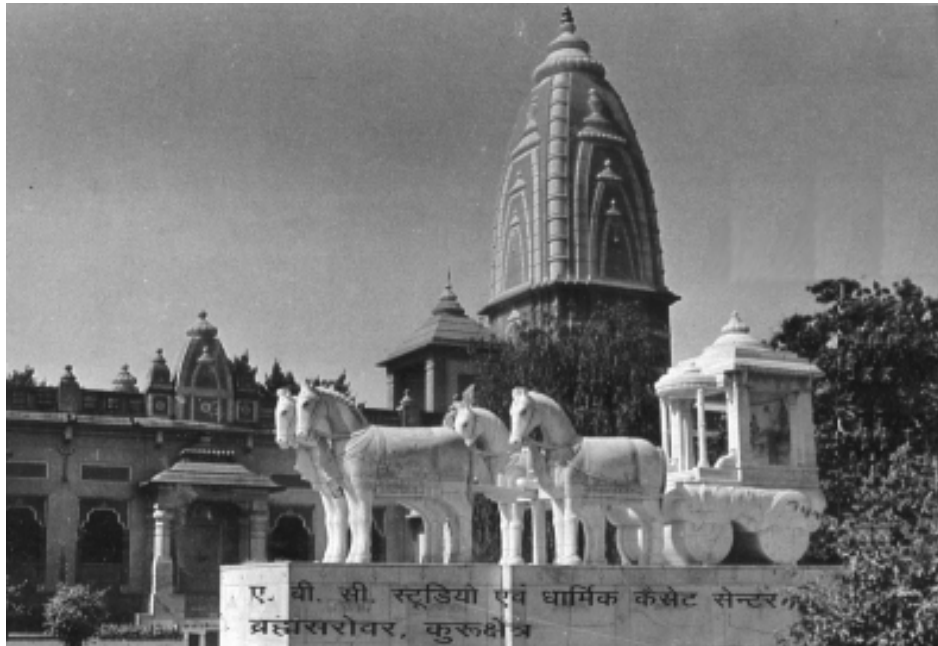
Bhakti is of two types: *kevalā* (exclusive) and *pradhānībhūtā* (principally inherent). *Kevalā-bhakti* is also called *ananyā*, *akiñcanā*, *viśuddhā* and *nirguṇā-bhakti*. *Pradhānībhūtā-bhakti* is also of two types: *karma-pradhānībhūtā* (where *bhakti* predominates *karma*) and *jñāna-pradhānībhūtā* (where *bhakti* predominates *jñāna*). Performance of *karma-pradhānībhūtā-bhakti* gradually purifies the heart, whereby *tattva-jñāna* is achieved, and by performing *jñāna-pradhānībhūtā-bhakti*, one obtains *mukti*. Only that *karma-pradhānībhūtā-bhakti* which aims at *tattva-jñāna*, and that *jñāna-pradhānībhūtā-bhakti* which aims at obtaining *kevalā-bhakti* are called *karmayoga* and *jñāna-yoga* respectively, and they are only steps to *bhakti*. Otherwise, without *bhakti*, both *jñāna* and *karma* are futile.

The *Gītāpaniṣad* is composed of eighteen chapters. It begins from Chapter Twenty-five of the *Mahābhārata's Bhīṣma-parva* and continues until Chapter Forty-two. It has three divisions, each consisting of six chapters. The first division explains that the *jīvātmā* is an *aṁśa* (part) of *Īśvāra* and that his *svarūpa*, constitution, has

been described in such a way that he can acquire the eligibility to render service to Bhagavān, the *aṁśī* (whole). *Suddha-bhakti-tattva*, the principle of pure devotional service, has been explained in the middle six chapters. It is this *bhakti* which is the topmost means of attaining Godhead, which is *parama-puruṣārtha*. In the third and final part, *tattva-jñāna* has been defined. The subject matter of the *Gītā* is *kevalā-bhakti* which is like *cintāmaṇi*, a transcendental touchstone. This *cintāmaṇi* has been safely kept inside *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is likened to a treasure chest. The lid of this chest is *niškāma-karma-yoga*, the base is *jñāna-yoga* and the treasure is *bhakti*. Only those people who have staunch faith, who are fixed in religious principles, who have good character and who are self-controlled are qualified to study this conversation. Such qualified people are of three types: *saniṣṭha*, *paraniṣṭhita* and *nirapekṣa*. For more details on this subject, please refer to the *bhāvānuvāda* of *ślokas* 13-16 of Chapter 12.

For the proper flow of the book, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvāpāyana Vedavyāsa has included in the first twenty-seven verses phrases such as: *dhṛṭarāstra uvāca* or *sañjaya uvāca*. They should be accepted as the introductory part of the book. Just as a piece of salt when mixed with the salty ocean gets completely dissolved and becomes one with the ocean, similarly these introductory words composed by Śrī Vedavyāsa have also become one with the great ocean of *Bhagavad-gītā* spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This *Bhagavad-gītā* is at present being translated into English from the Hindi edition.



Monument at Kurukṣetra, depicting Arjuna's chariot.

Taking Srila Prabhupada Straight

Bhakti Vidagdha Bhagavat Maharaja

Introduction

The following letter is written by His Holiness B.V. Bhagavata Maharaja, a disciple of Srila Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja who, at the age of 101 years, is the most revered and senior disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada currently living on the planet. In this most sober essay, he answers various unfounded and fallacious accusations, put forward by a member of the ISKCON Governing Body against the personality of Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Goswami Maharaja. Our reason for publishing this is that the points raised by him in defence of Srila Narayana Maharaja are correctly pertaining to fundamental truths concerning the principal of *acarya*. By a patient and unbiased reading of the logical assertions he makes herein, one will be able to see clearly that one *acarya* may differ from another in terms of the detailed methods which he employs to present the absolute message of the *sampradaya* to the public at large and to his disciples in particular; but this does not prove, in and of itself, that he is not in the line of his predecessor *acarya*. Rather, the bold and uncompromising tone of His Holiness' presentation challenges us to understand both the genius and the sensitivity utilized by the *acarya* in his merciful delivery of the same esoteric truths of Gaudiya Vaisnavism to the masses. He will never change the *siddhanta*, and his mood will also be exactly the same as his predecessor.

Bhakti Vidagdha Bhagavat Maharaja cites the example of the powerful preaching mission of His Divine Grace Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, the *Nityananda-saktyavasha-avatara* of the 20th century who spread the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu throughout the globe. In his presentation of the practices and teachings of Gaudiya Vaisnavism to the modern public, he chose to modify them in a form different from that of his own Guru Maharaja, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur Maharaja. Yet, in so doing, he was not actually deviating from his Gurudeva, but rather he was demonstrating his absolute dedication to his orders. By this we must see that in the hearts of the most exalted *Vaisnavas* there is an overflow of mercy to help the plight of the fallen conditioned souls. It is this true compassion which inspires them to devise ways to attract and to engage the sincere aspirants willing to

accept the medicine they are delivering. Their apparent difference from that of their predecessors is rather a mark and measure of their own glorious position of exalted spiritual realization.

We appreciate the logic and forthrightness of Sripad Bhagavata Maharaja's letter, and we applaud his courageous effort to defend a pure devotee of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. - *Ed.*

The Letter

All Glories to Sri Guru and Gauranga. Hare Krsna. Please accept my respects. As a humble servant of the servant of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and following the orders of my Guru-Maharaja, Om Visnupada 108 Sri Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja, I am writing this letter to warn you in a friendly way not to commit *Vaisnava-aparadha*. It is written from a completely neutral point of view, so that no one will feel attacked or offended at heart. I ask for forgiveness if such thing is felt.

I came across your letter on the CHAKRA Website the other day and thought it my duty to protest against the spreading of such wrong conceptions of the Gaudiya-Math and its exalted *Vaisnavas* in the line of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. I will just try to show you some of the misconceptions that you are spreading in the name of *guru-seva* (or service to your Srila Prabhupada).

1. If you do not like to invite His Holiness Narayana Maharaja to any of your ISKCON centers, that's fine, but I think that if a *vaisnava* shows up at my door and I do not feel any happiness upon seeing him, that also is to be considered a *vaisnava-aparadha*. H. H. Narayana Maharaja is a well-known *vaisnava* (that you cannot deny) so if you or any of the members in your organization (which is also supposed to be a *vaisnava* organization) are not happy to see such a *vaisnava* at your doorstep, then you are generating such *aparadhas*.

2. You speak about the indications of Srila Narahari Sarakara Thakura in the Sri Krsna Bhajanamrita, that if one's spiritual master is in good standing, and yet is not sufficiently elevated to give a disciple instructions for his further advancement, then the disciple may take permission from his *diksa-guru* and thus take advantage of the more advance *vaisnavas* for instructions. Then

you have asked, “What if the *diksa-guru* does not give his approval?”. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has answered this very clearly in his book *Jaiva-Dharma* as follows: “When the disciple chooses someone as a *guru*, he has no opportunity to verify if that person is *tattvajna* (he who knows the treatises of Vaisnavism) and *vaisnavas* (in the real sense) then at the time of the effect, he cannot get any result from that kind of initiation and must give him up at once”.

So there is no question of asking permission from such a so-called *guru* (*guru-bruva*). You are well aware of the fact that many of your ISKCON members are not well trained to accept a *guru* and in many cases choose them out of ignorance. When after sometime they come to understand that their *guru* is not qualified enough, they give him up and search for a more advanced *vaisnava* to instruct them. It does not matter if the so-called *guru* is in good standing according to your ISKCON or G.B.C. rules. It has been seen that by following the instructions of your G.B.C. many innocent devotees have been cheated by accepting someone as their *guru* who was never qualified to accept disciples. The most recent example is that of your Harikesa (Maharaja or Prabhu) which proves my point very clearly. You should not turn the devotees into slaves of the G.B.C. Rather, according to the scriptures you must allow them to freely search for a spiritual master. It is not a question of whether a disciple goes to Narayana Maharaja for instructions or not. You have to understand the reason why these people go to him. Obviously they have the idea that their present *guru* is not qualified enough to instruct them. The moment a disciple thinks like this, his relationship with his *guru* is automatically broken. According to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, he should not disrespect his previous guide, but should with due respect search for a real initiation. This previous initiation is to be considered as *abhasa* (a faint presence) and it is strictly necessary to accept initiation (in the real sense) in order to begin doing real *bhajana-kriya*.

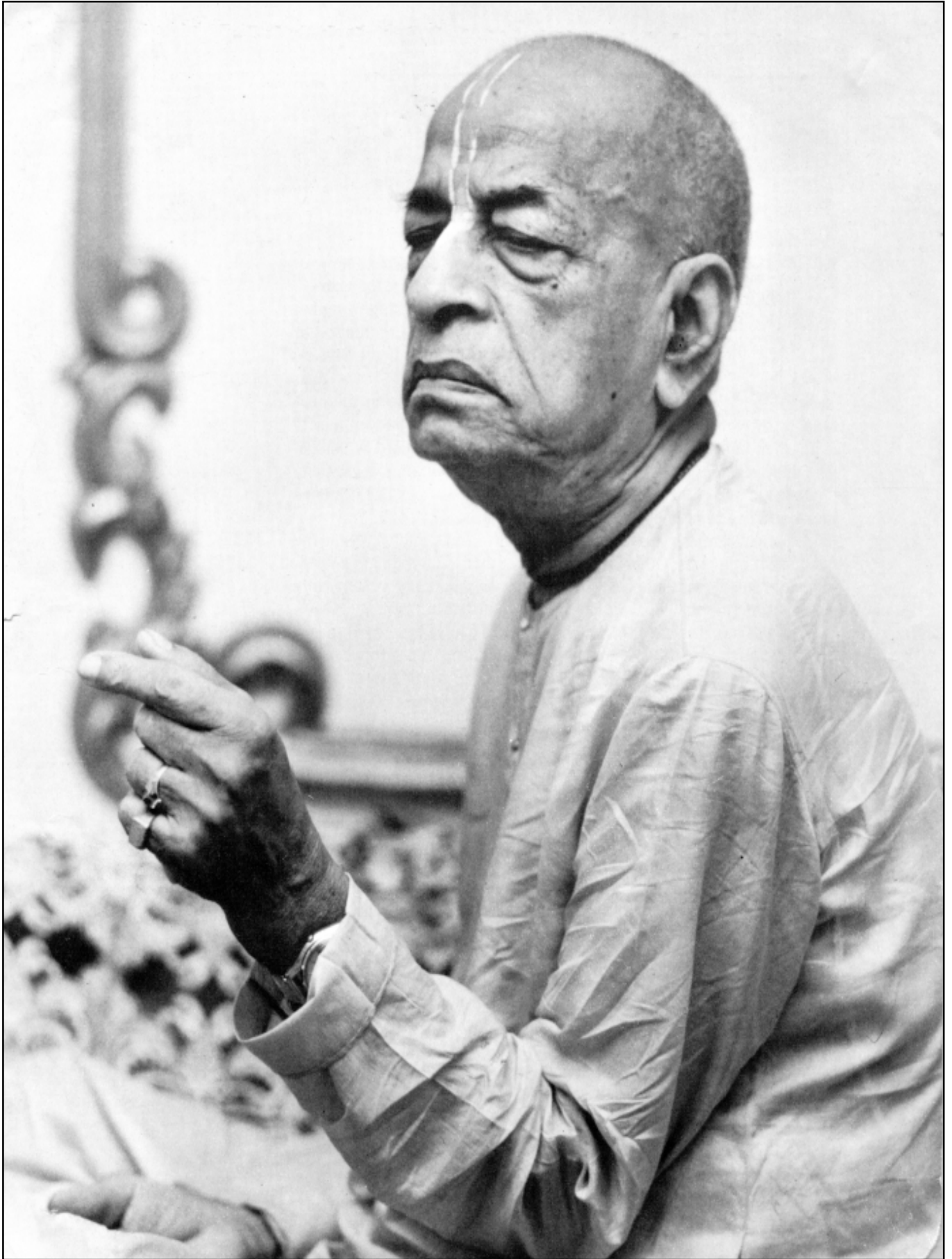
You have put forward so many arguments to prove that H.H. Narayana Maharaja is not an advanced devotee. A word to the wise, please do not spread these ideas because you have to care for your own spiritual welfare and at the same time be careful not to criticize the advanced devotees. You have also stated that H.H. Narayana Maharaja’s approach is significantly different from that of your Srila Prabhupada and that he is not a *siksa*-disciple of your founder-*acarya*. Does that mean that one who differs in details from the line of his *guru* is not an advanced *vaisnava*? If this is so, I would like to ask you a few questions, and please do not consider this as an attack since it has been you who has

brought out all these old issues. We do not disrespect Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, but you yourself are disrespecting him. We just want to warn you so that you will not commit any offenses against your own *guru* by misunderstanding his teachings.

I do not think that H.H. Narayana Maharaja is claiming to be your authorized spiritual master. It was your own G.B.C. who chose him to be an authorized spiritual master. Previously they had done the same with Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja, and it seems ridiculous that you do not understand that the *siksa* and *diksa gurus* must always be kept on the same level, so just as you cannot reject Srila Swami Maharaja, you (and the G.B.C.) cannot reject Srila Sridhara Maharaja or H.H. Narayana Maharaja, due to the fact that you yourself have given them this position.

Your Prabhupada taught you all that one should not blindly accept someone as a spiritual master. My question is that when he taught you all these things had you blindly accepted him as a spiritual master? It is quite clear that at the beginning of the ISKCON movement none of your godbrothers were well-aware of the necessary qualifications of a bonafide spiritual master. Just out of pure inspiration they had taken initiation from Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja and were definitely not cheated by following the instructions of the *Caitya-guru*. Even after having diligently studied the scriptures it does not qualify one to select a bonafide *guru*. The inspiration that comes from the heart is what helps you. If this inspiration comes from the G.B.C., then it may not be permanent. The only judgment a disciplic can make about his *guru* is whether he is a *mayavadi* or attached to sense enjoyment. If the disciple wants to get to know his *guru* in every sense, then he has to be on an equal level with that *guru*, then what need would there be for an initiation? Please stop to think it over for one minute. How was it that you chose your Prabhupada as a bonafide *guru* when all of you were completely (and it still seems that most of you are) ignorant about *guru-tattva*?

I have the answers from the scriptures. This can only happen by inspiration. Being merciful to the *jiva*, Sriman Mahaprabhu inspires the heart of the disciple in the form of *Caitya-guru* so as to accept initiation or instructions from a certain *vaisnava acarya*. Your G.B.C. members are trying to prove that Mahaprabhu has cheated them, because at first they were inspired to take *siksa* from Srila Sridhara Maharaja and later rejected him as unauthorized. Then they accepted instructions from H.H. Narayana Maharaja and once again stopped coming to him also. Does this mean that they were wrongly inspired by Mahaprabhu again and again so as to take



His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja

instructions from non-bonafide *siksa-gurus*? Tomorrow they may discover that they were cheated by Mahaprabhu when they accepted Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja as their *diksa* and *siksa-guru*. Is this the reason why Harikesa left your movement as well as the instructions of your Prabhupada and so have many others?

*siksa guruke ta jani krsnera swarupa
antaryami bhakta-srestha ei dui rupa*

“I know the *siksa-guru* to be directly Lord Krsna. He functions in two ways, as *antaryami* and as the greatest devotee”.

Some of your ISKCON G.B.C. members accepted H.H. Narayana Maharaja as their *siksa-guru* who must be on an equal level as the *diksa-guru*, and now you are questioning whether he is a *rasika-bhakta* and an advanced devotee or not. Maybe after some time you will have the same doubts about your own *diksa-guru* also. We would not, however, put forth such a question since we know your *guru* better than you do.

Rasika means a devotee who has established his relationship with the Supreme Lord. Our entire *guru-parampara* is composed of eternally liberated (*ragat-mika*) residents of the transcendental Vraja-dhama. All of them are *rasika* devotees. An unfortunate disciple who cannot accept his *guru* as a *rasika* devotee has no chance of making progress on the spiritual path. We accept your Gurudeva as well as H.H. Narayana Maharaja as *rasika* devotees and as advanced *vaisnavas*. But will you accept that?

