

## Part One

7<sup>th</sup> January 2003

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22<sup>nd</sup> January 2004

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
7 January 2003*

In 1978 I had an extremely vivid dream of Srila Prabhupada. It opened with me finding myself in a forest at night. Up ahead I saw an encampment--a group of persons seated in a ring around a fire under a very large tree. I came nearer and discerned these men to be sadhus. All at once I was astounded to see that on a simple wooden platform placed in the center of the group sat Srila Prabhupada! He was wrapped from head to foot in a brown chadar. I ran forward and fell prostrate in the dust, His Divine Grace on my left, the campfire on my right. Not only did I fall into dust, but into shock as well. My sweet Lord, Srila Prabhupada is here again!

I raised my head to see him smiling reassuringly at me, his face glowing yet ancient-looking in the dancing firelight, his eyes sparkling yet dark like glistening pools of oil. I couldn't find a word to say to him. But the only thought on my mind was, "How can I serve you, Srila Prabhupada?" In 1978 that was a profound and at the same time poignant question, now that His Divine Grace had physically departed this world. He nodded his head from side to side in his characteristic manner and, still smiling, said only this to me:

"Why don't you write?"

I awoke. Stunned, I could not take what I had just experienced as anything less than a direct darshan of my spiritual master. I had just gotten from him, in all my worthlessness, a direct order.

Since that time I labored to fulfill that order by writing three books that were published in the 1990's. This E-journal, appearing here under the title **In2-MeC**, is in further pursuance of that order. (If you find the title puzzling, well, think about it!) I call it a journal but I will not be limited to merely recording the things I am doing "in real time. " Here, I'll be writing. For Prabhupada.

When I was in high school and college I used to think I was blessed with a talent to write. But in fact it is only a blessing if you can write for Prabhupada and Krsna. It is a curse to write for one's own self. My very senior Godbrother, His Grace Brahmananda Prabhu, related to me that the only time he saw Srila Prabhupada actually *curse* someone was when a gifted disciple turned down writing for Prabhupada to write for himself. Srila Prabhupada offered that, If you desire to make a name for yourself as an author, we can give you all the credit for writing *Nectar of Devotion*, which is ready for publication. This person refused, got to his feet and turned to walk away from the spiritual master of the universe. In transcendental anger, Srila Prabhupada called after him, "Those who are envious and mischievous, who are the lowest among men, I perpetually cast into the ocean of material existence, into various demoniac species of life. Attaining repeated birth amongst the species of demoniac life, O son of Kunti, such persons can never approach Me. Gradually they sink down into the most abominable type of existence. " His Divine Grace actually cited only the Sanskrit of these verses (Bg 16. 19-20), but there you have the meaning. And indeed this person sank into abomination and many years later died most painfully of AIDS.

Save me, Srila Prabhupada! Please accept this attempt to serve your lotus feet.

All right, so since it is a journal too, what *am* I doing "in real time" these days? (Let's not forget, time is Krsna! We have to spend it for Him. ) Since December 31 I have been in this city of Mahalaksmi, Kolhapur, which Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu visited to have the darshan of the enchanting deity of the Goddess of Fortune who resides here in separation from Lord Vaikuntha Isvara (Venkateshwara, or Balaji, who dwells at Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh). I will be here until the end of January. There is a community here of several hundred ISKCON devotees and congregation. Hence, I have ample opportunities for preaching. I've spoken at a Krsna conscious New Year's festival to some 500 celebrants, given a number of classes on Bhagavad-gita, and am now holding a four-day seminar on chanting the holy name, going through the 11 verses of Kali Santarana Upanisad.

The association here is very blissful. I hope in the next few days I can acquaint my readers more intimately with the Kolhapur devotees.

As per my usual routine, I worship Shaligram every morning with puja and a yajna. That takes about two and a half hours. More about that some other time. I do several hours of study each day too. I have a lot of verses I want to learn within the next two years.

It's been a long time since I had contact with my first temple president, HH Satsvarupa Maharaja, but whenever I come across one of his uncountable books, I'm in his thrall. In my study session of a few days ago, I found this passage of his. As soon as I read it I knew I would have to reproduce it here in **In2-MeC**. It's taken from *From Imperfection, Purity will come About*.

But some say, I grew up in *gurukula* with the devotees. I was forced to participate in Krsna consciousness. I didn't choose it. Now I want to check out the material scene. I can't repress it, it's breaking out of me--a desire to tour the town and to see what the materialists enjoy. I want to go to night clubs and dance. I want to find out who I am and I think the nondevotees can help me. They have so many teachings and ways. Perhaps I'll go to college. It's not that only Hare Krsna people are good. In fact, I'm beginning to think they're shallow. I don't want their company, at least not exclusively. I want to be with people who can think for themselves.

Satsvarupa Maharaja then comments:

It sounds feasible in some respects. I know you have good reasons to feel this way and you've convinced yourself. You won't listen to me why you should be patient and find all that you need within the wide bounds of devotional service. I will pray for you, but I won't go with you. I am satisfied with *bhakti*.

It's not only gurukula veterans who argue in this way. Yes, I too have a version of this argument! While writing my three books on philosophy, I had to acquaint myself with the ideas of Western thinkers. I found that some of these philosophers express themselves very well. They formulate penetrating questions that challenge some of the stock answers I learned to rely on in ISKCON. After finishing the philosophy books, I began writing a novel. So I delved into the works of stylish authors who, while not devotional, were at least pessimistic about life in the material world--Raymond Chandler, for example, who wrote that after sunset the streets of Los Angeles got dark with something more than night. I studied plotmaking and

techniques for holding a reader's attention. They have so many teachings and ways. Yes they do.

Well then? The Aborigines of the Australian outback also have so many teachings and ways. But am I interested in that? No way.

Now let's get real about what's going on here. It's all a question of how a living entity is attracted to the modes of nature. Yup, we're talking about taste. Certain manifestations of the three modes I find interesting. The formative ideas that stand behind the culture of the West, for example. Other manifestations leave me cold. That's right, I couldn't care less about the Dreamtime myths of Downunder, though I've met Australians (devotees, no less!) who think that's the sixth Veda or something. Another example: I never in my life cared for sports. I know devotees who've lived in Sridham Mayapur practically all their lives who still read the sports page for the cricket scores. Anyway, as they say, "Whatever floats your boat", right? But what floats boats sooner or later sinks boats. That's where all paths of the progress of mundane ideas finally end up: under the waves of birth and death.

In reality, *anarthopasamam saksad*: I, the spirit soul, have no relationship to any manifestation of the modes of material nature. It's like being intrigued by cloud formations, finding familiar forms in them--"Oh, there's a hand! There's a woman kneeling to pray! There's a giant bird!" Accepting for argument's sake that those clouds, amazingly, really are shaped the way I see them, what can they do for me? Well, beyond exciting me for a very short time, nothing. But in fact, those shapes exist only from my perspective here on the ground. Up there, the clouds have their own shapes. They would look completely different to me if I was able to rise up from the earth and float among them. Moreover, clouds seen either from the earth or the sky are ever-changing. And finally, just what *are* clouds anyway? Only ephemeral water vapor.

So these material attractions, however we try to defend and preserve them, are insubstantial from where we really sit as spirit souls.

Yet at the same time, they pose a grave danger to the welfare of our real nature, which is consciousness. They can cover our remembrance of Krsna. Fascination for the simulacra exhibited by clouds in the sky diverts our attention from the sun. Forgetfulness of the sun, the source of our eyes' seeing power, invites the clouds to completely cover our vision. This is where repeated birth and death begins.

*Bhuliyā tomare, samsara asiya, peye nana-vidha byartha*: "O Lord, forgetting you and coming to this material world, I have experienced a host of sins and sorrows. "

Of course, one can argue *yukta-vairagya*--"Sure, material interests are there, but I am engaging these propensities in Krsna's service. " That is indeed the process. Go fishing, yes--but don't get wet!

Speaking of remembrance. . .

## THE FIRST TIME I MET SRILA PRABHUPADA

You may have seen my Godsister Mahamaya Devi Dasi's book, *Srila Prabhupada is Coming! My Personal Memories of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*. Therein she recalls that she joined the Boston ISKCON temple in January, 1971. At that time, ISKCON Boston was located at 40 North Beacon Street in Allston. The building, a three-storey weatherboard house, still stands today. ISKCON Boston, of course, is now located on the more fashionable Commonwealth Avenue.

I had joined that North Beacon Street temple a few months before Mahamaya Devi Dasi. Actually, I must admit I don't remember her (Emily, as she was known in those days). I was a temple devotee, she was a press devotee, and she moved to New York with the ISKCON Press in April '71. In any case, her book is most valuable for my writing of this story, for she accurately records dates that I'd long forgotten.

After the press pulled out, Satsvarupa dasa Adhikari remained temple president for several more months until he relocated to Dallas by Srila Prabhupada's order. The vice president was Harer Nama Prabhu, whom I greatly respected. Rukmini Devi Dasi, wife of Bharadvaja Prabhu, stayed on for a while as pujari.

Most of the rest of us were uninitiated, and we were just a handful--Audry, Rosemary, Carol, Carolannie, Thomas, Larry, Jill, James, Barbara, Donna, Paul, Martin, Victor, Nancy, Jody, Joseph, and me, Roger. Though I was just "Roger Prabhu" (we did not use the terms "bhakta" or "bhaktin" then), I was the cook of quantity prasadam for the devotees. The few initiated devotees shared the Deity cooking for Their Lordships Jagannatha, Baladeva and Subhadra.

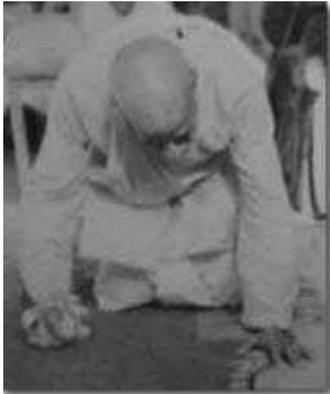
In July 1971, Srila Prabhupada flew in from Detroit to install Sri-Sri Radha-Gopiballabha and to give initiations. He stayed in Boston three days, then flew to the Henry Street temple in Brooklyn, New York.

He arrived on an afternoon flight. That morning, the Boston temple was transcendently stampeded by the lotus feet of 150 devotees who poured in from New York, Philadelphia, and other places I've forgotten. It was my service to cook lunch for all of them. And it was their service to receive Srila Prabhupada at the airport, leaving me to clean alone a kitchen in more disarray than I'd seen it for a long time. I remember I had 45 minutes to do the whole job before Srila Prabhupada was expected to walk into the temple. I'd heard that His Divine Grace would sometimes make surprise inspections of the temples he would visit. So I prayed to Krsna to empower me. And I guess He did, because when I finished that kitchen was cleaner than the clean it had been early that morning, before cooking began. But oh, how I wished I could have gone to the airport with the others!

As I raced around like a madman scrubbing everything in sight, a strange thing happened. I became aware of a faint kirtan. It sounded like a large gathering of devotees chanting the holy names, but from somewhere on the outer edge of my consciousness. Was it an ethereal phenomenon or just an audio tape that someone was playing somewhere else in the building? Now, I was pretty sure there was *nobody* in the temple except for poor old me, the kitchen-walla. At one point I even took a quick dash through the building to find out where this sound might be coming from. I thought that if it was a tape, the person playing it could help me clean the

kitchen. But I saw no one. And no matter where I went, I seemed to get no closer to nor farther away from the source of the kirtan. It remained hardly more than a murmur at the limit of my hearing.

Well, I had no time to bother about it. Srila Prabhupada was coming! I finished the kitchen, ran up the back stairs into the men's bathroom and jumped into the shower. The water splashing onto my head blocked out all other sounds. When I shut the water off, I heard the *same* kirtan, now loud and clear in the temple room, which like the bathrooms was on the middle floor of the building. This was the sound of Srila Prabhupada's arrival!



In a frenzy I toweled myself off, stabbed some tilak on my body and jumped into a dhoti and kurta. Bolting from the bathroom through the hallway, I faced the side entrance of the temple room. (The main entrance, used by Srila Prabhupada and all the devotees, was a stairway leading up from the building's ground floor front door. The side entrance was a folding "accordion" door on the next floor. ) I yanked the door open in time to see Srila Prabhupada bow down before Lord Jagannatha's altar. My first direct vision of His Divine Grace!

The temple room was packed. After bowing down, I sat scrunched against a corner wall right there at the side entrance. Meanwhile, Srila Prabhupada was being shown his Vyasasana at the "back" of the temple room (i. e. the side of the room opposite the altar). He gracefully seated himself, gazed kindly around the expectant assembly of devotees, then closed his eyes. With a humble expression on his face, he began his arrival lecture.

The accordion door next to me opened. Harer Nama Prabhu stepped through holding a large metal plate of assorted cut fruits. Seeing me first, he handed the plate to me and whispered, "Offer this to Srila Prabhupada as soon as he finishes the lecture. "

I was stunned. I don't think I said anything, but my face must have registered a foolish, "Who, ME?" Harer Nama, a very ascetic-looking devotee at that time of his life, gave me a grave stare, an art he was very practiced in. As I noted earlier, I greatly respected him. "You have to bring this to the Vyasasana NOW," he hissed. "Sit down near Prabhupada and wait. When he stops his talk, step up with this plate. " Harer Nama left the way he came, pulling the door shut behind him.

Kindly allow me to digress by putting in a few words here about what sort of person I am. When I need to, I can put on a good front. . . but under the surface I am very unsure of myself. I am a lunar type of personality, and as you know, sometimes the moon is right up there in its full glory, and sometimes it's just a silvery sliver hanging forlornly on the horizon. On Amavasya night, the moon is not to be seen at all even though it is right there.

I came to Krsna consciousness driven by self-doubt. And even after joining ISKCON--but before meeting Srila Prabhupada--I was not at all sure I would stay in this

movement. I kept the option to leave somewhere in the back of my mind. Sure, I couldn't argue with the philosophy, and I admired all the devotees, even the wacky ones. But I didn't think I really belonged to this group. So where did I belong? I didn't know. That was my condition.

Now here I was, Bhakta Loony Moonbeam. . . with a fruit plate in my lap meant for only the greatest person alive on Planet Earth. I had an order on my head given by the temple vice-president, a devotee I could never refuse. Was I wracked with insecurity? Absolutely. Was I happy? Oh yes, that too. Sweet and sour sauce all the way.

I took a careful look at Srila Prabhupada. His eyes were still closed. He was speaking about the modes of material nature, how they color the consciousness the way mud colors water. I made my move, gingerly threading my way through the devotees and guests seated close together on the floor, keeping an eye on Srila Prabhupada all the while. Thank Krsna! His eyes are always shut. He doesn't see me coming. If he suddenly looks my way, I might drop the plate.



I reached the Vyasasana but kept moving until I was close to the rear wall of the temple. Nobody was sitting in this spot because you couldn't see Srila Prabhupada's face here. I could sort of see him in profile, but it was from a rearward angle. The idea was to sit down safely outside of Srila Prabhupada's field of vision. I was sure he hadn't seen me yet, and when at last he did open his eyes, I didn't want them to fall on me. When the time comes for him to get the plate, let me pop up out of nowhere and then fall back out of sight.

The lecture was brief. Srila Prabhupada stopped and opened his eyes, looking at the Deities and at his audience. Everyone shouted "Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!" Then silence reigned. OK, now's the time. . .

But I couldn't move. Scared. Frozen to the spot. Angry at myself for not performing my duty, but too baffled by low self-esteem to do anything about it.

Now what?

All at once Srila Prabhupada's golden head swiveled back in my direction. He looked at me and smiled graciously. "Ah, prasada!", I heard him say. The sound of his voice coursed through my consciousness like electricity, sparking me to action. In an instant I was on my feet. I stepped up close beside him so that he could select whatever he wanted. He took a piece of cantaloupe, bit into it, chewed, and put the remnant back on the plate. Then he poured water into his mouth from a styrofoam cup that was also on the plate. He leaned over to his left and spit the water on the floor. Amazing! After returning the cup, he got down from the Vyasasana, offered

obeisances to the Deity, and swept out of the side door along with a dozen or so leading disciples.

The rest of the devotees, all 150, mobbed me for mahaprasadam. I did manage to swallow a grape or something before the plate was stripped of remnants.

Standing there, I suddenly realized I was ecstatic!

What had just happened?

Srila Prabhupada showed me he *knows* me! Without even having laid eyes on me before the moment he smiled at me and said "Ah, prasada," Prabhupada was transcendently aware of my person. He knew full well my self-doubts, my hesitation to commit myself, yet he reached past this inner darkness to enliven my true identity with his Divine Grace. Regardless of the factors of time, space, even the state of my mind, that militated to keep me distant from him, Srila Prabhupada knows exactly who I am, where I am--and what my service to him is! At our first meeting, this realization was unshakably enshrined in my heart.

And what about that mysterious kirtan I'd begun hearing when the temple was empty of devotees, the ethereal chanting that turned into the kirtan of the devotees who accompanied Srila Prabhupada to the temple from Logan Airport? All these years later I still wonder about that.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
9 January 2003*

### **THE SECOND TIME I MET SRILA PRABHUPADA**

I met Srila Prabhupada again on the heels of my first encounter with him. Now, while watching Siddhanta Prabhu's "Srila Prabhupada Memories" video series, I've noted that several Godbrothers report that, like me, they were shy and hesitant the first time they met His Divine Grace. After being enthused by the mercy of the initial contact, some got a little too emboldened and tried to "force" a follow-up meeting with Prabhupada on one pretext or other. Every Godbrother whom I know of with a story like this said the second time around Srila Prabhupada shut him down, either by chastisement or dismissiveness (the transcendental "cold shoulder" treatment). My second attempt to serve Prabhupada was similarly too ambitious. But Prabhupada corrected me in a different way.

You'll recall from the previous journal entry that after His Divine Grace gently lifted this skittish little worm of a self into the light, up from out of my thick shell of defensive self-absorption, I found myself in ecstasy. "Liberation means joyful." But liberation shouldn't mean that I then think I am the enjoyer.

Well, that's what happened next. Now wait a sec. . . no, truth be told, it wasn't quite like that. I didn't deliberately work out in my head a plan to try to take advantage of my new-found Relationship with Srila Prabhupada. But that's what the sudden burst of enthusiasm that dwelled up in my heart led me into. "The road to hell is paved

with good intentions" and all that. No, it wasn't like that either. I was still on the road to Srila Prabhupada. But along that road await heavy lessons for a disciple to learn.

Anyway, after Prabhupada exited the temple room I rushed out of the side door, leapt down the back stairs and burst into the kitchen. Within moments I had put together another fruit plate, this one featuring fresh New England blueberries, succulent pieces of green and orange melon, and a couple lumps of sugared butter in little cupcake paper holders. I raced back up the stairs with the plate in my hands and tapped at the door of Srila Prabhupada's quarters, located just across the hall from the side entrance to the temple.

Let's consider a moment what I was doing. My bringing that fruit plate to Prabhupada's room was more service to me than service to His Divine Grace. After all, not ten minutes earlier Srila Prabhupada had taken fruit. Just a little bit, true, but he could have taken more if he wanted. So why barge in his room with yet another plate of fruit? This illustrates what I mean about trying to take advantage of the relationship with the spiritual master.

The door opened just enough to reveal Satsvarupa Prabhu sitting on the floor inside. He looked up at me doubtfully. Whispering urgently, I told him "I've brought prasadam for Srila Prabhupada. " His eyes widened, then he turned away. I heard him ask something to Srila Prabhupada. In a moment the door swung open and I strode through.

Into the spiritual sky. I paid my dandavats and looked up in amazement.

Srila Prabhupada's room, as I recall, was painted white with blue trim. Mostly it seemed white. The floor, covered with spotless cotton sheets, was certainly all white. So Srila Prabhupada's transcendental effulgence in the midst of this color scheme had an almost blinding effect on the eye. It really seemed to me that the air in there sparkled, as if the molecules of oxygen were surcharged to a sublime glow by Prabhupada's presence.

Prabhupada sat against white bolsters behind a low table. Arrayed in a half circle around him were about a dozen of his eldest disciples, some of whom I'd only heard about--for example Karandhara Prabhu from Los Angeles, who'd arrived with Prabhupada. They looked as though they were drinking their spiritual master's divine form through their eyes.

In my new boldness I stepped up to serve Srila Prabhupada, but he motioned me to distribute the fruit to the devotees. The purport: I should not try to enjoy my relationship with the spiritual master. I should serve him by serving his servants.

But shortly, one of the disciples, Karunamoya Prabhu, spoke up. "Srila Prabhupada, he brought you a New England delicacy called blueberries. Please try them. " Prabhupada nodded to me and held out his hand. The purport: by the mercy of the spiritual master's servants, I may get a chance to serve His Divine Grace directly. I should not aspire for more than this.

I placed some blueberries in his truly lotuslike palm; but before tasting them, Prabhupada noticed the butter. He directed me to dab some of it onto the berries in his hand. Then he took, nodding his head appreciatively from side to side. Purport: Srila Prabhupada is independent, so he may call on me to personally serve him at any time.

But I must learn to remain humble.



I distributed the rest of the prasadam to the devotees, offered my obeisances, and silently withdrew.

It would be nice to be able to conclude here that I learned an important lesson from my first two meetings with Srila Prabhupada, and could thereafter move beyond my insecurities onto the steady platform of fixed devotion. But less than 48 hours later my propensity for self-doubt caused me to almost miss my initiation. That's a story for another time.

A Godbrother speaking at the Krsna Balarama Mandira 2002 Srila Prabhupada Tirobhava observance said that the reminiscences of Prabhupada's disciples of their times with His Divine Grace are not nostalgia. Well, I'm doubtful if that entirely applies to me. No, I understand what he meant and do agree philosophically. But I belong to the *kapha-prakrti* type, according to Ayurvedic personality classification. We are prone to sentimentalism, looking backward, depression. I find myself often indulging in wishful thinking about the past. That's nostalgia, or something close to it.

In 1951, *Harper's*, a New York literary magazine, published a short story by Seymour Freedgood called "Grandma and the Hindu Monk." It was about a sadhu from East Bengal who comes to live in a rooming house run by a Jewish family in a suburb of New York City (on Long Island, I think). The sadhu wears saffron robes, is a strict vegetarian, preaches from the *Bhagavad-gita*, keeps a Tulasi plant, and chants Krsna's name to the beat of a small drum.

I first read "Grandma and the Hindu Monk" in a paperback collection of 20th Century American fiction that I found in the Mayapur library (of all places!). That was six or eight years ago. Later I made a photocopy of the same story from an original *Harper's* 51/1 issue in the archives of the Los Angeles Public Library. Re-reading that awakened a nostalgic flood of interest in the America of the late '40's and early '50's--the period when most of Srila Prabhupada's disciples were taking their births.

This short story about a Bengali Vaishnava who comes to chant and preach in New York suggests that a chthonic anticipation for Krsna consciousness was stirring deep in the American psyche as early as 14 years before Srila Prabhupada's arrival.

It interests me that the same year Srila Prabhupada published the first issue of *Back to Godhead* in Calcutta, with its lead article on the problem of war, the so-called Beat Movement was gelling among certain disaffected New York intellectuals who were alienated by the war-plagued Western civilization. Among these founder-acaryas of the Beats was Allen Ginsberg, who would later render important service to Srila Prabhupada in the late 1960's. Another original Beat was John Clellon Holmes, who wrote a newspaper article in the early '50's titled "This is the Beat Generation. " He described the Beats as being opposite to the scientific materialists who had tried to banish God from human experience. The Beats were looking for God in everything.

What if Srila Prabhupada had come to New York in 1945 instead of 1965? (Don't take this "what if" too seriously, gentle reader. It is just a thought experiment. ) There already were people around then who would have certainly come forward to hear him. Poets, students, speculators, welfare workers, dopeheads and dropouts who very well might have followed him with the same sense of eager spiritual adventure as did his disciples of the 1960s. Imagine if ISKCON today was 57 years old, and had been personally guided by Srila Prabhupada for the first of its 37 years (from 1945 until November 1977)?

Just wishful thinking. Sorry.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
10 January 2003*

Yesterday I wrote:

"I should not try to enjoy my relationship with the spiritual master. "

But that relationship is nectarean! Therefore it must certainly be enjoyable! So is it wrong for a disciple to be an enjoyer in his rasa with Lord Krsna's pure devotee?

*Delhi, March 25, 1976*

**Prabhupada:** Full freedom means to be under the order of the Supreme. That is full freedom. That is full freedom.

**Atreya Rsi:** The cinema or restaurant is not freedom. It's completely conditioning under the laws of material nature. But fully surrendered soul is fully free.

**Prabhupada:** No, no, if you simply, even if you want to go to a cinema. . .

**Pusta Krsna:** He's still responsible for going.

**Prabhupada:** If you ask, "Father, I wish to see cinema," if father says, "All right, we'll go," that is not sinful. But you go in your own whims--that is sinful. *Tena tyaktena bhunjitha.*

**Cyavana:** Sometimes it's difficult as devotees for us to know whether we're doing the right thing or whether we're just speculating.

**Prabhupada:** And therefore you have to consult your guru.

The son going with his father to the cinema is a useful analogy. There certainly is enjoyment for the son in that relationship, but it is under the authority of the father. When the son's enjoyment conforms to the desire of the father, it is all right. In this relationship, the father's enjoyment is prominent. Yet there is still room for the son's desire. The son can even take the initiative for enjoyment. "If you ask, 'Father, I wish to see cinema.' if father says, 'All right, we'll go,' that is not sinful. "

Think about it. It is indeed not sinful--it is love.

But if I insist that MY WHIMS TO ENJOY MYSELF should be prominent in relation to my father (spiritual master, Krsna)--in other words, if I go ahead and do whatever I like no matter what my superior desires--"that is sinful. "

So my bringing another fruit plate to Srila Prabhupada minutes after he had taken fruit was whimsical. I was not considering his desire. But then again, there is the element of the spiritual master's merciful expertise. Srila Prabhupada turned my whimsy into sadhu-seva of his disciples, my older brothers. And being satisfied with that, he again personally accepted fruit from my hand. Thus I was saved from a great blunder.