You have argued that H. H. Narayana Maharaja has aggressively targeted ISKCON members and congregations. I would like to know if it is that he goes to the temples and drags the people out or they, who go to him to listen to his Hari *katha*. It seems to me that you are saying that the Gaudiya Math has no right to attack the *apasampradayas* and *Mayavadis*. Then what are we going to preach? It is not Narayana Maharaja who reveals the evils of your G.B.C. and other ISKCON leaders. Your G.B.C. has rejected 7 of your original 11 *gurus*. Does Narayana Maharaja have anything to do with this? You must feel ashamed that these people (the 7 G.B.C. members who left) have proven by their activities that they were not even on the level of *kanistha-adhikaris*. If H. H. Narayana Maharaja ever spoke of them as *kanistha-adhikaris*, then he must have spoken about the best in your present ISKCON organization.

To say that the present ISKCON structure is a *karma-yoga* organization is to give them the highest respect. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has written that apart from the *niskama-karmi*, a *sakama-karmi* cannot be referred to

as a yogi. Therefore according to him only a *niskama-karmi* is performing *karma-yoga*. It is a shame that during the Tulasi worship and *parikrama* you chant “*yani kani-ca papani*” and so on, when it is clearly known that it is a prayer for a *sakama-karmi* who wants to subdue all of his sins by doing devotional service. Your *sannyasis* and *gurus* (at least most of them) keep the Nrisimha-Kavaca and little pendants of Lord Nrisimhadeva on their necks for protection and this is clearly *sakama-karma*. Persons who have such tendencies cannot be counted amongst the *karma-yogis*. We think that a few amongst the best are practicing *karma-yoga*. We have due respect for them and may be H.H. Narayana Maharaja is aware of that, and therefore he is giving such high appreciation of ISKCON, as a *karma-yoga* organization, just to respect those few who are performing *niskama-karma*.

You have also complained that H.H. Narayana Maharaja reinitiated disciples of ISKCON *gurus*. But do you think of it as a reinitiation or a real initiation? Regarding those Harikesa disciples who had lost faith two or three years ago, and later took real initiation from Narayana Maharaja, was it not an intelligent move on their part? Were they ever initiated by Harikesa in the real sense of the word? So where is the question of reinitiation? Actually H.H. Narayana Maharaja only initiates those who are sincere spiritual seekers who have been cheated, as well as those who were about to be cheated by your present G.B.C.s. So why are you so disturbed? He has never reinitiated anyone, because this term reinitiation is in itself ridiculous. It means nothing!

It is a true fact that Tamal Krishna Goswami and Giriraja Maharaja used to respect H.H. Narayana Maharaja as their *siksa-guru*. They even performed *guru-puja aratikas* to him many times at the Kesavaji Gaudiya Math. How is it that they can abandon a person whom they have accepted as their *siksa-guru* without any apparent reason? Both of them are initiating *gurus* in ISKCON at the moment, but if they argue that they could not recognize him before, that means that they do not have any realizations as to how to understand what are the principle symptoms of an advanced *vaisnava*. So why are they initiating so many people and your G.B.C. supports them as bonafide *gurus*, if they do not have the power to distinguish the position of a *vaisnava*, which is a minimum qualification for a *madhyama-adhikari*?

You are disturbed because H.H. Narayana Maharaja spends an exceptionally long time in the most successful preaching area of Tamal Krishna Goswami. Please try to understand the situation. If today Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja came in his previous form to

preach in the world, and the disciples of Tamal Krishna Maharaja asked him to stay for a long time at their place, and he agreed to stay for that time preaching, would you be asking the same questions? For the disciples of Tamal Krishna Maharaja H.H. Narayana Maharaja seems to be the *guru* of their *guru*, and it would be natural for them to arrange a long time program for him. Why does that disturb you so much? If Tamal Krishna Goswami wants to preach and spend an exceptionally long time in the most successful centers of any Gaudiya Math he is welcome. It is a fact that I witnessed many of the ISKCON *gurus* and *sannyasis* visiting the Gaudiya Math headquarters in Mayapura and were always welcomed as well as respected like any other Gaudiya Math acarya. It is very immature that you are not ready to respond in the same manner.

In 1990 you were persuaded by some people who were accepting *siksa* from H.H. Narayana Maharaja to visit him. Where are those *siksa* disciples now? How are they giving *siksa* to others? What will they say when asked by others where did they get their *siksa* from? This is ridiculous. Somehow you were disturbed because in the first verse of Isopanisad the word *idam* was explained differently from the book published by ISKCON. I strongly request you to see the commentaries by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura and Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana on this verse if it is not offensive for you to read other books than those of your Prabhupada. You were very shocked because you are a disciple of Srila Swami Maharaja (as you have written) and in front of you H.H. Narayana Maharaja has said that there was an error in his book. If you do not say that it is the error of the book do you want to prove your *gurudeva* as a fool? You may do so but we do not, because we know your *guru* better than you do. In the commentary of Caitanya-Caritamrita it is written that *gunja-mala* means a garland of small conchshells. Do you accept that? Do you put garlands of conchshells on Krishna instead of *gunja-mala*? If you say that there are no errors in the books written by your *gurudeva* are you trying to say that he did not know what *gunja-mala* means? You may say yes, but we the members of Gaudiya Math are very much afraid to commit offenses at his lotus feet knowing perfectly well what is a *gunja-mala*, and knowing that the mistake is only in the book, not in him. In many other places there are also many mistakes, but these mistakes are only in the books. Why are you blaming H.H. Narayana Maharaja for wanting to protect the respect of your Prabhupada?

You have written that your Prabhupada emphasized the importance of his books. That may be true, but you must remember that most of these books came out only

after ISKCON was established. H.H. Narayana Maharaja, as well as many other Gaudiya Math devotees, were getting close association with your Gurudeva long before ISKCON was established. If you say that your Gurudeva became qualified after having written these books then it is certainly an *aparadha*. The Bhagavata, Tulasi, the holy river Ganga and the devotees of the Lord are worshipable from their birth. It is offensive to think that Gurudeva is a general *sadhaka* and that he attained perfection after having written all of these books and established ISKCON, and from then on is worthy of worship. The third *nama-aparadha* to think of Sri Gurudeva as a mortal man. For those who had association with your Gurudeva long before many of your G.B.C. members and *acaryas* were born, they certainly know your Guru better than you do.

One clear example of your ignorance was the case of the funeral services for your Gurudeva. Your Gurudeva wished that H.H. Narayana Maharaja put him to rest in his Samadhi. To you it may have seemed that your Prabhupada was only speaking about funeral services. This is due only to your ignorance and lack of experience in the Vedic culture. It is the custom of the Gaudiya *Vaisnavas* as well as other *vaisnavas* and *smarta sampradayas* that only the successor of the departed acarya has the right to perform his funeral rites. When the body of a departed *grihasta* is offered to the fire, the eldest son has the priority to touch the fire to the body of the departed parent. When it is offered to the soil mixed with salt (as it happens mostly in the case of the Gaudiyas and other *sampradayas*' departed *sannyasis*) the successor of that *sannyasi* has the right to write the *samadhi mantra* on the body of the departed *sannyasi*. If the successor is not a *sannyasi* (as was in the case of Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura) then the senior most godbrother present there can write it as well as any other exalted *vaisnava*. In the case of Prabhupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, the *samadhi mantra* was written by his first *sannyasa* disciple Srila Bhakti Pradipa Tirtha Maharaja, though he himself was an initiated disciple of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. If a *sannyasi* has departed without leaving a successor or without making any disciples, then the assembled *vaisnavas* must choose a qualified *vaisnava* to do the ceremony. Even the Hindu laws of India, at the time of dispute for succession, consider the person who performed funeral rituals, giving him main preference.

So you have to consider that although so many *vaisnavas* were present in Vrindavana at that time, including most of your *sannyasi* godbrothers, your Gurudeva chose Srila Narayana Maharaja to place him in his *samadhi*. In the ISKCON video it is clearly seen that

Srila Narayana Maharaja is writing the *samadhi-mantra* on the body of your Gurudeva. You cannot make a mockery out of this.

I am sure that you are being led down a primrose path of deviation by this performance of *vaisnava- aparadha* and in this way putting your Gurudeva in a lower position. You are always concocting different ways to control the present situation in your society and are never consulting with the more advanced and experienced *vaisnavas* who can give good advice.

You wrote that your Prabhupada's instructions to you are open and direct, but by what you have written it seems to be the complete opposite. I will give you an example to clarify this point. You quote your Prabhupada as having said that the "Gaudiya Math had failed", but in your writings you say that "Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada radically reformed the Gaudiya tradition transforming it into a global preaching mission in the modern world". Now what is the name of that mission? It is the Gaudiya Math. And who were its members that dedicated themselves to that mission? You must learn to appreciate their position, but unfortunately you are busy publishing books that make false propaganda against these exalted devotees. If it is not against your G.B.C. rule I strongly request you to read the book entitled 'Prabhupada Sarasvati Thakura' published by Mandala Media and in that way get lots of real information about the global successful preaching mission, because according to your writings the Gaudiya Math is unsuccessful.

Again you have quoted a room conversation in Bombay (August 16, 1976) wherein your Prabhupada wanted to nourish the very soft faith of the newly initiated (those who were less than ten years or so) and you think this is exactly the fact.

Before the passing away of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, he gave orders that there would only be one *guru* and the rest should work in a very harmonizing way as to be able to preach the message of Rupa-Raghunatha. He also said that Ananta Vasudeva will preach the message of Rupa-Raghunatha and Kunjavihari Vidyabhusana (later on Srila Bhakti Vilasa Tirtha Maharaja) will do the managing for as long as he lived and must be respected by all. A few years earlier he had written, *vasudevananta dasye thakiya ta sada laha nama*—"always remain in the service of Ananta Vasudeva and chant the Holy Name".

In his presence it was said that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada wanted all of the members of the Gaudiya Math to stay under the guidance of Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu and chant the holy name. On that basis he had been selected as the acarya of the

Gaudiya Math and no one had been fighting for that post. Your Gurudeva was also part of the Gaudiya Math and he also did not object at that time. They did not create an artificial *acarya*. Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu was a *brahmachari* (in white dress. According to Gaudiya Math tradition only when a *brahmachari* accepted the vow to maintain a life-long celibacy, the *acarya* will offer him the saffron cloth) at that time, and afterwards, when his godbrothers saw some flaws in his behavior they left his association. Srila Oudulomi Maharaja was then selected as the following acarya of the Gaudiya Missions and Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu accepted the life of a *vaisnava grihastha* and stopped giving initiations. After the disappearance of Srila Oudolomi Maharaja, Srila Bhagawata Maharaja was appointed as the next acarya and when he disappeared Sripad Parivrajaka Maharaja was the next. There is nothing wrong with this.

If you say that this is not enough proof that Prabhupada wanted Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu to be the acarya, one may ask, "Did Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura want to appoint Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja as his successor acarya?" If not, did he try to become more than his *guru*? All of these are your questions, can you answer them? You may say that Srila Swami Maharaja inspired so many people to come to Krishna Consciousness and that proves that he was the successor of his *guru*. In that argument one may say that H.H. Narayana Maharaja is also inspiring so many of your godbrothers and godsisters to follow him, which proves that he is a self revealed successor of your Prabhupada. Then why are you so disturbed?

You have said that you will ask your *gurudeva* why he did not promote Narayana Maharaja as the next acarya, but will you ask him why he engaged such persons as Kirtanananda, Bhavananda, Bhagavan and four other persons as G.B.C.'s? Do you think that your godbrothers and godsisters are blindly following H.H. Narayana Maharaja, or would you rather they follow people like Kirtanananda and the other six G.B.C.s because they were appointed by your *gurudeva* as leaders of ISKCON?

Lastly, you have directly hit a very sensitive point which ultimately concerns your *gurudeva*. In it you say that H.H. Narayana Maharaja has deviated from the line of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. Do you believe that what he preaches is out-

¹⁾ The *brahma-gayatri* refers only to the first line of the *gayatri*, not to the rest, like *guru*, *gaura*, *gopal*, and *kama gayatris*. In the Gaudiya tradition the first line is only given to men.]

side of the line of Srila Prabhupada? I request you to read the lectures and articles of Srila Prabhupada in the weekly Gaudiya Magazine. The preaching and delivering system of your Prabhupada comes from different places rather than just the mission of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. We do not want to criticize him because we know him better than you, but it will be difficult for you to accept this as the truth.

1. The *maha-mantra* in ISKCON is always sung as a full *mantra*. You can never chant it half and then the other half. It is clearly coming from the idea of the *babajis* and other groups that entered the Gaudiya Mission (i. e. Puri Goswami or Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu and Srila Audolomi Maharaja's line) and your Gurudeva taught you to follow in their footsteps. If you say that they deviated does that mean that your Gurudeva took ideas from deviated persons?

2. Keeping peacock feathers on Mahaprabhu can only be seen in the temple established by Srila Ananta Vasudeva Prabhu (Puri dasa *mahasaya*) at Radha-Kunda and in the prominent *gauranga-nagari sampradaya*, one of the thirteen pseudo-sects. We can clearly see this in the temples established by Srila Swami Maharaja. Where has this come from?

3. Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura clearly said that Adwaita Acarya Prabhu never had a beard and used to keep clean shaven. But the *bauls* (one of the thirteen *apasam-pradayas*) wanted to make him a *baul* and put a beard on his face. On the

Deities at the Yoga-Pitha or Srivas Angan as well as any other Gaudiya Math temple you will never find a beard on Adwaita Acarya's face. But at the Mayapura ISK-CON temple as well as other temples (in San Diego and Hawaii) we can see Adwaita Acarya with a beard. Will you say that your Gurudeva was following the *bauls*?



Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Prabhupada & disciple.

4. One prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura gave the *brahma-gayatri*¹⁾ to a lady disciple. Srila Prabhupada later wrote an article in the weekly Gaudiya entitled *bhai-sahajiya* (brother *sahajiya*). Most recently the Santikunja at Haridwara was preaching that anyone can get the *brahma-gayatri* initiation. Can I simply ask you from which line your *gurudeva* get the idea of initiating lady disciples into the *brahma-gayatri*?

5. Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura accepted that the border of Mayapura is a small canal called *gurgure* (just before one approaches the Yoga-Pitha temple from the ISKCON temple side you will find a canal crossing the road and that is

the border of Sri Mayapura according to Srila Prabhupada on his commentary in the Caitanya Bhagawata). Long after his disappearance he revealed in the heart of Srila B.D. Madhava Maharaja that near the confluence of the Ganga and Sarasvati rivers Ishodyan is situated which is part of Antardwipa, Sridham Mayapura. The present Ishodyan was revealed by Srila B.D. Madhava Maharaja which was also supported by Srila B.R. Sridhara Maharaja and your *gurudeva* established his world headquar-

ters of ISKCON in that part of Mayapura, which was not accepted by his *gurudeva* but was revealed by his godbrother. Why could not he take Srila Prabhupada straight?

6. Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura taught us how to worship the Deity in the temple. In Gaudiya Math temples his orders are mostly followed. They offer *bhoga* five times a day and *aratiks* three times a day on regular days. But in your ISKCON temples we find a different system which is more likely to the system of the caste *gosvamis* and other temples in Vrindavana who follow the worship according to the eight-*yama* pastimes of the Lord. We like that system and also appreciate it, but our question is—from where did your *gurudeva* learn this kind of worship? Did he take *siksa* from the caste *gosvamis*?

7. Kirtana with the harmonium was prohibited by Srila Prabhupada. Only in the temple of Srila B.H. Bon Maharaja this was seen before. We are not criticizing him because we know that he is an exalted *vaisnava*. He was a qualified acarya and has the right to introduce any musical instrument into his temple. Your Prabhupada also introduced it in his ISKCON temples. Did he learn that from Srila Bhakti Hriday Bon Maharaja?

8. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura instructed us to worship Sri Sri Guru Gauranga-Gandharvika-Giridhari. In all the temples established by him we find Sriman Mahaprabhu and Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. The *mangala-aratik* and other *aratik* songs specifically written by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura and Srila Prabhupada follow in their footsteps. Whereas in your ISKCON temples there are different combinations of Deities and different kinds of songs are recommended for *mangala-aratik* which are not considered as *mangala-aratik* songs. Do you think this is a deviation or not?

9. Srila Prabhupada ordered his disciples to print and distribute books of the previous *acaryas* and specially those of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. He did not write many books himself because he thought it unnecessary, whereas you clearly state that your *gurudeva* instructed you to print, publish and read his books only. Does that mean that he thought that the books of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura are less valuable than his?

10. Srila Prabhupada or his disciples never recommended a new devotee to chant *Harinama* on a *mālā* without being properly initiated by a *guru*. According to the commentary by Srila Viswanatha Cakravarti Thakura, on Srimad Bhagavatam Sixth Canto (the case of Ajamila) it will only generate a great offense (*gurvava jna*). Your Prabhupada began this in ISKCON. Where did this idea come from?

11. You have complained that H.H. Narayana Maha-

raja has accepted services from young ladies (*kumaris*). For your information I want to say that in his mission Srila Prabhupada strictly prohibited the ladies from serving even in the kitchen where *sannyasis*, *brahmacaris* and *vanaprasthas* were living. He never allowed any women (with the exception of two elderly women disciples of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura that sometimes used to cook only for Srila Prabhupada) to serve the Math residents in any way possible. Later on a few Gaudiya Math *acaryas* allowed some women into the kitchen, and your Prabhupada is no exception. Many times young Western ladies used to serve him including to cut his hair, but we do not dare criticize him for this behavior because we know that he was elderly and the girls were old enough to be his granddaughters and besides he was in such an elevated consciousness that there was no chance of him being affected by sensual desires. H.H. Narayana Maharaja is also at that age and if he is following the footsteps of your Prabhupada why does that bother you? This European lady whom you say is your reliable source of information found this tableau filled with eroticism because there is one logic—*kamuka pasyanti kamini mayam jagat*. “A lustful person sees the whole world as full of lust”. By falsely accusing H.H. Narayana Maharaja, you are accusing your own Gurudeva.

These are a few of the examples on how your Prabhupada differs from the teachings and practices of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. His Mayapura Dham, his process of Deity worship, his *nama-sankirtan*, his book publications, his personal conducts, his Deity installations, his process of initiating disciples all differs from his Gurudeva. We cannot know the cause how it happened, but do you want to say that he is not a bonafide *siksa* or *diksa* disciple of his Gurudeva or not in a direct line from him? Then how can you deny H.H. Narayana Maharaja’s claim as the successor of your Prabhupada, only because his teachings differ from him?