The next morning Srila Prabhupada got into the car to be driven to the bank of the River Charles to "enjoy" his morning walk with a number of disciples. As the driver started the motor, a disciple known for his eccentricity ran up to Prabhupada's window indicating he should roll it down. His Divine Grace kindly complied. The boy asked, "Srila Prabhupada, can I take sannyasa?"

"You must be pure," Prabhupada replied.

"I know, Srila Prabhupada. Can I take sannyasa?"

Prabhupada looked at the driver to indicate he should put the car in gear. Without another glance at the eccentric disciple, he rolled his window back up. The car moved forward. That disciple ran ahead of the car to pull up handfuls of grass from the lawn and strew them in front of the vehicle, as if they were handfuls of flower petals



On the riverbank Srila Prabhupada and his entourage walked by a bridge. Under the bridge lived a few of the kind of people it is now politically correct to term "homeless" (though back then, we just called them bums). They saw the devotees coming past, so they stumbled out in an alcoholic stupor to gawk and make coarse remarks. I believe one of them even called out to Srila Prabhupada to ask if he had a cigarette.

The disciple's faces were grim as they girded themselves to defend His Divine Grace. But Prabhupada's face was merry. "Intoxicants!" he chuckled, greatly amused.



I think by his use of that word Prabhupada showed a playful mastery of English vocabulary. Think about it. Those were *persons* who stumbled out from under the bridge. Why would Srila Prabhupada pick a word that only referred to the alcohol inside them? I think he had in mind sophisticated English words ending in "-ants" that refer to people: "savants," "hierophants," "dilettantes." He put a similar spin on the word "intoxicants," rendering it into a high-sounding designation for this lowly pack of winos.

In a simple mid-day ceremony, Srila Prabhupada installed the beautiful Sri-Sri Radha-Gopiballabha. These Deities are twins of Sri-Sri Radha-Damodara, who at that time--or at least, soon after that time (I'm not exactly sure when the road show started rolling, but I know it was during my days in Boston)--were traveling around America with Kirtanananda Swami and the Transcendental Road Show.

About the name "Radha-Gopiballabha," the Boston Radha-Krsna Deities installed by Srila Prabhupada in 1971 were not formally addressed that way until a couple years later, when Trai Dasa Prabhu was president. By that time I had transferred out of Boston to the Radha-Damodara TSKP headed by Vishnujana Maharaja. (I started serving the Radha-Damodara Deities when They separated from the Road Show, which remained in the New York temple. Radha-Damodara continued to travel in a bus with Vishnujana Maharaja and eight or ten brahmacharis, one of whom was this humble self. )

Anyway, the Deities who later became known as Sri-Sri Radha-Gopiballabha had Their first bath in a large stainless steel bowl. Srila Prabhupada gracefully poured *pancha-amrita* over Them from a conchshell while chanting the "Govindam" prayers. Then Prabhupada dressed and decorated Them behind closed altar curtains. The ceremony ended with Deity darshan, kirtan, and a big feast.

Many guests attended, including a slick-looking Indian man who taught yoga to Bostoners. His chief disciples were well-endowed young women. He sat among the crowd in a yoga asana. When Prabhupada bathed the Deities, tears streamed down the yogi's face. To tell the truth, seeing that gave me some respect for him. But later

I heard he left in a huff because he could not get a private audience with Srila Prabhupada.

There was a bearded longhair named Rafael who used to often visit the Boston temple in the company of a similarly hippie-looking boy and a girl. I got the impression that together these three formed a small cult of some sort. Their slogan was "Jaya Vishnu. " Rafael once asked me, "Do you think it is bona fide for us to chant Jaya Vishnu instead of Hare Krsna?" Years before, he had lived for a while at the Matchless Gifts temple on Second Avenue in New York. Gargamuni Prabhu caught him smoking grass in the bathroom. Rafael threw a punch and ran out onto the street. When Srila Prabhupada heard about it, he went into transcendental fury. "Where is he? I shall kick on his face!"

Unlike the Boston yogi, Rafael did get a darshan with Srila Prabhupada, who reminisced that he'd taught the boy how to make chapatis. But then Prabhupada's mood turned grave. "These are old stories," he said, dismissing the pleasant memories of Second Avenue. He indicated his shaven-headed disciples who were present in the room. "They have taken this Krsna consciousness seriously. " I didn't see Rafael and his friends much after that.

Later today (Friday) I am taking a 3-hour drive to the city of Belgaum. I'll stay the weekend for the Rathayatra festival. I'll leave the Shaligram Shilas here at Kohlapur, bringing only Giriraja and Ananta Narsimha with me. Not enough time for big puja during festivals.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*En route to Belgaum, Maharashtra  
10 January 2003*

From *From Imperfection, Purity Will Come About* by HH Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami:

Years ago, I used to sing the Introductory Song to *Saranagati* every morning in the cabin at Gita-nagari. About fifty devotees would gather with me after a morning walk. I remember straining to reach the high notes in the second line of each stanza. Then I would read the translation. The theme of surrender is dear to all devotees. Managers and gurus sometimes used surrender to convince subordinates to perform. "Your duty is hard? Do it anyway! *Surrender!*" Isang this song to remind us.

The devotees who sang these songs with me are scattered now. They no longer collect money for the farm or teach in the *gurukula*. The children are no longer obeying their teachers. Some of them no longer surrender to the four rules or chant sixteen rounds. I've stopped singing *Saranagati* every day and I've stopped demanding that everyone surrender. Now I am working on myself.

It is bracing to read how this very senior disciple of Srila Prabhupada has come to dedicate himself to self-improvement. (I don't know if SDG would agree that 'self-improvement' is what he is working on, since this term may be cheapened by overuse. All them 'self-help' books floating around, some of which enjoy faddish

popularity in ISKCON. Nonetheless, I confess: I myself feel I've benefited from reading self-help books, though these are not the ones that I find other devotees are reading. )

But a book like this one from Satsvarupa Maharaja stands far above all those on display on the esoteric shelf of your local bookstore. It is by a devotee for devotees. So again, to term it a 'self-improvement' or a 'self-help' book may do it injustice.



From November 24 to December 20 this past year I stayed in a small "monk's cell" on the roof of the Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Ashrama at Govardhana. As my dear Godbrother Keshava Bharati describes it, "This is ISKCON's place of *bhajan* for *ghostyanandis*." I had no assistant with me, nor did I take help from the local brahmacaris for my personal needs. So daily I was washed my own clothes, cleaned my own room, and did my own shopping.

I rose early, chanted my rounds, did my full puja program--the yajna I performed outside my room for Sri Govardhana Hill, which is visible from the ashrama rooftop. For hours each day, I studied. Some days I went on *parikrama*, an eight-hour barefoot walk around Govardhana Hill that included a stop for a holy bath in the most sacred Sri Radha-Kund. In this way I can list the things I did there, but it's difficult to find the words to describe the sublime consciousness that enveloped me while I was doing them. Govardhana is a place of extraordinary mercy.

Anyway, on the theme of self-improvement, a sannyasi Godbrother who visited the ashrama for a few days said to me, "Every morning from your room I hear you chanting so many mantras and ringing bells. Is it that you don't have so much service to do anymore?" I have to add he asked this in a very loving way; we're old friends.

I answered that I've found that for preaching nowadays, it seems advantageous for a sannyasi to be able to demonstrate a good grounding in Krsna conscious culture and knowledge. As expressed so nicely by Satsvarupa Maharaja, it has become apparent that mere harping on surrender is not satisfying, neither to the assembled devotees nor to the preachers/leaders. So therefore I believe that working to improve one's authenticity as a representative of Krsna conscious knowledge and culture is an important service; perhaps, in these troubled times, the most important service. And besides, I continue to travel and preach.

My Godbrother nodded thoughtfully. He could see what I was talking about.

A good quotation in this regard:

Action without study is fatal.  
Study without action is futile.

Now, for 21 points, who was Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama?

This question actually pertains to a Prabhupada remembrance from *before* my first meeting with His Divine Grace. I believe it took place in early 1971, certainly no later than April. The ISKCON Press had not yet relocated to New York.

So, the first thing about Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama is a letter that arrived from Srila Prabhupada in India. His Divine Grace informed the press devotees that an Indian Swami had joined ISKCON and was offering his service! So Prabhupada had recommended him to come to Boston to work with Pradyumna Prabhu in the Sanskrit department. Now, I didn't read the letter myself; that's what I remember about it from the talk going round the temple.

Some time later, the Swami arrived. He exactly fit the image of an impersonalist sannyasi that we American devotees had in our minds: beard, long hair, turban, ochre robes. In that dress he'd go out with us on Harer-nama Sankirtana. Quite a sight for the karmis. He did chant, and he did look happy. During kirtana he liked to blow on a little conchshell that from time to time he'd pull out of his robes.

He moved into the temple, up on the third floor. He probably shared Pradyumna Prabhu's room (being a temple and not a press devotee, I rarely ascended the third floor, so I'm not sure in which room he stayed. )

The senior devotees were worried about him being a Mayavadi. The Ashrama order of sannyasis comes in the line of Shankaracharya. But Lord Chaitanya took sannyasa in the Mayavadi line too, so maybe Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama was a genuine devotee at heart.

I found out where he was really at one evening after the arati and Bhagavad-gita class. I happened to be downstairs near the front door when I walked three "seventies party animals" (you have to have lived through the 1970's to know what that meant). As per the lingo of that time, these were "two dudes and a chick. " They wanted to see the Indian Swami they said they'd heard about. I quickly determined they did not mean Srila Prabhupada, but Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama. I sent another devotee up to fetch him. Staying to preach to them, I discovered they didn't have much on their minds beyond sex.

Moments later the Swami came down in his full regalia. I stood to the side to listen while he spoke with them. They wanted to take him to a party. "And why?" he asked. "We'll have a good time," they urged. "Come on, Swami--beer, wine, whisky, whatever you want. "

He twinkled at them, shaking his head from side to side in the Indian manner. "No, I'll not come with you. "

"Come on, Swami. Have some fun. Get drunk with us. "

"That's all right, you go to your party. I'll remain here, and I'll drink through your mouths. "

Whoa, I thought, there it is. . . Mayavadi philosophy on toast!

Not many days after that, a second letter about Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama arrived from Srila Prabhupada. To live with us, the Swami had to shave up.

I caught a glimpse of him as he left the men's bathroom after his shave. Without hair and beard he didn't look particularly impressive. Pretty sad character, I thought. Moreover, he was obviously quite upset at being obliged by Prabhupada to part with his head and face follicles.

I never saw Swamiji in the Boston temple after that. I don't know what happened. I guess he didn't like showing himself all shaved up like that, so he stayed in his room upstairs; and at some point he must have left the temple for good.

Some time later we got a handbill with a photo of the Swami on it. Here again he was fully coiffeurred, decked out in turban and robes. The flyer announced his new publication: *Bhagavad-gita As It Was!!!*

The next thing I heard about him was that he showed up at the Henry Street temple in New York with two women. Srila Prabhupada was visiting at the time. Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama got an audience with His Divine Grace, but it didn't last long. The way I heard it, Srila Prabhupada remarked afterward, "As soon as I saw him, I knew he was crazy. " Later I had a talk with one of the New York brahmacaris who, on Prabhupada's order, forcibly dragged the Swami out of his room and threw him out on the street. The two ladies followed behind meekly with shocked looks on their faces.

So guess what. . . about a year ago I met Swami Swa-ananda Ashrama in the Schipol International Airport in Holland. He looked a bit grayer, had a knit cap on his head instead of a turban, and wore yogi pants instead of a sannyasi lungi. He didn't remember me specifically, but did say, "Hare Krsna! Thirty years ago I stayed in ISKCON. I knew Prabhupada. "



Six kilometers south of Kolhapur (direction Belgaum) we stopped at Gokul Shiragao. This place is described in the Padma Purana as nondifferent from Sri Vrndavana Dham. Lord Krsna came here from Dvaraka and manifested the Yamuna River, a kadamba grove, and Govardhana Hill. And here He performed all His Vraja-lilas.

His lotus footprints and the hoofprints of His cows are preserved in stone.



There is a temple here in which two ancient Deities of Sri Gopala are enshrined. I took darshan and sprinkled water from the Yamuna on my head. An inscription assures us that a single visit to this holy tirtha will destroy all sins.

Joy stirs in me here.

I am happy I came.



All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
14 January 2003*

At shortly before 7:00 PM, Madhu Puri and I arrived by car in Kolhapur from Belgaum. I should mention that the main road between these two towns is extremely dangerous. It is clogged with traffic, and in India that means clogged with cars and trucks that are madly trying to overtake one another, veering out into the oncoming lane and ducking back just before disaster. Or not ducking back in time. On both trips (one down, one up) we saw the smashed remnants of terrible collisions along the roadside.





Anyway, the Belgaum Rathayatra was a huge success, as it was last year.

The streets of Belgaum town look like an overflowing river of people when Lord Jagannatha Swami passes through them. On each day of the two-day festival, 25,000 plates of Jagannatha Prasada were distributed. Could you count aloud to 25,000 within the same period of time that amount of plates were distributed, say from nine AM until nine PM? I doubt it, which means plates of prasada were going out faster than a person can count "one-two-three-four-five..."



Yes, that is Jagannatha Swami's main business, isn't it? Feasting and distributing His feast prasada. About Lord Jagannatha Srila Sanatana Goswami writes in *Sri Sri Krsna-lila-stavah, nanabhoga purandana*: "To your dear devotees You give the nectar of your lips in the form of *maha-prasada*." At Puri, the Lord is always eating. At Sri Rangam, He always sleeps. At Dvaraka, He always defends. And at Vrndavana, He always ...





I was fortunate to ride the cart for almost the whole Rathayatra, which went from two o'clock in the afternoon to seven in the evening.

I and my good friend and Godbrother Radhakunda Prabhu distributed *prasadam* from the Deities' altar into the hands of thousands of eager devotees on the road. (For on that day, all who come to see the Jagannatha cart are counted by the Lord as His devotees.)



That evening at the festival grounds, I and two of my sannyasi Godbrothers, HH Lokanath Maharaja and HH Bhakti Vrajendrananda Maharaja, gave talks from the stage. The next evening HG Radhakunda Prabhu spoke, and Lokanatha Maharaja led an ecstatic kirtan that with the vigorous encouragement of Radhakunda Prabhuji got thousands of devotees off their feet and dancing.

Unfortunately while in Belgaum I developed a skin infection on my legs. Now here in Kolhapur I am under doctor's orders to stay in bed for 24 hours with my legs raised on cushions. They're doing all kinds of tests on me which seem totally unnecessary, even an electrocardiogram test! It's just a hair follicle infection, after all. But it seems that Indian doctors like to show us Westerners that their medical practices are up to date.

The Jagannatha Atmanivedana Mantra from Sri Laksmi Tantra:

*daso 'ham te jagannatha  
sa putradi parigraha  
presyam prasadhi kartavye mam  
niyunksva hite sada*

O Lord Jagannatha, please accept me as your servant, with all my sons, family and associates. Please direct me so that I can serve you better and better.



All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
16 January 2003*

While in Belgaum, I stayed at the palatial home of a wealthy and very pious businessman named Mr. Katwa. This was the third time I've visited him, so we are very friendly. He has two grown sons who live at his home and a daughter who is married and stays in Chicago. The whole family chants Hare Krsna. Mr. Katwa is really a jewel of a gentleman. He is so kind-hearted, soft-spoken, and eager to serve. Yet by his own explanation, his whole life prior to meeting devotees a few years ago was totally committed to making money and enjoying his senses. He used to be very fond of wine and meat. Most of his old eating and drinking buddies snubbed him when he gave these habits up. But he remains fully convinced of Krsna consciousness, in a quiet, sincere way. He relishes Srila Prabhupada's *Bhagavatam* and likes to discuss what he has just finished reading.

My old friend Sriman Radhakunda Prabhu stayed at Mr. Katwa's also. I got to know him in the 1970's when he was a big book distributor. When I was on the BBT library party, he was HH Satsvarupa Maharaja's personal servant. So we saw a lot of each other in those times. He's energetic, funny, and really attached to the nectar of the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna. When he honors prasadam his habit is to recite a different name of Their Lordships as he puts a bite of prasad into his mouth:

"Radha-Govinda. . . Radha-Giridhari. . . Radha-Vrajakishore. . . Radha-Vamsibihari. .  
."

Radhakunda Prabhu has lived a very full life and has many stories to tell. I shall relate one here. It is very gruesome yet most instructive. I am not going to explain the philosophical meaning, since that will be obvious from the story itself.

In 1975, Radhakunda Prabhu lived for some time at the Mayapur goshalla where he cared for the cows. A mystery shoe thief was coming around at night. He'd steal the

nicest shoes left by devotees and guests at the entrance of Sri Sri Radha-Madhava's temple. It was an embarrassment for the management because the shoes of visiting dignitaries would go missing. So the order went out from the top: "Catch the shoe thief. And when you get him, give him a good beating. " To give a caught thief a beating is quite within the norms of social behavior in India.

Radhakunda and another devotee took the assignment to catch the "chapel chor" (shoe thief) red-handed. During Sandhya-arati Radhakunda hid in the dark in the bushes that grew around the Lotus Building. (In those days the temple room was the whole ground floor of the Lotus Building--it did not, as it does today, extend from the Lotus to the Conch Building). His partner took the lookout up on the first-floor balcony.

A man came through the jute fields in back of the Lotus Building and carefully approached the temple entrance. He shined a flashlight on the shoes and slipped two pairs into the waistband of his dhoti, one pair in front, the other in back. He pulled his kurta down to hide the shoes. Then he turned to make his getaway back through the fields.

Radhakunda Prabhu darted from the bushes, intercepting the thief from behind. He was armed with a lathi (bamboo stick) that had been soaked in cow dung to make it as heavy and as hard as iron. He raised it high to bring it down on the thief's head. Sensing something, the thief turned to face Radhakunda. Swishing through the air, the lathi cracked his skull. Radhakunda follow that blow up with two baseball bat-style lateral whacks, one to the right and one to the left side of the thief's head. But the man didn't fall. He just stood there dazed and swaying, blood flowing down his face from out of his hair. By this time the other devotee had rushed down the Lotus Building stairs to take Radhakunda's arm and stop him from hitting the thief a fourth time.

"Are you sure he's the thief?" he demanded.

Radhakunda lifted the man's kurta, which by now was stained red with blood. There were the shoes. The other devotee brought up a home-made mangowood *numchaku* (a Japanese-style karate flail consisting of two foot-long sticks that are connected by a short length of rope). Again and again he smashed the thief in the head with them. The man still didn't fall.

By this time a crowd of Bengalis surged out of the temple and demanded to know why the two foreigners were beating up a Bengali. "Chapel chor," Radhakunda yelled, again lifting up the thief's kurta. So the Bengalis joined in the pummel session.

Finally the man was brought up to a room in the Lotus Building. Radhakunda tried to force him to reveal his name and village by hitting him in the forehead with the tip of his lathi in the manner of striking a billiard ball with a pool cue. The man just moaned. Suddenly a Bengali devotee entered and informed Radhakunda that this man was from his own village. He was deaf and dumb and so would never be able to give his name.

When it sank in what he had just done, Radhakunda's head cleared, as if he was coming out of a red fog of blind rage. This man might be a shoe thief, but he was

nonetheless a dhamvasi (resident of the birthplace of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu). Being deaf and dumb, he would be even poorer than the other dhamvasis of the villages around the ISKCON center. Therefore he had become a thief. Radhakund felt terrible. What an offense he had just committed! What reaction now awaited him?

Not long thereafter, Radhakunda came down with a severe amoebic infection. His liver became abscessed, which in those days was a death sentence. But he didn't know what disease he was suffering from, and the devotees around him were taking his condition lightly. For two weeks, wracked with unimaginable pain, he laid on a cot at the goshalla, hardly able to move. Finally an Ayurvedic doctor came to look at him. He told the devotees that Radhakund had eight hours to live.

He was loaded in a car and driven to a Calcutta hospital. The three-hour drive was a nightmare of excruciation. At the hospital, a doctor urged the devotee who brought Radhakunda in to drive him back to Mayapur because death was certain. Practically getting physical with the doctor, the devotee demanded that Radhakunda be admitted. So he was given a bed in the terminal hall. . . the dying ward. It was a huge room of 150 beds. Here lay the incurables. Every day one or two dozen would die, be swaddled in sheets like mummies, and be stacked like cordwood on the balcony. At night the bodies were loaded onto a creaky wagon and removed for burning somewhere. Radhakunda was given a bed on that very balcony.

He was a skeleton shrink-wrapped in ghastly yellow skin. But he didn't die. What he suffered was worse than death.

At that time Calcutta was fervently communist (it is still communist today, but not so fervently as the 70's. . . and don't forget, the American war against communism in nearby Vietnam lasted into 1975). The Bengalis who came to the ward to visit their dying relatives would go out onto the balcony to smoke. Seeing Radhakund there, they'd make callous remarks (in Bengali language of course, but Radhakund had learned enough to understand most of what they were saying). They would ridicule him as an agent of the CIA. They would blaspheme Srila Prabhupada and Krsna. And they would stub their cigarettes out on his flesh.

To the doctors he was already dead, so he got no help there. The nurse did not swab his body down nor change his position, so he developed bedsores. Day after day he watched the bodies stack up and wondered when his own would be thrown on the pile.

The terminal hall's only toilet was located on the balcony. One day Radhakunda saw a man lurch out of the ward and make for the stool room door. But before he got there, he vomited blood and dropped dead. Another time a patient was put into a bed on the balcony just next to Radhakunda. He looked at the man's face and saw that the liquid on his eyeballs was bubbling. For just a second, Radhakund looked away. But as he was intending to tell the man about Krsna, he turned back to see his face once more. In that moment the man had died.

This went on for three months. In that time the only devotee to visit Radhakunda was HH Trivikrama Maharaja, who handed him a Limca soft drink and told him, "You're not the body, Prabhu. "

Gradually it dawned on the doctors that Radhakunda was surviving the death sentence of an abscessed liver. They became interested in him as a medical breakthrough. So he was promoted from being just a slab of meat to an experimental animal. Like clockwork throughout the 24 hours of the day, every fifteen minutes they would come to inject him with veterinary antibiotics through long, thick needles that were designed for horses.

Eventually he could sit up. Finally he could stand. He forced himself to walk. And where he walked was out of the hospital to the Albert Road ISKCON temple, which was not far away. When he arrived, the devotees were thunderstruck. He didn't understand why until he saw himself in a full-length mirror positioned inside of the door of an almira cabinet in the temple's office. He looked like an inmate of Auschwitz. He couldn't recognize himself.

He soon flew to America, to Denver temple. He tried to recover his health by resting in the brahmacari ashrama. After a week or so, he felt strong enough to do a little service, so he drove a sick devotee to the hospital. The doctor dealt with the sick devotee in a few seconds, prescribing some pills. Then the doctor turned to Radhakund.

"You. . . come come with me. "

He was taken to the emergency ward and treated for a month. He'd kept his Calcutta medical records; reading them, the American doctors were astonished to know he'd survived a liver abscess. Almost every day, specialists from other American cities, and even other countries, visited him and asked him hundreds of questions.

Nowadays, liver abscesses can be cured. I suppose Radhakund's case has something to do with that.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
17 January 2003*

Back to the fifties:

I would give almost anything I have to reverse the course of my life in the last year. The past doesn't change for anyone. But at least I can learn from the past. I've learned a lot about life. I've learned a lot about myself and about the responsibilities any man has to his fellow men. I have learned a lot about good and evil. They're not always what they appear to be. I was involved--deeply involved--in a deception. I have deceived my friends, and I had millions of them. I lied to the American people. I lied about what I knew, and then I lied about what I did not know. In a sense, I was like a child who refuses to admit a fact in the hope that it will go away. Of course it did not go away. I was scared, scared to death. I had no solid position, no basis to stand on for myself. There was one way out, and that was to tell the truth. It may sound trite to you but I've found myself again after a number of years. I've been acting a role, maybe all my life, of thinking I've done more, accomplished

more, produced more, than I have. I've had all the breaks. I have stood on the shoulders of life, and I've never gotten down into the dirt to build, to erect a foundation of my own. I've flown too high on borrowed wings. Everything came too easy. That is why I am here today.

This is the confessional testimony of a mundane academic "guru," Charles Van Doren, before the US House Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight in 1958. I find his story instructive, so I thought I would write something about it here.

Mr. Van Doren was a young, handsome literature teacher at Columbia University in New York City. Besides his PhD in literature, he had a degree in astrophysics. His father was Mark Van Doren, professor of literature at the same university and a prizewinning poet and author. His mother was a noted author too, as was his uncle Carl. The Van Dorens were considered to be one of the leading intellectual families in the USA.

A friend of Charles had appeared on a television quiz show, the type of program where guests are asked questions in a chance to win prize money. This friend urged Charles to take a chance too. So he applied at NBC (National Broadcasting Company) where several such quiz shows were aired. The production team of a program called 21 was ecstatic. Charles Van Doren was just the man they were looking for: a good-looking, charismatic intellectual.

At that time, 21 was one of the most popular quiz shows, attracting 40 million viewers every time it aired. But what all these viewers did not know was that 21 was totally "fixed." The contestants answered the questions right or wrong from a script. Who won and who lost was planned by the show's head producer, an NBC executive named Dan Enright.

Enright persuaded Charles Van Doren to be 21's new winner. At first Van Doren wasn't happy with the idea of winning dishonestly. The argument that convinced him was that as a TV star he would be able to give a big boost to education in America. At that time Americans were afraid that the Russians had surpassed them in science. The year before, 1957, the Russians put Sputnik 1 into orbit. This was the world's first artificial satellite. The Americans, with all their money and technology, had for several years tried without success to launch a rocket into space. They were most chagrined to be beaten by the Russians, whom they looked down upon as ignorant, vodka-swilling peasants.

So the foremost question on America's mind in 1958 was, how do we get our young people excited about higher learning so that they will excel in science and put the country back into first place?

Charles Van Doren was fated to be that "exciter" America was looking for. Though he never shook off his inner doubts about 21's deception of the public, he reasoned (as Shakespeare stated in *Merchant of Venice*), "To do a great right, do a little wrong."