You say that Narayana Maharaja has no attraction for the Gita, but have you seen his beautiful Hindi translation edition of Bhagavad-Gita with the commentaries of Srila Viswanatha Cakravarti Thakura, as well as other profound commentaries by H.H. Narayana Maharaja himself? If he has no taste for the Gita then why has he bothered to give such nice presentation and commentaries?

At the cornerstone laying of the Baghbazar Gaudiya Math, Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura expressed his desire to publish the authentic commentaries of the higher topics of the Srimad Bhagavatam such as Gopi-Gita and Bhramara-Gita. He said, “... [although] we should not read the commentaries of Gopi-gita and Bhramara-gita written by the

prakrita-sahajiyas, but we must also publish authentic editions of the Gopi-gita and the Bhramara-gita of the Srimad- Bhagawatam, because we need to perform real *krishnanusilanam*". This was printed in the weekly Gaudiya. H.H. Narayana Maharaja is now trying to fulfill that desire of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada, so how can you say that Narayana Maharaja has become an instrument of this attack against the mission of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura? Our Gurudeva Om Visnupada 108 Sri Srimad Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja considers him to be the best weapon to resist the misconceptions of the so-called *babajis* of Radha-Kunda and it is a proven fact that when he goes to Radha-Kunda he openly challenges them to come forward and have a debate with him if they do not accept the mission of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati as bonafide. Nobody dares to come near him. Do you think that any of your ISKCON *gurus* can do this?

You also say that Narayana Maharaja has dismissed book distribution as an inferior activity. But whatever you have quoted from your Prabhupada also supports it. First of all you have quoted that your Prabhupada has said, "Book distribution is in the mood of the *gopis*". Again you have quoted about your ultimate goal as , "we shall transcend and get through the invincible impass of Maya and reach the effulgent kingdom of God to render Him face to face eternal service, in full bliss and knowledge". You do not want to distribute books at the stage of ultimate attainment, but desire another kind of face to face service to God. Doesn't that mean that your means and goals are not the same? But our *guru-varga* and your *gurudeva* also have taught that the means and the goal are the same. You yourself have agreed that book distribution is not the ultimate goal or eternal *bhakti* . Then this can be called *bhaktyabhasa*, or *bhaktyaropa*, but never real *bhakti*, because it is a temporary *seva*, and not like *sravanam* and *kirtanam* which are eternal.

If you are going to do this you may as well accuse Srila Gaurakisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja as well as Srila Jagannatha Dasa Babaji Maharaja because they never went out on the streets to sell books due to the fact that they were in the mood of the *gopis*. Such offenses will bring utter ruin in your spiritual life as has happened to many of your godbrothers already.

An *acarya* can instruct his disciples according to a particular time, place and circumstance whereas in other circumstances the disciple can be given different instructions. The *guru* has the right to accept necessary directions from the Scriptures and preach them by his personal conduct. The definition of an *acarya* is as follows:

*acinoti yah sastrartham acare sthapyatyapi
swayamacarate tasmāt acaryah tena kirtitah*

"A person who chooses the conclusions of the authorized scriptures according to a particular time, place and circumstances and practices what he preaches to others is called an *acarya*".

Sometimes for the disciple the words of his *guru* differs from those of the other saints and the authentic scriptures. In such cases he must not offensively think that *guru* or *sastra* or saints are wrong. Rather he must remember the famous song by Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura Mahasaya,

*sadhu sastra-guru-vakya hrdaye kariya aikya
satata bhavisa prema majhe
karmi jnani bhaktihina ihare karibe bhina
narottama ei tattva gaje*

"Narottama sings the *tattva* that one must harmonize the directions of the *sadhus*, *sastras* and *guru* in his heart and always float in the ocean of *prema*. The *karmis* and *jnanis* are devoid of *bhakti*, so you must keep yourself apart from them".

Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura Mahasaya advises us to harmonize the words of *sadhu sastra* and *guru*. If the words of the *sadhu* seems to be different than those of *sastra* and *guru*, then one should not offensively think that the *sadhu* is wrong, but he must consider himself unable to understand the words of that *sadhu* and must follow *guru-vakya*. If the *guru* differs from *sadhu* and *sastra*, then, instead of thinking that the *guru* is wrong, one must consider himself unable to understand the real purpose of *guru-vakya* and on such cases he must follow *sadhu-vakya*. The *sastras* are never wrong. Either the *guru* or *sadhu* guide us to follow the necessary directions of the *sastras*, otherwise,

*ye sastra vidhim utsrijya vartate kamacarata
na sa siddhim avapnoti na sukham na para gatim*

It seems that you are confused regarding the instructions of your *guru* and are unable to harmonize them in your heart. I humbly suggest you to choose some realized *sadhu* to clear up your doubts rather than offend H.H. Narayana Maharaja. If you do not like to go to him that's fine but you have no right to stop those who want to go and receive instructions or initiations from him. You have requested your godbrothers and godsisters to follow Satsvarupa Maharaja's footsteps, but how can they believe you? Previously your G.B.C.

had requested them to follow their footsteps and many did. Right now seven out of eleven guides do not even exist or are in proper standard according to your G.B.C. rules. Who knows, maybe after a few years you will pass the same judgment on Satsvarupa Maharaja. By then H.H. Narayana Maharaja may not be physically present and thus the devotees will be forever deprived of his direct association. Which fool will want to depend on your words? Do you rely on your own self?

From your *gurudeva* you have quoted as follows, "A pure devotee can distinguish between the *bhakti-lata* creeper and a mundane creeper, and is very alert to distinguish them and keep them apart".

You also say that you have distinguished some of these weeds quite evident in the person of H.H. Narayana Maharaja. It is simply a strange audacity that you call yourself as a pure devotee and thus deny other exalted devotees who recommend Narayana Maharaja as a *sad-guru* and a *rasika* devotee. Our Guru-Maharaja has said openly that Narayana Maharaja is a *sad guru* and a *rasika bhakta*. Although I am neither a *siksa* or *diksa* disciple of H.H. Narayana Maharaja, still I never dare to stop someone from taking instructions or initiations from him. Quite to the contrary; if they want to go to him I am the first to encourage them to do so.

It is completely ludicrous and outrageous that most of you ISKCON G.B.C.s came to Krishna Consciousness less than 30 years ago and many of them are out of their devotional practices already, and claiming yourselves as bonafide preceptors and detectors of unwanted weeds (*upasakhas*) in the person of a devotee who has been practicing Krishna Consciousness for over 50 years without faltering once, even years before many of your G.B.C.'s had taken birth. Our most respected Guru-Maharaja has been practicing Krishna Consciousness continuously almost from his birth, and with 100 years of experience in such matters he is not qualified to guide others or recommend a person as an elevated *vaisnava*? On the other hand your G.B.C., who had never heard *krishna-nama* before 1966, and whose future is uncertain, is qualified to do so?

In fact you are scared of the Gadiya Math preachers, especially those who are born in Bharata-Bhumi (India). The Gaudiya Math has never had to complain that ISKCON *gurus* are taking away their disciples. If it is only your ISKCON G.B.C.'s who are disturbed, then it seems to me that you want to monopolize everything simply by using the name of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. In India some people (backward class) have a reservation for education and government services because they have no chance in an open competition with the more intelligent class of people. So the gov-

ernment of India reserves some seats for them so that they may have an opportunity.

My humble request to you is that you please give up such useless effort to engage in the copyrights to initiate innocent devotees. Rather let us try to follow the last instruction of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. "All of you preach in the most harmonious way the teachings of Rupa and Raghunatha with great enthusiasm".

I write this letter from a neutral point of view, because Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has instructed us not to be disheartened even if not a single person is ready to hear the open truth. As a humble servant of his servant, I thought it my duty as given to me by my Guru-Maharaja to protest against such wrong conceptions. If anyone has been hurt within his heart or felt any type of anxiety by reading this, I pray for your forgiveness and hope that one day he will come to realize all of these points.

Sri Guru-Vaisnava dasanudasa,
Bhakti Vidagdha Bhagawata

Condolences

My dear darling daughter Prema Lata,

Accept my hearty blessings. All glories to Sri Sri Guru & Gauranga! All glories to Sri Sri Radha-Vinoda-Bihariji!

This morning I was informed by Vrajanatha Prabhu that you called last night with the sad news that my bosom friend, Hayesvara Prabhu, has left his body. Hayesvara Prabhu was not only my friend, he was the friend of all the devotees. Especially he was a very large and tall tree under whose shade all the devotees of Holland were protected and nourished. He was a very dear son of an orthodox Christian preacher, but from the beginning of his childhood he was not satisfied with the principles of Christianity. When he received the great fortune to meet with the world famous devotional preacher in the line of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Sri Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, Hayesvara Prabhu was at once charmed, and he totally surrendered unto his lotus feet.

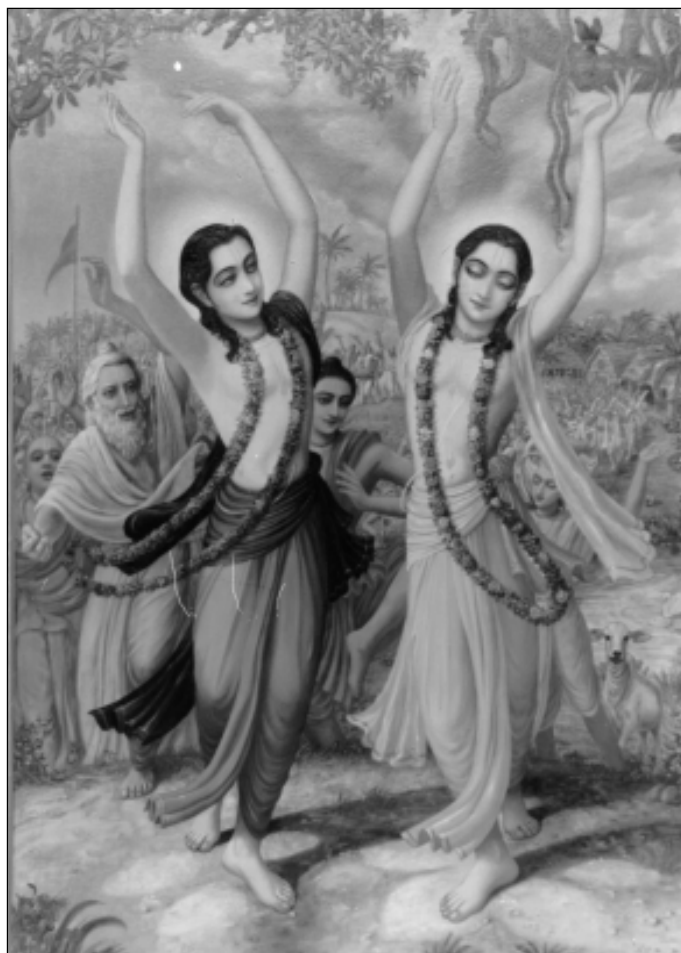
He was a famous writer and journalist, and he very soon translated the Bhagavad-gita and other devotional literatures into the Dutch language. After Swamiji's departure from this world, he came into the association of such an elevated *param-bhagavata*, Sri Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja, who later entered into *aprakata-lila*. At that time Hayesvara Prabhu felt bereft of *sadhu-sanga*, but soon he came into our association. He was very much intimately connected with us, and so much attracted to the deep conclusions of Gaudiya Vaisnavism. He translated many of my books into the Dutch language and also preached on my behalf. His house was a preaching center and a home for all devotees. He was rewarded by the Dutch government for his beautiful literary contribution, but he was much more rewarded by the Gaudiya Vaisnavas for his devotional writings and services.

Today we are observing a condolence ceremony and we pray to Hayesvara Prabhu to give us his association and mercy. We know that he is eternal, but we are feeling bereft of his association. We are very happy to know that he was so calm and quiet at the last moments of his stay with us. He chanted the holy names, Hare Krsna, and at the last moment, with tears in his

eyes, he chanted with his last breath, "Radhe, Radhe!" — and left his body. We pray to Sri Sri Radha-Krsna Yugala, to Sri Sri Gaura-Gadadhara and Sri Sri Gaura-Nityananda Prabhu to bestow Their causeless mercy upon our dear Hayesvara Prabhu.

Your ever well-wisher,
Swami B.V. Narayana

P.S. My hearty blessings for all the devotees who are with you, Also all the devotees who are here, Navina-Krsna Prabhu, Pundarika Prabhu, Vrajanatha Prabhu, Vrnda devi, Tungavidya devi and many more, all offer their heartfelt *puspanjali* to our dearest bosom friend, who gave us his kind association. Sri Sri Radha-Krsna mercifully gave us the association of Hayesvara Prabhu and now They have taken him back so that he will continue to serve Them under the guidance of Their dear devotees.



The Charm And Superiority of the Bhagavad-paramparā

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

An excerpt about the true conception of guru-tattva, from the forthcoming biography of nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.

In recent times ever new questions are being invented in regard to *śrī guru-paramparā* in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Some people are of the opinion that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was initiated in the Madhva *sampradāya* and that he was not a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava. Their assertion is that, in spite of his attaining the association of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the influence of the Madhva *sampradāya* upon him was so great, that in his own literatures he has stubbornly included Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* in the Madhva *sampradāya*. And this, they claim, has been done by him without any reasonable justification. Thus they declare that he cannot be considered an *ācārya* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Another section of ignorant persons say that jagad-guru Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupādājī has created a new concept named the *bhāgavata-paramparā*. In this *bhāgavata-paramparā* he has explained that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is a disciple of Vaiṣṇava Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, and that Śrī Gaurakīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Some *sahajiyā* Vaiṣṇavas are also presenting the doubt that Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī accepted the renounced order (*sannyāsa*) from himself, and consequently, his *guru-paramparā* cannot be considered bona fide. My most worshipable Śrīla Gurudeva has shattered all these accusations by the use of powerful logic and solid scriptural evidence. His analysis of the subject is being presented within this article.

The disciples and grand-disciples of Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda are currently preaching *śuddha kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and *śrī harināma* throughout the world as preached and practised by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They have preached extensively all over the world. Consequently, in every prominent city,

moreover, in every town and village, the streets and avenues are resounding with the sound of the holy name and young men and women are applying themselves to the cultivation of *śuddha-bhakti* with great enthusiasm. They are meeting Vaiṣṇavas from India, performing *harināma saṅkīrtana* together and preaching *śuddha-bhakti*. Being agitated by this, a few ignorant, so-called Vaiṣṇavas of the *sahajiyā* community are trying to mislead the common man by presenting fraudulent accusations against the Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava lineage. Śrīla Gurudeva has established the rational and perfect conclusion on this matter in his own essay entitled “Gauḍīya Vedantācārya Śrī Baladeva.” We are extracting some lines from that essay—

Guru-paramparā of the Commentator (Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa)

We are presenting before you the historical truth which is obtained upon considering the *guru-paramparā* of the commentator, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. First of all, he acquired specific expertise in *bhakti-śāstra* under the guidance of *virakta-śiromaṇi* (the crest-jewel of detached *sādhus*) Pītambara dāsa. After that, he accepted *pāñcarātrikī-dīkṣā* from a Vaiṣṇava by the name of Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara dāsa, who had appeared in the seminal *brāhmaṇa* dynasty in Kānyakubja. Rādhā Dāmodara dāsa was the grandson of Rasikānanda Murāri. He accepted *dīkṣā* from another Kānyakubjīya *brāhmaṇa*, Śrī Nayanānandadeva Gosvāmī. Rasikānanda Prabhu is the fourth person in the *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* of the commentator Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu was a disciple of Śrī Syāmānanda Prabhu. The aforementioned Nayanānandadeva Gosvāmī was the son of Śrī Rasikānanda. The guru of Śrī Syāmānanda was Śrī Hṛdaya Cai-

tanya, whose guru was Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita. Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu had bestowed His mercy upon Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita. Even though Syāmananda Prabhu was a disciple of *ācārya* Hṛdaya Caitanya, afterwards he accepted discipleship under Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was a disciple of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who was a disciple of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī was a follower and associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Śiṣya-paramparā of the Commentator

An account of the *pāñcarātrika-paramparā* has been given, beginning from Śrīman Mahāprabhu down to Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa. Now an account of his *śiṣya-paramparā* is being given: Śrī Uddhara dāsa, referred to in some places as Uddhava dāsa, was a disciple of the commentator. Some hold the opinion that these are two different personalities. Whatever the case may be, Uddhava dāsa had a disciple named Śrī Madhusūdana dāsa. Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī was a disciple of this very Śrī Madhusūdana dāsa. Previously, as Sārvabhauma Vaiṣṇava or prominent leader of the Vaiṣṇava community in Māthura maṇḍala, Kṣetra maṇḍala and Gauḍa maṇḍala, he became famous by the name of Siddha Jagannātha dāsa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura accepted this very Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja as his *bhajana śikṣa-guru* by the system of *bhāgavata paramparā*. Under the direction of Vaiṣṇava Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura discovered the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu at Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was the *śikṣā-guru* or *bhajana-guru* of Śrīla Gaurakīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, giving *dīkṣā-mantra*, etc., accepted my *gurupāda-padma*, om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottaraśata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, as his own disciple. Whoever is incompetent in accepting this *paramparā* is to be counted among one of the thirteen types of *apasampradāya* mentioned in writing by Śrī Totārāma Bābājī Mahārāja. Alternatively, he may be regarded as the creator of a fourteenth *apasampradāya*.