The previous star on 21 was a very ordinary-looking fellow by the name of Herbie Stempel. Dan Enright orchestrated a duel between Stempel and Van Doren that played out over three showtimes. Many more viewers than normal tuned in to see the dramatic contest of minds. At last Stempel lost on an easy question. In reality he knew the answer, but producer Enright had persuaded Stempel to fail on a question

that most viewers themselves would know the correct answer to, so as to heighten the dramatic effect. In return Enright promised to put Stempel's name in the works for appearances on other NBC shows.

But NBC just dropped Stempel. Feeling cheated, he testified before a New York City judge that 21 was a big fraud. However this got him nowhere. NBC persuaded the judge that Stempel was mentally unstable. So his testimony was not made public. But a lawyer named Richard Goodwin who worked for the US federal agency in Washington that had authority over television came to know of this case. He started his own investigation which led to a federal inquiry by a subcommittee of US congressmen.

In the meantime, Charles Van Doren became the most popular personality on American TV. Students around the country--especially the female students--worshipped him as a hero. Indeed, he was an intellectual Elvis Presley. In a culture where men normally ask women for marriage, Van Doren was getting a dozen marriage proposals a week, many from women he had never met. His rocket flight into stardom reached its zenith when his face appeared on the cover of *Time*, America's leading news magazine.

And he was winning money. After a few weeks he had "earned" more than a hundred thousand dollars. In the 1950's, a hundred thousand dollars had a great deal more buying power than the same amount does today.

Dark clouds began to loom on Van Doren's sunny horizon when Goodwin, the lawyer from Washington, came to interview him. As it turned out, Richard Goodwin was himself an intellectual who had graduated first in his class from America's most prestigious university, Harvard. Van Doren and Goodwin spoke the same language. They became close. Out of concern for his friend, Goodwin confided that he had collected evidence showing that 21 was rigged. But Van Doren insisted he knew nothing about that, and that he personally had won honestly. Goodwin urged him to walk away from NBC and to make no public statements until the federal inquiry was over. But although Van Doren stopped appearing on 21, he accepted NBC's offer to become a regular on NBC's popular Today show. For a few minutes air time each week, he drew a yearly salary of \$50 000.

The "quiz show scandal," as it came to be known, engulfed Charles Van Doren. Although he tried to follow his friend's advice to make no public statement, his millions of devotees demanded that he clear himself of Herbie Stempel's accusations. Herbie had testified before the congressional subcommittee. The cat was out of the bag.

One thing Stempel's performance before the subcommittee made clear was that Stempel's *own* character was questionable. He admitted that he willingly participated in the fraud, and he admitted he had been diagnosed by a doctor as having psychological problems. Everyone was still inclined to believe that whatever deception might have been going on at 21, Charles Van Doren, PhD, knew nothing about it and had won his prize money honestly.

Van Doren issued a press release confirming that opinion. He claimed to be innocent of any wrongdoing and ignorant of it as well. This prompted the inquiry committee to

subpoena him. The subpoena was a development that Richard Goodwin never wanted. Now Van Doren would have to tell his side of the story under oath.

Van Doren, fearing that his exposure as a liar before the subcommittee would shame his whole family, caved in and submitted the sworn statement I quoted at the beginning. It sent a shock wave across America. Charles Van Doren retired from teaching and public life to write books at his family home in the Connecticut countryside.

As I noted early on, he was a mundane academic guru. I have often observed that if we take care to look, we can find an almost mystical symmetry between events in the nondevotee society and those in ISKCON society. This despite the warning that "what the karmis do is all maya, Prabhu." So why do it? Well, there's that often-quoted line about those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it. After all, Srila Prabhupada said history was his favorite subject.

An air of emergency..."we gotta do something fast!"...the appearance of a young, gifted *kavi* (learned speaker) with good intentions...shady backroom planners take note that the *kavi* has what it takes to capture the public's imagination and solve the emergency...he falls in with them and is persuaded on the basis of "sastra" that one may do a little wrong to do a great right...*danam*, *janam* and *sundarim* surround him...he becomes attached to his position...someone who early on tries to expose the fraud is outmaneuvered and ends up being discredited as a nutcase...the *kavi* is urged by a good friend to free himself from entanglement before it is too late...the *kavi* tries, but only half-heartedly (for oh! How addictive name and fame can be!)...convinced still that he acts not for himself but only for the sake of the faithful, he prolongs the lie into the danger zone...at last he can't bear it anymore...in great shame he confesses the truth and goes into seclusion...the faithful are left shaken and dismayed...the "nutcase" whose testimony everyone dismissed at first is vindicated, though his own flaws are manifold.

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra*  
*18 January 2003*

*Srila Prabhupada Lilamrta* Ch 17 takes us to the Bowery in New York City, where in 1966 Srila Prabhupada shared a loft with a young man named David Allen. Prabhupada hoped David would become his first initiated disciple. Unfortunately he continued to take drugs even while being trained by His Divine Grace. At last he went mad. David's madness prompted Srila Prabhupada to vacate the loft. From there, with the help of Carl Yeargens (Karlapati dasa) and Michael Grant (Mukunda dasa), Prabhupada moved to Second Avenue, where his kirtans and classes in the Matchless Gifts storefront began.

I got to know David Allen when he visited the Boston temple sometime in the winter of either late '70 or early '71. Why do I remember this? Yesterday's journal entry alluded to the fall-downs of senior disciples of Srila Prabhupada. In a way, David's case is the first such story in the history of ISKCON.

I recall the great respect the devotees of Boston temple showed him. He wasn't initiated, but he was the first candidate for initiation. For a time he was the only

person in whom Srila Prabhupada found a potential for serious spiritual life. He was special.

Nowadays my older Godbrothers and -sisters who spent a lot of personal time with Srila Prabhupada, who did great service to His Divine Grace, and who may have been sannyasis or even gurus, but who suffered setbacks in their spiritual life, are treated (or should be treated) with the same kind of respect that I saw the Boston devotees show to David.

David was a simple fellow, no pretensions. But because he'd been touched so early on by Srila Prabhupada, there was something different about him, something I found appealing. I just had to talk to him. He didn't have a great deal to say, really. No amazing revelations, like I'd hoped. But Srila Prabhupada had clearly made a deep impression on his life. He was in awe of His Divine Grace. I could see that David would never forget him. And that's what made David so special.

There was another person whose birth name I've forgotten. He finally joined ISKCON after Srila Prabhupada's nitya-lila pravishtha, and was initiated as Prabhupada dasa. I think he serves at present in South America. Anyway, this young man ran a second-hand shop not far from the Boston temple. But during the Matchless Gifts days he lived in New York and used to visit with Srila Prabhupada.

I found his association very appealing also. In those early Boston days of my memory he kept long hair and beard (David was more clean-cut), but he told funny stories of his times with Prabhupada. He said he had a lot of trouble with his wife and used to go to Prabhupada to lament. Prabhupada would listen for a while, then reach for one of his folded saffron sannyasi lungis that were stacked on a shelf. This he would hold out to the young man as an invitation that he ought to renounce his marriage and take the sannyasa order. The young man said, "Oh no, Swamiji! Not that!" Srila Prabhupada returned the lungi to the shelf and remarked something like, "So then you must continue suffering. "

As a new devotee I felt it was my great fortune to associate with David and the future Prabhupada dasa. Now in ISKCON, by default, I am a "senior disciple" of Srila Prabhupada. But I still feel very fortunate whenever I can associate with anyone who carries with him or her the oceanic mercy of extended personal association of Krsna's pure devotee during the beginning days of his mission. Such fortunate persons may appear before our imperfect eyes as "fallen" in some way, as "not up to standard. " But if they carry Srila Prabhupada in the core of their heart then in my opinion they are not of this world. They are of the spiritual world, Prabhupada's world. As soon as they start talking about Srila Prabhupada, their eternal identities as his servants birth after birth become apparent.

Here in Kolhapur I was asked, "Why did they fall down?" Well, how do we know they fell down? I see that internally, in their hearts, they continue to mediate upon their service to Srila Prabhupada. And I see that if Srila Prabhupada returned, they would instantly resume all the external formalities of service to him. They are Prabhupada conscious. They are rasa-graha: they cannot forget the nectar of his association. No matter the external situation or activities, if one is rasa-graha, or retaining consciousness of the nectar of the lotus feet of the Lord (which means the nectar of the pure devotee who is always situated at those lotus feet), one's spiritual identity is established.

*na vai jano jatu kathancanavrajem  
mukunda-sevy anyavad anga samsrtim  
smaran mukundanghry-upaguhanam punar  
vihatum icchen na rasa-graho janah*

My dear Vyasa, even though a devotee of Lord Krsna sometimes fall down somehow or other, he certainly does not undergo material existence like others [fruitive workers, etc. ] because a person who has once relished the taste of the lotus feet of the Lord can do nothing but remember that ecstasy again and again. (SB 1. 5. 19)

Someone may ask, "Well, why don't such fortunate persons just come back to ISKCON and serve in the institution like the rest of us?"

Often the sad answer is that they are very sensitive about the minimization of His Divine Grace that they find in ISKCON after Prabhupada's departure from this world. If you think that Srila Prabhupada is always glorified and never minimized in today's ISKCON, you are overlooking certain unhappy developments.

For example, the BBT recently published a book for distribution to the public in the USA. It is a very pretty book written in an up to date style. But it associates Srila Prabhupada in a favorable way with Vivekananda, a Mayavadi whom Srila Prabhupada severely condemned. It associates His Divine Grace favorably with a host of other mundane persons, one of whom is still alive and taking active part in criticizing Srila Prabhupada on the Internet.

I've noticed that many of our present-day ISKCON devotees are able to shrug this off: "Anyway, the book sells, and who among the karmis is gonna take notice of those details?" Well, for one thing, *Prabhu*, this is the Internet age. Anybody can get on the Net and type this list of mundane names into their favorite search engine. Voila! Mayavada missionizing and Prabhupada minimizing right there on your home computer screen. But apart from that, the main thing is the book is an offense to Srila Prabhupada. If the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust would have ever printed a favorable mention of the name Vivekananda during the years of Prabhupada's physical presence on this planet, a bomb blast would have gone off that we would still be talking about now. Just because Prabhupada is not physically visible to us now does not mean he does not know about this book and is not unhappy with it.

My Godbrothers and Godsisters who gave their youthful lives to Srila Prabhupada and who still love him in the core of their hearts are deeply pained by this new BBT book. I know, I talk to them. So why should they take part in a movement that produces and distributes offenses to their spiritual master?

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
20 January 2003*

#### **HOW I ALMOST MISSED MY INITIATION**

The first time I met Srila Prabhupada, he let me see that he knows me, and that he wants me to serve him. The second time I met him, he let me see that I ought not to be whimsical, and that he is served when I serve his servants. But on my third meeting with Srila Prabhupada, I almost threw it all away.

I mentioned previously my "lunar personality. " Say what you will about numerology, but I find that it works for me. Some devotees--I could name a couple Godbrothers, but I won't-- are into the Enneagram, a New Age system of personality typology. Like numerology, the Enneagram system analyzes the human personality into nine basic types. I checked out the Enneagram a few years ago but after a period of fascination I finally rejected it as being too subjective. Numerology is more objective because it is tied to objective numbers like the birth date. Indian numerology fits hand in glove with the nine planetary values of astrology, and with the three *prakrtis* of Ayurveda. It is not free of speculation, however, so buyers beware. Anyway, I am a 2, the number of Soma, the moon. Actually I am an 11, but in numerology, no number has a value greater than 9. So 11 is 1+1, or 2. Likewise, 12 is 1+2 or 3 (3 is the value of Guru or Jupiter). Even a big number can be reduced in this way--for example, 3471 is 3+4+7+1 or 15, which in turn is 1+5 or 6, the numerical value of Venus.

But multiple-digit numbers (10 and higher) retain a scent of their multiple values even after they are reduced to a single digit (between 1 to 9). So being an 11 means I am a special type of 2. Regular 2's are thoroughly feminine entities; they do not shine on their own but must reflect the light of a masculine power, i. e. number 1, which is the value of the sun. However, an 11 is a 2 formed of two 1's. Therefore, while still being emotional and intuitive like other 2's, an 11 is obstinate, revolutionary, and authoritative. Furthermore, since 11 is a mystic number, people whose psychic number is 11 are very mystical. Yet overall, 11's are still 2's, meaning that their minds are very much influenced by the moon. This is both good and bad, since the moon is both light (as on Purnima day) and dark (as on Amavasya day). Regarding the dark side, to quote from a book--"they [number 2's] fall victim to their delusions and doubtful nature. They become mistrustful and anxious and are caught in their own internal dialogues. "

The day after Srila Prabhupada installed Sri Sri Radha-Gopiballabha, I and the other "bhaktas" and "bhaktins" (remember, we didn't use those terms then) of the Boston temple were to be initiated in a morning ceremony at about 10:00 AM. Unfortunately, earlier that morning I fell into a darkened state of mind exactly as described in the quotation above.

My name was posted on the list of those to be initiated. I saw the list. But I didn't see my name. I suppose my own nagging, self-deprecating internal dialogue--"I'm not worthy to be Srila Prabhupada's disciple"--forced my mind to censor out what my eyes were trying to show me. My doubtful nature willed that I would not be initiated. I was too useless, therefore I had to be passed over. Srila Prabhupada would not take me after all.

And that is why, during the initiation, I sat somewhere among the many guests who were coming each day to see Srila Prabhupada. Funny, I thought as I watched the proceedings, there is an empty place among the initiates seated around the yajna-kunda: an extra paper plate with a three-strand set of neckbeads on it. Who could that be for?

Names were called, and one by one the initiates came forward to receive their japa beads and names from His Divine Grace. Suddenly *my* name was called.

Like 48 hours earlier, at that moment Srila Prabhupada finished his arrival lecture, I once again froze. What was I so afraid of that I could neither move nor speak when Srila Prabhupada called me to his lotus feet? "It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live," said a Roman thinker of old. In other words, I should have been more afraid of *not* answering Prabhupada's call and thus not beginning my spiritual life. I was in the grip of maya in the form of a stultifying terror that I had inherited from many births in a world of savagery and deceit.

The temple instantly went pin-drop silent. Tension charged the air like static electricity. I don't believe anybody actually *looked* at me--all eyes were on Srila Prabhupada--but I felt everyone's thoughts sweep across my gloomy mindscape like searchlights: "What are you doing there? What's the matter with you? Snap out of it!" "That's all right," Srila Prabhupada said calmly. It was as if a Vaikuntha breeze swept through the temple room. The mental strain that my stupidity had put everyone under--not the least myself--went poof!, right out the window.

After the fire sacrifice, a disconcerted Satsvarupa Prabhu came up to me. "Roger Prabhu, why weren't you there for your initiation?" he asked, his eyes large with concern. You may recall from reading the *Lilamrta* that he stayed home and typed up Prabhupada's dictation during the initiation ceremony at which he was supposed to become Srila Prabhupada's disciple. Afterward, when he handed Prabhupada the typed pages, His Divine Grace told him, "If you love me, I'll love you. "

"My name wasn't on the list!" I moaned. "I didn't know I was supposed to be there. "

He led me through the temple's side entrance into the hall where the list was posted. He looked at it, not saying a word. He just kept looking at it until I looked at it. There it was. . . my name, in the midst of the other names, right where it had been all along.

"Oh," was all I could manage to say in a small voice.

He faced me and nodded reassuringly. "There will be another initiation this evening for the devotees who've come from other temples. Please don't miss it. "

At the evening initiation I got my name, Suhotra dasa (Srila Prabhupada said, "Means 'very nice priest'") but due to a mix-up, I got no initiation japa beads. Or rather, Sridhama Prabhu, the Miami temple president, seeing that because I was a last-minute add-on therefore there was no japa-mala for Prabhupada to chant upon and hand me, gave Prabhupada *his* personal japa-mala! I didn't notice this happening. All I knew was, I received from my spiritual master's lotus hand these beautiful red beads that I immediately became attached to. After the fire sacrifice, Sridhama Prabhu came up to me and said, "Sorry, those are *my* beads," and took them back. Mercy for him: Srila Prabhupada chanted on his initiation beads twice.

My sweet Lord.

But the stalwart Harer Nama Prabhu came to the rescue. The next day he had me buy some wooden beads at Tandy's (a hobby chain that must have sold thousands of beads to ISKCON devotees in the early days). I did a lousy job of stringing them (I'd never done that before). Since by the time I was done stringing them Srila Prabhupada had flown to New York, Harer Nama Prabhu personally took the beads to the Henry Street Temple and had Srila Prabhupada chant on them there. When he returned, I had my initiation japa-mala.



Some years later I lost those beads while on book distribution in the city of Charlottetown on Prince Edward Island, Canada. The beads that I use now were chanted on by Srila Prabhupada in Vrndavana.

From my fiasco of a first initiation I learned that while I am prone to make mistakes in my spiritual life, fortunately Srila Prabhupada is prone to forgive them.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
20 January, 2003*

Doubt is one of the important functions of intelligence; blind acceptance of something does not give evidence of intelligence. Therefore the word *samsaya* is very important; in order to cultivate intelligence, one should be doubtful in the beginning.

--HDG Srila Prabhupada (SB 3. 26. 30p)

Great doubts  
deep wisdom. . .  
Small doubts  
little wisdom.

--Chinese Proverb

In the previous entry I told something about the nature of "this" mind, "my" mind: it has a lunar quality and thus like the moon is subject to phases of change. According to *Bhagavad-gita*, that is true of all minds: *manas cancalam asthiram*, "the mind is flickering and unsteady" (Bg 6. 26). I made mention of numerology to illustrate that the mind is subject to the forces of nature like the planetary rulers Soma, Surya, and so on.

I do have an interest in numerology and astrology, just as I have an interest in philosophy and psychology. But I would not agree that I have a real faith in these things. My interest in them is conversational more than anything else. I use them as a source of vocabulary for discussion of the human situation in the material world. Just to illustrate what I mean, I'll switch over to philosophical vocabulary. In the modern philosophy known as existentialism, the human condition is said to be predominated by dread and despair. Many people have that experience in their own lives. But they don't know how to express it. So knowing the vocabulary of such philosophy is useful when talking about that experience. At the same time I do not believe that it is *ultimately true* that the human situation is predominated by dread and despair. If I did, how could I be a devotee? The human situation is predominated by Krsna.

Some people (among them there may even be some devotees) have hope that numerology, astrology, philosophy, psychology, the Enneagram--or whatever else there might be outside the of *parampara* path of Krsna consciousness--can help them. I do not, even though I have an interest in these subjects, and may even apply them in my own life. My faith is that hope in anything that falls short of surrender to Krsna as explained and demonstrated by Srila Prabhupada is hope that is sure to be baffled. For without surrender to Krsna, who predominates over the human situation, the human situation is as the existentialists describe it: full of dread and despair.

Like an image in a dream the world is troubled by love, hatred, and other poisons. So long as the dream lasts, the image appears to be real; but on awaking it vanishes.

--Sripad Sankaracharya

Is this quotation wrong just because Sankaracharya said it? I have spoken to devotees who think like that. But if we take a little effort to analyze his words, we'll find their congruency with the Vaishnava version. He compares a world troubled by poisonous duality to an image seen in a dream. The actual logic of this comparison is that just as when one awakens from a dream and sees the image vanish, so when one awakens to reality, he will see the poisonous duality of the material world vanish.

That is not voidism. To wake from a dream does not mean that nothing then remains. A dream is founded upon the waking state. When one awakes, he sees the dream for what it actually is from the standpoint of wakeful consciousness, not nothingness. While under the dream, he does not know it is a dream. He thinks the dream is all there is--thus he thinks it is real. That is his illusion.

Similarly, the troubled world of duality is founded upon the untroubled world (Vaikuntha), not upon nothingness. Our illusion is to think the troubled world is real. That "real" we think the world to be has no alternative; i. e. like the existentialists, we think reality is only dread and despair, nothing else. But it is the LACK of reality that gives rise to dread and despair. Reality is of the quality of Vaikuntha. Reality is anandamaya, overflowed with bliss. The miserable material world is simply the want of Vaikuntha. It is not the want of nothing, which is the voidist idea.

The voidists think that we are in this miserable material world because we are missing what we really want, which is nothing. No, we are missing Vaikuntha. In Vaikuntha we want nothing. Not that we want "no thing" as "a something desired", as a negative sense object. In Vaikuntha we want no OTHER thing because we have everything--Krsna. Thus in Vaikuntha we are fully satisfied. The voidists want "no thing" from the standpoint of dissatisfaction, like the fox who rather wanted "no grapes" than the despair of wanting grapes that he could not attain.

The point of all this is actually simple. And the point refers back to the two quotations in the beginning of this entry. The point is that attainment of Vaikuntha begins with a doubt about the reality of the material world, and a further doubt about nothingness (no-thing-ness) as the solution to that doubt. Hence: "great doubts, deep wisdom; small doubts, small wisdom. "

The doubts about *vishesha* (mundane characteristics) and *nirvishesha* (the negation of those characteristics) will often be expressed in the vocabulary of dread and despair. Hence the first chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita* is called *vishaada-yoga*, "the yoga of despair. " It's here that Arjuna gives his longest speech in the whole *Gita*. Here he puts forward all his doubts before the Lord; in later chapters, he returns to these doubts (3. 1, 3. 36, 5. 1, etc. ) even as Krsna is slashing them by His transcendental instructions.

All topics that fall short of surrender to Krsna are framed in the vocabulary of despair.

Astrology, numerology, philosophy, psychology are not *vaikuntha-vaca* (see SB 9. 4. 18). They are *vishaada-vaca*. But just as Arjuna used the vocabulary of despair to reveal his doubts to Krsna that they might be forever removed, so these subjects may be employed to enunciate our plight in this material world. . . so that we may invite the spiritual master to remove that plight by transcendental knowledge.

Transcendental knowledge that he communicates by his transcendental mercy. This is the only hope of the living entity in this material world.

The day after my initiation, Srila Prabhupada went to Logan Airport to fly to New York. This time I went with the devotees to see him off. Prabhupada sat in a waiting room chair while we sat in a great mass on the floor in front of him. He chanted japa, so we chanted japa. I was more or less in the middle of the group. Like everyone else, I had my eyes on His Divine Grace as I chanted.

Suddenly Srila Prabhupada looked right at me and said, "Oh, you are chanting Hare Krsna very nicely. " Everyone immediately fell silent. I didn't know what to say in reply, but my mind fairly shouted, "No, Srila Prabhupada! I am not chanting Hare Krsna nicely AT ALL!"

The "lunar mind" and its internal dialogue of despair.

Srila Prabhupada made a lifting gesture with his left hand and in an almost urgent voice said, "Yes!"

I offered my humble obeisances to his lotus feet.

The purport is not (of course!) that of all the devotees present in the waiting room, I was singled out by Srila Prabhupada as the superior japa-chanter. He was teaching me the means by which I could get free of my internal dialogue of despair even when I was not in his personal presence. Yesterday he'd given me the Hare Krsna Mahamantra. If I kept chanting it in connection with him, my spiritual master, as I was doing there in the airport, then I would be chanting nicely. Then *I* would be nice, no matter what my despairing mind might tell me. I would be in Vaikuntha.

I am still chanting Hare Krsna today only because of the lessons I learned from His Divine Grace in Boston of July, 1971.



Those lessons are my only hope.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
21 January 2003*

When I was born my father was in the U.S. Air Force. He'd been in the Air Force since the Second World War, and stayed in until I was eleven or twelve. At age two I lived in Tachekawa, Japan. There is still a military air field there, but it is now used only by the JDF (Japan Defense Force). I checked Tachekawa out during a visit to Japan in 1997.

As a child in Japan I used to run away from home repeatedly. I'd go to the bus stop near my house and stand near the big people. When the bus arrived, I'd climb on board, probably with the help of a kind-hearted lady. Then I'd ride the bus until the end of the line. This caused my mother no end of worry.

I still remember the Japanese beetles that glowed with iridescent colors in the morning sunlight.

Here's a great question for a quiz show. Which American school for kids from 5 to 18 sits 2000 miles from the continental United States and 900 miles from the European mainland? And the answer is, ladies and gentlemen: the school at Lajes Air Base, which I attended from 1956 to 1960.

Lajes is a town on Terceira, an island in the Azores. You can find out more at [www.lajes.af.mil](http://www.lajes.af.mil). Featured on this Website are photos of Lajes Air Base from the late 1950s, exactly the time I lived there as a child. By seeing these photos you see Lajes through my seven or eight year-old eyes.

Lajes is just a few miles from a volcano hot enough to boil water. Every once in a while a ground tremor would rattle our windows. The whole island is really just a two-mile-high smoking cone of solidified lava.

No, I didn't live two miles up in the air. Every place on Terceira is near the ocean, because the island is a submerged mountain, part of a vast abyssal range called the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Ilha Terceira, "the isle of Terceira," is one of a cluster of Ridge volcanoes that poke their heads out of the choppy waters of the subtropical Atlantic Ocean. These are the Azores Islands, a territory of Portugal.

The capital of Terceira is Angra do Heroismo. I remember the bright Sunday that my father drove the family (Mom, my little sister Kathy, and me) to the south side of the island to visit Angra for the first time. It took about forty minutes to get there in our dark blue 1949 Mercury.

Seen from the sky, Angra is approximately shaped like a crescent. The inner curve of the crescent is the shoreline of a navigable bay. At the middle point of the shoreline a massive promontory named Mt. Brazil juts into the ocean. Ships and boats ply to and fro past its forested hulk. They are tracked from above by noisy sea birds and from below by silent sharks and barracudas. Inland from the shore a multitude of white buildings topped with red roofs marches up a dark green slope. The borderline along which upper Angra halts is the outer curve of the crescent.

We visited the Misericordia Church, which is located along that upper borderline. We could look down upon most of the town from there. I remember standing on a stone wall to see as far as I possibly could. It was overgrown with colorful flowering vines. Small lizards with pulsing throats scampered amid the leaves and flowers. The wall commanded an impressive vista of the town, the bay, and Mt. Brazil. As I pranced about on the wall, the melancholy 'tung...tung...tung' of a hand-pulled bell sounded from the church tower.

Way out in the waters beyond Mount Brazil was a bare peak of pale greenish-brown. It looked like a compact Rock of Gibraltar that had been chopped right down the middle with a Titan's fiery sword. "That's called Split Rock," my father told me. "In the Second World War the Germans sometimes parked U-Boats between its two halves."

From the Azores we sometimes visited my mother's relatives in England. I remember going with the family to see Nottingham Castle, formerly the abode of the Sheriff of Nottingham, the arch-foe of Robin Hood. We also visited Wiesbaden, Germany, from the Azores. In a hotel there I watched a German TV show, not knowing what the announcer was talking about.

Time is the most undefinable yet paradoxical of things; the past is gone, the future is not come, and the present becomes the past, even while we attempt to define it, and, like the flash of the lightning, at once exists and expires.

Colton (1780-1832)

Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
22 January, 2003

Big Bertha from Berlin has this to say:

"All this musing here in In2-MeC about the human condition, about the unsteady mind, about melancholic philosophy, about memories of things lost in time. What does this have to do with Krsna consciousness?"

Cc Madhya 20. 102&purport:

*`ke ami', `kene amaya jare tapa-traya'  
iha nahi jani-- `keman hita haya'*

#### TRANSLATION

"Who am I? Why do the threefold miseries always give me trouble? If I do not know this, how can I be benefited?"

#### PURPORT

The threefold material miseries are miseries arising from the body and the mind, miseries arising from dealings with other living entities, and miseries arising from natural disturbances. Sometimes we suffer bodily when we are attacked by a fever, and sometimes we suffer mentally when a close relative dies. Other living entities also cause us misery. There are living entities born of the human embryo, of eggs, perspiration and vegetation. Miserable conditions brought about by natural catastrophes are controlled by the higher demigods. There may be severe cold or thunderbolts, or a person may be haunted by ghosts. These threefold miseries are always before us, and they entrap us in a dangerous situation. *Padam padam yad vipadam*. There is danger in every step of life.

SB 7. 6. 16p:

In human society there are attempts to educate the human being, but for animal society there is no such system, nor are animals able to be educated. Therefore animals and unintelligent men are called *vimudha*, or ignorant, bewildered, whereas an educated person is called *vidvan*. The real *vidvan* is one who tries to understand his own position within this material world. For example, when Sanatana Gosvami submitted to the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, his first question was *`ke ami', `kene amaya jare tapa-traya'*. In other words, he wanted to know his constitutional position and why he was suffering from the threefold miseries of material existence. This is the process of education.

Cc Madhya 20. 4p:

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura informs us that this letter from Rupa Gosvami to Sanatana Gosvami is mentioned by the annotator of Udbhata-candrika. Srila Rupa Gosvami wrote a note to Sanatana Gosvami from Bakla. This note indicated that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was coming to Mathura, and it stated:

*yadu-pateh kva gata mathura-puri  
raghu-pateh kva gatottara-kosala  
iti vicintya kurusva manah sthiram  
na sad idam jagad ity avadharaya*

"Where has the Mathura Puri of Yadupati gone? Where has the northern Kosala of Raghupati gone? By reflection, make the mind steady, thinking, 'This universe is not eternal. '"

But Big Bertha replies:

"No, no, no. We don't accept this. This is old-style preaching, just hammering the negativities, wasting time in idle lamentation. We want the nectar of Krsna's pastimes and we want it NOW. "

*From Imperfection, Purity Will Come About* by Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami (23-25):

Surrender is austerity when we do it in faith before reaching the spontaneous stage. We are like Lord Brahma who heard Lord Visnu's sound vibration "*tapa*" and began to meditate, not sure of what he expected. We want to surrender to beautiful, playful Krsna. Surrender means to want to please Him even before we know Him.

Like Bhaktivinoda Thakura's song, we will also have to sing songs before we are spiritually redeemed. "I am wrong, I am unhappy, I am ignorant. . . " We regret our pre-Krsna conscious impressions; they haunt us as we grow older. We regret not having taken full advantage of our spiritual master's association. We regret not having fully studied the words of the *maha-bhagavatas* to whom our spiritual master introduced us. We aspire to reach the stage Bhaktivinoda Thakura sings of in his last stanza of this self-deprecating lament. He says he has been misled by the so-called jewel of education, but now "I seek no other treasure in this world than Your lotus feet. "

Material knowledge makes an ass out of a man. It makes him forget his soul. He pursues "brilliant thoughts" and material "improvements" which in actuality are mirages and blind alleys. By the time he discovers how lost he is, it's too late. At the end he is broken. An intelligent man at that point accepts humiliation as the only valuable lesson he has learned, but by then he is alone. His friends have deserted him and the pursuits which once seemed important now seem ludicrous.

This is when he decides to dedicate himself to devotional service. With his body embarrassed by dwindling and weakness, he tries to renounce material life.

Krsna is the ever-youthful hero of Vrndavana. When the old man discovers Krsna and tries to surrender to Him, he is liberated from the bonds of his body. People laugh at him, but he says, "I am not obliged to follow those asses and their institutions and slavish duties. I will worship Govinda by chanting and hearing His glories and I won't care for anyone else. "

Bhaktivinoda Thakura says the ass-like man carries the burden of material existence on his back all his life. All kinds of materialists, from the educated to the illiterate, agree that spiritual life should not be pursued. "Here is one such ass" who has

followed them and seeks meaning in this world while totally neglecting the call of the soul and the Supreme. It has all been in vain.

This is not an idle song. Try to feel the loss he feels. See yourself in that position. See the whole world like that--the people growing old in quiet desperation, one by one realizing their lives have been wasted. The worst fools, of course, never admit it.

*Tatala Saikate* by Srila Vidyapati (sung as *Kahe visayi mana* by Srila Prabhupada):

[Note: Vidyapati is well-known as a rasika poet. His poetry was loved by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Unfortunately mundane people think his poems express sensual ideas--see my Godbrother Yogeshvara's remembrance of discussing Vidyapati's poems with Srila Prabhupada in the *Memories* video series. But although Vidyapati is known for writing about "very high things," see his mood in this song below. ]

*tatala saikate bari bindu sama  
suta mita ramani samaje  
tohe visari mana tahe samarpala  
ab majhu habo kon kaji*

O Lord, completely forgetting you, I have offered my mind unto the society of women, children, and friends--but this experience has been just like offering a drop of water unto the burning hot sands of the beach. How can I possibly be relieved of this great misery?

*madhava! hama parinam nirasa  
tuhun jaga tarana dina doya moy  
ataye tohari visoyasa*

O Madhava! As a consequence, I am rendered totally despondent. You are the savior of the universe, and are merciful to the helpless souls. Therefore I place my hope only in you.

*adha janama hama ninde goyayalun  
jara sisu koto dina gela  
nidhuvane ramani rasa range matala  
tohe bhajabo kon bela*

Wandering about in a half-alive condition, I spend my life in utter disgrace. Uncountable days passed as a frivolous child and a useless old man. I have been intoxicated by the pleasure of sharing romantic adventures with beautiful young women. When will I ever get a chance to worship You?

*koto caturanana mari mari jaota  
na tuya adi avasana  
tohe janami puna tohe samaota  
sagara lahari samana*

Numberless Brahmas have died one after another, whereas You are without beginning or end. All of the them take birth from You and are again and again absorbed into You just like the waves in the ocean.

*bhanaye vidyapati sesa samana bhoy  
tuya vina gati nahi ara  
adi anadika natha kahayasi  
bhava tarana bhara tohara*

Vidyapati confesses that now, at the end of his life, he is fearful of death. O Lord! There is no shelter other than you. You will always remain celebrated as being the Lord of both the beginning and the beginningless. Now the responsibility for my deliverance from the material world is entirely Yours.

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
23 January 2003*

Ideal Qualities, from *Ramayana Ayodhyakanda* Chapter One

Lord Ramachandra was Bhagavan Sri Vishnu Himself incarnate on earth for the destruction of Ravana. Lord Rama had no peer. He was the reservoir of beauty, He was free from malice, and He was blessed of His father's unparalleled royal qualifications.

Rama always addressed the people in gentle words and never used any hard expression even when spoken to rudely. In the magnanimity of His heart he would forget hundreds of evils done to Him and be grateful for even one single act of kindness. He relished taking time off His military training to discuss Shastra with wise and elderly *brahmanas*.

When approached by someone, it was He who spoke first in greeting. Though everyone knew of His immense power, He was never haughty for that. He was truthful and learned and He always honored the aged.

Lord Ramachandra was most attentive to the welfare of His subjects, and in return the people loved Him deeply. He was a friend to the poor, a chastiser of the wicked, and well-versed in religion, social customs, and law. He was worthy of His line, and always held the duties of a *ksatriya* in high esteem. He never participated in profane and irreverent talks.

When questioned no matter on what subject, He answered wisely like Brhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods.

He was young, healthy, and virtuous. He was as dear to the people as their own selves. He had mastered the *Vedas* and the *Vedangas* and was skillful in the use of all arms, both ordinary weapons and those controlled by *mantra*. He was valiant. He was honest. He was the source of all good. He never spoke lies even in utmost peril. He was modest, reserved, and always respectful toward His superiors. He was never

angry or jubilant over trifles. He sought no evil. He was free of idleness and ever vigilant. He was ever ready to scan His own faults.

He knew the means of honestly amassing wealth, and He knew how to distribute it to the deserving recipients of charity. He punished or rewarded the people according to the strict rules of justice. He had aged, pious *brahmanas* as His guides. He was well-versed in philosophy and poetry. He knew all the arts of enjoyment but He never sought pleasure at the cost of morality.

He was an expert rider, a great warrior, and a valiant general who could successfully lead His army against His enemy. He was a master of military strategy. Even the demigods could not defeat Him.

He was not given to complaining, nor was He a slave of time. He was patient like the earth, intelligent like Brhaspati, and powerful like Indra. He shone like the mid-day sun to the delight of His father and to the benefit of the people. Bhumidevi, the personified earth planet, desired only the excellent Rama as her lord.

Jaya Sri Rama!

Jaya Srila Prabhupada!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra*  
*24 January 2003*

What hope is there then, when our gaining ideal qualities seems but a hopeless dream?

Read this excerpt from HH Satsvarupa dasa Gosvamis *From Imperfection Purity Will Come About*. It's about making our very hopelessness our prayer for salvation.

Rupa Gosvami's verse states that one who can control these urges [tongue, belly, genital, mind, anger, and words] is a *gosvami* and is capable of accepting disciples all over the world. But Bhaktivinoda Thakura doesn't claim he is such a *gosvami*. "After great endeavor to subdue these material demands, I have completely given up all hope. O Lord of the destitute, I call upon Your holy name, for now You are my only shelter" (*Saranagati* 7. 1. 4). He has turned the verse into a personal prayer. Let us remember the *Upadesamrta* text in this way.

We sometimes quote it as evidence of one who is qualified to be a spiritual master. Or we assert, "I am following the rules. I control these urges. So consider me a *gosvami*". But we cannot ultimately control ourselves; we can only endeavor and pray, because our minds, tongues, bellies, and genitals are banded together against us. Our tongue speaks nonsense. Please, Lord of the poor, give us Your shelter.

Similarly, Bhaktivinoda Thakura takes the statement of items which are unfavorable for devotional service and he turns it into his personal prayer. "I have not been able to give up any of these attachments. Thus my own faults have been my downfall. " It is nice to study these faults from an objective distance, "One should avoid these. "

But it is also powerful to come close to them and openly admit, *I have these and they are spoiling my life*. The list of entanglements comes alive and we confess. We have been giving a lecture on unfavorable items to one's execution of service. Now we admit our own wrongs.

"O Lord Hari, what am I to do now? I am indeed fallen; but Your holy name is the savior of the fallen. Clinging to that holy name, I have taken shelter at Your lotus feet" (*Saranagati* 7. 2. 3-4)

Wait a minute, why so freely say that you are guilty? What has proved you wrong? Do you actually commit *atyaharah prayasas ca prajalpo niyamagraha? Jana-sangas ca laulyam ca?* Yes, sometimes greedy, sometimes eating more than necessary and collecting more funds than necessary. I definitely practice the rules only for the sake of following them. These items are not only a list of what the fools and nondevotees do. Srila Prabhupada writes, "Every intelligent man should purify his consciousness and rid himself of the above mentioned hindrances to devotional service by taking whole-hearted shelter of this Krsna consciousness movement" (NOI, text 2, purport). ISKCON can free us. So you, I mean I--are we taking shelter?

As for the six principles favorable to the execution of devotional service beginning with *utsaha*, Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, "I have never possessed these six devotional qualities. " *Saranagati* means making the confession. You look in your heart and find yourself wanting. *Saranagati* means to drop the pose. With honest scrutiny we can see we are still dancing with *maya*. We can check the bad qualities off as in a private questionnaire, "Yes. Sometimes. Yes. All the time. Yes, I *think* of doing it. " When good qualities are mentioned--and sometimes the interviewers remind us to be honest--his pencil checks off, "No. Rarely. Not so often. "

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura writes, "Absorbed in abominable activities, I never kept company with *sadhus*. Now I adopt the garb of the *sadhus* and instruct others. This is *maya's* big joke" (*Saranagati* 7. 3. 3). Who has that power to look within and admit the truth? Who is so liberated that he can accept criticism from others, "You don't have patience. You don't seem confident in the process of devotional service. " And who has the power to see himself as a hypocrite for instructing others even though he is not himself free? "O Lord Hari, in such a helpless condition surely I will obtain Your causeless mercy. O when, under the shelter of my spiritual master, will I call out to You with humble prayers?" (*Saranagati* 7. 3. 4).

You mean we should go around admitting we are hypocrites and can't follow the basic instructions of the *Nectar of Instruction*? We should be honest. We don't have to "go around" announcing anything. Know it within yourself and act accordingly. Engage confidentially in the process of *anartha-nivrtti* and develop good qualities. Live the *Nectar of Instruction*.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!



Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
25 January 2003

Cc Adi 4. 130

*yaha haite sunirmala dvitiya nahi ara  
tathapi sarvada vamyavakra-vyavahara*

#### TRANSLATION

Nothing is purer than Her love. But its behavior is always perverse and crooked.

\* \* \* \* \*

Every day in Goloka Vrndavana, Mother Yashoda writes a letter that is delivered to Yavat for Srimati Radharani. The letter invites Her to cook Lord Krsna's breakfast. Though Mother Yashoda loves Srimati Radharani with the combined tenderness of a million mothers, she is not aware of the secret intimacy between Sri Radha and her divine son Sri Krsna. All she knows is that Radharani was blessed by Sage Durvasa that whatever She cooks will taste like nectar; and that each time She cooks, the dishes She prepares will be different from all that She has ever cooked before. Yashoda simply wants the best for Krsna.

In obedience to Mother Yashoda, and in great eagerness to serve Her Lord, Radhika comes to Nanda Bhavan with all Her *sakhis*. By that time Yashoda has readied the kitchen--the stoves are fired and the ingredients are set out. The *sakhis* get busy, expertly cutting up different items, grinding and blending spices, combining ingredients. While Srimati Radharani cooks, Lord Krsna peeks at Her beauty from a hidden place.

Mother Yashoda, assisted by the *sakhis*, takes charge of serving Sri Krsna and His boy friends. Yashoda's intention is to take the remnants of her divine son. But after the Lord and the gopas have finished breakfast and before Yashoda is free to sit down for *prasadam*, the *sakhis* hurriedly remove every grain of remnants from

Krsna's plate while strewing upon it remnants from the other plates. Krsna's remnants are smuggled out of the house to Srimati Radharani, who waits at a secluded spot on the road. In this way, even Yashoda-devi is transcendently tricked by the crooked ways of Radhika and Her girlfriends.

In all such affairs, Srimati Radharani is sharply vigilant against discovery. She has to be so careful, especially since Her mother-in-law Jatila is extremely suspicious of Her. For example, once Jatila was dressing and decorating herself with the help of her transcendental daughter-in-law. Jatila couldn't find the *kohl* (eyeliner), which she was in the habit of calling "*krsna*" because of its black color. "Where is the *krsna*?" she asked Srimati Radharani.

Immediately, symptoms of ecstasy manifested in Srimati Radharani's person. Her hairs stood on end and She trembled all over. Jatila glared at Her. "What is this? I say '*krsna*' and you are stunned? Why? What are You thinking about? WHO are you thinking about?"

The spiritual master represents Srimati Radharani. Therefore his ways are also crooked, while at the same time remaining ever pure.

\* \* \* \* \*

London, 26 July 1976

**George Harrison:** He had a baby girl and was trying to think of a name, so I told him to call it Dhara, you know? `Cause from Radha--*radharadharadha*--it becomes *dhara*. So he called his girl that name.

**Jayatirtha:** There's a story of Valmiki, you know that story?

**Gurudasa:** *Maramaramaramaramara*.

**Jayatirtha:** Valmiki was a murderer, or a dacoit, thief. So he was met by Narada Muni, I think.

**Prabhupada:** Yes, Valmiki.

**Jayatirtha:** And he was advised by Narada Muni to please chant the holy name of the Lord and give up this thievery. So he wouldn't. So instead Narada Muni said, "You chant *mara*. " *Mara* means death. So he agreed.

**Prabhupada:** *Maramara, rama*.

**Jayatirtha:** Later on, this Valmiki, he wrote the Ramayana after having chanted *rama, mara*, he became purified.

**Hari-sauri:** Transcendental trickery.

**Jayatirtha:** All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

\* \* \* \* \*

A Godbrother remembers Srila Prabhupada asking some disciples, "So, Krsna's devotee, is he simple, or is he crooked?" The devotees didn't quite know what to say, so Srila Prabhupada repeated the question. "Krsna's devotee, is he simple or crooked?"

Someone replied, "He is simple, Srila Prabhupada. "

"You think so? You are sure?"

"Yes, Srila Prabhupada. He is simple. "

"No, he is crooked. Just like me. I have tricked you all to take this Krsna consciousness. "

\* \* \* \* \*

In just that way, Kasyapa Muni tricked his wife Diti, mother of the demons.

After her twin sons Hiranyaksa and Hiranyakasipu were killed by the Supreme Lord in His incarnations of Varahadeva and Narsimhadeva, she swore vengeance on Indra, the king of heaven. It was Indra, she reasoned, who instigated the Lord to descend and take action against her sons. So now she wanted a son who would be immortal like the demigods and yet would be the enemy of the demigods and the death of Indra.

For a long time she served her husband Kasyapa with great humility, care and attention, foregoing all personal comforts. Finally in gratitude he declared, "My dear wife, I am so pleased with you that I shall grant you whatever boon is within my power to give. "

On his word as a *brahmana*, Diti revealed her mind. He was shocked, but she was adamant: "I want a son from you who is an immortal enemy of the immortals, and who will kill Indra, the king of the immortals. "

Kasyapa seemed to relent. He told his wife that she could get such a son only if she performed an austere ritual called Pumsavana strictly for one year. If she deviated from the rite in the slightest way during that period, she would get a son who would be friendly to Indra. She promised to follow the Pumsavana vow in every detail.

At the core of the rite was the worship of Sri Sri Lakshmi-Narayana. Thus the Pumsavana *vrata* was really pure devotional service disguised by Kasyapa Muni to look like a method of religion that only a demon would follow. When she set herself on the Pumsavana path, Indra came to serve her, claiming himself to be impressed by his aunt's spirituality. In truth his interest was to find a weakness in her practice so that he could kill her son while he was still in the womb.

During her execution of the vow, Diti became pregnant. When she was heavy with child, she could no longer tolerate the austerity, although she valiantly tried. One day she neglected to observe one of the rules of cleanliness. While she slept in an

unclean state Indra assumed a tiny form and entered her womb. He cut the embryo into seven pieces. Each piece instantly became a separate whole embryo. The seven babies started to cry. Worried that their crying would awaken their mother, Indra told them, "*Ma rodih*" (don't cry), from which they got their name as the Maruts. He cut each new embryo into seven. Now there were forty-nine embryos. They requested Indra to stop hurting them. "We are demigods like you," they pleaded. "We are your friends, not your enemies. "

Indra came out of Diti's womb accompanied by the 49 Maruts. When she awoke, she saw her sons sharing friendly talks with Indra. Amazingly, she found herself pleased at this. Indra, seeing his aunt was awake, humbly begged her forgiveness for trying to do harm to her sons. She was surprised at herself for accepting his apology and for feeling kindness toward him.

She realized that her husband had tricked her. Instead of getting a son to satisfy her murderous desires, her following of the Pumsavana rite had purified her heart. The thought of killing Indra had left her. She had become a devotee. What's more, instead of one immortal son, she had forty-nine.

\* \* \* \* \*

Syamasundara Prabhu told of a little-known event that I think is a true-life illustration of what Srila Prabhupada meant when he said that if the son asks the father to take him to the cinema and the father agrees, then that cinema-watching is not sinful. Syamasundara got a hot tip of a coming increase in the value of gold. He advised Srila Prabhupada of this money-making opportunity. The two of them flew to Zurich and bought gold at the Swiss Credit Bank for \$20 000. They waited a week as the gold price climbed. Finally Srila Prabhupada got bored and they sold their gold, doubling their investment.

Well. The vow not to gamble or speculate rules out just this kind of activity. It's sinful. But Syamasundara Prabhu, Prabhupada's spiritual son, asked if his transcendental father would like to take a chance on the gold market. Prabhupada agreed. Though it was gambling, it was not sinful.

\* \* \* \* \*

Big Bertha from Berlin is rather outraged by all this. She argues that Srila Prabhupada's perfection is a spiritual fact. But since *Bhagavad-gita* says all endeavors in the material world are covered by fault, it is misleading to say that everything Prabhupada did in his life here was perfect. It was not right for him to encourage a disciple to gamble like that. His instructions to his disciples about *gurukula* were not perfect either. In fact, despite what was written earlier in In2-MeC about Lord Ramachandra, He too was not a completely ideal example. He sent His wife away to the forest while she was pregnant. This encourages ordinary male devotees to abandon their wives. We've seen too much of this sort of thing in ISKCON.

\* \* \* \* \*

For the neophyte especially, considering a pure devotee from a material point of view is very injurious. One should therefore avoid observing a pure devotee externally, but should try to see the internal features and understand how he is engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. In this way one can avoid seeing the pure devotee from a material point of view, and thus one can gradually become a purified devotee himself.

When one thus criticizes a pure devotee, he commits an offense (vaisnava-aparadha) that is very obstructive and dangerous for those who desire to advance in Krsna consciousness. A person cannot derive any spiritual benefit when he offends the lotus feet of a Vaisnava.

--*Nectar of Instruction*  
text 6, purport

\* \* \* \* \*

*Cc Madhya* 6. 196

*bhagavan, tanra sakti, tanra guna-gana  
acintya prabhava tinera na yaya kathana*

TRANSLATION

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, His different potencies and His transcendental qualities all have inconceivable prowess. It is not possible to explain them fully.

*Cc Madhya* 23. 39

*yanra citte krsna-prema karaye udaya  
tanra vakya kriya mudra vijneha na bhujhaya*

TRANSLATION

Even the most learned man cannot understand the words, activities and symptoms of a person in love of Godhead.



*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
26 January 2003*



This is Paul Wexler, a Hollywood actor who played in movies and TV from the 1950s into the 1970s. He died of cancer in 1979, I believe. The photo shows him as he appeared in the 1954 film *Suddenly*, starring Frank Sinatra and Sterling Hayden.

Paul Wexler is the father of Alan Wexler, who was initiated by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada as Anirdeshavapu dasa. When Anirdeshavapu dasa took sannyasa in the 1980s, he received the name Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja.

"Nice son, nice father," Srila Prabhupada said upon meeting the father of one of his disciples. He told the man that because his son was a devotee, 10 generations of his family in the past and 10 generations in the future would be delivered.

Plutarch wrote that character is simply habit long continued. Paul Wexler's life was replete with the kind of bad habits that screen actors are known to go in for. Nice son, nice father, but also habits bad, character bad.

He was a sports car enthusiast. But his zipping around Los Angeles in a little British convertible resulted in a freak accident in which Wexler's wife--Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja's mother--was killed when Maharaja was small child. Thereafter Daddy Wexler took to womanizing. So as to unencumber his sense gratification, he packed his young son off to Oregon to be raised by relatives. Paul Wexler was a big party-goer, a drinker and a smoker. And of course he liked his steak, the favorite dish of the '50s male. (Standard dinnertime conversation line of that time: "Nothing like a fine piece of meat. ")

Nice father?

Paul Wexler acted in films like *The Ten Commandments* (he was an Egyptian soldier), *Khartoum*, and *The Way West* (little Alan appeared in that one too). He was the voice for a dog in the feature-length Disney cartoon *101 Dalmations*. He often played black-hat gunslinging bad guys in '50s TV Westerns like *Gunsmoke* and *Have Gun, Will Travel* ("brought to you by Twenty Mule Team Borax"). In the 1970s he had a starring role as the arch-villain Captain Seas in the Doc Savage movie called *The Man of Bronze*.

In real life he played the role of a bad guy too. When his son joined ISKCON, Paul Wexler was not happy. In fact he was so upset that he cut Alan (Anirdeshavapu) out of his will. Still, when he passed away, Anirdesh traveled all the way from India to LA to attend his father's funeral. He found out that his father's estate was in the hands of his second stepmother, a busty blonde bimbo who treated him like dirt.

This is not one of those happy end stories, like Mrs. Scharf finally finding satisfaction in the fact that her two sons, Bruce (Brahmananda) and Greg (Gargamuni), had given their lives to Srila Prabhupada; or Kartikeya's very unfavorable mother speaking Krsna's name as she passed away, her eyes fixed on her devotee son who sat by her deathbed (hearing about this, tears came to Srila Prabhupada's eyes; he told Kartikeya in a voice choked with emotion, "You have saved your mother!").

It seems to me that the only thing nice about Paul Wexler was that he had a son who took to Krsna consciousness seriously. "If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton," George Bernard Shaw is quoted, "you may as well make it dance. " That's all Paul Wexler was: a Hollywood prop, a skeleton on wires, moved here and there by the modes of nature. He was dead even though breathing.

But Prabhupada said 10 generations back, 10 generations forward, are delivered when a son becomes a pure devotee. Thus this particular skeleton was made to dance. I can't say where he is right now, but I'm confident old evil Captain Seas is dancing to the tune of the Hare Krsna *mahamantra*.