From the aforementioned *guru-paramparā* we acquire the understanding that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa is a follower of Śrīman Mahāprabhu within the spiritual family lineage (*parivara*) of Śrī Śyāmananda prabhu. On account of *ācārya* Śrī Śyāmananda accepting the guidance of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, and because Jīva Gosvāmī is exclusively *rūpānuga* (a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī), it therefore follows that Śrī Baladeva

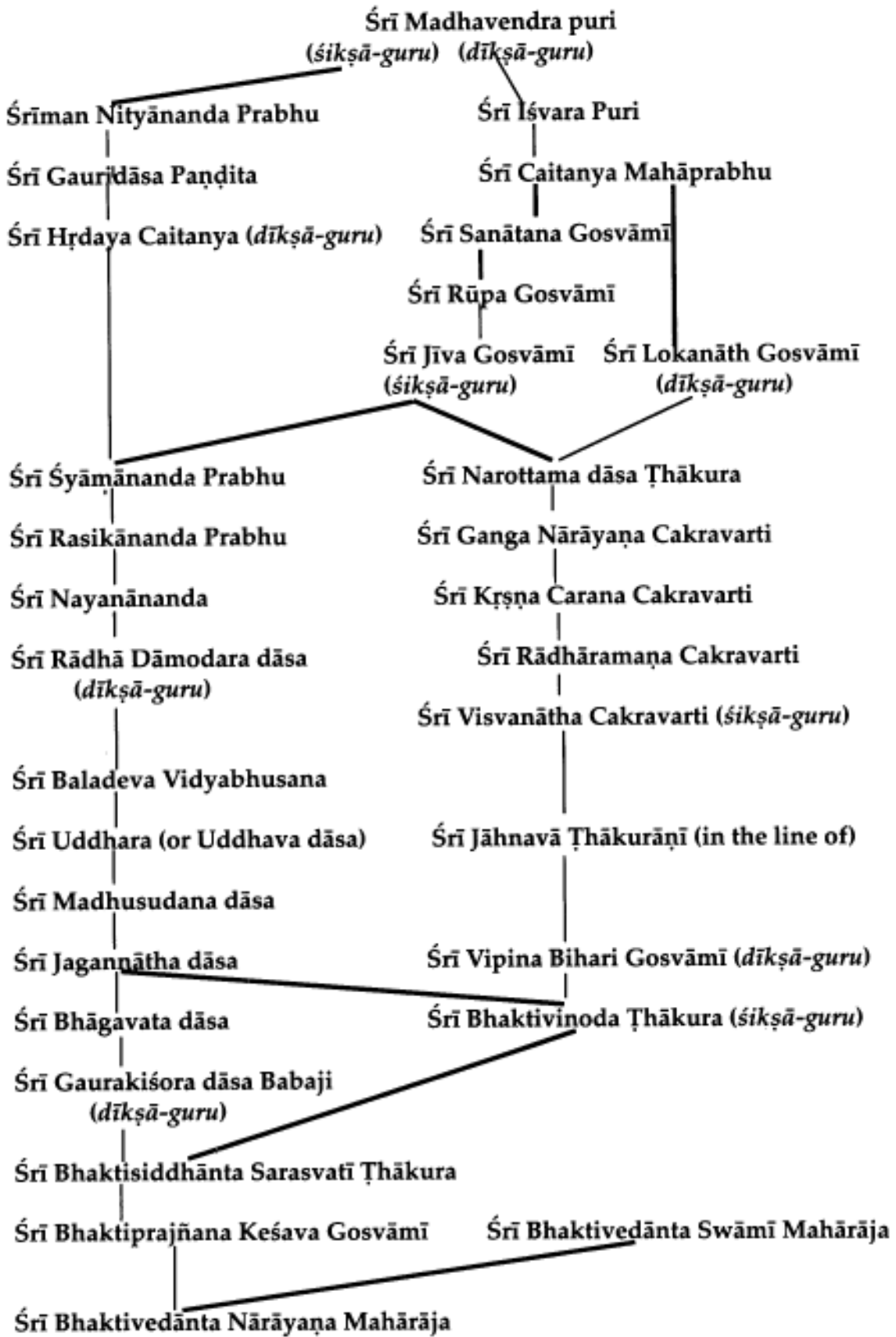
Vidyābhuṣaṇa is also a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava. Whoever does not acknowledge that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa is a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava, having said that he is in the line of Śrī Śyāmananda, and thinks that he is not qualified for the topmost service mood of *unnata-ujjvala-rasa*, is certainly a deluded offender. Although Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa was initiated in *pāñcarātrika-dīkṣā* by Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara dāsa, he also accepted *śikṣā* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the literatures of the Gosvāmīs.

Pāñcarātrika-paramparā is included within the Bhāgavata-paramparā.

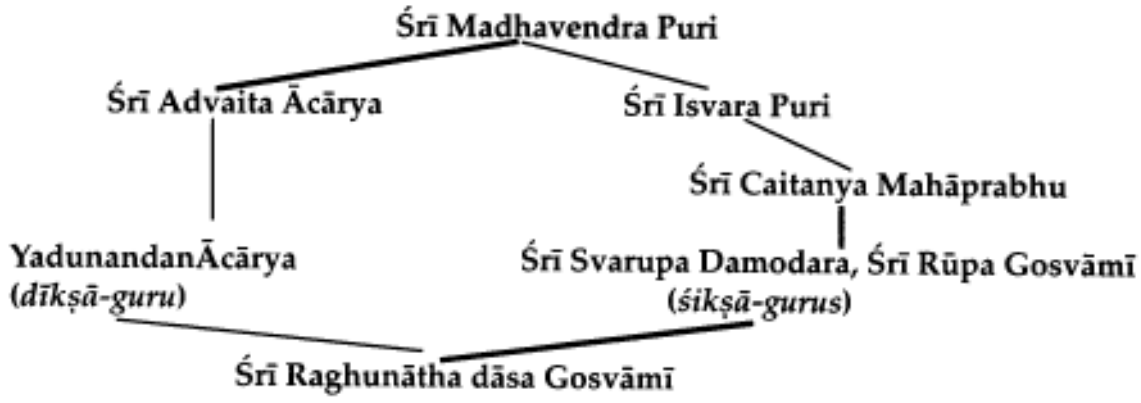
Bhāgavata-paramparā is superior to *pāñcarātrika-paramparā*. It is founded on the degree of proficiency in *bhajana* (*bhajana-niṣṭhā*). The charm and superiority of *bhāgavata-paramparā* is that *pāñcarātrika-paramparā* is included within it. In *bhāgavata-paramparā* there is no obstruction in regard to time. From the viewpoint of *śuddha-bhakti*, both the doctrine of *pāñcarātrika* and of *bhāgavata* expound synonomous opinions with the same objective. In *Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta* it is said, *pāñcarātre bhagavate ei lakṣaṇa kaya* (Cc. Madhya 19.169). The *prākṛta-sahajiyā-sampradāya*, while introducing themselves as the followers of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, accumulate offences to the lotus feet of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Similarly, nowadays the *jāti-gosvāmīs* and those who accept their remnants, such as several members of the *sahajiyā*, *kartābhajā*, *kīśorībhajā*, and *bhajanakhājā sampradāyas*, while proudly conceiving themselves to be the followers of Cakravartī Ṭhākura, employ various disrespectful explanations against the commentator Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa. In this way, they are growing excessively hateful and progressing towards hell.

We are presenting herein a diagram of the *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and *bhāgavata-paramparā* by which readers will be able to properly appreciate the speciality of *śrī bhāgavata-paramparā*, and also understand how *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* is included within the *bhāgavata-paramparā*.

Through the medium of this diagram we will give an account of the *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and *bhāgavata-paramparā* of Śrī Śyāmananda Prabhu, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and so forth:



— Siksa relationship only (*Bhagavata* line) — Dikṣa / Siksa relationship (*Pancaratrika* line)



Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu — In *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's disciple is Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita, and his disciple, Hṛdaya Caitanya is the *dīkṣā-guru* of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu. In *bhāgavata-paramparā* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's disciple is Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, the disciple of Sanātana is Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and his disciple is Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu is the *śikṣā* disciple of this very Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. It will not be an exaggeration to mention here that in consideration of *tattva*, *rasa*, *bhajana* and in all respects, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was superior to Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya. Therefore Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya himself personally sent Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī for advanced instruction in the practice of *bhajana* and Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu accepted the *anugatyā* (guidance) of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Thus the serious matter which is deserving of our consideration here is the question— which is superior, *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* or *bhāgavata-paramparā*?

Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura — In the same way, according to *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura's guru is Śrī Lokanātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Yet there is no record of Śrī Lokanātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *pāñcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* to be found anywhere. In such texts as *Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna*, it has been stated that his guru is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. However, it is a well known fact that Śrīman Mahāprabhu did not make anyone His disciple according to the *pāñcarātrika-praṇālī* (method). Therefore, if Śrīman Mahāprabhu is the guru of Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī, then it is only on the basis of *bhāgavata-paramparā*. On the other hand, although Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura is the *pāñcarātrika* disciple of Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī, he is also the disciple of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī in *bhāgavata-paramparā*. In the *anugatyā* of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura became steeped in *bhajana-śikṣā*.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī — In *pāñcarātrika-paramparā* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is a disciple of Śrī Yadunandanācārya, who is situated in the *pāñcarātrika-śākhā* (branch) of Śrī Advaita Ācārya. On the other hand, if we deeply consider the life history of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, we then find the indelible influence of the *bhajana-śikṣā* of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī is very clear. Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī are his gurus in *bhāgavata-paramparā*. In this example also, if we compare *pāñcarātrika-paramparā* with *bhāgavata-paramparā* then we find the superiority of *bhāgavata-paramparā* is shining as radiantly as the sun.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa — According to *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa is a *pāñcarātrika* disciple of Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara in the *paramparā* of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu. On the other hand, from the viewpoint of *bhāgavata-paramparā* he is a disciple of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara himself had personally sent Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa to Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura to study *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and all the various Gosvāmī literatures and also to receive advanced instruction in *bhajana*. The guidance of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in the life of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa is widely known. Only under the guidance of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura did he defeat the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas in the royal court of Galtā and keep intact the service and worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindajī. Attaining the mercy of Śrī Govindadeva, the worshipable deity of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, he composed *Śrī Govinda-bhāṣya*. There is certainly no room for any doubt about Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura being a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava. Therefore, since Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhuṣaṇa is under the guidance of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura there is also no doubt about his *rūpānugatva*, his being a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava. Furthermore, it is a well known

fact that, having attained the mercy of Śrī Govindadeva, he ensured the continuing service of that very deity who was the treasured life's breath of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. So from this perspective, in the light of his attaining the mercy of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his *ārādhya-deva* Śrī Govindaḥ, what doubt could possibly remain in regard to his *rūpānugatva*?

Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura — According to the *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, Śrī Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī, who is situated in the *pāñcarātrika-paramparā* of Śrī Śrī Jāhnavā Ṭhākuraṇī, is the *dīkṣā-guru* of Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. On the other hand Vaiṣṇava Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is his *bhajana-sīkṣā-guru* in *bhāgavata-paramparā*. Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is a disciple of the famous Madhusūdana dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in the *paramparā* of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhu-ṣaṇa. In regard to *tattva-jñāna*, *bhajana-sīkṣā*, etc., it is not necessary to say that Vaiṣṇava Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is superior to Śrī Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī. No-one can deny that the stamp of the guidance (*anugatyā*) of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is imprinted in the life of Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura — According to *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, his *dīkṣā-guru* is Śrī Gaurakīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, who, by *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, is situated in the branch of Śrī Jāhnavā Ṭhākuraṇī. Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja accepted the attire of a renunciate (*veṣa*) from a disciple of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, namely Śrī Bhāgavata dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Thus by *bhāgavata-paramparā*, Śrī Gaurakīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is in the branch of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. In this way, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is in the *paramparā* of Śrī Jāhnavā Ṭhākuraṇī by *pāñcarātrika-paramparā*, and he has been connected with Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in *bhāgavata-paramparā*. By shedding light on his life history, it is established that he made the practices, precepts, *bhajana-pranāli* and fulfillment of the aspirations of Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura the sole aim and object of his life. Thus, in *bhāgavata-paramparā* his guru was Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, whose guru was Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Therefore there is not even the least opportunity to raise a finger against the *guru-paramparā* of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the founder-*ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭhas.

Several additional facts worthy of our consideration on the subject of *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and *bhāgavata-paramparā*:

(1) The guru of lower rasa

If a *pāñcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* in his *siddha-svarūpa* (constitutional spiritual form) is situated in a comparatively lower *rasa* than his disciple, then how will he give *bhajana-sīkṣā* pertaining to the more elevated *rasa*? In this situation, the disciple must go elsewhere and take shelter of such a Vaiṣṇava who is qualified to administer the appropriate superior guidance. For example, Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya, in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, was an associate in *sakhya-rasa*, whereas his disciple Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu (Duḥkhī Kṛṣṇa dāsa) was an associate in *madhura-rasa*. Therefore Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya himself had personally sent Duḥkhī Kṛṣṇa dāsa to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī to receive higher *bhajana-sīkṣā* pertaining to *madhura-rasa*.

(2) The lesser qualified guru

The guru and disciple in *pāñcarātrika-guru-paramparā* may be in the same *rasa*, however the guru may not be so highly qualified. Under such circumstances, for higher *bhajana-sīkṣā* the disciple must go and take shelter of another *uttama* Vaiṣṇava who will be called his guru in *bhāgavata-paramparā*.

From the above-mentioned two considerations, we can conclude that there are some inherent defects in the *pāñcarātrika* process, whereas *bhāgavata-paramparā*, being completely free from these defects, is flawless in all respects.

(3) Śrīman Mahāprabhu is not pāñcarātrika-guru of anyone

All members of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* consider themselves to be the followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, accepting Him as *jagad-guru*. However, upon what basis do they consider that they are His followers and accept that He is their guru? Śrīman Mahāprabhu is not anyone's guru in *pāñcarātrika-paramparā*, although He Himself is a disciple of Śrī Īśvara Purī in *pāñcarātrika-paramparā*. There is no recorded account anywhere to the effect that Śrīman Mahāprabhu has given *dīkṣā-mantra* to anyone. Therefore if the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community accepts the *anugatyā* and discipleship of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then that can only be on one basis, and that basis is — *bhāgavata-paramparā*.

(4) All Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are rūpānuga on the basis of bhāgavata-paramparā only

Each and every Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava is proud to call himself 'rūpānuga'. But let us consider this point: How many people did Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī make his disciple by the *pāñcarātrika* method? Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī is his one and only *dīkṣā* disciple. So on what basis do the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community accept Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī as their guru? Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī himself is also not a *dīkṣā* disciple of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore how is it possible to be a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and at the same time be a follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu? Even Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī who is the *śikṣa-guru* of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has not a second thought about calling himself *rūpānuga*.

The basis of all these examples is one—*bhāgavata-param-parā*. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī is the disciple of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community consider Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī to be their guru only on the basis of *bhāgavata-param-parā*. Who is the *pāñcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* of Śrīla Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī? He has not mentioned the name of his *pāñcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* in any of his literatures. He has described the names of his *śikṣā-gurus* in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi* 1.37:

*ei chaya guru — śikṣā-guru ye āmāra
taiṅ' -sabāra pāda-padme koṭi namaskāra*

"I offer millions of obeisances at the lotus feet of these six *śikṣā-gurus* of mine."

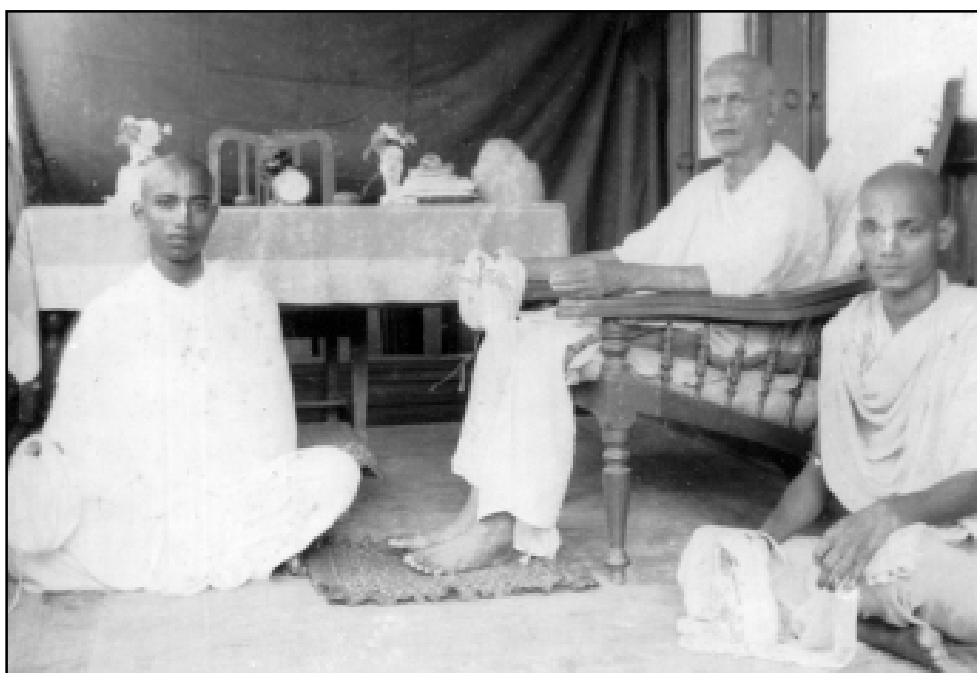
And at the end of each chapter of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is written:

*śrī-rūpa-raghunātha-pade yāra āśa
caitanya caritāmṛta kahe kṛṣṇa dāsa*

"I, Kṛṣṇa dāsa, whose aspiration is to attain the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha, narrate *Caitanya Caritāmṛta*."

By these statements he has accepted Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī as his main *śikṣā-gurus*. Thus he has also accepted them as gurus on the basis of *bhāgavata-param-parā*. From these facts it becomes thoroughly obvious that *bhāgavata-param-parā*, which includes *pāñcarātrika-param-parā*, always shines forth brilliantly. Therefore, whoever ignores these facts and casts aspersions upon the *guru-praṇālī* of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Ṭhākura and Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, or whoever doubts that they are *rūpānuga*, is certainly a staunch opponent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and a secret agent of Kali.

Thus, whatever opinion my most worshipable Śrīla Gurudeva has written on the subject of the *guru-praṇālī* of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, and also in regard to *pāñcarātrika-guru-param-parā* and *bhāgavata-param-parā* is both logical and fully in agreement with the established conclusions of the scriptures (*śāstra-siddhānta*).



Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and disciples.

Religion of Nothingness

Introduction to Being And Nothingness

The subject matter of this article was first presented in the previous issue. There Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja discussed the concept of *śūnya*, or “nothingness.” In the following article he will clarify that understanding, by quoting from the most popular and essential of Buddhist scriptures. The reason we have translated the word *śūnya* as “nothingness” and the word *brahma* as “being” is that it comes from the title of the magnum opus, *Being and Nothingness*, by Jean-Paul Sartre, the founder of modern-day existentialism. Not surprisingly, we find similarities of this type of existentialism in its roots, that is, Buddhism. We have borrowed the title from him in order to discuss the same concepts that stirred the French elite and intellectual class, consequently bringing Sartre the Nobel Prize for his seemingly new philosophy.

Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja mentions the work called *Prajñā-Pāramitā-Sūtra*. Since it will be spoken of in many places, it should be understood in the light of its importance to Buddhist philosophy. Although at first glance we may think that we are going too far, and it is becoming too esoteric to delve into, we discover a most interesting point that he is affirming. This *Sūtra* has become so commonly known in Buddhist circles that one cannot be said to factually know the Buddhist philosophy without understanding it. It is, therefore, popularly known as “*The Heart Sūtra*.” Here is what one modern text says regarding “*The Heart Sūtra*”:

When Buddhism first moved from India to China [Tibet] in its Mahāyāna forms, it was known not as Buddhism, but as the “Religion of *Prajñā-pāramitā*” or, since the *sūtras* of the *Prajñā-pāramitā* centered around the teaching of *śūnyatā* (somewhat loosely translated as emptiness or nothingness), as the “Religion of Nothingness.”

The *Heart Sūtra* is one of approximately 38 *sūtras* in the *Prajñā-pāramitā* group, and its shortest. In it, the dynamic vibrancy of *śūnyatā* and the cryptic delineation of its meaning have been captured with a radical economy of expression that has exercised a fascination over the minds of countless generations of Bud-

dhist thinkers in India, China, Tibet and other lands where Mahāyāna Buddhism flourished.

While it celebrates *śūnyatā* as a timeless truth, the *Heart Sūtra* has also to be seen as an historical document, engaged in rivalry with the rationalist-schematic approach taken by earliest sects of Buddhism (designated as Hīnayāna—the lowest vehicle—by its rivals.) In the centuries after Buddha’s death, the Hīnayāna followers, with the encyclopedic *Abhi-dharma* as their literature, had created categories of analysis to the point where it became, in the words of Heinrich Dumoulin, the Zen historian, “a dishearteningly lifeless product without metaphysical elan” Mahāyāna *sūtras* thunder again and again against philosophers (*abhidharmists*) who are disposed to freeze reality into a categorical permanence and to discriminate between subject and object.

In the still-solidifying tradition of Mahāyāna, the *Heart Sūtra* is a key document demolishing all these categories, and pointing out that all categories are ultimately dualistic and not leading to wisdom essential for enlightenment. In the earliest stages of the formation of Mahāyāna, there were schools of thought which proposed the doctrine of the “five words” of the Buddha; meditations on these words alone have transcendent significance and the power to bring liberation (which, they claimed, was not the case with the rest of his discourses.) These five words are: Non-soul (*anatta*), impermanence (*anicca*), unhappiness (*dukkha*), extinction (*nirvāṇa*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*)¹

[We should make a note here that these five words of the Buddha are written in Pāli, a spoken dialect of Sanskrit in which all Buddhist texts are written. The original Sanskrit for these five words are: *anātma*, *anitya*, *duḥkha*, *nirviśeṣa* and *śūnyatva*.]

The first four of these words are shared by the early Mahāyānists commonly with the Hīnayānists; it is the inclusion of *śūnyatā* (emptiness) as the last of these words that early Mahāyāna asserts its difference with

¹ Mu Soeng Sunim, *Heart Sutra*. Cumberland, Rhode Island, USA: Primary Point Press, 1991, pp. 6-7

the Hīnayāna schools. For the Hīnayānists, “emptiness” may be synonymous with the first word—non-self or non-soul—but its use was restricted in describing a person. Mahāyāna invention was not only to postulate *śūnyatā* (emptiness) as the essential emptiness of the phenomenal world, including the world within a person’s mind; the thinkers of Mahāyāna took care to deny the existence of *śūnyatā* as yet another category. Thus we have the doctrine of *śūnyatā-śūnyatā*, the emptiness of emptiness. *Śūnyatā* is experienced as intuitive wisdom, and it is only through the intuitive wisdom of *śūnyatā*, the theme of Mahāyāna wisdom schools, that one is ferried across to the other shore of liberation.

The *Heart Sūtra* has two versions, the longer and the shorter. The longer version has a prologue in which Buddha enters into *samādhi* and an epilogue in which he rises from *samādhi* and praises the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara [one of the celestial Bodhisattvas or enlightened beings who is the embodiment of compassion]. The shorter version, used here, begins without the prologue and has Avalokiteśvara contemplating the meaning of the profound perfection of wisdom.²

In the same text in which we are referring to *Prajñā* is translated as “wisdom,” and more specifically as “intuitive wisdom.” *Pāramitā* is translated as “perfection” or “that which has gone beyond” or “transcendental.” A *sūtra* is the spoken word or specifically for Buddhists the sermon or word spoken by the Buddha. The *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtra* may be translated as either “The Perfection of Wisdom” or “The Transcendence of Wisdom.” Sometimes the entire title is given as *Mahā-Prajñā-Pāramitā Hṛdaya Sūtra*. *Mahā* means “Great,” and *hṛdaya* means “heart” or “essence.” Thus we find the title translated like this: “The Great Heart of Perfect Wisdom” or “The Heart of Great Transcendent Wisdom.” Briefly and commonly it has come to be known as the “*Heart Sūtra*.” This *sūtra* presents to us the *śūnyatā* as being the core or heart of the universe.

One other point which is food for thought for Western scientists and philosophers is this. It appears that the modern day scientists in quantum physics, the science of subatomic particles, are beginning to see the parallels in Buddhism, specifically in regards to the *śūnyatā* aspect.

It has been just as difficult for the human mind to accept the existence of *śūnyatā* at the core of the universe as it was for the early quantum physicists to accept the quantum [an indivisible unit of energy] randomness of the universe. Einstein had even hoped that the quantum theory he helped create was somehow flawed, hoping desperately, even in the face of the evidence of his own experiments, that there would be a hidden variable that would establish order in the quantum world.

Later experiments, conducted at the University of California in Berkeley on Bell’s theorem, confirmed the absence of any hidden variable, and showed that when either of two correlated particles were observed, no matter how far separated in space, the other was instantly affected by the observation—as if the two particles were embedded in the observing consciousness itself.

Even before Bell’s theorem, Werner Heisenberg, one of the founding fathers of quantum theory, formulated in his Uncertainty Principle, that it is not possible to examine a situation or system without altering the system by the very act of examination; in the deepest experience of meditation, the object of consciousness is embedded in the observing consciousness; the two are fused together by the energy or *śūnyatā* out of which both emerge.³

Although unable to give the longer version of the *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtra*, we will give here the shorter version of this *Heart Sūtra*, which has been translated by the renowned Zen Buddhist monk, Mu Soeng Sunim. It is modified here only for a clear understanding of some of the Buddhist words. Zen Buddhism is the Japanese and Korean form of Mahāyāna Buddhism. One can glean from reading it how important the Buddhist concept of *śūnyatā* was to them. The *Heart Sūtra* takes place on Vulture Peak, east of the ancient city of Rājagṛha, the capital of the kingdom of Magadha.

Vulture Peak was a favorite site of the Buddha, where he gave a number of sermons during his forty-five year preaching career. The longer version mentions that the leading characters of this *sūtra* were these three, Śākyamuni Buddha, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva and Śāriputra. Here is the shortened version, which will be followed by Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja’s own profound, intuitive wisdom into the concept of *śūnya*.

² [Ibid., pp.8-9] ³ [Ibid., p. 22]

The Mahā Prajñā Pāramitā Hṛdaya Sūtra The Great Heart Sūtra of Intuitive Wisdom

Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, the embodiment of compassion, when practicing deeply the *Prajñā Pāramitā*, perceives that all five *skandhas* of form (*rūpa*), feelings (*vedanā*), perceptions (*sañjñā*), impulses (*saṃskāra*) and consciousness (*viññāna*) are empty and is saved from all suffering and distress.

Śāriputra, “Form does not differ from emptiness (*śūnya*), emptiness does not differ from form. That which is form is emptiness, that which is emptiness is form. The same is true of feelings, perceptions, impulses, consciousness.

Śāriputra, “All *dharma*s (the “point-instants” or “wave-particles”) are marked with emptiness. They do not appear or disappear, are not tainted or pure, do not increase or decrease. Therefore, in emptiness, there is no form, no feelings, perceptions, impulses, or consciousness. There are no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind, no color, no sound, no smell, no taste, no touch, no object of mind, no realm of eyes and so forth, until no realm of mind-consciousness. There is no ignorance and also no extinction of it and so forth until no age and death and also no extinction of them.

In emptiness, there is no suffering, no origination, no stopping, no path, no cognition, also no attainment with nothing to attain.

The Bodhisattva, the awakened, enlightened being who has diligently cultivated the qualities necessary to become a Buddha, depends on *Prajñā Pāramitā* and the mind is no hindrance. Without any hindrance, no fears exist. Far apart from any perverted views, one dwells in *nirvāṇa* (*nirvāṇa* is *śūnyatā* and *śūnyatā* itself is *nirvāṇa*).

In the three worlds of past, present and future, all Buddhas depend on *Prajñā Pāramitā* and attain *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*, the perfect unexcelled awakening (the ten powers of knowledge).

Therefore, know that *Prajñā Pāramitā* is the great transcendent *mantra*, is the great bright *mantra*, is the utmost *mantra*, is the supreme *mantra* which is able to relieve all suffering and is true not false. So proclaim the *Prajñā Pāramitā mantra*, proclaim the *mantra* which says:

gate, gate, parāgate, parāsaṅgate, bodhi svāhā

“Homage to the awakened mind which has gone, gone, gone over, and gone beyond, across the shore of suffering.”

Thus we come back to the original theme of Buddhism, *śūnya*. We see this *śūnya* echoed in the existentialists like Jean-Paul Sartre whose basic premise was that life has no meaning or reason. “Life is absurd” and “God is dead” were the slogans coined by the existentialists, beneath their banner of “free choice” in the face of unrelenting emptiness. And the underlying question that the Buddhists faced: How does one bridge the gap between *śūnyatā* as the ultimate reality and the human condition? This is how they answered it. It is through the free choice of compassion (*karuṇa*) for all beings that one gives expression to the Buddha-nature. Thus, only in compassion does wisdom (*prajñā*) find its ultimate and fullest expression. This is why in the *Heart Sūtra* we see that Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, the celestial Buddha and embodiment of compassion, is speaking while Śākyamuni Buddha is silent. Śāriputra is the aspiring *bodhisattva*. Without the element of compassion, then the Mahāyāna Buddhists indeed would say to the existentialists that the *śūnyatā* alone would make life unbearable.

- Chief Editor



Being and Nothingness

— Brahma and Śūnya —

Om Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

We have submitted before the readers the proposition that Buddha and Ācārya Śaṅkara's *siddhāntic* conclusions regarding the universe are the same. If the universe is without essence, illusory or temporary, and a mere spark of illumination, then what is the real and lasting essence?—This is the present consideration: whether the *śūnya* or “nothingness” of the monistic Buddha is *sat* or real and *nitya* or lasting, namely, that the knowledge of *śūnya* (*śūnya-jñāna*) is the ultimate goal; or the other, whether the *brahma* or “being” of the *brahmovādī* Śaṅkara is real and lasting, namely, that the ultimate goal is the knowledge of *brahma* (*brahma-jñāna*).

It has been previously stated that Śaṅkara's philosophy is *yāhāra pratīti nai tāhāi sat*, “that which is imperceivable is *sat* or real,” and also for Buddha it has been understood that “the non-perceivable is the *śūnya*, the essence of nothingness.” By the word *brahma*, Śaṅkara wanted us to conclude “What more is there to concern us with than this?”—readers should make a note of this. Our opinion is that, assuming all considerations regarding *śūnya*, or nothingness, and *brahma*, or being, they are merely the same concepts. What the Buddhists regard as *śūnya* and what Śaṅkara calls *brahma* only reiterate the same thing. Therefore *śūnya* and *brahma* are non-different propositions. We will now proceed on to further re-inforce these concepts with a few more proofs.

Buddha's Śūnyavāda— His Concept of Nothingness

In the sixteenth *sūtra* of the *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtra* (one of the most authoritative of Buddhist scriptures) this is observed—

sudurbodho 'si māyāiva dṛṣyase na ca dṛṣyase

“You (*śūnya*) are extremely difficult to understand. Like an illusion, you are seen and not seen.”

In the second *sūtra* of the same book it is explained—

*ākāśam iva nirlepaṃ niṣprapañcaṃ nirakṣaram
yas taṃ paśyati bhāvena sa paśyati tathā-gaṭam*

“One who perceives you with contemplation as unattached, vacuous and silent like the sky, perceives the non-existent or the state of *śūnyatā* or nothingness.”

In the second part of the *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā Prajñā-Pāramitā* [the longer version of the *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtra*] it is explained like this—

*sarva-dharma api deva-putra māyopamaḥ svapnopamaḥ
pratyag buddho 'pi māyopamaḥ svapnopamaḥ
pratyag buddhatvam api māyopamaṃ svapnopamam
samyak sambuddho 'pi māyopamaḥ svapnopamaḥ
samyak sambuddhatvam api māyopamaṃ svapnopamam.*

Sugata Buddha (Śākyamuni) is explaining to the *deva-putras*, the sons of demigods—

“All *dharmas*, or religions, are like an illusion, like a dream. Each and every *buddha* is like an illusion, like a dream. All states of buddhahood are like an illusion, like a dream. The sum-totality of all *buddhas* are like an illusion, like a dream, and the totality of the complete state of buddhahood is like an illusion, like a dream.”

In the scripture by the name of *Sarva-Darśana Saṅgraha*, Sāyaṇa Mādhava has expounded upon this Buddhist philosophy in some fifteen sentences—

*mādhyamikās tāvad-uttama prajñā ittham acīkathan.
bhikṣu-pāda prasāraṇa-nyāyena kṣaṇa-bhaṅgā dyabhi-dhā
mukhena sthāyitvānukula-vedanīyā-mātrānuga-tatva
sarva-satyatva-bhrama vyāvartena sarva-śūnyatāyām eva
paryjvoasānam. atas tat tvam sad-asad ubhayānubhayātmake
catuṣ koṭi vinirmuktam śūnyam eva*

“The *mādhyamika* Buddhists who have first-class wisdom and detachment have spoken like this: the material existence's momentariness, namely, its past impressions of momentary, principal categories or

titles, that which is favorably sensuous, and every kind of truth is ephemeral, ultimately culminating in *śūnya* or nothingness. Therefore both *sat* and *asat*, the true and untrue, and are ontologically *śūnyatva*, that is, they originate from the *śūnya*."

In the twenty-ninth sentence of the same book this reference is made:

kecana bauddhāḥ bāhyeṣu gandhādiṣu antareṣu rūpādi-skandheṣu satsv api tatrāhāsthām utpādayituṁ sarvaṁ śūnyam iti prāthamikān vineyān acikathan

"Some Buddhist adepts have declared to their students—External aspects like smell, mind, and form, and the other *skandhas* (constituent elements), are able to produce changes in the *sat* and *asat* because all is *śūnya*; this world is full of these categorical changes."

Śākya-Simha Buddha has also described this in the twenty-first chapter of the Buddhist scripture, *Lalita-Vistara*. The adherents of Śākya-Simha Buddha's doctrines of voidism (*śūnyavāda*) and non-self (*nairātma-vāda*), taking up the powerful bow of knowledge, have vanquished the enemies of the sufferings of *samsāra*—in this way it has been explained: *samarthaḥ dhanur-grhītva śūnya –nairātma-vādinaiḥ kleśa-ripūn nihatvā*—and other statements like this.

From the proofs of various Buddhist scriptures we have understood that the form of *mahā-nirvāṇa* is essentially *śūnya*, nothingness, like the sky, attributeless, and mundane, namely, its causal form and activity is *śūnya* or illusory. The root of the material momentariness or "suchness" is the *śūnya*. The *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtra* has said, "If the tasteful quality of the mango is removed, the mango becomes a part of the *śūnya*, nothingness." Śaṅkara's *nirguṇa bhramavāda*, his philosophy of the attributeless *brahma* or being, is thus synonymous with this. Buddha has said, "What does not have *guṇa* or quality and attributes (*kārya*), is *śūnya*, nothingness." Śaṅkara has also said, "What has no *guṇa* or quality, is *brahma*, being."

In The Next Issue:

Śaṅkarācārya's Brahmvāda—His Concept of Being

Hare Kṛṣṇa
Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare
Hare Rāma
Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma
Hare Hare

His Holiness Dalai Lama Reads Rays of The Harmonist

After bringing Rays of The Harmonist to the United States, Kisore Krsna Dasa Brahmachari distributed a copy of The Rays of The Harmonist, which was recently presented to His Holiness Dalai Lama via Ambarisha Dasa.

Upon reading an article on Buddhism (ref. Vol. II No. I & II), His Holiness was engrossed in a discussion on the subject matter with his secretary.

The series of articles on mayavada philosophy, Sankaracarya, and Buddhism have created several positive reactions, and will be continued in response hereof.

The Harmonist

or

Shree Sajjanatoshani

VOL. XXIX

FEBRUARY 1932 Caitanya-Era 445

No. 8

Circumambulation of Sri Navadvipadhama

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Prabhupada

The circumambulation of Sridhama Navadvipa will commence this year on the 12th March and will be completed on the 20th. The festival of the anniversary of the advent of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna Caitanya will be celebrated on the 22nd March. A certain amount of the details of the ceremony is to be found in the Navadvipa Almanac published by the Gaudiya Mission.

The preliminary (adivas) kirtana will take place on the 11th evening. The 'Nine Islands' will be circumambulated during the nine succeeding days in the following order:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| March 12 th | Antardvipa (incl. Sridhama Mayapura) |
| March 13 th | Simantadvipa |
| March 14 th | Godrumadvipa |
| March 15 th | Madhyadvipa |
| March 16 th | Koladvipa |
| March 17 th | Ritadvipa |
| March 18 th | Jahnudvipa |
| March 19 th | Modadrumdvipa |
| March 20 th | Rudradvipa |

The circumambulation of Sri Navadvipa-dhama is an ancient institution which can be traced in literature to almost the time of Sri Caitanya. The well-known devotional work, *Bhaktiratnakar*, which is about two hundred years old, contains the ancient traditions connected with the different localities. It has been published in a handy form in Bengali with the title 'Chitre-Navadvipa'. The reader is referred to that work for a detailed idea of the subject in its different aspects.

There is an impression among a certain class of thoughtless people that the sanctity of a place or creed is somehow enhanced by its greater antiquity. Most of the places on this earth were in existence at the time of Sri Caitanya and have been in existence from time immemorial. If the ancient history of a site is known the circumstance certainly adds to the human interest of the place.