Nice son, nice father. It's the *son* whom Prabhupada mentioned first. So even if the father, stand-alone, is not nice, since the son is nice by having become a devotee, the father can't escape being nice.

\* \* \* \* \*

In summer of 1997 I visited Los Angeles for about ten days. My Godbrother Yadubara Prabhu, as a treat I guess, took me to Paramount Studios. We were part of a tour group led around by a chatty studio guide.

The industry of illusion. You can't help but be impressed. Movie-making has in its short history evolved into an exact science. Hollywood attracts talent from all over the world--not just actors, but artists, musicians, writers, sculptors, audio-visual technicians, computer programmers, interior decorators, clothes designers. . . I could wrack my brains to make a list of all the skills needed to make movies and it would still be incomplete.

These people are motivated. They take risks. They work hard. They not only work hard, but they work together as a team. Making a movie is in some ways as complex and demanding as a military campaign.

ISKCON is supposed to be a spiritual version of just this type of operation. Prabhupada was expert in engaging talented personalities in stupendous productions. Actually he far surpassed any Hollywood producer or director in orchestrating a spectacular show, because his was a world-wide production that never stopped! Right now the director Peter Jackson is working on the last part of his *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. It's a three-year project of bringing each of author's J. R. R. Tolkien's three "Ring" epics to the screen. It's supposedly the most ambitious extravaganza in the history of film-making. But after three years have passed and the third and last film is playing in the cinemas, that's it. Everybody on the team goes home to count their earnings and enjoy their senses. ISKCON was Srila Prabhupada's production for bringing the *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Caitanya-caritamrta* not just to the silver screen, but to the senses, mind, intelligence and consciousness of every human on the planet. A total spiritual experience! Jackson's crew is on location in New Zealand; Prabhupada's crew expanded to more than a 108 locations world-wide. And Prabhupada's show just goes on and on, and not just on this planet.

Well, that's what Prabhupada wanted, at least. While walking through the sprawling Paramount Studios I asked myself, "I wonder if ISKCON will ever achieve this level of dedication, competence, and attention to detail?"

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Not long after I was initiated, I met Otto Preminger in Boston. The temple got an invitation from a local TV station to send a few devotees to a talk show. So Harer Nama Prabhu asked me to go along with him and Sumati dd (who took over pujari duties from Rukmini dd). Only Harer Nama and Sumati actually appeared on the show. I've forgotten why, but I ended up just watching from behind the cameras. Anyway, the show had a lady moderator, and her guests that day were--besides the two Hare Krishnas--a guitar-strumming Jesus freak, and famed Hollywood director Otto Preminger.

Among his many films, Preminger directed *Laura*, a romantic mystery starring Gene Tierney and Dana Andrews. It was a huge hit in the States and in Britain just after the Second World War. *Laura* was a favorite of my mother's, who was a seventeen-year-old English girl when it played in theaters in her country. The script dialogue had some brilliant lines. When Laura (played by Tierney) innocently interrupts Waldo Lydecker (played by Clifton Webb) at his dinner to ask him a favor, he icily replies, "Young woman, either you were raised in an incredibly rustic community, or you are suffering from the common feminine delusion that the mere fact of being a woman exempts you from civilized behavior--or perhaps both. "

On the TV show, Otto Preminger said very little. Unfortunately, he did not take the *prasadam* that Sumati and Harer Nama distributed. At least he saw the devotees and heard them say "Hare Krsna" repeatedly.

I wonder if he is dancing with Paul Wexler right now.

Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
27 January 2003

Syamasundara Prabhu, speaking in the *Srila Prabhupada Memories* video series, part 27, has this to say about the hippie culture of the Haight-Ashbury district in San Francisco during the 1960s:

You have to realize the context, that there was nothing like this from the fifties. The age of small appliances and Ricky, Ozzie and Harriet. There was this slight clattering from Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and the Beat Generation somewhere in the background, but this was a revolutionary time, when thousands and tens of thousands of people were opening the doors of perception and leading a radical new lifestyle that had never been done before. And Prabhupada just stepped right into it and conducted it like a ringmaster. He was right at home right in the middle of it.

In case that statement isn't really clear to the reader, here's some help:

"Small appliances:" transistor radios, pop-up electric toasters, Norelco floating-head electric razors, electric eggbeaters, etc.

"Ricky, Ozzie and Harriet:" in America during the 1950s, one of the most popular shows on TV was *Ozzie and Harriet*, a weekly comedy about the Nelson family. One of the Nelson sons was Ricky, who became a noted pop singer.

"Slight clattering from Jack Kerouac" etc.: earlier in this journal I made mention of the Beat Generation, which arrived in New York City near the end of the Second World War. This was an underground movement of writers and poets who sought the meaning of life by a kind of bohemian mysticism fueled by bebop jazz and street drugs. They chose the name "Beats" for themselves to indicate that 1) they were beaten down by modern society; 2) their goal was beatitude (blissfulness); 3) they moved to the beat of progressive jazz music.

The most famous of the Beat authors was Jack Kerouac. His first best-selling book was *On the Road*, which he supposedly typed in a clattering burst of creative inspiration onto a big roll of teletype paper, without going back to edit or revise any of it. Allen Ginsberg was a poet. His most famous opus was *Howl* which like *On the Road* was published in the mid-fifties. Ginsberg later became a spokesman for the hippie movement; Kerouac didn't care for the hippies. Other seminal figures of the Beat Generation were William S. Burroughs (author of *Naked Lunch*, banned in the United States for some time after its publication in the late fifties), John Clellon Holmes (author of *Go*, the first Beat novel), and Neal Cassidy (not an author or poet himself, but being a total eccentric, he was a great inspiration to those Beats who did write).

"Opening the doors of perception:" this is in reference to a poem called *The Doors of Perception* by the English visionary William Blake (1757-1827). The Beats and the hippies liked this poem because it seems to encourage drug abuse as a method of expanding consciousness. The sixties rock group called *The Doors* took its name from Blake's poem.

\* \* \* \* \*

Someday in the future a historian with too much time on his or her hands will write a book tracing all the conflicts that arose in ISKCON during its first thirty years to tensions between devotees who came from the Beat Generation and devotees who came from the hippie movement.

No, I'm serious. Not that I necessarily *agree* that such a rift played a major role in ISKCON's troubles, but this is just the kind of speculative scenario academicians like to cash in on.

Last December, when we were in his Vrndavana apartment reminiscing about the early days, Brahmananda Prabhu told me, "I considered myself part of the Beat Generation. The Beats made individual expression into a philosophy of life. They weren't poseurs. The hippies on the other hand were into having fun and promoting a popular youth movement. In New York--at least at first--Beats and hippies were worlds apart. It was Allen Ginsberg who merged the two."

In those days I lived neither in New York nor San Francisco. Being younger, I got into the bohemian scene a little later. But I too was dimly aware of the difference Brahmananda Prabhu pointed out between Beats and hippies.

I gravitated to the Beats. I wasn't looking for membership in a tribe. I wasn't trying to define myself as a social entity. I didn't seek the acceptance of my peers via the length of my hair, the clothes on my back, the drugs that I took, or the music I listened to.

I was looking for myself and God in the medium of experience. And I was trying to express myself and God through the medium of experience--i.e. through all varieties of artistic creativity, but especially writing.

I have to admit that this distinction I just made between Beats and hippies is ultimately just semantics. I think Beat poet Leroi Jones summed it up best in his autobiography. He wrote (I have to paraphrase because I don't have the book in front of me) that the bohemian way of life he took up in Greenwich Village during the 1950s was aimed at the immediate gratification of desires.

That airey-fairy "experience" I was trying to find myself and God in? It was just the experience of sense gratification. What else were the Beats and hippies doing except gratifying their senses?

But still, there was a difference between the Beats and the hippies. It was not about the comparative validity of their experiences. It was about their mentalities. Quite simply, the Beats were a literary movement and the hippies were a social movement. A writer necessarily works by him- or herself. But if your thing in life is to be a member of a social movement, then you necessarily work within your group.

HH Satsvarupa Maharaja, ISKCON's most productive literary devotee, often writes about his unease with the social side of life in the Hare Krsna movement. And in response, I've heard somewhat uncharitable remarks from devotees who consider the social side to be the one factor that really shows whether a devotee is "on" or "off."

I have no comment about this state of affairs, other than that it reveals the age-old tension between the individual and the group. ISKCON, being a group formed of individuals, is not exempt from this tension. The tension isn't necessarily rooted in the Beat-or-hippie backgrounds of the older devotees. It's just there. Everywhere.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nowadays we don't hear as much "for the Society" drumbeating as we used to. Individualism among devotees is much more acceptable than it was in the '70s, '80s, and most of the '90s. Still, a number of the individualists who have fallen out of step with the ISKCON society tell me they'd be eager to get back into step if some sort of change, reform or cleanup takes place. I find that interesting from a philosophical point of view.

The philosophy of the ultimate nature of everything is *acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva*. I suppose one of the practical consequences of that must be that individualism and collectivism are supraliminally different yet inseparable. (Forgive me if "supraliminally" seems an arrogant choice of a word. It means, "above the threshold of consciousness or sensation;" i.e. "above thought and perception," i.e. "inconceivably.") In other words, the individualist can't ever perfectly be aloof from society, nor can the collectivist ever perfectly fit into society. And neither will be able to perfectly understand why. Still, it is human nature to make up reasons for everything. And so we argue that our fitting in or not fitting in depends upon the presence or absence of social change.

I suppose I am straying. I'm just trying to say that the tension between the individual and the group is inevitable. It's the very nature of things. All political arguments miss that simple fact. In that way, all political arguments are ignorant.

\* \* \* \* \*

Syamasundara Prabhu is quite correct. The hippies were unique in American society. And Srila Prabhupada knew how to capture them for Lord Caitanya's mission. At the same time, Srila Prabhupada said to Syamasundra Prabhu, "Well, hippies, they are nonsense. What is the value of their anything? They have no value. They are crazy, mad fellows. That's all. There is no philosophy, nothing of the sort."

And the Beats? They were *certainly* crazy people. Allen Ginsberg, Carl Solomon, William S. Burroughs and his wife were all placed under psychiatric care during the late '40s and early '50s. I remember picking up from my readings of Beat literature and poetry that it is a good thing, a creative kick or whatever, to be declared insane.

The hippie movement was just a much more popular form of craziness than the Beat movement was.

Thus Prabhupada came in the '60s, not the '40s or 50s, to take advantage of American craziness at its peak. As Syamasundara remembers, hippies were in a frame of mind to immediately accept that Lord Jagannatha is God. They were madmen, but blessed madmen.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yesterday (Sunday 26 January) I spoke to an audience consisting of doctors from the Lotus Hospital and Research Centre and professional people of the Rotary Movement in Kohlapur. This took place at Appa's Complex, a lecture hall opposite Shahaji College. The presentation was in two parts. At noon I gave a talk on stress management, and at 8:30 I spoke on life after death.



The organizing devotees thought *kirtana* wasn't advisable. That was a little unfortunate, but understandable. This was ISKCON's first program to Kohlapur's upper class, so the devotees didn't want to challenge their citified sensibilities too much. You see, in Maharashtra there is a traditional movement of Krsna-*kirtana* that expanded from Saint Tukarama (see *Cc Madhya* 9.282p).

The members of this movement are called Varkaris, and they come from the villages. Such rustic folk are far less inhibited than city folk; they have no reservation about wholeheartedly jumping into *kirtana*. The city folk also know *kirtana* and they do respect it, but they identify enthusiastic chanting with the lower classes. So the ISKCON leadership here, Rupa Vilasa Prabhu and Vrndavana Ananda Prabhu, didn't want to put our esteemed guests in an embarrassing position by holding a *kirtana*. The audience would hardly participate due to worrying too much about how others from their class would see them.

But they liked the lectures and asked many questions. *Prasadam* was served. All of the attendees filled out "response forms"; in this way their names go into a file for future cultivation.

May the ISKCON yatra in Kohlapur continue to grow and grow and **GROW AND G R O W....**

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
28 January 2003

Listen! Visnujana Maharaja is singing:

*vrndavana ramya-sthana  
divya-cintamani-dhama  
avtra kalini nire  
raja-hamsa keli kore  
tahe sobha kanaka-kamala*

The beautiful place known as Vrndavana is a transcendental abode in the spiritual world, and is composed entirely of divine touch-stones. There are many enchanting temples bedecked with costly jewels. The royal swans known as *raja-hamsa* frolic in the waters of the river Yamuna, which surrounds that transcendental island. In the midst of that divine river is a beautiful golden lotus of a hundred jewels.

About Visnujana Swami Srila Prabhupada said, "By his singing alone, he can go back to Godhead. "

\* \* \* \* \*



*Sripada Visnujana Maharaja*

I first saw Sripada Visnujana Maharaja when the Transcendental Road Show stopped in Boston in early 1972. First Toshana Krsna Prabhu arrived as the advance man, arranging venues where the Show devotees would perform. I think they played in Amherst, a university town about 45 minutes west on the Interstate freeway from Boston. They may have played in other places. For sure they put on a limited presentation (not the complete show) during the Boston temple Sunday feast program.

My Godsister Mahamaya Mataji gives a very apt description of the Road Show in Chapter 4 of her exciting book, *Srila Prabhupada is Coming*, so I'll just quote her:

The Transcendental Road Show was one of the most ecstatic experiences of my life. We traveled around in the buses with beautiful Radha-Krishna Deities, preached at colleges and universities, distributed massive amounts of *prasadam*, held ecstatic *kirtans*, performed well-rehearsed dramas, heard philosophical lectures by *sannyasis*, enjoyed Krishna-conscious guitar music, and more. We had a tie-dyed parachute backdrop for our rock band. It was unique.

Started by Kirtanananda Swami and the multi-talented Mangalananda Prabhu for preaching in the southern United States, the Road Show rapidly expanded to a

troupe of 35 devotees. Many thanks to Mahamaya Mataji for reminding me of the words to two of Mangalananda's melodious songs, which I used to know by heart:

Lord Caitanya's moon is rising  
And it's not at all surprising  
That we're singing in the street  
Telling everyone we meet  
We're going home--Back to Godhead

This next song was sung to the *Kiba jaya, jaya gaurachande* melody (not Prabhupada's original melody, but the one that ISKCON assimilated from India in 1971):

Hey, you don't have to worry  
All your cares will soon all be gone  
Try to understand the problem  
There's no place for you to put your love

So take this simple message  
It will carry you so very far  
Back to Home, Back to Godhead  
Chant these names and give yourself to God

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare  
Hare Rama, Hare Rama  
Rama Rama, Hare Hare

In the next excerpt, Mahamaya Mataji describes the arrival of Visnujana Maharaja at the Road Show's headquarters--an empty airplane hangar in Orlando, Florida--in 1971:

Visnujana Swami, hearing the glories of the Road Show, came to check it out. He was based in Texas, running preaching centers in San Antonio and Austin. He loved our breadsticks [a Mangalananda Prabhu creation] and *kittri* and said we had the best *prasadam*. He immediately jumped into service. He taught us dramas, including one about Magrari the hunter, performed with handheld tin masks that warbled when shaken. The Deities needed a better altar, and he built a new one.

So in early 1972 the Road Show's four converted school buses cruised up to 40 North Beacon Street to spill their blissful, enthusiastic occupants into our temple. I was over-awed, especially by the two swamis, and *especially* by Visnujana Swami. It was a potent program. As a direct result of the Road Show's visit, five or seven new devotees joined the temple. Sahadeva Prabhu, who got initiated by Srila Prabhupada on the same day as me, was so inspired he went out and got a "preaching bus" for ISKCON Boston. We painted it blue with a big "Hare Krishna" in multicolored letters on each side.

A number of Boston devotees rode in this bus to New Vrndavana in September '72 to attend Srila Prabhupada's Bhagavat Dharma Discourses. In a later entry I will have more to say about that wonderful event. But here I just want to mention that at this

time I met up with the Road Show troupe a second time. By then Kirtanananda Swami was fully occupied with the New Vrndavana project, so Visnujana Maharaja was completely in charge of the Road Show. If I am not mistaken, the charismatic Sudama Maharaja was traveling with him also.

In any case, Sudama Maharaja was certainly teamed up with him when the Road Show returned to Boston in late 1972. The mood had changed somewhat. Now the troupe performed a full-fledged rock opera. There were some new songs, harder and heavier; one was called "The Party" and was sung by a raucous-voiced Mataji decked out in witchy makeup and clothes. Yes, the Road Show certainly looked and sounded more professional, but at the cost of its former innocent charm, I thought.

On his way to the Bhagavat Dharma Discourses, Srila Prabhupada caught the new show in Pittsburgh. Rumor had it he wasn't so pleased. Some devotees played parts of drugged-out hippies, and perhaps they embraced their roles too closely to their hearts. His Divine Grace asked, "Are these our men?" Thus when the Road Show returned to Boston it was under a cloud of doubt.

On top of that, a disagreement was cooking up between Visnujana and Sudama Swamis. Now, these events are more than thirty years gone and both Maharajas, great souls, are departed from this world. But right after the second round in Boston, Sudama Swami got together with Bali Mardana Maharaja, the GBC for New York, to redefine and redesign the program. The plan was that under Sudama Maharaja's direction--he came from a family of professional stage performers--the troupe would remain permanently in the Henry Street Temple and work on "making it" in the New York theater scene. Like that old Sinatra song about New York City: "If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere." Visnujana Maharaja was (how else can I say it?) given the boot. Scuttlebutt had it that Sudama and Bali Mardana Swamis considered Visnujana Maharaja just too bush league for The Big Apple. [Translation for non-American readers: "scuttlebutt" means gossip; "bush league" means rustic and unsophisticated; "The Big Apple" means New York City. ]

While all that was cooking up, I was morose in Boston. Not long after my first initiation in the summer of '71, Satsvarupa Prabhu was transferred by Srila Prabhupada to Texas. Before he left, Satsvarupa got myself and Sahadeva Prabhu second-initiated by mail. We two were to be "senior devotees" in a temple where the "rank-and-file devotees" had been first-initiated on the same day with us. Thus within a month of getting my spiritual name I found myself wearing a *brahmana* thread. I felt over-rated and under-qualified. With Satsvarupa Prabhu gone, Harer Nama Prabhu was for a short time the caretaker temple president. I would have been satisfied had he remained in the post, but I think he felt uninspired in Satsvarupa's absence. Well, he wasn't the only one.

One after another during a period of one year, three temple presidents were shipped in. Harer Nama Prabhu departed for another temple, I've forgotten which one. I stayed on in Boston and learned to do big book distribution, a new phenomenon in the ISKCON of that time. I traveled around New England with a team of *brahmacaris* in a *sankirtana* van. This was nectar, but we always had to come back to a temple that stood on uncertain managerial legs. So by the end of '72 I was looking for a way to stay on the book distribution road and never come back.

To make a long story short, I begged Visnujana Maharaja to take me with him when he left Boston for New York. Trai Dasa, our new temple president, was not happy with me, but what could he do? As the Road Show pulled out before dawn, I jumped onto one of the buses. Bliss! At that time I didn't know about the politics between the swamis. The same day we arrived in New York, SURPRISE! Visnujana Maharaja was unseated as the director of the Road Show. The very *next* morning, again before dawn, I was on the road with him and a half-dozen *brahmacaris* in the Radha-Damodara bus. We drove to Atlanta. This was the beginning of the Radha-Damodara Traveling Sankirtana Party (known popularly by the acronym "RD TSKP").

\* \* \* \* \*

*tar madhye hema-pitha  
asta-dale bestita  
asta-dale pradhana nayika  
tar madhye ratnasane  
bosi achen dui jane  
syama-sange sundari radhika*

In the center of that lotus is a golden platform surrounded by eight petals. Situated upon those eight petals are the eight principal sakhis, headed by Lalita and Visakha. In the center of the surrounding petals the Divine Couple presides, seated upon a jeweled throne. In the company of Lord Syama sits the beautiful Radhika.

\* \* \* \* \*

Visnujana Maharaja remains for me the most compelling preacher I've ever known, except of course for His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada. Mahamaya Mataji describes Maharaja's speeches as "heart-penetrating". That's an excellent description.

But let me tell you right off the bat: traveling with him for nearly two years, I came to know his so-called "shortcomings. " I love him to this very day, but I won't hype him to you as some kind of *siddha* (perfected being). Yet at the same time I do believe that, by Srila Prabhupada's Divine Grace, Visnujana Maharaja attained perfection. (More about that a little later. )

The thing is, even his shortcomings were endearing. And that was very helpful to me in those sometimes dark days I served on the Radha-Damodara TSKP. To explain: he and I had similar mentalities. Everyone thought he was so blissful, but he had a melancholy side also. I told him about the depression I had struggled with in Boston after Satsvarupa Prabhu's departure to Texas. He showed me a letter he'd gotten from Srila Prabhupada about his (Visnujana Maharaja's) own depression.

I am glad to note that from your recent letter under reply you are feeling better than you previously expressed. So when you may feel morose, chant Hare Krsna Mantra loudly and hear it. That will reestablish you on the platform of transcendental bliss. Sometimes it appears that the devotee is put into some difficulty unreasonably, but the devotee does not take even this adverse circumstance as other than a manifestation of the Lord's Supreme Mercy. Anyway, such feelings come and go like seasonal changes and we should not deviate for that reason from our prescribed duty.

Then Maharaja told me that when Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu departed on his South Indian tour, even He felt perturbed in His mind due to separation from the devotees whom He'd left behind. So He chanted loudly like a lion,

KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA HE!  
KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA HE!  
KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA RAKSA MAM!  
KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA PAHI MAM!  
RAMA RAGHAVA RAMA RAGHAVA RAMA RAGHAVA RAKA MAM!  
KRSNA KESAVA KRSNA KESAVA KRSNA KESAVA PAHI MAM!

Thus while the bus was rolling down the road to Atlanta, Visnujana Maharaja encouraged me to lead the *brahmacaris* in what he called "a liberating *kirtana*." I tried my best to chant like a lion. It was wild. But it really got rid of the blues.

Right from the beginning he moved my heart with his honesty and simplicity. You see, as a result of the teaming up of Bali Mardana and Sudama Maharajas to get the Road Show out of Visnujana Maharaja's hands, some criticisms were made about Maharaja to Srila Prabhupada. His Divine Grace replied in a letter to Sudama Swami dated November 11, 1972. It was in Atlanta, or perhaps while we were still on the way down to Atlanta, that Visnujana Maharaja read the letter aloud to all of us, his "boys." Here are some pertinent lines:

So far the Road Show and this Yoga Village are concerned, these things should be stopped. Simply perform our kirtana. If we divert our attention in this way, the whole thing will gradually deteriorate. He is going far away. All these things are nonsense inventions.

I still remember Maharaja's voice--soft, calm, yet pained--as he pointed out to us that the "he" in the sentence, "He is going far away," was he himself. He wanted us to know plainly that--at least at the moment in time Srila Prabhupada wrote that letter--His Divine Grace considered Visnujana Maharaja to be off the *parampara* track. Maharaja humbled himself before us and said, "Please consider this carefully and decide whether you wish to continue on with me. I have no choice. I must somehow or other find a way to satisfy my spiritual master. But you are under no obligation to help me. You all have your own relationships with him. If you fear your relationship with him may suffer in my association, then tell me and I will help you resettle in a more favorable situation." He had the gift of crystal-clear diction that was ornamented by first-class vocabulary and grammar. His talks were so good you'd be ready to believe he prepared and memorized them beforehand. But no, that was just his usual speaking style.

After he told us so straightforwardly about the letter, we all were ready to enter fire for him. At this point I should mention the other RD TSKP *brahmacaris* of that beginning period. There was Narada Muni Prabhu, Visnudatta Prabhu, Dayal Chandra Prabhu, Sri Ballabha Prabhu, Patatriraja Prabhu, Hasyagrami Prabhu, and Jamadagni Prabhu. Soon Jamadagni left, while Aja, Rksaraja and Sri Galim Prabhus joined. During the two years I was with the RD TSKP, these devotees--and of course Maharaja and myself--made up the nucleus of the party. Bhakta Marty from Denver, who became Mahamantra Prabhu (and now is Bhakti Visrambha Madhava Maharaja), joined us a bit later. He too became a core Radha-Damodara devotee.

By the time we arrived in Atlanta, I was so taken with Maharaja's association that I went out on a Sunday, door-to-door, to collect \$100 for him. In those days that was an almost unheard-of amount for one devotee to bring home. If a devotee came back with \$20, that was really big news. I left Maharaja at 10:00 AM and returned at 8:00 PM to hand him \$70 in bills and \$30 in change. He was so pleased.

Another time I was going door-to-door in an apartment building, distributing books. This was before so-called "plainclothes *sankirtana*" became the norm in ISKCON. I was wearing dhoti, *tilaka* and shaved head. I knocked on a door and a man called from behind it, "Who are you?" I explained who I was and why I was at the door. I heard a woman say, "Open the door, let's have a look at him. " In an instant, the door banged opened. I found myself face to face with a man aiming a revolver at my head. His wife was hiding behind him. I started preaching. Gradually the man lowered his gun and finally gave me a donation for a Krsna Book. I was so happy after that, because I had a great story to tell Visnujana Maharaja when I got back to the bus! And, yes, he was very enlivened to hear it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Visnujana Maharaja was blessed with a soft, gentle heart. His prayer was that he might give that heart completely to the service of the lotus feet of his spiritual master and Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna. What fascinated me about him is that this mood of devotion was completely natural, and therefore completely authentic. It had been awakened by Srila Prabhupada's mercy in late-sixties San Francisco. Visnujana Maharaja, when I started traveling with him, had not yet visited India. In 1973 and thereafter, some tough, outspoken "made in India" ISKCON *sannyasis* started arriving on America's shores. Not to say they were insincere, but I just found Visnujana's homegrown sincerity more appropriate and accessible. It was not obscured behind a "swami profile" that I suspected was a clumsy imitation of the strictness Srila Prabhupada showed in his preaching to the Indian public. I thought, "But when Prabhupada started preaching *here to us*--to Americans, Western people-- he showed a different side: patient, understanding, yet quietly firm and uncompromising. That seems more natural and suitable. " It wasn't a question of Visnujana Maharaja's being "sentimental" (a favorite slur word of those times). He was just following Srila Prabhupada's mood as he had personally experienced it. He told me a little about those days. Before meeting Srila Prabhupada, he lived in a tree on the Morning Star Ranch, which was a hippie commune outside of San Francisco. His name was Mark and his best friend was Tom (later to be initiated as Tamal Krsna). Mark would sometimes come into the city to make a little money by selling wooden flutes that he'd carve on the farm. He'd sit with the flutes spread out on the sidewalk in Haight-Ashbury, sometimes wearing nothing but a blanket with a hole in the center through which he thrust his head.