Spiritual connection with Godhead or His devotee is the cause of the sanctity of a locality, not because any mundane place is supposed to be able to recall the memory of the event which is transcendental, but for the entertainable reason that the locality itself is not mundane at all. Sir P. C. Roy, in opening Sridhama Mayapura Exhibition was led to declare that every particle of dust of Sridhama Mayapura is sacred due to its association with Sri Caitanya. If the locality surrounding Sridhama Mayapura is annually visited for this antiquarian reason by pilgrims from all parts of the country, such a custom would be of no help in preserving the real memory of Sri Caitanya and His teachings.

The circumambulation of Sridhama Navadvipa is not a national and antiquarian performance for showing respect to the memory of a great historical personality. Sri Caitanya is Godhead Himself. Sridhama Navadvipa is the eternal transcendental divine realm. Sri Caitanya, His realm and His activities are eternal and are also capable of being realized as such by devout pilgrims in their performance of the circumambulation of the spiritual sphere, by the grace of those perfect pure souls who serve Sri Caitanya in the spiritual realm. The performance of circumambulation of Sridhama Navadvipa under the guidance of the

sadhus is thus a purely spiritual function, and the pilgrim, in the course of his journey actually traverses not a number of mundane localities, but the various constituent spheres of the realm absolute.

No particle of mundane dust can have any spiritual value whatever. Godhead and His saints never tread the mundane plane. They belong eternally to the



spiritual realm. The appearance of Godhead to the view of mundane spectators is not a mundane event. A mundane spectator, till he is spiritually helped, can see nothing that is not mundane. The mundane entity which is observed by such a person, is neither Godhead nor any of His saints but only a deluding mundane entity. Godhead certainly can and does manifest His appearance in this world without becoming thereby a mundane entity or getting alloyed by mundanity. He is declared by the scriptures to descend to the view of the spectators of this world with all His divine paraphernalia. But it does not, therefore, follow that the fleshy eye can have the actual sight of Godhead even on such occasion.

It may appear to be reasonable from the empiricist's point of view to ask for the proof of the divinity of Sri Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. The empiricist happens to think that it is his function to sit in judgement for allowing the claims of a person to the title of divinity. Nothing can beat the impudence of such a ludicrous claim. Has the empiricist any faculty by which he can allow or disallow the claims of the divinity?

The truth is that the empiricist is always denying the claims of the divinity by requiring Godhead to produce such proofs of His claims to his allegiance as will be acceptable to his limited understanding. This attitude has produced the inevitable result of thinking that the divinity has never submitted any proofs for meeting such a laudable purpose. On the contrary, however, He has ever been supplying him with overwhelming proofs against all his claims. The empiricist has thus attained the state of utter ignorance of the truth under the hypocritical conviction that what he is pleased to think as true for the time being, is, therefore, necessarily true. This may flatter his vanity, only at the expense of everything that really matters.

In this fool's paradise the empiric pilgrim also is inclined to condemn himself by his so-called convictions and seeming critical caution. They only throw him more completely into the clutches of the deluding energy. By trying to avoid any concession to dogmatism he is made to grovel in the fit of abject submission to the degrading dogmatic freaks of the arch-enchantress who is the mother of this material world.

It is necessary for the real seeker of truth to approach Him by his genuine serving disposition. The wish to dominate truth is the fruitful source of every form of ignorance. There is no other degradation for the soul than the hankering for such domination. There is no truer elevation than artless receptive serving humility in presence of the absolute indivisible truth who is all pervading. The divinity is the truth. He is a person. His personality is the reciprocal of our own transcendental nature. He is the only master. We are all His servants. Our pure animation is enabled to retain its spotless purity by His service.

But as Godhead is the indivisible truth, His realm and eternal servitors are part and parcel of Himself. It is no service of the absolute which leaves out of account His eternal servitors and His eternal realm. Godhead manifests Himself through the functions of His constituents.

The jiva is a particle of the divine essence. But he is a detachable part of His essence. He is privileged to serve Godhead by remaining eternally detached from Him. He is created in the superfluous or marginal zone

of the essence of the divinity. There is also a negative zone. The *jiva* is a particle of the positive zone projected into the no-man's land between the spiritual and mundane spheres of existence. He is liable to be drawn into the mundane sphere although he is by constitution a particle of the positive essence of the divinity.

The realm of the divinity is also of the essence of the divinity. The *jiva* is a detached particle of the spiritual potency of Godhead. The realm of the divinity is the plenary spiritual power of the divinity. The *jiva* can serve Godhead only in and through the aid of the divine realm. The divine realm is a spiritual entity with freedom to allow or disallow the overtures for the service of the divinity. But it is necessary for the 'jiva' to seek her aid against every sort of apparent discouragement. The *sadhus*, who are the accepted proteges of the divinity, teach us by their example and precept how to secure her favor.

The pilgrim who is, therefore, anxious to obtain the sight of Godhead, is under the absolute necessity of seeking the aid of the divine realm. The sight of the divine realm admits us automatically also to the presence of the divinity who abides only there. But the divine realm tests our sincerity as seekers of the service of Godhead before she condescends to aid our endeavor. If she finds that we want to dominate and not to serve the truth she presents her unapproachable face to our view. She appears as dumb as the sphinx to our hypocritical entreaties for her aid. This is the plight of the empiric pedant on the threshold of the living realm. But the '*sadhu*' is always at our elbow with his counsel of genuine submission to the plenary power of Godhead in recognition of Her divine nature. The *sadhu* speaks to us in concrete and intelligible language. But the *sadhu* speaks with real knowledge of the requirements of the position. There is thus imperative necessity of making the pilgrimage under the guidance of the real *sadhu*.

But the words of the *sadhu* also may appear to be irrational to one who is inclined to set up his experience of the world as the judge of the propriety of the *sadhu's* counsel. Mundane experience can give no positive help in the quest of the spiritual. It is not necessary to turn to it for such help. The words of the *sadhu* can give every help that one requires for the spiritual purpose, provided only that one is not really willing to have anything mundane.

The spiritual realm is realizable in and through the words of the *sadhu*. The spiritual realm cannot be seen by the mortal eye, nor touched by the hand of flesh. Neither is it the closed ear that can hear the true voice of the *sadhu*. The ear of the soul is to be opened to the

spiritual sound. In other words one is to listen to the words of the *sadhu* with the conviction that the words themselves are identical with the object which they signify, that if the words are only received by the fully receptive rational impulse the whole indivisible substantive reality will stand self-revealed. If the result is otherwise, it can only be due to the deliberate withholding of one's full attention. It is in one's power to correct this error of method when it is pointed out by the *sadhu*. In proportion as the receptive attentive hearing is perfected, the true import of the words of the *sadhu* manifests itself to the soul of the hearer. It is necessary to offer this form of service by way of the preliminary on the threshold of the realm of the divinity by all those who really want to enter there.

The pilgrim is required to give up his preference for pseudo-knowledge if he is to be benefited by his pilgrimage of the divine realm under the guidance of the *sadhu* who has a natural and exclusive attachment for the real truth. The guidance of the *sadhu* is necessary for enabling him to lend his full attention to his words by discarding all explicit or latent partiality for untruth. The function of the cognitive faculty is to be relieved from the consequences of its willful and perpetual attraction towards untruth. Guidance for such an end is not any curtailment of one's freedom of rational choice. The rational faculty is only then true to itself when it submits to be guided by a competent person in the quest of the truth which is located beyond his reach. It is prepared to submit for its instinctive and causeless love for the truth. It is enabled to attain its fully expanded natural state by such submission. Neither the end nor the method indicated above proposes any form of mechanical subordination to an external agency which is being always enforced without any protest on the part of the conditioned soul by his material environment. Unless we are prepared to adopt the only rational course that is open to us, the attainment of the knowledge of the absolute truth in the form of willing submission for receiving Him from His agents we really abdicate our rational function by preferring to follow the irrational alternative. We are of course free to go astray. We are also free to maintain that such irrational course is rational. But such sophistry will not enable us to avoid the logical consequences of such a procedure in the shape of losing sight of the truth altogether.

True, the description of Sri Navadvipa-dhama in the literary works penned by the devotees who speak of the absolute truth, is bound to appear to the uninitiated as being apparently opposed to the evidence of one's senses. This is the standing grievance of the

empiric historians and antiquarians in regard to the statements of the devotees. But the devotees always take good care to inform their readers that they are not describing anything that is limited by space and time. Empiric historians and antiquarians cannot be expected to understand on their own terms the nature of spiritual entities. Neither is that their function nor purpose. The erratic excursions of empiric historians and antiquarians into the domains of the spirit should be avoidable by the exercise of the ordinary honest common sense that is happily to be found also in this mundane world.

It is not proposed that the empiric historian and antiquarian should be debarred from approaching the subject of the absolute. It is the duty of all persons including the atheists to seek the absolute and to seek nothing but the absolute. But the empiric method which is employed by the historians and antiquarians who are engaged in the so called investigations of the phenomena of this world by the resources of their defective limited senses, cannot enable one to understand at all the subject matter of the revealed scriptures. It is, of course, open to the empiric historian and antiquarian to apply their own method to the investigation of a spiritual subject for deducing a purely mundane conclusion against the principle of rationality. This has actually been done by more than one famous writer. But such attempt constitutes only one of the numerous departments of changeable human knowledge which have nothing to do with the spiritual.

One who undertakes the pilgrimage of Sri Navadvipa-dhama with the conviction of, and, in pursuance of the method of the empiric historian and antiquarian, will certainly enrich the range of his worldly experience which he values. But he will miss the spiritual end which is declared by the scriptures to be attainable by the performance of the journey under the guidance of the *sadhus*. We invite all persons to join the devotional function with the attitude that is necessary for ensuring the success of the spiritual quest which alone matters. It will be irrelevant to consider this place according to the objection that has actually been taken by certain persons to the practice of asking pilgrims to serve Sri Gaura-kunda and Sri Radha-kunda at Sridhama Mayapura. Those objectors probably think that Sri Gaura-kunda and Sri Radha-kunda are merely tanks that have been made by recent excavation and cannot, therefore, have really anything to do with either Sri Radhika or Sri Gaurasundara who appeared on this earth long ago.

But those who make the pilgrimage to Sridhama Mayapura never suppose that either Gaura-kunda or

Radha-kunda can be any pool of water of this or any other period, or that bathing in Sri Radha-kunda is identical with a bath in some ancient tank of the British District of Mathura. Sri Radha-kunda is always invisible to mortal eyes; and no mortal can ever bathe in it. But Sri Gaurasundara appeared in the form of His power in the home of Sri Candrasekhara Acarya. Sri Caitanya Matha occupies the site of the residence of Sri Candrasekhara Acarya. Sri Radha-kunda is certainly to be found in the home of Sri Candrasekhara by one who seeks a bath in the same. Sri Gaura-kunda is to be eternally found only in the home of Sri Jagannatha Misra. Those who have no faith in Sri Gaurasundara are not likely to understand the sayings and doings of His devotees, nor can they ever attain the sight of the eternal transcendental realm of the divinity. Faith in Sri Gaurasundara cannot be obtained except by the grace of His bonafide devotees. It is not the so-called blind faith of the empiricists of this world to which the reader is asked to subscribe. Neither is it asserted that true faith is any product of the so-called empiric knowledge. Spiritual faith on the contrary, is that perfectly rational disposition of the pure soul which seeks patiently and unceasingly for the service of the Absolute Truth. The sincere seeker of the service of the divinity is alone privileged to be favored by the sight of the truth for the purpose of rendering such service.



Essay on Sri Caitanya-Caritamrita

Srila Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja

This article is the first part of an original hand-written pre-1965 manuscript, which has been retrieved from a digital file. Only minor spelling and grammatical corrections have been made. The published version of this subject matter can be read in the author's Caitanya-caritamrita, Adilila, Chapter Four, pp. 104-202.

First Adventure — 4th Chapter.

In this part of the epic, it has been emphatically stressed that Lord Caitanya appeared Himself for three principal purposes of His own. The first purpose was that He wanted to relish the objectivities of Srimati Radharani who is the prime reciprocator of transcendental love of Sri Krishna. Lord Caitanya being Sri Krishna Himself, Radharani is the object of love. He wanted to relish the loving mellow in the position of Radharani.

The second purpose is that the love affairs of Srimati Radharani and that of Sri Krishna is a matter of the highest estimation for the devotees and Sri Krishna wanted to enjoy such ecstasy of loving service in the position of Radharani who enjoyed the transcendental beauty of Sri Krishna. This was only possible by accepting the mental and physical temperament of Sri Radharani, and so He wanted to have that taste.

The third purpose was that when Radharani met with Sri Krishna, the exchange of transcendental mellow between the spiritual couple was more pleasing to Srimati Radharani than to Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna wanted to know Himself as such—why He was so enjoyable by Srimati Radharani. He thought wisely that there must be something in Him which was so much enjoyable by Srimati Radharani and by which Radharani's achievement of transcendental mellow, was far greater than His. As Sri Krishna, it was impossible for Him to enjoy in the position of Srimati Radharani because it was completely foreign to Him.

All the above three purposes were in relation with Srimati Radharani's objective position. Lord Sri Krishna wanted to adopt this objective position, Srimati Radharani, with an aim to relish His own mellows which were concealed from Him, a relish which was engineered and wound up in Srimati Radharani.

The specific purposes of Lord Caitanya's appearance are mentioned above. Other purposes such as to regenerate the spiritual emancipation of the people in general, vital to the period of the iron age (*Kali-yuga*), as well as to fulfill the desire of Srila Advaita Prabhu in the matter of Lord Caitanya's appearance—were all secondary purposes of His appearance.

Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami was the principal personage amongst Lord Caitanya's confidential devotees and from the records of his diary, the above purposes of the Lord, have been revealed. And this revelation is confirmed by the statements of Srila Rupa Gosvami in his various prayers and hymns. In this part of the epic a clear distinction between lust and love is made on the basis of ethical principles and by doing so, it has been established herein as to how sense-gratification of Lord Sri Krishna is basically different from material lust.

The first sloka in Sanskrit directs that the transcendental features of Lord Sri Krishna can only be ascertained when one is endowed with the causeless mercy of Lord Caitanya. Lord Sri Krishna being the Absolute Personality of Godhead, cannot be exposed to the mundane visionary instruments. He reserves the right of not being exposed to the intellectual feats of non-devotees. Notwithstanding this truth Lord Sri Krishna and His transcendental pastimes in the land of Vrindavan are easily understood even by a small child, by the Grace of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

The author, as usual, glorifies the Lord along with His associates such as Srila Nityananda prabhu, Srila Advaita prabhu, Gadadhara Prabhu and Srivasa Prabhu, Who are the principal devotees amongst the Lord's innumerable followers. Now, after an elaborate explanation of the 4th *sloka*, he proceeds to explain the 5th one out of the fourteen *slokas* in the original. In the third chapter of the epic, the purport of the 4th *sloka* has been summarized as follows: Lord Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared Himself for the purpose of disseminating the cult of transcendental love of Godhead as well as to glorify the transcendental Name of Lord Sri Krishna, which is recommended by constant chanting in this age of *Kali* (iron age). That statement is quite alright, but these reasons of Lord

Caitanya's appearance are secondary ones. The primary reasons are as follows. This statement of facts is necessary to put into sight just to magnify the real purpose of the Lords' appearance. The magnifying process is placed as follows:

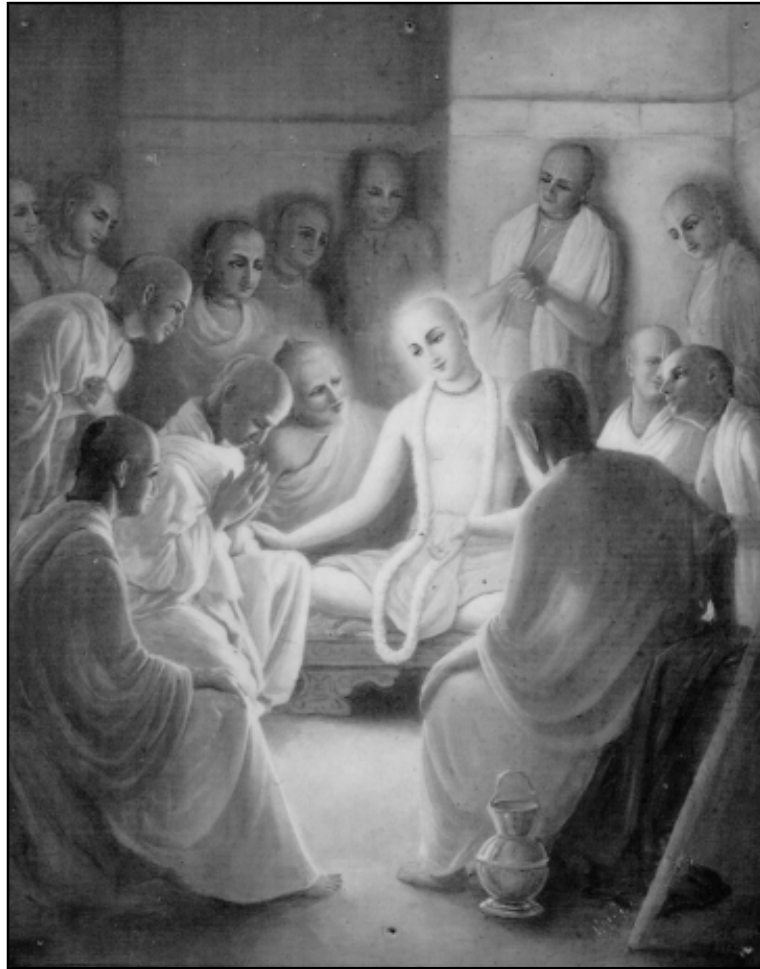
We have information from the *Bhagavad-gita* that the Lord appears at a particular interval of time in order to adjust time worn maladjustment of spiritual culture. Since then Lord Sri Krishna appeared, therefore, at the end of *Dvapara-yuga* for regenerating the spiritual culture of human beings and at the same time the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, was to manifest His transcendental pastimes also. Vishnu is the authorized Lord for maintaining the created cosmos and He is also the principal factor to make adjustment in the maladministration of the cosmic situation. Sri Krishna is the Primeval Lord and He is not meant for such adjustment of maladministration.

Sri Krishna appears only to exhibit His transcendental pastimes in order to attract the fallen souls back to Godhead, back to home. The two periods, namely the period of setting right the maladministration as well as the period of Lord Sri Krishna's appearance, coincided at the end of last *Dvapara-yuga*. As such Lord Sri Krishna's plenary portions such as Narayana; the four protective expansions named: (1) Vasudeva (2) Sankarsana, (3) Pradyumna and (4) Aniruddha; all the incarnations of Godhead such Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Nrsimha, and Vamana who are parts of the plenary expansions, the periodical incarnations, the incarnations of the Manu-age (every 71 x 4300000 years) — all of them merge into the transcendental Form of Lord Sri Krishna and all of them appear in a total manner. Therefore, when Sri Krishna appeared, Vishnu, the Lord of maintenance, also

merged into Him because all the plenary portions and parts of the Absolute Personality of Godhead were to merge in Him during His appearance.

The acts of killing the *asuras* or the nonbelievers such as Kamsa, Jarasandha etc., during the period of Lord Krishna's appearance, were all done by Vishnu who was within the Person of Sri Krishna. Such killing of *asuras* apparently by Lord Sri Krishna was, as a matter of course, a side activity. The real purpose of Lord

Krishna's appearance was to stage a dramatic performance of His transcendental pastimes at *Brajabhumi*, in order to exhibit the highest limit of eschewing transcendental mellows, by the exchange of reciprocal love of God between the living entity and the Supreme Lord. This reciprocal exchange of mellows is called '*raga-bhakti*' or devotional service to the Lord in transcendental enrapture. Lord Sri Krishna wants to make it known to all the conditioned souls that He is more attracted by *raga-bhakti* than *vaidhi-bhakti*, devotional service in scheduled regulations. Lord Sri Krishna is the embodiment of all the transcendental mel-



Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu with disciples.

lows. It is said in the Vedas, '*rasabaisa*.' The Absolute Truth is the reservoir of all kinds of reciprocal exchanges of loving sentiments. He is at the same time causelessly merciful and He wants to bestow upon us this privilege of '*raga-bhakti*' and as such He appears Himself, by His self-same internal energy, without being forced by any extraneous exertion. He feels like this, "The whole universe is full with a feeling of adoration for the Lord. But love of God, which is a product of such reverential adoration and with a feeling of an inferiority complex—does not give Him as much pleasure as He gets by love relieved of all gesture of awful veneration". A devotee who thinks himself in

inferior complex,— is said to be in the realm of reverential devotion, appreciating the opulence and omnipotency of the Lord. Lord Krishna does not become much influenced by such reverential devotion. It is the inherent nature of the Lord that He reveals Himself before His devotees according to the inherent devotional service of the living being.

A devotee who thinks of Sri Krishna as his pet son, or a devotee who thinks of Him as his personal friend, or a devotee who thinks of Sri Krishna as the most dear fiancée, and only in such natural affection, the devotee renders service unto Him. The Lord becomes more attracted by such devotees. By their displays of transcendental love of Godhead, the Lord becomes a subordinate object of love. Such pure love of Godhead is exclusively unadulterated by any tinge of superfluous desires than devotion and is unmixed with all sorts of fruitful action or empiric philosophical perspective. It is pure and natural love of Godhead spontaneously roused up in the absolute stage. This devotional service is executed in a favorable atmosphere freed from material affection.

In the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita* it is affirmed by Lord Sri Krishna that formerly (some 40 crores [400 million] of years before the battle of Kuruksetra) the mystic philosophy of *Gita* was once explained to the Surya-god. The message was received through a chain of disciplic succession. But in course of time when the chain was broken by some reason or other, Lord Sri Krishna appeared again in the battle of Kuruksetra and taught Arjuna again the self-same truth of the *Bhagavad-gita*. The following statement was made by the Lord in connection with His advent at that time. He said, “O son of Pritha! All devotees of Godhead do scrupulously follow the recognized path chalked out by Me. And I do good to such different devotees in proportion of their degree of surrender unto Me.” [*Gita* 4.11]

What are the processes of the varying degrees of devotional service? The author of *Caitanya-Caritamrita* explains this fact as pure devotional service, (*suddha-bhakti*) devotional service (*bhakti*) and adulterated devotional service, (*vaidhi-bhakti*). Therefore there are three divisions of devotional service in variant degrees. Devotional service, which is dictated by some desire for material or spiritual gain or which is covered by fruitive action, philosophical speculations or mysticism—in other words which is aimed at something not exactly in the line of satisfaction of the Absolute Truth—is called *vaidhi-bhakti* or adulterated devotional service. Devotional services mixed up in fruitive action, philosophical speculation, mysticism or some-

thing mixed up in personal gain, all of them are called adulterated devotional service. Devotional service performed strictly in conformity with revealed scriptures, these prescribed devotional services are distinct from adulterated devotional service. This process of service is favorable to the satisfaction of the Lord.

And there are those who are spontaneously devoted to the Lord without any aim of personal gain. They are called attracted devotees. They are attracted to the service of the Lord spontaneously and follow the footprints of self-realized souls. They not only follow the prescribed services but also supercede them if need be and all of them are conducive to the attainment of pure devotional service. As such pure devotional service is identical with spontaneous devotional service. This pure devotional service is the facsimile of the devotional services rendered in the transcendental realm of Godhead, *Goloka*, whereas the prescribed regulation of devotion services is the facsimile of the transcendental realm of Godhead called by the name *Vaikuntha*.

In *Vaikuntha-dhama* the devotees render service in a reverential mood whereas in *Goloka* the devotees render services in a spontaneous mood. In the spontaneous mood only, the Personality of Godhead Sri Krishna takes more pleasure and therefore He says about the degrees of services. The degrees of services are mentioned therefore in relation with pure, adulterated and prescribed forms of devotional services.

The degree of pure devotional service is represented in the activities of the residents of *Brajabhumi* (Vrindavan). In the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (10.82.44) the expression is made by the Lord Himself when He met the inhabitants of Vrindavan at *Samanta-pancaka* during a solar-eclipse.

During that time the Lord came from Dvaraka and the inhabitants from Vrindavan luckily met Him there. The meeting was too much painful for the damsels of *Brajabhumi* because Lord Krishna left them apparently while dociling at Dvaraka. The Lord obligingly acknowledged the pure devotional services of the damsels of *Braja*, and said as follows: “The life nectarine of every living being is pure devotional services rendered for the satisfaction of the Personality of Godhead. Oh My dear damsels of *Braja-dhama*, your affection unto Me is the only means by which you have attained My favor.”

The Lord said, “My mother (Yasoda-devi) thinks of Me in filial affection and therefore sometimes she checks My naughty acts by arresting Me by ropes. She thinks of Me very insignificantly because I have accepted her motherly affection. Friends who are at-

tached to Me in pure friendship do spring up to My shoulders and think of Me in equal terms without recognizing My greatness as the Lord. Similarly My loving damsels sometimes throw upon Me cruel words in anger, but such vulgar languages from them, full with love for Me, give Me more pleasure than the hymns of the Vedas chanted in My account.

Such slang language, by lovable objects upon the beloved, are significant of pure affection. Where the beloved is worshiped as the most venerable object by the devotee, spontaneous loving sentiments are observed to be lacking. The Vedic instructions, for regulating a neophyte devotee lacking in pure love of Godhead, may compare very gorgeously as the face of spontaneous love of Godhead. But in fact such spontaneous pure love of Godhead is far superior in quality than regulated devotional services. Such pure love of Godhead is always glorified in all respects to the reverential devotional services rendered by a less affectionate devotee.

Lord Krishna in the Form of Lord Caitanya educates His devotees to make progressive development up to this stage of pure devotional services. As such He appears periodically as a devotee in order to take part in various wonderful activities depicted in His sublime philosophy and teachings.

There are innumerable spiritual planets in the spiritual sky and in all of them the Lord accepts services of the eternal devotees in a reverential mood. Therefore, Lord Sri Krishna presents His most confidential pastimes as He enjoys in His transcendental realm. Such pastimes are so much attractive that they attract even the Lord and thus He relishes them in the form of Lord Caitanya.

Yogamaya is the name of His internal potency by which He is made to forget Himself and becomes an instrument and lovable object of His pure devotees in different transcendental mellows. This *yogamaya* potency creates a spiritual sentiment in the minds of the damsels of Braja by which they think of Lord Krishna as their paramour. This paramorous sentiment is never to be compared with mundane illicit love by the opposite sex. It has nothing to do with sex-psychology although such pure love of devotees seems to be so.

We must know it for certain that nothing can exist in this cosmic manifestation which has no counter reality in the spiritual field. All material manifestations are emanations of the transcendence. The erotic principles of amorous love reflected in mixed up values, may be a perverted reflection of the reality in spirit—but we cannot make an estimation of the reality without their being sufficiently educated in the spiritual

science. This spiritual love sentiment is conducted by the *yogmaya* potency and as such, both Lord Sri Krishna and the damsels of Braja forget themselves in such spiritual enrapture. By such forgetfulness only, the attractive beauty of the *gopis* plays a prominent part in the transcendental sense-satisfaction of the Lord who has nothing to do with mundane sexology. And because spiritual love of Godhead is above everything mundane, it seems superficially that the *gopis* have transgressed the codes of mundane morality. Mundane moralists are thus perpetually puzzled by this and the acts of *yogamaya* are demonstrated by not exposing the Lord and His pastimes to the eyes of the mundaners. It is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gita* by the Lord, that He reserves the right of not being exposed to every one. The acts of *yogamaya* make it possible that the Lord and the *gopis* in loving ecstasy sometimes meet and sometimes they separate.

These transcendental loving affairs of the Lord are unimaginable by empiricists who indulge in the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. As such the Lord appears Himself before the mundaners to bestow upon them the highest form of spiritual realization, as well as to relish Personally the essence of it. The Lord is so merciful that He appears Himself to take back the fallen souls to home in the Kingdom of Godhead, where erotic principles of love of Godhead are eternally relished in Their real form, as against the perverted sex-love so much adored and indulged in, in the diseased condition of the fallen soul.

The purpose of displaying *rasa-lila* by the Lord is essentially made so that all the fallen souls may give up their rabid morality and religiosity and be attracted in the Kingdom of God to enjoy the reality. A person who actually understands what is *rasa-lila*, will certainly hate to indulge in mundane sex-love. So the realized soul after hearing the Lord's *rasa-lila* in the proper channel will result in complete abstinence of material sex-pleasure. That is the crucial test of it.

[This is the first 6 pages of a brilliantly deep and penetrating 32 page article, full of profound *siddhantas*. The full manuscript is also available in the pre-1965 section of the *Folio* program —Ed.]

Śrī Śaci-Tanayāṣṭakam

Eight Prayers for Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari

Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya

1.

*ujjvala varaṇa gaura-vara-deham
vilasita niravadhi bhāva-vidhamtri-
bhuvana pāvana kṛpāyāḥ leśam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam*

effulgent; complexion; divine body of golden hue
enact pastimes; array of; heights of Rādhikā's mahābhāva
threefold world; purifies; of mercy; by a mere iota
unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He whose divine bodily complexion is an effulgent gold,
Whose array of pastimes enact the heights of Rādhikā's mahābhāva,
Who by a mere iota of mercy purifies the threefold world,
I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

2.

*gad-gad antara bhāva-vikāraṁ
durjana tarjana nāda-viśālam
bhava-bhaya bhāñjana kāraṇa-karuṇam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam*

faltering voice; internal; transformations of *bhāvas*
persons of wicked mentality; menace; thunderous roar
fears of mundane existence; dispels; mercy as the cause
unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He who experiences the eight *bhāvas*, such as a faltering voice,
Whose thunderous roars menace persons with a wicked mentality,
Whose mercy is the cause for His dispelling the fears of mundane existence,
I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

3.

*aruṇāmbara-dhara cāru-kapolam
indu vinindita nakha-caya-ruciram
jalpita nija guṇa nāma-vinodam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam*

ruddy robe like the newborn sun; adorns; lovely cheeks
full moon; defame; radiant, glowing fingernails
chanting of; own virtues; holy names; immense ecstasy of
unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He who wears ruddy robes like the newborn sun, Who has lovely cheeks,
Whose radiant, glowing fingernails defame the fullest moon,
Who is immersed in the ecstasy of chanting His own virtues and names,
I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

4.

*cañcala cāru-caraṇa gati ruciram
mañjira rañjita pada-yuga madhuram
candra vinindita śītala vadanam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam*

moving; charming lotus feet; gait; elegant
small, jingling anklet bells; beautified; lotus feet; sweet
moon; defame; cooling; face of
unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He whose charming, moving feet and elegant gait
Are adorned with the sweet sounds of jingling anklet bells,
Whose divine face defames the rays of the cooling moonlight—
I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

5.

dḥṛta kaṭi ḍora kamaṇḍalu-daṇḍam
divya kalevara muṇḍita muṇḍam
durjana kalmaṣa khaṇḍana daṇḍam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam

possesses; waist; loin cloth; waterpot; *sannyāsa* staff;
 divine, transcendental; body; shaved head;
 wicked; sins; vanquishes; *sannyāsa* staff;
 unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He who possesses a loin cloth, waterpot and *sannyāsa* staff,
 Whose divine body and shaven head are so beautiful,
 And who vanquishes the sins of the wicked with His *daṇḍa*—
 I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

6.

bhūṣaṇa-bhū-raja alakā valitam
kampita bimbādhara vara ruciram
malayaja viracita ujjoala-tilakam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam

ornament of dust; lock of hair; endowed with;
 quiver; lips like red *bimba* fruit; matured; captivating;
 sandlewood; made of; shining *tilaka*;
 unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He whose locks of hair are ornamented by the dust raised by His ecstatic dancing,
 Whose captivating lips quiver like matured red *bimba* fruits,
 Whose divine form and forehead shine with *tilaka* and sandlewood—
 I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

7.

nindita aruṇa kamala-dala-nayanam
ājānulambita śrī bhujā-yugalam
kalevara kaiśora nartana-veśam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam

defames; fresh morning sun; lotus flower petals;
 extend to the knees; holy; long arms;
 form; youthful; dressed like a dancer;
 unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He whose lotus eyes defame the hue of the new morning sun,
 Whose divine, elongated arms extend down to His knees;
 Whose divine form is dressed like a youthful dancer—
 I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

8.

vigalita nayana-kamala jaladhāram
bhūṣaṇa nava rasa bhāva-vikāram
gati ati manthara nṛtya-vilāsam
taṁ praṇamāmi ca śrī śacī-tanayam

constantly exude; lotus eyes; streams of tears
 ornaments; everfresh; mellows; sentiments of ecstatic love
 gait; deliberate and elegant; divine pastimes of dancing
 unto Him; I offer obeisances; also; Gaurahari, son of Śrī Śacī

Unto He whose lotus eyes constantly exude a stream of tears,
 Whose form is ornamented by the everfresh mellows of *bhāva*,
 Whose elegant gait accompanies His divine dancing pastimes—
 I offer obeisances to Gaurahari – also known as Śrī Śacīnandana.

Vrisabhanu-nandini

Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

Excerpt from a lecture given 31 December 1998, Murwillumbah, Australia.

Introduction

The following is the first in a series of three lectures on the three aspects of Srimati Radharani. Srila Maharaja takes reference from the *Sanat Kumar Samhita*:

*saktih samyoginī kāmā vāmā saktir viyogini
hlādinī kirtidā putrī caivam rādhātrayam vrājī*

Then, with reference to other scriptures, Srila Maharaja adds his own fathomless realizations to show the relationship of these three with the three aspects of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His *lila* in Navadvipa, Puri, and South India.

In this first lecture He mainly discusses Vrisabhanu-nandini, the root Radhika in Whom the other two aspects, or manifestations, are eternally situated, and he briefly describes the other two. In the following two lectures, to be published in the next issues, he concentrates on Her two manifestations. Regarding Viyogini Radhika, that is Radhika Who feels separation from Krishna after He went to Mathura, Srila Maharaja shares the details of Krishna leaving Vrindavan, His breaking the heart of Nanda Maharaja in Mathura after His killing of Kamsa; and Uddhava's visit to Vrindavan, and witnessing the pitiful condition of Nanda Maharaja and the gopis in their mood of tearing separation.

In the third lecture Srila Maharaja concentrates on Samyogini Radhika, that manifestation Who meets Krishna at Kuruksetra. He relates the long awaited meeting of Krishna and Mother Yashoda there, as well as His message regarding His *bhagavat-tatto* to the gopis, and their mentally taking Him back to Vrindavan. -Ed

Lecture

Those who are doing *arcana* of Radha-Krishna, on the path of *raganuga*, will go to Vrindavan in the heart of Goloka, and there they will serve Radha-Krishna conjugal in *unnatojjoala-rasa*. And those who are worshiping Radha and Krishna, but not in the mood of this *unnatojjoala rasa*, not under the guidance of any *gopi*, will go to Mathura or Dvaraka and there they will serve Satyabhama in that part of Goloka. Satyabhama is a manifestation of Radhika, and so they will serve Satyabhama and Krishna there. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has kindly explained all these truths and a *raganuga bhakta sadhaka* should know them. You should also know that in Goloka there are three places: 1) Vrindavan, Gokula and Vraja—these are in the same category. Then 2) Dvaraka and 3) Kuruksetra and other places.

There are also three aspects of Śrīmatī Radhika. She is the same Radhika, but Her mood is somewhat changable. These aspects are: Vrisabhanu-nandini, Radhika-viyogini and Radhika-samyogini. Who is Vrisabhanu-nandini? She is always together with Krishna; there is no separation. She feels some separation mood when She is doing *mana*, or when She is in *prema-vaicitya* (separation from Krishna felt when They are both together), or when Krishna goes cowherding—only at these times. So Vrisabhanu-nandini never feels separation, and this is called *nitya-lila*. It continues from one morning to the next, from *nisanta-lila* (the end of the night pastimes) to all the other *lilas* in each twenty-four hour period these are called *nitya-lila*. Do you understand? There is no *naimittik-lila* there¹

Three types of *Dhamas*

There are also three types of *dhama* manifestations. The first is *prakata*, that is, when the *dhama* and its *lilas* are fully manifest in this world. The second is *aprakata-lila sthala*, the place of *aprakata*, transcendence, the spiritual world, where all *lilas* are eternally manifest, where *nitya-lila* is always present. And the third is *drisyaman-*

¹ The literal definition of *naimittik* is "that activity which takes place due to some cause". It is sometimes called, therefore, causal activity. Because this 'cause' does not exist in the *aprakata* realm, i.e. there are no demons there, the demon killing *lilas* do not exist there, except as a conception or mood.

dhama, that is, what we see in this earthly Vrindavan now. At the present time we cannot see Krishna and Radha, and we cannot see any pastimes. What are we seeing? Who are we seeing? Covered by *maya*, we cannot see any pastimes. We can, however, hear the pastimes, and then we can understand that, "Oh this is the same Govardhana which was lifted by Krishna and this is the same Yamuna." This is called *drisyaman*, the or pre-sent vision of the *dhama*.