He started visiting the temple on Frederick Street to join in the *kirtanas*. When the *kirtana* ended and Srila Prabhupada started the lecture, Mark would stretch out on the floor and go to sleep, sometimes keeping his head on the lap of a girlfriend. Before joining ISKCON, he got married. His wife was very attached to him. She did not agree to join, so they separated painfully.

Visnujana Maharaja told me that he became serious about joining after Srila Prabhupada referred to him in his lecture (or perhaps it was in an instruction to the temple managers) as an example of a demon. It had to do with his sleeping in the

class. Something like, "Here is a demon. Even he gets the opportunity to purify himself, he goes back to *maya*. So? Then go. Don't come back again and again to do your nonsense here. " That's not meant to be a quotation. It was Prabhupada's mood, as least as Mark understood it then. It shook him up.

Later, after he'd been initiated, Srila Prabhupada praised him: "You are advancing nicely. "

"It is by your mercy, Srila Prabhupada," Visnujana answered.

"No, not like that. My mercy is open to everyone. You are taking it. "

Visnujana had attracted that praise of His Divine Grace because of his ecstatic *kirtanas*. But sometimes Srila Prabhupada had to chastise him still. Once Srila Prabhupada was driven to see the evening chanting party in the Los Angeles streets. Visnujana, as usual, was leading. But he was playing two *mrdangas* at the same time. Srila Prabhupada commented, "He cannot even play one *mrdanga* properly, yet he beats two. "

From somewhere Visnujana picked up a Mira Bai song that goes, "Gopala, Gopala, Devakinandana Gopala; Gopala, Gopala, Yasodanandana Gopala. " Srila Prabhupada told him to stop singing it. "It may have been sung by great devotees," he said, "but it was not sung by great authorities. "

Being a musically talented person, Visnujana would invent melodies for the *mahamantra*. Once Srila Prabhupada saw him composing a melody at the harmonium. "And what is wrong with *my* melodies?" His Divine Grace demanded.

Once Prabhupada asked why so many American gentlemen would go on walks with dogs on leashes. Visnujana answered, "So they can watch how their dogs are nicely passing stool. " Srila Prabhupada laughed and laughed at this.

Visnujana Maharaja told us that he had personally witnessed Srila Prabhupada talking to his spiritual master's photograph, eyes flooded with tears.

Maharaja loved Sri-Sri Radha-Damodara. Here is the proof. One morning at 4:00 AM, he was preparing Their Lordships for *Mangala-arati*. By this time we'd left Atlanta. We were somewhere in the South, where winters are milder than Northern states like New York. But this morning it was *soooooo* cold! And there was no proper heating system on the bus. It was so frozen that Maharaja couldn't move his fingers properly. I remember him so clearly, coming out from behind the velvet Deity curtains, bundled up against the cold, a forlorn look on his face. "It's so cold I can't control my senses to serve Their Lordships," he lamented. He was not complaining about the cold for himself. He was complaining for the sake of the Deities. That is love.

In the beginning he used to do all the *puja* himself. A little later, when Sri Galim joined the party, they shared *pujari* duties. I remember once when Maharaja finished the morning bathing and dressing; he came out from behind the curtains in complete bliss. "Their beautiful forms are *burnt* into my mind!" he exulted.

One time he was about to take *rasgula prasada* of the Deities. He held up the round white milk sweet and asked it, "My dear *rasgula*, have you come to break my heart?"

In Miami, Sri Ballabha climbed through the back door of the bus kitchen to rob the Deity *maha* sweets. Bhakta Marty (Mahamantra Prabhu) was the kitchen assistant (he did an excellent job of that, I might add). To get at the sweets Sri Ballabha roughly handled him, so Marty called to Visnujana Maharaja for help. In an angry mood, Maharaja jumped out of the forward door of the bus and chased Sri Ballabha all around the yard. As he ran, Sri Ballabha stuffed his face with *maha* sweets. This sight was so funny that Maharaja's anger evaporated. All he could do was laugh. But whenever he would talk about this incident later, he would always compare Sri Ballabha to various demons in the Krsna book.

The RD TSKP went through an evolution in its preaching mission. At first, Maharaja focused on college preaching. He tried to do a purer and simpler version of the Road Show. Instead of a rock band, Maharaja formed an amplified *bhajan* band with Rksaraja, Visnudatta and Hasyagrami Prabhus. They performed "new" Vaishnava songs that Acyatananda Maharaja had recorded on tape (like *Gurudeva*, *Ohe Vaisnava Thakura*, *Suddha Bhakata*, and *Gopinatha* with Maharaja's beautiful harmonium riff). Instead of a psychedelic light show of swirling colors splashing the walls and ceiling, Maharaja projected a nice slide show about the Hare Krsna Movement, and gave a "heart-penetrating" explanation. Then he led *kirtana*, getting the audience off its feet to chant and dance. In tandem with this college preaching *sankirtana*, I led a party of *brahmacaris* in a van on book distribution *sankirtana*.

But the college programs weren't so regular. For various reasons, they too often just weren't possible to arrange. So then Maharaja started preaching in state fairs. In America, each of the 50 states holds a big fair or exhibition festival. For a week or so, the glories of a state (especially its farm produce) are put on display at a big fairground in the state capital. (I. e. the Minnesota State Fair is in the capital city of Minneapolis; the Arizona State Fair is in the capital city of Phoenix. ) There are rides, contests, games, amusements, and stalls that sell all kinds of things. The exhibition in each state is scheduled so that week after week, a state fair happens in a different place around the USA. There are 52 weeks in a year, so 50 one-week fairs scheduled that way meant that Maharaja had a full year of preaching. He got the RD TSKP into the fairs as an "Indian boutique. " We preached from a booth that offered incense, clothes, posters and Prabhupada's books for sale.

Usually I was off somewhere in a *sankirtana* van instead of helping at the state fairs. But in late '73 I did work the boutique at the fair in Arizona. Three pretty Christian girls started hanging around the booth. They said they wanted to talk about God. I preached to them a bit, but soon I got annoyed with their behavior. They seemed too friendly and kept asking me to come out of the booth and go with them somewhere to pray. I told them I was a *brahmacari* and had no business leaving my prescribed service to do anything with girls. They got offended but still kept hanging around. Finally Visnujana Maharaja arrived at the booth. They complained to him about me. So *he* went to pray with them. They didn't go far, just onto a grassy area near the booth, so I was able to watch what they did. Maharaja and the girls got down on their knees and each recited some prayer. The girls were very satisfied by this and went home. I still felt I was right to have stayed away from them. But I appreciated the way Maharaja dealt with them. It was innocent. This little story may sum up Maharaja's nature best of all.

Near the end of the Arizona State Fair, Maharaja told me to drive a van all by myself to the Houston temple in Texas. He gave me some duty to take care of there; he told me he and the rest of the *brahmacaris* would join me in Houston after a few days had passed.

For two days I drove through some of the loneliest desert country in all of America. I thought I was really taking a risk for Krsna, driving such a distance all alone.

But I made it to Houston fine. A couple days later I got a phone call from Visnujana Maharaja. The Radha-Damodara bus had just gone up in flames in the middle of the desert! The differential on the rear axle got overheated and the grease and oil inside combusted. The devotees barely managed to save the Deities and themselves before the blaze turned the bus into a charred metal skeleton.

Maharaja went to LA and borrowed money from Karandhara Prabhu, the West Coast GBC. He bought a much better bus. The old one was just a plodding school bus, the new one was a long-distance coach. This was the first of a fleet of such busses. In the later part of 1974 HH Tamal Krsna Maharaja arrived from India to re-join his old friend from the Morning Star Ranch. Their teaming up was when the Radha-Damodara TSKP started to expand: first from one bus to three, then finally up to a dozen.

For a few reasons I didn't fit into the "new, bigger and better" RD TSKP that grew up out of Tamal Krsna Maharaja's preaching and managerial skills. So shortly I transferred to the BBT Library Party, which was directed by Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami. Still, in the three-month period that Tamal Krsna Gosvami and I shared on the Radha-Damodara TSKP, we became friendly.

Once while we were in Gainesville, Florida, I complained to him I had a pain in my spine. TKG told me, "Well, you're lucky because I know Japanese massage. I'll have you fixed up in no time. " He had me lay face-down on the floor. Then he proceeded to walk up and down my back! He had to stop because he couldn't control his laughter. Visnujana Maharaja was there too, and they both just totally cracked up. That was TKG's "Japanese massage:" just a joke at my expense. But I loved it. I was laughing too.

And there was the morning Berkeley that I arranged with the bus kitchen to eat one *maha* gulab jamun after completing each of my sixteen rounds of japa. At the end of my rounds I drank all the sugar juice that the gulab jamuns had been suspended in. Someone told Tamal Krsna Maharaja about this, so probably intending to teach me a lesson by publically embarrassing me, he informed me at the Deity greeting that I'd be giving the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class. I suppose he expected me to be too intoxicated to speak sensibly. But I gave what the devotees said afterward was a "real fired-up talk. " It was then that Tamal Krsna Maharaja decided to send me to the library party. "Suhotra," he said, looking at me with a slightly sour expression, "I can't do anything with you. "

All glories to Srila Prabhupada and His eternal servitors.

\* \* \* \* \*

I mentioned earlier that I believe that Visnujana Maharaja, though apparently not a *siddha* during his life, did achieve perfection. I know this from a vivid dream I had in the 1980s.

Under an intense blue sky I saw a huge, perfectly manicured lawn extending in all directions as far as the eye could see. The only thing standing on the lawn was a huge white temple in the distance. I walked a long way across the grass to the temple, and then I started to climb wide marble stairs to reach the ornately arched entranceway. I noticed a *sadhu* sitting against a pillar halfway up the stairway. It was Visnujana Maharaja. He smiled at me in the warmest way and said, "It's wonderful here! When are you coming to join me?"

*o-rupa-lavanya-rasi  
amiya podiche khasi  
hasya-parihasya-sambhasane  
narottam das koy  
nitya-lila sukha moy  
sadai spuruka more mane*

The waves of Their beauty and sweetness are emanating showers of nectar in the form of Their talks, which are filled with a flood of laughing and joking as they address one another. Narottama Dasa says, "May these eternal pastimes overflowing with transcendental joy by ever being manifest in my heart. "

"That's perfect. "

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
29 January 2003*

### **RD TSKP DARSHAN WITH SRILA PRABHUPADA IN NEW YORK 1973!**

I am eternally grateful to Sripada Visnujana Maharaja for arranging a *darshan* with Srila Prabhupada for all of us on the Radha-Damodara Travelling Sankirtana Party. This took place in the Henry Street Temple in Brooklyn, New York, either in early April or late May 1973 (those were the two periods Srila Prabhupada visited New York that year). I think it was in May, because I remember the weather was warm and sunny. New York in early April is often cold and gray. If the *darshan* was in May, that might explain why it was so brief. At that time Srila Prabhupada stopped in New York for only a day or so, to catch a flight to London.

By mid-'73, the RD TSKP had become quite successful in book distribution. In the *sankirtana* newsletter, there were different categories like large temple, medium temple and small temple. We were regularly number one in the traveling sankirtana party category, and our results were similar to those in the medium temple category. Visnujana Maharaja felt very grateful to us for this, so on one bright morning in the New York temple, he arranged a *darshan* for us with Srila Prabhupada.

We followed Maharaja into His Divine Grace's quarters. He was seated on a floor cushion in his bedroom, dressed in sannyasi cloth but wearing neither kurta nor garland. The room was golden with sunlight. Prabhupada's skin glowed with a rich coppery hue. We all offered our obeisances. Srila Prabhupada gave us a friendly nod. His mood seemed light, yet quiet; humble and detached.



Visnujana Maharaja introduced each *brahmacari* by name. He spoke about our *sankirtana* results and specifically drew Prabhupada's attention to myself as the *sankirtana* leader. His Divine Grace gave me a bright smile. (It was a strange position for me, being introduced like that. Until that moment I had never considered myself to be the traveling *sankirtana* leader of Visnujana Maharaja's party. I took some responsibilities for the others, that was true enough, but it seemed to me that we book distributors were just cooperating together under Maharaja's spiritual guidance. I was not aware of myself as a wielder of authority. )

Prabhupada spoke a few encouraging words to us about *sankirtana*, but nothing I can quote as an exceptional instruction or revelation. Then he turned to Visnujana Maharaja. I watched as, for just a moment, a glance passed between them. Wordlessly, something personal and confidential was exchanged.

Was it just my imagination? Well, my older Godbrother Tejas Prabhu assures me that whatever Srila Prabhupada says and does has boundless depth of meaning, because he is the *acarya*. Everything about him is a teaching. And as he is teaching only Krsna consciousness, everything about him has transcendental significance.

The bona fide spiritual master, by his personal activities, teaches the disciple the principles of devotional service. (*SB* 2. 9. 37p)

Thus I have no doubt that something meaningful passed between Srila Prabhupada and Visnujana Maharaja. My sense of it--if my sense of anything has any value--was that Srila Prabhupada was transcendently anxious for his son. He was appreciative for the service Maharaja was offering: the *sankirtana* results, his preaching programs. But I noted from His Divine Grace's glance that he saw something worrisome, too. From Maharaja's side, I think, there was a look of pleading--pleading for reassurance from his spiritual master. It's a cliché for me to tell you that the moment was intense. . . but it was.

The moment passed. Srila Prabhupada smiled again and with his gentle eyes briefly touched each of our hearts. Without anything further being said, we knew the *darshan* had ended.

As we offered obeisances to leave, a new *brahmacari* to our party, Bahushira Prabhu, spoke up. "Srila Prabhupada, you gave me the name Bahushira. Can you tell me what it means?"

Prabhupada cocked his head and uttered a polite, "Hmmm?"

Bahushira repeated his question. Prabhupada apparently heard the name as Bahulasva, for he said, "Bahulasva. . . he is friend of Krsna. "

And that was that. The *darshan* had hardly spanned three minutes time.

\* \* \* \* \*

For a long time I've meditated on that look that Srila Prabhupada exchanged with Visnujana Maharaja. I never spoke with Visnujana Maharaja himself about it. After the *darshan* Maharaja was very grave; I did not think it was my place to pry. Thus all I can do here is **offer** the reader my inductive thoughts.

Strictly defined, induction is the process of reaching a conclusion on the basis of indirect or circumstantial evidence. It involves intuition. If Paramatma blesses it, intuition is a powerful means to knowledge. So I pray to the Lord of the heart that my intuition be not amiss.

In the time period of my association with Visnujana Maharaja--from late 1972 to late 1974--it was clear that his only real Godbrotherly friend was HH Tamal Krsna Gosvami. Oh, he was *friendly* to myself and the other RD TSKP *brahmacaris*. But there was nonetheless a gap between us. Obviously he was senior to us and in the highest *ashrama*. Thus, until Tamal Krsna Maharaja arrived in mid-1974, Visnujana Maharaja was, in a way, isolated; he maintained distance from his *sannyasi* Godbrothers. I recall a comment from a tough-talking "made in India" swami to the effect that, "Visnujana doesn't associate. He must be envious. "

I can't agree to the envious part, but in fact he did not associate much with other *sannyasis*. He once revealed his mind to me about that. He knew that many of ISKCON's swamis of that time were having problems. I've just made a list in my mind of the ISKCON *sannyasis* I easily remember that were in circulation around the USA during 1973. There were eleven (not including Visnujana Maharaja). Only two are still in the renounced order. Most are not in ISKCON in any capacity now.

But I think the main reason why Visnujana Maharaja stood alone was that he was an eccentric. His eccentricity extended to his relationship with Sri-Sri Radha-Damodara. I mentioned yesterday a rift between Sudama Swami and Visnujana Maharaja. It was a subtle thing, really; neither Visnujana nor Sudama Swamis were inclined to political intrigues. But they couldn't see eye-to-eye about Visnujana Maharaja's keeping Radha-Krsna Deities in a bus.

Shortly before our RD TSKP *darshan* with Srila Prabhupada, Sudama Swami got a letter from His Divine Grace dated March 23. Now, in those days, when a senior disciple in the States received a letter from Srila Prabhupada, within 48 hours after he or she opened and read it, the contents were being discussed in every ISKCON temple in the country. So what Srila Prabhupada wrote to Sudama Swami was weighing on Visnujana Maharaja's mind during the *darshan*.

You mentioned about your Temple bus, and that is very nice. When I saw Rupanuga's bus in New Vrndavana I wanted that there be a whole fleet. But you should not take Radha-Krsna travelling, better you take Gaura-Nitai. For serving Gaura-Nitai there is no offense, but if Radha-Krsna is there and there is some

discrepancy, then there is great offense and this should be avoided. Therefore, I gave the same advice to Visnujana when I was in Pittsburgh.

There was a number of *sannyasi*-led bus parties touring America in 1973, but only Visnujana Maharaja was touring with Radha-Krsna *vigraha*. It was public knowledge that Prabhupada had advised him that by traveling with Sri-Sri Radha-Damodara, he was exposing himself to great offenses. But as I noted yesterday, he truly loved those Deities. Thus my intuition is that throughout all those years he served Radha-Damodara, a dilemma gnawed at his heart.

It must have been a dilemma for Srila Prabhupada also. He didn't like to discourage his spiritual son; at the same time, he worried for him. As *acarya* of ISKCON, he couldn't permit the spread of a questionable standard of Deity worship. Thus the relationship between Srila Prabhupada and Visnujana Maharaja was, I think, under some constraint. This is a hard point to explain. I am not intending to suggest that their relationship was taxed or shadowed over. But there was some caution attached to it. Visnujana Maharaja did not want to displease his spiritual master, yet he was in constant danger of doing so. So he had to be cautious. Srila Prabhupada did not want to dishearten his disciple, but he had to be cautious about showing full enthusiasm for his way of Deity worship.

I admit that this explanation is my opinion, not proven fact. But there's even more evidence for it. Yesterday I mentioned the fire that destroyed Radha-Damodara's bus. With my own ears, I heard Visnujana Maharaja lament that it was due to some offense to the Deities. So there is no doubt that he worried about this.

Still, he did save the Deities from the fire, by Their mercy. And when he got another bus for Them underway, Srila Prabhupada remarked, "This boy does not quit. " There is no doubt that Srila Prabhupada appreciated Visnujana Maharaja's sincere service to Sri-Sri Radha-Damodara as we see in this conversation from July 1, 1975 in Denver.

**Tamala Krsna:** He [Visnujana Maharaja] gets up early in the morning, wakes Him [the Deity, Radha-Damodara] up, cooks for Him, then we offer *arati*, then bathing and dressing the Deity, sings for Him all day. He's so devoted to Radha-Damodara.

**Prabhupada:** *Svarupa-siddhi, arcana-siddhi*. By simply worshiping Deity one can become perfect. *Arcana-siddhi*.

**Tamala Krsna:** That's a great advantage of our bus. Now we just traveled for two days in a row from San Francisco, but we did not miss one *arati*, we had six *aratis*, full prasadam. We took bath on the bus in our shower room. We had regular classes, *kirtana* all day. It was undisturbed.

**Prabhupada:** So why not one week with them [Radha-Damodara and Their servants]? I am prepared.

Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!

*Kolhapur, Maharashtra  
January 31, 2003*

The Bhagavat Dharma Discourse in New Vrindaban, September 1972, was the high point of my life in terms of personal association with Srila Prabhupada. Not that I got a private *darshan* with His Divine Grace, or received some individualized instruction from him, or even rendered direct personal service to him. What happened in this period from August 31 to September 7 was that Srila Prabhupada trained me how to preach. For thirty years hence, I've been building a personal style of preaching upon the philosophical foundation he laid in my heart via his lectures of these days. I'm known in ISKCON to be a philosophical sort of devotee, but that too really started here, at the Bhagavat Dharma Discourse. Before then I was just a hearer of other devotees' realizations. Afterward I wanted to explain my own realizations too.

Realizations? In reality I was, and still am, a big fool. *Gurudeva! Yogyata-vicare, kichu nahi pai, tomara karuna-sara. Karuna na hoile, kandiya kandiya, prana na rakhibo ara.*

### **Assorted memories of New Vrindaban, August 31-September 7, 1972**

#### Keshava and Buddhimanta Prabhus

For two weeks, during the middle of summer '72, Keshava and Buddhimanta Prabhus visited our Boston temple. These two blonde, square-jawed, powerfully-built *brahmacaris* were instrumental in sparking the big book distribution revolution that began in their home temple of San Francisco and then spread to other temples in California. Now they were on tour to teach the rest of us ISKCONians in America (and soon in Europe) the secret of how Srila Prabhupada's hardbound books could be sold in great quantity on the street. Many times, Buddhimanta Prabhu had distributed in just one day a hundred Krsna books. In Boston they empowered each of us five or seven *sankirtana brahmacaris* there to do 20 to 50 big books per day.

So when we pulled up at New Vrindaban on August 31 in our Boston temple preaching bus, we were happy to see Keshava and Buddhimanta already there. Like two Special Forces commandos, they were camped in a tent on the grass. (More than a thousand visitors had come for the Bhagavat Dharma Discourse, and most of them had their own transportable living spaces in the form of vans or tents. New Vrindaban had no guesthouse then. )

From as far away as San Diego, *sankirtana* devotees had converged at New Vrindaban to see Srila Prabhupada. The tent of Keshava and Buddhimanta became a popular place for book distributors to gather. Due to the *vira-rasa* that these two prabhus emanated, these gatherings reminded me of soldiers swapping stories at base camp.

#### The bathing hole

As we Boston boys were getting our bus ready for living in, Keshava warned me: "Wait until you see the men's bathing facility. All I can say is, you can't keep a *brahmana* thread clean in this place. "

New Vrindaban was a patchwork of several farms in the hilly countryside outside Moundsville, West Virginia. At that time the main farm was Bahulaban, where the beautiful Deities of Sri-Sri Radha-Vrindaban-chandra presided in Their converted farmhouse of a temple. The Bhagavat Dharma Discourse was held in a huge festival tent on top of a hill that overlooked Bahulaban. To get there you walked a dirt road that snaked up the hill from the temple. At the bottom of the hill, just next to a curve in the road, a *pukkur* had been dug for the men to do their ablutions in. A *pukkur* is a Bengali-style bathing pond; it's really just a big hole in the ground that is filled from a natural source, like a stream or a spring.

The chilly water of the Bahulaban *pukkur* was soupy with mud. When you bathed before sunrise or after sunset, you had to bring your own flashlight because there was no other illumination. Between the *pukkur* and the nearby dirt road, canvas blinds had been erected to give the bathers the illusion of privacy.

At this time in ISKCON in America, the male devotees had not yet learned the Indian custom of taking bath with a *gamcha* on to keep the body covered from the waist to the knees. As I soon learned with my own eyes, everything going on in the *pukkur* during daylight hours was entirely visible to someone walking the dirt road down the hill. Coming down, you were for a good stretch of road in a position to see over the canvas blinds in front of the *pukkur*. . The ladies used the road too, of course. If I could see into the *pukkur*, so could they. It was shameful.

#### Outdoor kitchen service

I knew cooking from my early days in the Boston kitchen; but what's more, when I traveled with Keshava and Buddhimanta Prabhus, they trained me in their own "powerhouse book distribution style" of cooking. One preparation I learned from them consisted of chunks of eggplant boiled with chopped tomatoes in a big pot of butter. Not deep-fried in ghee, but **boiled** in foamy yellow **butter**. A favorite sweet of theirs was called Eagle Rock. Make a pound of caramel by boiling a bunch of unopened cans of Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk for three hours in a pot of water, then open the cans and mix the contents with a gallon of sour cream. These preps were for one *sankirtana* party of five or seven boys. Anyway, having trained me up in his extravagant culinary style, now Keshava considered me a chef of sorts, so we worked together preparing huge quantities of *prasadam* for the festival, particularly on Janmastami Day. This we did outside on portable gas burners fed by gas bottles. Here I first met Sri Galim Prabhu, who had come from Texas to stay in New Vrindaban as a cook. I also met Radhanatha Prabhu (now Maharaja) for the first time. Such a sweet, humble *sadhu*.

A sea of mud One morning we Boston *brahmacaris* thanked the Lord that we were all able to fit into our bus each night, for when we got up, we found that a heavy overnight rain had turned Bahulaban into a sea of mud. The many visiting devotees who slept in tents were soaked and chilled to the bone. Being in hill country, New Vrindaban is often uncomfortably cold at night even during the summer; and if a drenching rain falls, it is almost intolerable for outdoor campers. But in those days devotees really believed in austerity, especially if the austerity was for getting Srila Prabhupada's association.

### A near-death experience

A strange thing happened to me. When we arrived, we were directed to park the bus in a grassy lot on the far side of the paved public road that ran in front of Bahulaban. A day later, on a bright warm early afternoon, we were told the bus had to be moved to another parking place. The weather being nice, most of the Boston boys-including the regular driver-were not to be found. So it fell upon my head to drive the bus to the new spot. I had never driven such a large vehicle before.

To get the bus off the grassy lot and on the road in the right direction, I had to back up and do a Y-turn. The bus wasn't the only vehicle on the lot, so it was tricky. As I got on board I posted a *bhakta* (who was known to be sort of spaced out) as a lookout outside. Then, in the driver's seat, I revved up the engine, shoved the big gearshift lever into reverse, and let out the clutch. The bus lurched for an instant, then with a metallic whine, rolled to the rear. Fine. I twisted the steering wheel to the right and began easing into the Y-turn. All at once there was a soft bump, then a scream. I tromped on the brake pedal. What happened?

The *bhakta* rushed to the driver's side window. "Suhotra Prabhu, you ran the bus over Tom Prabhu! He was sleeping in the grass off to the side, and when you turned you put the back wheels right on him!" Tom Prabhu was a new devotee who belonged to our bus party.

I was horrified but also incredulous. "Didn't I tell you to keep a watch out so that I wouldn't run into anything?"

His eyes and mouth formed perfect o's in his face. It was as if at that moment only, he understood what he should have done. "Uh...I did see him back there, but...well, I guess I thought it would be OK. " Abruptly he tuned me out and drifted away, yammering his *japa* in a loud voice.

"K R I S H N A!" I jumped out the door and found Tom Prabhu on the right side of the bus crouched next to the big double back wheels. He was clutching his midsection with a shocked look on his face. Those twin tires had rolled across his stomach. Miraculously, as it turned out, he wasn't injured. But for the rest of the day he did have a whopper of a bellyache.

After seeing to it that Tom was OK, I managed to get the bus to the new parking lot. Feeling terrible, I parked next to a vehicle with Texas license plates. Some *brahmacaris* were standing beside it, talking. They were from the Austin temple. As I disembarked, one of them noticed my unhappy face. It was Prahladananda Prabhu (now Maharaja).

"Something the matter?" he asked me with a concerned glance.

I pointed to the bus and said, "I just drove *that* over the stomach of a sleeping devotee. "

"We're not the doer, Prabhu," he said. That didn't exactly make me feel better.

## Srila Prabhupada Nectar

### The hilltop lectures

Srila Prabhupada delivered his first lecture on August 31. This was when he was received at the Bahulaban farm upon his arrival at New Vrindaban by automobile from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The devotees greeted him with joyous *kirtana*; he sat in a large red-velvet *vyasasana* they had readied for him under a tree near the temple and gave an arrival address. Then he got in his car again and was driven a mile down the road to another New Vrindaban farm called Madhuban. Here he lived during the Bhagavat Dharma Discourse festivities.

We Boston *brahmacaris* missed Srila Prabhupada's arrival. Driving hundreds of miles from Massachusetts to West Virginia in a ponderous school bus, we didn't reach New Vrindaban until later that day.

In any case, the actual festival began the next morning. At about 7:00 AM Srila Prabhupada arrived by car from Madhuban and walked up the dirt road to the top of the hill, accompanied by an entourage of "big guns" (Kirtanananda Maharaja plus a number of GBC men and *sannyasis*). He entered the big festival tent and ascended a wooden stage to mount his *vyasasana*. A great crowd of devotees and guests greeted him with *kirtana*. Srila Prabhupada's *vyasasana* was to our left; to the right were big Jagannatha, Baladeva and Subhadra Deities from New Vrindaban, and the Radha-Damodara Deities from the Transcendental Road Show.

After the welcoming *kirtana*, Srila Prabhupada chanted *Jaya Radha Madhava* and began the first Bhagavat Dharma Discourse. Today he spoke about the potency of the Vedic sound vibration, that this sound, which is the origin of creation, is given by God, that God has a spiritual body, and that we too are spiritual. The Discourse was concluded with another great *kirtana*. Srila Prabhupada walked back down the hill and returned to Madhuban.

In each successive Discourse, His Divine Grace took us deeper and deeper into the meaning of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The Vedic sound is manifest as many scriptural texts; Srila Vyasadeva compiled these texts and then gave a conclusive summary of them in the form of *Vedanta-sutra*, which is the highest education. Yet after he completed his compilation of the Vedic knowledge he was still not satisfied. His spiritual master Narada Muni informed him that he was dissatisfied because he had failed to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus Vyasa composed *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. This literature teaches only the topmost *dharma*, which is the religion of the pure soul: devotional service to Vasudeva, who is *adhoksaja*, of a personal form and nature that is not material. Ordinary people miss this most valuable knowledge because of being absorbed in the false material conception of the self. They are like Hiranyakasipu, who was only after gold and comfortable bedding upon which to enjoy the company of women. The *Bhagavatam* teaches liberation (*vimukti*) from all such nonsense, but ordinary people go after the false liberation offered by science and technology. The *Vedas* also allow for sense enjoyment on the path called *pravrtti-marga*, but our real, spiritual life is to be found on the *nivrtti-marga*. This *marga* culminates in *bhakti*. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* teaches pure *bhakti* which is *ahaituki* or without any material motivation. Pure *bhakti* brings one to the stage of perfect renunciation in devotional service to the Lord, and pure consciousness of the Lord as Bhagavan--that Person who possesses all opulences. By performing one's

duty free of the bodily concept of life and by knowing God scientifically, one will love Bhagavan Sri Krsna, because He is all-attractive to the purified soul. To love God means to glorify His holy names throughout the world.

How perfect an outline of the philosophy of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*! Every devotee should study these lectures to study the logic of the Bhagavat philosophy, to see how every element of the philosophy is fundamentally connected to all other elements.

Here are two noteworthy questions and answers from the Discourse.

**Devotee:** I've heard it explained that the body is made up of many, many different living entities, and the soul is just like a controlling soul.

**Prabhupada:** What is that?

**Pradyumna:** He's heard it explained that the body is made up of many, many different entities, living entities, or that each cell is a living entity.

**Prabhupada:** That's all right. What is the wrong there?

**Devotee:** Why is maya so very, very strong if our purpose in life is to be with God?

**Prabhupada:** What is that?

**Hrdayananda:** Why is maya so strong if our purpose is to be with God?

**Prabhupada:** Your purpose is not strong.

**Devotees:** (laughter) Jaya! Haribol.

**Prabhupada:** Thank you. Now have kirtana.

**Devotees:** Thank you! Jaya!

#### An ecstatic kirtana

Janmastami fell that year on September 2. I am pretty certain that it was on that day Visnujana Maharaja and the electrified Road Show Band led the devotees and guests in an exceptionally heavenly *kirtana*. Everyone danced like madmen and madwomen in front of Srila Prabhupada and the Deities. On his *vyasana*, Srila Prabhupada chanted along with the devotees, playing his *karatalas* and following Visnujana Maharaja's lead. Ecstasy overwhelmed Prabhupada and he took over the lead, tears flooding his eyes. Everyone's eyes became wet as His Divine Grace lifted us into a whole new realm of communion with the holy name of the Lord. Why does my heart remain a stone in my breast even as I remember his mercy? Everything Srila Prabhupada taught us led to this: crying for Krsna!

## Janmastami

After lecture and *kirtana* in the hilltop tent in the morning, there was a big initiation in the Bahulaban temple before the Deities of Sri-Sri Radha-Vrindaban-chandra. I didn't attend it because I was cooking. I heard that when Srila Prabhupada arrived there, nothing was ready-no *yajna-kunda*, no paraphernalia; the only thing that had arrived was a mass of devotees too big for the modest-sized temple room. These conditions greatly delayed the initiation. But at last our Boston *bhaktas* got their names and beads along with many other candidates from temples all across the country

Janmastami evening, September 2, 1972, is forever emblazoned in my memory. Srila Prabhupada, seated on his *vyasasana* in Radha-Vrindaban-candra's temple room, requested his *sannyasi* disciples who were seated on the marble floor before him to read out loud the first three chapters of *Krsna* book. This reading took hours! It lasted almost until the midnight *arati*. As I noted, the temple room was not very large, so most of the devotees were outside in the dark listening through the windows. Fortunately I got a ring-side seat right behind the *sannyasis*. It had been a hard day of service and fasting, so many devotees, even some of the *sannyasis*, were nodding out during the reading. But not me! I was focused on His Divine Grace, and he was focused on the nectar of Sri Krsna's appearance at Mathura before Vasudeva and Devaki. His association was so electric that I sat fully alert for all those hours.

When the reading of Lord Krsna's appearance came to an end, Srila Prabhupada joked that he would like to go on hearing, but we had no patience for it. Then Kirtanananda Swami stood up to make a short speech. He pledged the entire New Vrindaban project to Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet. It was touching; his voice cracked with emotion as he spoke. Srila Prabhupada got up from his *vyasasana* and with a broad smile embraced Kirtanananda, who nearly fell over with surprise. How wonderful!

## Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja

The day after Janmastami is Srila Prabhupada's appearance day. This was celebrated in the hilltop tent. Srila Prabhupada had to interrupt the proceedings because we, his American disciples, didn't know what we were doing. Finally we got ourselves organized and in order of seniority (*sannyasis*, GBCs, temple presidents, older *brahmanas*, and so on) we ascended the stage in single file to place flowers at his lotus feet and offer our prostrated obeisances. A lot of younger male devotees didn't get the chance to do a direct offering, due to time limitations. Only one Mataji did-Silavati dasi, who at that time was an authority for Deity worship. It's dumb to have to admit this, but I don't remember if I got the opportunity to offer Srila Prabhupada flowers and obeisances or not. It's possible, since I was a *brahmana* by that time (I got my second initiation in the mail a month after my first initiation). But I think that if I had gotten the chance to worship Srila Prabhupada directly on this day, I would recollect it. I don't, so it may be that I worshiped him in my heart only.

A big feast was laid out on the stage before His Divine Grace and formally offered. Then there was *guru-arati* with *kirtana*. When the ceremonies were over, Srila Prabhupada walked down the hill with his entourage. But the big American automobile that usually drove him to and from his Madhuban residence was nowhere

to be seen. Hridayananda Maharaja ran to his own car, a yellow Volkswagen "bug. " He brought it around in front of Srila Prabhupada, got out, and opened the passenger door for him. Prabhupada graciously accepted a ride in the humble little vehicle. (Some GBCs were displeased with Hridayananda Maharaja for this; they thought Srila Prabhupada should have waited for his limosine. )

At Madhuban, Srila Prabhupada asked for a plate of the Vyasa-puja feast. With great embarrassment the devotees discovered that the feast that was offered to His Divine Grace in the festival tent had been completely distributed to the devotees. He for whom the feast was prepared didn't taste a bite of it. Prabhupada tolerantly waited as a new feast was prepared there in Madhuban, for him and him alone.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Nigadi, Maharashtra  
6 February 2003*

Madhu Puri Prabhu and I left Kolhapur on 1 February; since then we've not stayed long at any place. Moving from here to there delayed the editing and uploading of the previous two journal entries, which I actually wrote in January; they were sent to **In2-MeC** only in the last couple of days. Please make sure you haven't missed them. One recounts a *darshan* with Srila Prabhupada in 1973, and the other is about the Bhagavat Dharma Discourse in New Vrindaban, September 1972.



*Departure from Kolhapur*

This entry, the one I am writing now, is the first for February. Let me bring you up to date.

#### Kolhapur finale

At sunset on January 31 I visited the main temple of the city of Kolhapur, which is dedicated to Mahalakshmi. My visit was timed to an auspicious moment, because at sunset on this one day per year the golden-red rays of the sun stream through the entrance of the temple to illuminate the lotus feet of the Lakshmi deity.



*small Lakshmi Sesasayi*

The history is that each year at this time the demigod Surya carries a message to Lakshmi from Lord Venkateshwara at Tirupati: "Kindly return to My side." The famous Venkateshwara (*Vaikuntha Ishvara*) Deity and Kolhapur's Mahalakshmi Deity were originally together. But when Brghu Muni trod upon the Lord's chest to test if He is really Bhagavan among the *trimurti* of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu, Lakshmi became too distressed that Her husband merely tolerated this insult. She left His side to perform austerities at Kolhapur. Therefore each year the Lord invites Her to return to Him.

It was my great fortune that I stood inside the *pujari* area to witness Surya touch Her lotus feet. (How was that? Because the *brahmanas* who serve Mahalakshmi-- though *smartas*, not Vaishnavas--are favorable to ISKCON.) The head *pujari* turned all the lights off as the crucial moment approached. It was really thrilling, in a deep, spiritual sense, to see the beam of sunlight creep towards the lotus toes of the Lord's eternal consort. I was remembering a verse from the *Sanat Kumara Samhita*:

*Sa tu sakshan mahalakshmi  
Krsna narayana prabho  
Na tayor vidyate bheda  
Svalpo 'smi muni sattamah*

This means that there is no difference between Sri-Sri Lakshmi-Narayana and Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna. Similar to the pastime between Venkateshwara and Mahalakshmi, sometimes Srimati Radharani becomes so transcendently angry with Sri Krsna that She won't associate with Him until He comes to worship Her lotus feet.

After we saw the pastime of Surya and Mahalakshmi, Rupa Vilasa Prabhu took me to have *darshan* of the beautiful Sesasayi Deity who has been worshiped in Kohlapur city for some 110 years. Unfortunately the Deity is housed in a building that looks like a tile-roofed blue brick shed. This stands next to a bus stop on a traffic roundabout in central Kolhapur.

The story of the Deity is that it was unearthed during an excavation outside of Kolhapur. The king ordered that the black stone *murti* - which is as large as a full-grown man, lying in full repose upon Ananta Sesa-be transported by elephants to a place he had chosen as the site of a temple. The elephants moved the Deity as far as its present location, but could not budge it an inch beyond. So a simple shelter was built around Him. Thus, nowadays you take *darshan* to the din of passing traffic. I hope ISKCON one day soon becomes influential enough in Kolhapur to be able to arrange for the construction of a proper temple for this very special Deity. As I stood before Lord Sesaayi I felt it was His plan that I was leaving the small Lakshmi-Sesaayi Deities I had been worshiping upon Rupa Vilasa's home altar. Kolhapur is the city of Sesaayi.



*Farewell address on rooftop*

Then we went to a devotee's home for my "farewell address" to the Kolhapur ISKCON congregation. The gathering was held upon his spacious rooftop. Over 300 devotees and guests attended.

### Pune

The next morning at 7:00 AM, after a final short *kirtana* with the crowd of devotees who turned up at Rupa Vilasa's place to see me off, I boarded a Tata Sumo for Pune (pronounced Poona). With me were Madhu Puri Prabhu and a nice Kolhapur bhakta named Amit, who is staying with me until I depart Maharashtra. Pune is an important center of higher education in India. ISKCON's Sri-Sri Radha-Kunjabihari Temple's main mission is to the large student community of the city. Under the able direction of temple president Radhe Syama Prabhu, the effort has resulted in a congregation of hundreds of young people. On the evening of my arrival I did a program for this group.



*Devotees in Kolhapur*



*The Tata Sumo*

The next day I gave Bhagavatam class and then the evening Sunday lecture. After giving Bhagavatam on the morning of Monday, February 2, I, Madhu and Amit went by Sumo to Satara.



Amit

### Satara

Sachisuta Prabhu, an enthusiastic and well-spoken *grhasta* preacher, heads up the ISKCON mission in Satara. Like Kolhapur, it is strictly a congregational effort; there is no temple here. The congregation is smaller than at Kolhapur, but the mood is just as sweet. We stayed at the home of Mr. R.S. Mane, a retired Colonel of the Indian Army. This is my third visit, so he and his wife are my good friends.



*The Mane family*

I did an evening program at the nearby village of Koregaon, an afternoon lecture at a homeopathic medical college, an evening program at the Satara Rukmini-Vitthal temple, and a Bhagavatam class at Mr. Mane's house on the morning of my departure, which was yesterday.



*Saci Suta and Principal*



*Medical students*



*Evening at Vitthal temple*



*Sri Sri Rukmini Vitthal*



*After Bhagavatam class*

### Nigadi

Today as I write this (Thursday, February 6) we are at the home of a devotee family in Nigadi, which is an industrial area in the vicinity of Pune. Here ISKCON has met success in cultivating the working people who flock to Nigadi from other towns. They are simple but enthusiastic.

Early tomorrow morning we (myself, Madhu Puri and Amit) board a train for Mumbai. I'll be the weekend there at the Chowpatti ISKCON Mandira. On Monday the 10th, Madhu Puri and I will take the Raj Dhani Express to Delhi.



*Lecture in Nigadi*

### A message from HH Bhakti Vishrama Madhava Maharaja

**In2-MeC** of January 26 brought in a message from my Godbrother and old friend Bhakti Vishrama Madhava Maharaja. He remembers Sri Ballabha's plundering of the Radha-Damodara *maha* sweets as happening somewhere up in New York State, not in Miami. That is certainly possible. I know this story because Vishnujana Maharaja and others-including Sri Ballabha himself-told me about it, not because I witnessed it myself. I was out on book distribution at the time.

My recollection is that I first heard the story when the Radha-Damodara bus was wintering in Miami, at the old ISKCON "Compound" temple in Coconut Grove. (The present Miami ISKCON temple is also located in the Grove, but the "Compound" is a different address; it is an old estate on a large piece of land surrounded by a wall. A big banyan tree grows in the center of the yard. ISKCON had the use of this place in the 1970s.) Anyway, having first heard the Sri Ballabha *maha*-plundering story in Miami, I suppose my memory registered that it actually happened there. Certainly it could have happened up in New York State instead.

Thanks, Maharaja, for the clarification.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Chowpatti (Mumbai) Sri-Sri Radha-Gopinatha ISKCON Mandira  
9 February 2003*



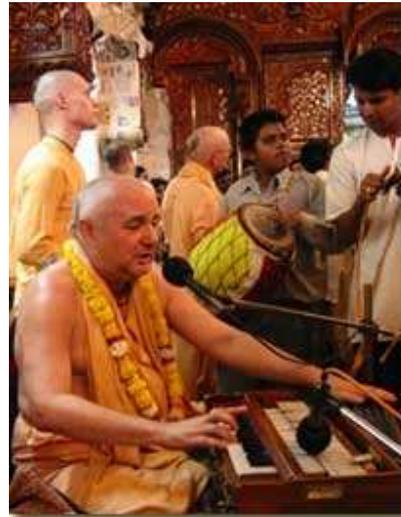
*I'm speaking to students of the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology. ISKCON Chowpatti maintains a preaching apartment across house on February 8. The ToI is the most the street from the school, which enrolls widely-read English language newspaper in only the cream of India's science students. This photo was snapped in that apartment's temple room.*



*Program at the Times of India publishing house on February 8. The ToI is the most the street from the school, which enrolls widely-read English language newspaper in the world.*



*The Sunday feast program at Chowpatti. I spoke on "The Evolution of Theism", which was about the development of spiritual philosophy from the Buddha to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.*



*Kirtan at Chowpatti: a transcendental madhouse!*

*Sant Nagar, Delhi  
February 12*

After a 17-hour overnight train ride, Madhu Puri and I arrived in Delhi yesterday. We are staying at the former Centennial House. At this building from 1994 to 1996, HH Lokanatha Maharaja and his Godbrother (and cousin by birth) Gaura Sundara Prabhu directed the world-wide observances for the centennial anniversary of Srila Prabhupada's divine appearance in this world. Since then Gaura Sundara Prabhu used this place as an ISKCON life membership office; at present, for several months now, he no longer does that service, so he rents some of the rooms here to devotees visiting Delhi. It is only seven minute's walk from ISKCON's Sri-Sri Radha-Partha Sarathi temple.

I will leave for Calcutta by train on the 16th. Madhu Puri will fly from Delhi to Stockholm the next day. He's been doing the photography for **In2-MeC**, so his departure means this journal will have no pictures for a while.

We're busy here. He's running about the city changing his tickets and looking for computer equipment; I'm similarly visiting the bazaars to purchase some items. On the 15th we'll both go down to Vrindavana for a day.

I don't have time today to write more, so...

Hare Krishna!

*Sant Nagar, Delhi  
February 14, 2003*

Lord Nityananda's Glories from *Sri Caitanya Bhagavata* by Srila Vrndavana dasa Thakura

This chapter describes the childhood pastimes of Nityananda up to his twelfth year, during which time he re-enacted the divine pastimes of Krsna, Rama, Vamana, and the other avatars of Vishnu. This chapter also describes his tour of different holy places which continued until his twentieth year.

On the order of Gaura Krsna, Ananta Deva had already made his appearance in the village of Ekacakra in Radhadesh. In this way, Nityananda Prabhu appeared like the moon from the sea of the womb of Padmavati, the wife of Hadai Oja. And just like the rising moon, he dispelled all the darkness covering the land of Radha by his auspicious appearance. As a child, Nityananda constantly played with his boyhood friends imitating the pastimes of Krsna.

Once, his friends took the role of the assembly of gods, who were desirous of petitioning the Lord to relieve the burden of evil oppressing the Earth. Nityananda Prabhu took with him a child who was dressed as the earth, and together with the children who acted the roles of the different assembled gods, he went to the banks of the river Ganges. There he addressed the Lord who rests in the ocean of milk, Ksirodaksayi Visnu. At that time, one of the children took the part of Lord Visnu, and hiding unseen by the other children spoke in a grave voice that all could hear: "I shall surely be born in Goloka Mathura to lighten the burden of the Earth."

And so Nityananda Prabhu enacted the different pastimes of Krsna that the Lord performed during the Dvapara age. He enacted the pastimes of the marriage of Vasudeva and Devaki, the birth of Sri Krsna in the prison of Kamsa, the journey of Vasudeva to Nandagram and how he carried Krsna over the Yamuna river, as well as his return from Nandagram and how he brought Mahamaya who had just appeared as the daughter of Yasoda with him.

He enacted the slaying of Putana, the breaking of the cart, Krsna's butter stealing pastimes, the slaying of the demons, Dhenuka, Agha, and Baka. He also displayed the pastimes of the pasturing of the cows, the lifting of Govardhan hill, the stealing of the gopis clothes and the Lord's bestowal of mercy upon the wives of the sacrificial brahmanas. He performed the pastimes of sending secret advice to Kamsa in the guise of Narada, the killing of the Kuvalaya elephant and the wrestlers Canura and Mustika, and the killing of Kamsa.

Nityananda Prabhu also enacted the pastime of Vamanadeva's cheating Bali of the three worlds, and took the role of Ramachandra. His friends acting the part of monkey soldiers pretended to build a bridge of floating stones across the ocean, in imitation of the pastimes of Rama. Once, Nityananda took the part of Laksman, and, bow in hand, would storm the palace of Sugriva. Once he took the part of Rama Himself, enacting the pastime of breaking Parasurama's pride. Once, taking the role of Laksman he pretended to kill Indrajit and then swoon, hit by the powerful arrows of Ravana, the demon-king.

He would enact the pastime of having the medicine from Gandamadana Hill brought by Hanuman and would recover from his wounds after receiving the medicine.

Nityananda spent twelve years enacting these kinds of pastimes. At that time, he went to visit the different holy places in order to purify them from the sins left behind by the pilgrims who visit them.

He toured the holy places in both Northern and Southern India, on the pretext of pilgrimage and in this way was occupied until his twentieth year when he arrived in Nabadwipa and met Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In the course of his wandering through the different holy places, Nityananda Prabhu met Madhavendra Puri, Isvara Puri, and Brahmananda Puri. Nityananda passed many days enjoying the ecstasy of krsna-katha in the company of Madhavendra Puri and his disciples. He then visited Setubandha, Danatirtha, Mayapuri, Avanti, Godavari Jiyura Nrismha, Devapari, Trimala, Kurmaksetra and many other holy places.

At last he arrived at Jagannatha Puri, where he took darshan of Jagannatha Deva and was profoundly moved to ecstasy upon seeing the Deity. From Jagannatha Puri, he returned again to Mathura. The chapter closes with an explanation of Lord Nityananda's renunciation.

Lord Nityananda who is identical with the powerful Balarama himself, manifest during this period his pastimes of preaching the holy name in love of God. The chapter concludes with a description of greatness of Nityananda Balarama.

All glories to Sri Krsna Caitanya, the ocean of mercy. All glories to Nityananda Prabhu, the friend of the helpless. All glories to the life and soul of Sri Advaita Candra. All glories to He who is the only shelter of Srivasa and Gadadhara. All glories to Visvambhara, the son of Jagannatha Misra and Sacidevi who is always beloved by his devotees and followers.

Before the advent of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Ananta deva himself had appeared on the order of the Lord. He took birth in the Radhadesh to help enact the divine lila of the Lord. His father's name was Hadai Oja and his mother's name was Padmavati.

He appeared in the village of Ekacakra within the land of Gauda. From infancy he was sober, highly intelligent and supremely qualified. The baby boy was millions of times more beautiful than cupid.

From the moment of his birth there appeared within the Radhadesh, all-auspicious symptoms. All varieties of famine, poverty, and unhappiness immediately disappeared. On the day that Sri Gauracandra made his advent in Sridhama Nabadwipa, Nityananda Prabhu shouted with joy. The vast universe was pervaded with the sound of his cries and the whole world became astonished.

Some said, "The thunderbolt has descended to Earth." Many could understand that the mighty disturbance was the result of some divine power. Some said, "We know the cause. The master of Gauda has spoken in a voice of thunder." And in this way, everyone gave their different opinions. But by the power of the illusory energy of Krsna, no one could recognize the transcendental position of Nityananda Prabhu.

In this way, keeping his divine nature unmanifest, the supreme Lord, Nityananda Prabhu delighted in the company of children. In all the games that the Lord played with the children, Krsna was the center. Indeed, their play was nothing but the lila of

the Lord. Nityananda Prabhu would hold an assembly of the gods with one of the children acting the part of the Earth presenting the petition of the demigods to the supreme Lord Visnu. All of them would go along with the Earth to the banks of the river where together they would pray to the hidden Lord of the universe, Ksirodaksayi Visnu.

Unseen by all, one of the boys would loudly proclaim from his hiding place, "I will shortly be born in the cowherd village of Mathura."

Another day, Nityananda Prabhu and his childhood friends would gather in the village to celebrate the marriage of Vasudeva and Devaki. Once, having made their playhouse into the prison of Kamsa, he re-enacted the pastime of Krsna's divine appearance in the dead of night. Nityananda Prabhu built a cowherd settlement and took Krsna there, deceiving Kamsa by substituting Yogamaya for Krsna within the prison.

Another time he dressed up one of his childhood friends as Putana, while another boy, climbing his body pretended to suck his breast like the baby Krsna. Once, having built a cart made of reeds with the help of the children, Nityananda Prabhu broke it. Nityananda Prabhu would bring his childhood friends to the house of the local milkman and steal milk and yogurt, following in the footsteps of Krsna. His friends never left his company, nor would they return to their homes, but day and night they would play in the company of Nityananda Prabhu.

Nor did their mothers and fathers complain, but all loved Nityananda with their hearts and souls. He would hold his relatives and friends in affectionate embrace. Upon beholding his amazing childhood pastimes, everyone would say, "We have never seen such wonderful playing. How is it possible that this child has learned all these activities of Krsna."