What is *prakata dhama*? When Krishna descended here with all His associates, Vraja *dhama* itself also descended from Goloka Vrindavana. Both *dhamas* are one and the same; there is no difference. On one hand there is no difference at all, and on the other hand there is some difference. At the time of Krishna's *prakata-lila*, when He descended and played here, *Yogamaya* connected this earth to that transcendental 'earth' pastime place. At that time the beauty of that place, Vrindavan *dhama*, was so glorious. All the *nitya-siddha* and *sadhana-siddha* devotees, could go there and see Radha and Krishna; and those who were practitioners, the *sadhakas*, as well as those in *bhava avastha*, could also go. But after some years the pastimes disappeared and were no longer seen by persons of this world. Only *siddha* devotees, those whose love and affection have been perfected, can go to Goloka Vrindavan where they will stay forever and never have to return to this world. This is one difference.

Another difference is that although Vrindavan here in this world, is the same transcendental *dhama*, our eyes are covered with material *maya*, or in other words *yogamaya* has covered the *dhama*, and we cannot see it with our material eyes. On the other hand, a very high class devotee, sometimes gets a glimpse of that *aprakata-lila*.

In that *aprakata-lila*, there is no birth pastime of Krishna. Abhimanyu, the husband of Radhika, is also not there, and there is no going and coming from Vrindavan to Mathura and Dvaraka. Only *abhimana*, the mood or conception of such pastimes is there. For

example, everyone in Vrindavan is under the conception that Yasoda bore a son, Krishna, but there is no *janma*, no birth, in Vrindavan; only Nava Kisora, Natabara murti Krishna is there, and Radhika is also there. This is the root substance in Vrindavan. In *aprakata* Vrindavan there is only an idea that Krishna has gone to Mathura and Dvaraka; at that time the Brijabasis are thinking, "Oh, this separation is very bad; we cannot tolerate it."

In *prakata-lila*, however, these conceptions have *murti*, solid form. In *aprakata lila* Srimati Radhika thinks that, "I am married to Abhimanyu," but this is only a mood or conception created by *Yogamaya*. on the other



Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

hand here, in *prakata-lila*, that conception takes a shape and everyone can see that, "He is the husband of Srimati Radhika." In other words, in this *prakata-dhama*, in *prakata-lila*, everyone can see that Yasoda is giving birth to Krishna. There, in *aprakata*, although there is no *janma*, everyone thinks that, "Yasoda had begotten a child and His name is Krishna; He is Yasodanandana." They also have the conception that Krishna has gone to Dvaraka, although actually He has not gone. They lament that, "Oh, Krishna has gone! He should not have gone. I am feeling so much separa-

tion." Similarly, there is no Kamsa, only some idea of him. The Brijabasis think, "Oh, if Krishna goes to Mathura He will fight with Kamsa and Caruna and Mustika." There is really no Caruna or Mustika; only the idea is there, created by *Yogamaya*. In *prakata*, however, these conceptions have taken solid shape, and have become Caruna, Mustika, Kamsa, Jarasandha and so on.

Only a realized person, whose *bhajana* has come up to the stage of *bhava*, can understand these truths. I am giving only an outline, only for those who want to advance, for those who have no worldly desires, and for those who are always thinking of these subject matters. I'm telling all these things in order to help them. This is called association.

A man who is always engaged in making money, who desires *pratistha*, that is name, fame and all other worldly attainments, who is always busy in earning his livelihood, cannot understand all these principles. I know that devotees of this high class are very rare, but still I am speaking so that you can hear, and in the future you may be fortunate enough to attain that place.

So there is no difference between *prakata* and *aprakata*, but our eyes, covered by *mahamaya*, cannot see as such. We have no conception of *aprakata lila*—only *prakata lila*. All the *lilas* in *prakata lila*, however are in *aprakata lila*, and therefore *parakiya lila* is also there. The root is there, and it is pervertedly reflected here in this world.

Three Aspects of Radhika

I was explaining that Radha has three aspects: As *Vrsabhanu-nandini*, *Srimati Radhika* is never in separation; we can think of Their pastimes as *nitya-lila asta-prahara*. [One *prahara* is three hours and so *asta*, or eight *praharas* is twenty-four hours.] We can think for example, how Radha is meeting with and serving *Kṛṣṇa* in *nisanta-lila*, at the end of night.

After *nisanta lila* comes *pratah lila*, in the early morning pastimes, and then *purvahna lila*, the pre-noon pastimes. At this time Krishna is going to graze the cows and *Srimati Radhika* and all the other *gopis* are looking towards Him with their different moods as they stand in their various hiding places. Then Krishna goes cowherding, and the *gopis* go to *Radha-kunda* and *Kusuma-sarovara* to try to meet Him there. They then engage in pastimes at *Surya-kunda* and other places. They steal the *vamsi* from Krishna and He looks here and there: "Oh, where is My *vamsi*? Where is My *vamsi*? Have you got it? Do you have it? Do you? Oh, you

have it? I will search and see whether You have taken it or not!" And sometimes they engage in gambling pastimes; *Srimati Radhika* defeats Krishna and all the *gopis* clap their hands.

Later, when Krishna returns home from cow-grazing, all the *gopis* are in *Javata*. They are looking at Krishna and performing *aratik* from the corners of their eyes. In other words, they are performing *aratik* with their side-long glances.

After that they all engage in their *sayahna-lila*, at which time Krishna goes to milk the cows after taking a light evening meal. At this time also, the *gopis* watch the beautiful scene. After this *Srimati Radhika* cooks something in *Javata* and sends it to *Nandagaon*, where Krishna, along with His father and all His uncles and friends, takes *prasadam*. His remnants are then sent to *Srimati Radhika*, and later, at midnight, They again meet. In this way there is never any separation; or, there is only separation when Krishna goes cowherding or *Srimati Radhika* is doing *mana* or when She experiences *prema-vaicittya*.

So one *Radhika* is always with Krishna, and She is *Vrsabhanu-nandini*. When Krishna goes to Mathura however, She is another *Viyogini*. *Viyogini* is actually the same *Radhika*, but She is a manifestation. After Mathura Krishna goes to *Dvaraka*, and this *Viyogini* feels separation and laments, "Where is Krishna?"

She is always weeping in the mood of separation, sometimes at *Uddhava-kyari* and sometimes at other places. But this is only in *prakata-lila*, not in *aprakata*. In *aprakata* there is only the *abhimana* of Krishna's having left—no shape. This is because in *Goloka* Krishna neither leaves *Vrindavan* forever, nor for so many years, like one hundred and eight years. Never. Rather, they see it like a dream and think that, "Oh, Krishna has gone."

The third aspect of *Radhika* is *Samyogini Radhika*. She is that manifestation of *Radhika* who gives up *Vrindavan* and goes to *Kuruksetra* to meet Krishna and bring him back. You should understand that *Vrsabhanu-nandini* and *Viyogini-Radhika* never give up *Vrindavan*. Never, never, never.

Just as *Brajendra-nandana* Krishna and *Rohini-nandana* Rama (*Bala-rama*) are always playing in *Vrindavan*, never giving it up for a moment, so this *Vrsabhanu-nandini* and *Viyogini-Radhika* also never leave *Vrindavan*. *Samyogini-Radhika*, however, feeling so much separation, *viyoga*, goes to *Kuruksetra* to bring Krishna back to *Vrindavan*. This is *Samyogini-Radhika*.

Three Aspects of Mahaprabhu

I want to come to the point of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes. I've explained about Radharani and I have given examples so that you can understand the nature of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Krishna who took the beauty and mood of Radhika. In other words, by taking Her beauty and mood, Krishna came in the form of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu or Sacinandana Gaura-hari.



*Sri Sri Radha-Vinoda Bihariji & Mahaprabhu,
Kesavaji Gaudiya Matha, Mathura.*

For this reason there are also three aspects of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu is always in Navadvipa; always. He never leaves. This is why Navadvipa is called Vrindavan.

Also, in Navadvipa there are nine islands, and in these nine islands all the twelve *vanas*, of Vraja are present :

Vrindavan, Madhuvana, Talavana, Kumudvan, Bahulavan, Kamyavana, Khadiravana, Bhadravana, Bhandiravana, Bilvavana, Mahavana, Lahavana. Besides this the twelve *upavanas* and twelve *sakhavanas*

are also present, and so altogether thirty-six *vanas* are present. In Navadvipa, however, these *vanas* are not situated in the same order as in Vrindavan. Some are here, some are there. Vrindavan, Kamudvana, Madhuvana, Talavana and so on are situated differently. Mayapura for example is a combination of Gokula and Mathura where He took birth. And Govardhana Hill is in Koladvipa, where our Devananda Gaudiya Matha is situated. There, *rasa-sthali* is located, because there in the lap of Govardhana, *rasa-lila* is so high class. Radhakunda is there in Ritadvipa, and Bhandirvana is present in Modradumdvipa, which is on the other side of the Ganges. In this way all the *vanas* are there. None of these *vanas* are in Puri, and therefore it is Navadvipa which is *avinnata* (non different) from Vrindavan. All of Mahaprabhu's *nitya-lila* pastimes in the eight *praharas* (three hour time periods) are in Navadvipa, and He never leaves there.

Another reason that Navadvipa is non different from Vrindavan is that during Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes in the very early morning He remembers the *nisanta* pastimes of Radha and Krishna and weeps. Then, a little later in the morning [6:00 – 8:30 A.M.], during *pratah-lila*, Caitanya Mahaprabhu meditates on the pastimes of Krishna and Radha which take place at that same time of morning. Radha is in Javata and Krishna is in Nandagaon

and They are taking bath, getting dressed and so on. And Mahaprabhu is always meditating on these pastimes and weeping. Then, in *purvahnna-lila*, He is meditating on the pastimes of that time, how Krishna is goes cowherding. Mahaprabhu's whole life goes on in this way. In Svetadvipa, Goloka Vrindavan, these *lilas* are all eternally present. Here, in the Navadvipa manifest in this world Caitanya Mahaprabhu's lila is called *prakata*, and there it is *aprakata*. There, He does not have to go to Puri or to Daksina Bharata (South India) or anywhere else. He is simply playing these *asta-kaliya*

lila. In *aprakata lila*, in Svetadvipa, He has no *sannyasa lila*. There is only an idea of it; and here in Navadvipa this idea takes a manifest form.

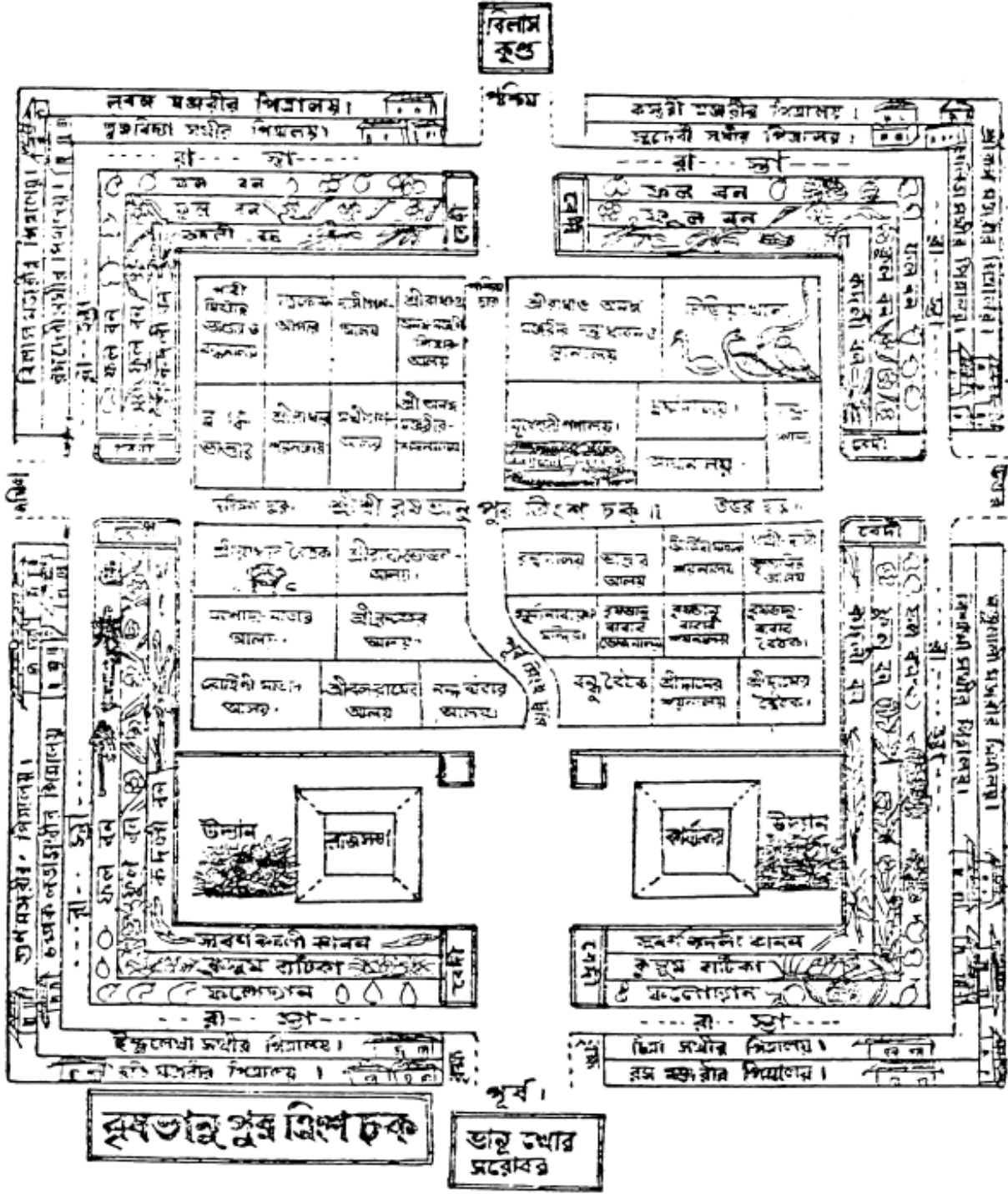
On one hand Caitanya Mahaprabhu has taken *sannyasa*, but on the other hand He cannot leave Navadvipa, just as Krishna can never leave Vrindavan. So who goes to Puri? It is only a manifestation of Caitanya Mahaprabhu who goes there and takes *sannyasa*. *Sannyasa* is not part of His *nitya-lila*. Do you understand? It is like *naimitika lila*. How? For example, the birth of Krishna in *aprakata lila* is *naimittika lila*, and the marriages performed in Dvaraka are *naimittika lila*. In Vrindavan there is only the idea that Krishna has taken birth and that He has been married. Similarly, in Svetadvipa of Nitya Goloka, situated by the side of Vrindavan, there is no *sannyasa-lila*—only the mood is there. That mood, *abhimana*, takes form here, and Caitanya Mahaprabhu thus takes *sannyasa* and leaves Navadvipa to go to Puri.

What is Puri? Dvaraka. Why? Subhadra cannot come to Vrindavan. The sons of Vasudeva, Baladeva and Vasudeva-Krishna, also cannot come to Vrindavan. So only there does Mahaprabhu play the role of *sannyasi*. Where? In 'Dvaraka.' What is the need of Caitanya Mahaprabhu going to Puri? This only takes place in *prakata-lila*, where that mood has taken shape. Then, from there He goes to Sri Rangam in South India, and there He meets with Venkata Bhatta, Gopala Bhatta and others, and He enacts so many pastimes. Next He goes to Godavari-tata, the bank of the Godavari river, and there He meets Raya Ramananda.

In all the pastimes which took place in Puri, Caitanya Mahaprabhu was always in the mood of separation. He was always feeling and tasting Radhika's moods. You should understand that this is like what I explained about Krishna in Vrindavan. The Mahaprabhu of Dvaraka Puri is a manifestation of Mahaprabhu in Navadvipa. In Navadvipa He is always in *kisora-lila*, never taking *sannyasa*. In Navadvipa He takes birth, plays with other boys, and is always performing *sankirtana*; there is no opulence there at all. In Puri, on the other hand, there is so much opulence. No one can ever approach Mahaprabhu. They must go to Raya Ramananda and Svarupa Damodara and beg permission, and then they can go to Mahaprabhu. And what is Mahaprabhu doing there? A very big opulence. No one can act as He does. Navadvipa-lila is *naravata-lila* (human-like pastimes) and there in Puri it is *aisvarya-lila*. In South India, He meets Raya Ramananda and He hears something from him. Is there anything to hear in Navadvipa? All His pastimes in Navadvipa are *naravata-lila*, like those of a human

being. In Puri He sometimes becomes like a tortoise, and sometimes his limbs are stretched out, his joints disconnected and held together only by His skin. At that time He becomes so long. This is opulence. No human being can do like this. So another reason that Navadvipa-lila is like Vrindavan-lila is that it is *naravata-lila*. Therefore this place is the highest of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's *dhamas*, and Puri-lila, where He tastes the moods of Radhika in Gambhira is second in importance.

Regarding Samyogini, this is when Mahaprabhu goes to South India. Why will Caitanya Mahaprabhu go to South India? What is the need? He will never go there and leave Navadvipa; but when He goes in *prakata-lila* He is like *samyogini*. So we should try to know all these *siddhantas*, truths, and then chant and remember them. You should not exercise your mental powers, to understand them, otherwise *maya* will come. So try to chant more. Whatever I am speaking is not my view; I am explaining the views of the *guru-parampara*, and these are very rarely revealed truths. You cannot find these very high truths by searching, but I have given you the essence and some outlines. After some time you will forget, but those who are very fortunate, they will not forget. Moreover, although what I am explaining to you is pure, you cannot take it in its pure form or pure sense. Your material conceptions will cover your understanding. You will try to understand by your intelligence, but please don't exercise your mental speculations. Try to have full faith and pray that these truths mercifully manifest in your heart. These facts are true to the highest extent. I don't know if in ten or twenty or one hundred or *lakhs* of births you can realize all these things, but still I have given you some outline.



Vrisabhanu-pura