One day having made serpents out of the leaves of trees, he brought the children to a pond. One of the children would enter the water and float motionless. Nityananda Prabhu would awaken him.

One day he took the children into a grove of palm trees, where they played at killing the demon Dhenuka and tasting the palm fruits known as tal fruits.

He would often go to the pasturing grounds and there play many different games with the children. After constructing toy demons and naming them Baka, Agha, and Vatsa, he would kill them. Nityananda Prabhu would return home with his childhood in the afternoon, all of them blowing on buffalo horns.

One day he would imitate Krsna's pastime of lifting Govardhana Hill. Another day after constructing a replica of Vrindavana, he would play there with his friends. One day he would steal the clothes of the gopis and another day would visit the wives of the brahmanas engaged in sacrifice. One of the children would take the part of Narada Muni and disguising himself with a beard he would give confidential advice to Kamsa. One day one of the boys dressed as Akrura and took Krsna and Balarama away from Vrindavana on the order of Kamsa. Nityananda Prabhu cried in grief, feeling separation from Krsna in the mood of the gopis. Streams of tears would flow from his eyes in the view of all the children.

Influenced by the illusory energy of Visnu, no one could understand the transcendental nature of Nityananda Prabhu's divine lila as all the children played in his company. After building a replica of Mathura, he would roam with the boys. Some of them would take the position of garland-makers and some would wear the garlands. Nityananda Prabhu would dress one of them as Kubja and would become perfumed by her.

One day, upon making a bow, Nityananda Prabhu broke it with a thundering noise. After killing the elephant Kuvalayapida and the wrestlers Canura and Mustika, he would knock to the ground and drag away by the hair one of the boys who had been made to play the role of Kamsa. Having killed Kamsa he would dance merrily with the children.

In this way, Nityananda Prabhu's pastimes as a boy made all the people of Ekacakra laugh with delight.

Nityananda Prabhu imitated in his pastimes the transcendental activities of all the avatars of Godhead. One day Nityananda Prabhu played Vamana and another child played Bali Maharaja. In this way, Nityananda Prabhu would deceive him into giving the three worlds in charity as one of the children, dressed as an old man, played the role of Sukracarya and forbid the gift. Then, Nityananda Prabhu as Vamana, after accepting the alms of Bali, placed his lotus feet upon that boy's head.

One day, Nityananda Prabhu played at constructing a bridge of trees and stones across the ocean as all the children played the role of monkey soldiers. In this way he could chop veranda plants and throw them into the water, pretending they were giant trees as the children would shout "Jaya Rama! Jaya Raghunatha! Victory to Rama! Victory to the Lord of the Raghu dynasty!"

The Lord Himself assumes the role of Laksman, and bow in hand, he made his way to the palace of Sugriva in a fit of anger, saying, "You wretched monkey! My Lord, Rama, is becoming distressed by your actions. My Lord is waiting on Malyavan mountain, burdened with grief. And you, O wicked monkey, are busy making merry with women! If I am to spare your life, then go to Rama as fast as you can, and offer him your help."

Another day, in the mood of Laksman, he would chastise Parasurama in anger, saying, "Brahmana - I can't be held accountable for what happens to you if you do not flee at once."

The children, in their innocence, would take Nityananda Prabhu's absorption in the mood of Laksman to be nothing more than childish play. They did have any knowledge of his position as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Some of them would roam about as the five monkeys, and taking the role of Laksman, Nityananda Prabhu would ask, "Who are you monkeys who roam the forests? Tell me! I am the servant of Raghunatha!"

They would tell him, "We wander here in fear of Bali. Lead us to Rama! We accept the dust of your feet upon our heads." Giving them hearty embrace, he would lead them to his master and bow down before the feet of Rama, falling flat like a rod. In the role of Laksman, one day Nityananda Prabhu was beaten by Indrajit. Another day he would play at killing Indrajit. Having made one of the boys take the role of

Vibhisana, he would lead Vibhisana in the presence of Rama and then install him as the king of Lanka.

Another child would shout, "Look! Here I come as Ravana. Beware the shafts from my bow. Let Laksman protect you if he can." With this, the child playing the role of Ravana hurled a lotus flower at Nityananda Prabhu, who dropped to the ground, senseless, in the mood of a defeated Laksman.

Having swooned away, Nityananda Prabhu would not arise. Although the boys tried in many ways to arouse him in many different ways, Nityananda Prabhu showed no sign of life in any part of his body. The children all put their hands to their heads and wept and cried. Hearing their cries Nityananda Prabhu's mother and father hastened to the spot. Finding no life in their child, both of them fell upon the ground senseless.

All the people of the village gathered there and gazed upon the scene in amazement. The children explained everything. Someone from the crowd said, "I understand the reason for all this. A long time ago, an actor who was playing the role of Dasaratha gave up his life upon hearing of the exile of Rama to the forest." Another said, "The boy is only acting his part. As soon as Hanuman brings the medicine and administers it to him, he will recover."

Of course, Nityananda Prabhu had already explained this to the children. He had told them, "As soon as I fall down, all of you make a circle around me and cry. After a short period of time, send away Hanuman. My life will return if the medicine is applied to my nose." But as soon as the Lord, who was perfectly playing his role, became unconscious, the children became very much upset. They completely lost their judgement and no one could remember Nityananda Prabhu's instruction.

They simply cried and cried, and called out, "O brother: get up!" But the bystander's remarks made them remember the Lord's advice. So, one of the children walked off as Hanuman and another child, dressed as a sage stood in his way. Greeting him with an offer of fruits and roots, the sage said, "Please stay with me a while, dear friend, and bless my humble retreat. Only by great good fortune can one attain the company of one like yourself."

Hanuman replied, "My work is urgent. I must make haste. I cannot stop; please excuse me but I must say goodbye. You must have heard of Laksman, the younger brother of Rama. Ravana has struck him unconscious with his sakti arrow. I must hurry to Gandhamadana mountain. His life may be saved only if I bring the proper medicine." The child who played the role of Hanuman spoke all these lines as he was trained by Nityananda Prabhu. Everyone looked on in amazement.

At the request of the sage, Hanuman went to a nearby lake to bathe. Another child caught hold of his feet from under the water. In this way, the child took the part of a crocodile and pulled Hanuman into the water. The child-actor playing Hanuman dragged the crocodile to the bank and then defeats him. Then Hanuman encountered an even more formidable foe.

A child disguised as a Raksasa ran after Hanuman and threatened to eat him, saying, "You have defeated the crocodile, but now you must defeat me. Who will revive Laksman if I swallow you alive?" Hanuman answered, "Your Ravana is a worthless dog. Take to your heels and be gone."

In this way the two children fought with each other until they had each other by the hair. They began beating each other with their fists. After some time, Hanuman defeated the Raksasa.

Finally, the child playing the role of Hanuman made his way to Gandhamadana mountain. There, some boys dressed as Gandharvas fight with him for some time, and, after defeating the Gandharvas, Hanuman brought Gandhamadana mountain away on his head. One of the children, acting as a doctor, remembering Rama, applied the medicine to the nose of Nityananda Prabhu, who was playing the part of Laksman. At last, the great Lord, Nityananda Prabhu regained consciousness and came to his feet.

At this, all the parents and everyone else laughed. Hadai Pandit took the child into his arms and all the boys were delighted. Everyone asked, "My dear child, where did you learn all these things?" And the Lord would laughingly answer, "These are all my divine pastimes."

In his early childhood, the Lord's body was delicately fair. No one wanted to give up embracing him. Everyone loved him more than they loved their own sons. By the illusory potency of the Lord, no one could recognize him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way, from his early childhood, Nityananda Prabhu enjoyed nothing better than rehearsing the pastimes of Krsna.

All the children, giving up their parents and their homes, would constantly play in the company of Nityananda Prabhu. I offer my humble obeisances hundreds of times unto the lotus feet of all those boys who thus played with the Supreme Lord Nityananda Prabhu. In this way, Nityananda Prabhu performed his pastimes, and from infancy, nothing pleased him except the lila of Sri Krsna.

Who has the power to describe the transcendental pastimes of Ananta? They are only revealed through his mercy, of his own accord. And so, Nityananda Prabhu stayed at home for the first twelve years of his life. At that time he went on pilgrimage, visiting the different holy places of India. He wandered as a pilgrim until his twentieth year and at that time he appeared before Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Listen to the account given in this Adi-lila of Caitanya-Bhagavata of the pilgrimage of Nityananda Prabhu the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is blasphemed only by wicked and sinful atheists.

Nityananda Prabhu delivered the whole world. He is an unparalleled ocean of mercy. Only by his mercy do I understand the truth about Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Only by his means has the greatness of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu been proclaimed. Listen to how Nityananda Prabhu, the best beloved of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, traveled to all the holy tirthas in India.

The Lord first visited the holy place known as Vakreswara. From there he traveled all alone to the grove of Vaidyanatha. After visiting Gaya, he went to Kasi, the seat of Lord Siva, where the current of the Ganges begins to flow northwards. Nityananda Prabhu became filled with joy at the sight of the Ganges. At Kasi he bathed in the Ganges, and with an unsatiated thirst drank its sweet waters. He performed his morning bath at Prayaga in the month of Magha and from there went to the place of his previous birth in Mathura. Having sported in the waters of the Yamuna at

Visrama-ghata, the Lord wandered about Govardhana Hill in great ecstasy and in this way he walked through all twelve forests of Vrindavana.

He visited the house of Nanda Maharaja at Gokula, and sitting down at that holy place, he wept out of emotion. Offering his obeisances to Madana Gopala the Lord journeyed to Hastinapura, the home of the pandavas and beholding the place of those great devotees, the Lord shed tears. All those who loved there, being nondevotees, could not understand. He bowed down, beholding the glories of Balarama in the city of Hastinapura and in his ecstasy, shouted, "May Balarama, the holder of the plow, deliver us all!"

Then, Nityananda Prabhu went to Dvaraka where he bathed in the sea in great joy. He went to Siddhapura, the seat of Kapila, and at the holy place known as the tirtha of the fish, Matsya-tirtha, distributed large quantities of cooked rice at a great festival. Nityananda Prabhu visited Siva-Kanchi and Visnu-Kanchi and laughed upon seeing the bitter schism between the followers of Vishnu and the followers of Siva.

He went to Kuruksetra, Priti-daksa, Bindhu-sarovara, Prabasa, and Sudarsana tirtha, and after paying a visit to the holy tirtha of Trita-kupa, he went to Nisala and from there to Brahma-tirtha and then to Cakra-tirtha. The Lord visited Pratisrota which is near the Saraswati of the West. And from there, that great magnanimous personality, Nityananda Prabhu, travelled to Naimisaranya.

At that time, Nityananda Prabhu went on to the city of Ayodhya and wept much upon beholding the holy birthplace of Sri Rama. Then he went to the kingdom of Guhaka, the candala, where Nityananda Prabhu fell unconscious out of ecstasy. Remembering the devotion of Guhaka-candala, Nityananda Prabhu was unconscious for three days. In all those forests, where the Supreme Lord Rama had stopped to spend a few days, Nityananda Prabhu rolled on the ground in the agony of separation.

He went to the banks of the Sarayu river and bathed in her waters and from there went to Kausaki and from there to the sacred retreat of Paulastya the sage. After bathing in all the holy tirthas of the Gomati, Gandhaki and Soma rivers, he climbed to the summit of Mount Mahendra, and having paid his obeisances there to Parasurama, he proceeded to Hardwara, where the flow of the Ganges originates on this Earth. He then visited Pampa, Bhima-rati and Sapta-Godavari, after bathing in the Tirthas of Benva and Bhipasa.

The great Nityananda Prabhu then had a view of Karttika and went to the mountain of Sri, where Siva and Parvati dwell. In the forms of a brahmana and his wife, Siva and Parvati resided on the top of the mountain known as Sri. Both of them recognized their own cherished Deity, Nityananda Prabhu, who had thus journeyed to the holy places disguised as an avadhuta. Both of them rejoiced upon beholding their guest, and the goddess Parvati herself, with her own hands, joyfully cooked prasadam for Nityananda Prabhu. As Siva and Parvati made offerings of food to Nityananda Prabhu with great regard, he smiled and offered his obeisances to both of them.

The confidential talks which they held between one another can be understood only by Krsna Himself. Taking his leave, Nityananda Prabhu went to Dravida. After visiting Vyenkattanatha, Kamakosti-puri, and Kanch, he arrived at the famed stream of the Kaveri and from there went to the holy place of Sri Rangam, where he stayed for

some time. From there he went to Hari-ksetra, and then visited Mount Rsabha. Then he travelled to South Matura, Krtamala, Tamraparni, and then journeyed northward to the Yamuna, where he visited the home of Augustya on Malaya mountain.

The people there were filled with great joy on beholding the magnanimous Nityananda Prabhu who accepted their hospitality, and from there with great pleasure, he travelled to Badarikasrama. Nityananda Prabhu stayed for some time at the abode of Naranarayana Rshik and passed his time in complete seclusion. From there he journeyed to the residence of Vyasa, who recognized Nityananda Prabhu as the mighty Balaram Himself.

Making himself visible, Vyasa welcomed his guest and the Lord offered his obeisances before Srila Vyasadeva. At that time, Nityananda Prabhu travelled to the seat of the Buddhists, where the Lord found them sitting together with one another. He questioned them, but no one replied in answer. Being angered by the Buddhists, the Lord kicked them on the head. Laughing, the Buddhists fled and Nityananda Prabhu continued on his pilgrimage undismayed.

At that time, the Lord arrived at the town of Kanyaka, and after visiting Durga-devi, travelled to the South Indian sea. Thereafter Nityananda Prabhu went to the town of Sri Ananta and from there to the pond of the five dancing apsaras or celestial nymphs. The Lord then visited the temple of Siva called Gokarna. He travelled from door to door over Kerala and Trigarta and after beholding the honored wife of Dvaipayana, Nityananda Prabhu travelled to Nirbindhya, Payosni, and tapti, in the course of his divine activities.

He visited Reva, the town of Mahismati and Malatirtha and then the Lord turned westwards, journeying by way of Suparakha. Nityananda Prabhu was devoid of all fear. He was never afraid of anyone, throughout the whole of his travels. His body appeared weak, by reason of constant absorption in Krsna consciousness. Nityananda Prabhu laughed and cried at intervals. Who could understand his transcendental moods? Such were the travels of Lord Nityananda Prabhu as he wandered from one place to the next, visiting the holy tirthas.

At that time, quite by accident, he met Madhavendra Puri. The body of Madhavendra Puri was surcharged with divine love for Sri Krsna. Madhavendra Puri was accompanied by all his disciples, who were filled with Krsna prema. Madhavendra Puri tasted no other food besides the mellow qualities of Krsna. The mellows of Krsna consciousness were his only sustenance. His holy body was the place of Krsna's pastimes. There can be no greater praise of his love for Krsna than to say that the great Advaita Acarya Prabhu was the disciple of Madhavendra Puri.

As soon as Nityananda Prabhu beheld Madhavendra Puri he lost external consciousness, and lay motionless, being overpowered with divine love. As soon as Madhavendra Puri saw Nityananda Prabhu he also lost external consciousness and became oblivious of the world around him.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu himself declared again and again that Madhavendra Puri is the original teacher of pure devotion. As Nityananda Prabhu and Madhavendra Puri fainted upon seeing one another, Isvara Puri and all the other disciples of Madhavendra Puri wept.

After regaining external consciousness, both of them began to embrace one another, crying tears of ecstasy. The two great teachers rolled on the ground in the ecstasy of divine love, and, transformed by their jubilation, shouted words of joy with voices of thunder. Tears of love flowed like rivers from the eyes of those two great masters. And wet with their tears, the Earth felt blessed. There was no end to the display of transcendental ecstasy shown by those two great souls whose bodies shivered as tears flowed from their eyes and their hair stood on end, for Caitanya Mahaprabhu himself danced within their hearts.

Nityananda Prabhu said, "Today I have obtained the complete fulfillment of all the pilgrimages that I have ever performed, for today, my eyes have beheld the holy feet of Madhavendra Puri. My life is glorified by witnessing such divine love as his." Holding Nityananda Prabhu in a close embrace, Madhavendra Puri, choked with divine love, could utter no words of reply. And in his joy, Madhavendra Puri had no wish to release Nityananda Prabhu from his embrace.

Isvara Puri, Brahmananda Puri, and all the other disciples of Madhavendra Puri, felt irresistibly attracted to Nityananda Prabhu. Although they had met so many renounced saints, they could detect no trace of love for Krsna in any of them. And by meeting those unfortunate and wicked souls, they gain nothing but grief. And being aggrieved, they sought refuge in the forests. But now they were relieved of all their sorrows upon beholding in one another the manifestation of love for Krsna.

For days, Nityananda Prabhu travelled in the company of Madhavendra Puri, delighting in discussing the pastimes of Krsna. Madhavendra Puri's devotional service is wonderful to speak of. He would faint upon seeing a blackish cloud. Day and night, intoxicated by love for Krsna, he laughed and cried, ranted and raved, and shouted in grief just like a drunkard.

And Nityananda Prabhu, intoxicated with the nectar of Govinda's sweetness, would stagger and stumble. Falling on the ground, he would laugh heartily. On beholding the wonderful mood of Madhavendra Puri and Nityananda Prabhu, the brotherhood of disciples constantly chanted the name of Hari. Intoxicated by the sweet taste of divine love, no one knew when it was day or night, and time lost all meaning. Who can understand the talks that Nityananda Prabhu had with Madhavendra Puri? Only Krsna knows their meaning. Madhavendra Puri could not bear to part company with Nityananda Prabhu, but took delight in his constant association.

He said, "Although I have traveled to many holy tirthas, I could find no divine love of Godhead such as yours anywhere. Having obtained the company of such a friend as Nityananda Prabhu, I have realized the mercy of Krsna. Krsna is so kind! Wherever one can get the association of Nityananda Prabhu, that place is more than Vaikuntha and all the holy tirthas combined. If one only hears of the devotion of such a devotee as Nityananda Prabhu, he is sure to attain Sri Krsnacandra. And whoever has the least bit of aversion to Nityananda Prabhu, can never be loved by Krsna even if he is a devotee of Krsna."

In this way, Madhavendra Puri glorified Nityananda Prabhu day and night and served him with love and attention. Nityananda Prabhu himself thought of Madhavendra Puri as his guru and thus engaged, those two great souls were so absorbed in love of Krsna that they could not tell whether it was day or night.

In this way, after passing some time in the company of Madhavendra Puri, Nityananda Prabhu set out on his journey to the bridge of Rama known as Setubandha, at the southernmost tip of India.

Madhavendra Puri went off to visit the Sarayu river. Being completely absorbed in Krsna, neither of them could remember anything of their own physical bodies. Completely forgetful of their own selves, they passed their days in the agony of separation from each other and so their life was preserved. For if any external consciousness had remained, it would have been impossible for them to survive the agony of separation. Whoever hears this account of Nityananda Prabhu and Madhavendra Puri with faith and devotion, obtains the treasure of love for Krsna.

In this way, Nityananda Prabhu wandered about in the ecstasy of divine love and after some time arrived at Setubandha, the bridge of Rama. After bathing in the ghat at Dana-tirtha, he went to Ramesvara, and from there, arrived in Vijayanagar. Having visited Mayapuri, Avanti, and Godavari, the Lord arrived at the seat of Jiyur-Nrismhadeva. He visited Trimala, and the sacred shrine of Kurmanatha. At last he set out to behold Sri Jagannatha-deva, the moon of Nilacala.

As soon as he entered the city of Lord Jagannatha, the blissful master of Nilacala, he fainted away upon beholding the sight of the Lord's cakra. He took darsan of Jagannatha, seeing his fourfold form as the Caturvyuha fully manifest in all his joyousness with the whole body of his servitors. Nityananda Prabhu lost his consciousness in the ecstasy of that vision, and once recovering, lost it again. This went on again and again. Nityananda Prabhu experienced shivering, perspiration, tears of joy falling on the ground, shouting words of ecstasy in a thunderous voice.

Who can describe the ecstasy of Nityananda Prabhu? After spending some time in this way in Jagannatha Puri, Nityananda Prabhu resumed his journey and with great enthusiasm, visited the place where the Ganges meets the ocean. Who can fully describe all his travels to the different holy places? I have only recorded a fraction of them, by his mercy. After visiting the holy tirthas in this way, Nityananda Prabhu returned to Mathura. He took up residence in Vrindavana and stayed there day and night absorbed in thoughts of Krsna.

He ate nothing, and only now and then would drink some milk if someone gave it to him without his asking for it. Nityananda Prabhu thought to himself, "Sri Gauracandra is staying in Nabadwipa, but his divine glory is remaining concealed. As soon as the Lord chooses to manifest his divinity, I shall immediately go to Nabadwipa and fulfill my role in his service."

In this way, having made up his mind, Nityananda Prabhu neither went to Nabadwipa, nor left Mathura, but sported constantly in the waters of the Yamuna and played in the dust of Vrindavana with the children.

And although Nityananda Prabhu possesses complete potency in all respects, he abstained from bestowing devotion for Visnu upon anyone. Thinking for himself that when Lord Gauracandra would manifest himself, then the time would come for performing the pastime of distributing divine love on the order of the Lord. By thinking that nothing should be done except by the command of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the greatness of the lord's service is not reduced, and so Nityananda Prabhu awaited the command of the Lord.

Nothing moves without the order of the Supreme Lord, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. And no one can do anything without his sanction, even if he is Ananta, Brahma, Siva, or any of the gods. The destroyers, rulers, and maintainers of the universe do their duty only upon the order of Sri Caitanya. Those sinners who are aggrieved in their minds by this, are completely unfit to be seen by a Vaishnava. The three worlds are witness to the fact that everyone obtained the treasure of love of god by the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu. He is the first of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's devotees. His tongue treasures the glorious praise of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Nityananda Prabhu discourses on Caitanya night and day; by serving him, devotion to Sri Caitanya is obtained. All glories to Nityananda Prabhu the primeval Lord, by whose mercy we can understand the glories of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Attachment to Nityananda Prabhu is the gift of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy. For one who knows Nityananda Prabhu there is no danger anywhere. If someone wishes to cross beyond this world of darkness and dive into the ocean of devotion, let him serve the moonlike Nityananda. Some say that Nityananda Prabhu is Balarama Himself. Others say that he is the abode of divine love for Sri Caitanya; let them say whatever they like. Whether Nityananda Prabhu is an ascetic, a devotee, or a sage; whatever he may be in relationship to Sri Caitanya, may his lotus feet be implanted firmly within the hearts of everyone. If after hearing all the good qualities of Nityananda Prabhu, there is still a sinful soul left who doesn't appreciate him or who wants to slander him or blaspheme him in any way, then I kick on his face with my left foot.

Certain followers of Sri Caitanya speak of Nityananda Prabhu in such a way that although they appear to speak ill of him, they are really praising him. Such exalted Vaishnavas (like Advaita Acarya) are always pure in heart and transcendently honest. Their seeming disagreement and quarrel is simply lila or sport.

If one looks at their disagreement externally and takes the side of one, slandering the other, he will be finished. By following only those who deprecate all slander of Nityananda, Sri Caitanya is attained. When will that day be mine when I shall obtain the divine vision of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu, surrounded by the assembly of devotees? May Nityananda Prabhu be my eternal master in every way. Remaining loyal to Nityananda Prabhu, may I serve the holy feet of Sri Gauracandra. May I read the holy Bhagavata at the feet of Nityananda Prabhu birth after birth.

This is my aspiration. All glories to the Supreme Lord, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. You gave us Nityananda Prabhu and you took him away from us. And yet, O Mahaprabhu, grant me this one favor - that my mind may remain always attached to you and to Nityananda Prabhu. He is your greatest devotee; without your consent, no one can attain his lotus feet. Nityananda Prabhu roamed throughout Vrindavana and different holy places until Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu manifest his divinity. Whoever listens to this account of the pilgrimages of Nityananda Prabhu attains the treasure of divine love.

Sri Krsna Caitanya is the life and soul of Nityananda Prabhu. Vrindavana Dasa, praying at their lotus feet sings Sri Caitanya Bhagavata.

*Sant Nagar, Delhi*  
*16 February 2003*

Yesterday I went to Sri Vrndavana Dhama for Lord Nityananda's appearance day.

I left with Haritasva das from Sweden (Madhu Puri was too ill to go) at 7:00 AM by rented auto. We arrived at 10:00 AM, just in time for the *abhisheka*. I was invited to bathe the *utsava murtis* of Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai by a *pujari* whom I've known for many years.

Then I visited Srila Prabhupada at his rooms at Radha-Damodara temple. Prabhupada said he eternally resides there, and I personally find him most accessible here, more than other places where he is present (his *samadhi mandiras*, for example). Then I took bath in the Yamuna.

I visited the MVT flat of my dear Godbrother Brahmananda Prabhu. Who should let me in the door but another dear Godbrother, Jagajivan Prabhu, whom I've not seen for fifteen years or so. We had a nice talk for half an hour, then Jagajivan Prabhu went to visit Prthu Prabhu at the hospital. He'd been gored by a cow a few days before. That's a very dangerous sort of injury, so I hope Prthu Prabhu recovers without complications.

Brahmananda Prabhu and I had lunch together. Then I visited his brother Gargamuni Prabhu at his office across the street. Finally it was time to catch the auto back to Dehli.

Today Madhu Puri and I take the Raj Dhani Express to Calcutta. Earlier I'd stated he'd fly to Sweden, but that is changed now. A long story.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Tarunpur, Mayapur*  
*23 February 2003*

We arrived in Mayapur the 17th of February. I stay in a bhajan kutir, built by Murarigupta das, two kilometers east of Mayapur in a small village called Tarunpur.



*Murarigupta das with daughter Sudevi.*



Murarigupta prabhu has also built a Japanese style rock garden just outside the entrance to my hut. The theme is the mathematical constant pi that is used for calculating the diameter of a circle. The garden features the symbol pi in the center of a set of circles and a triangle.

On the picture you can also see a small bridge. In the hut there is a nice place for my altar.



*Murarigupta's house in Tarunpur*

*Sridhama Mayapur, West Bengal*  
*4 March 2003*

Today is the anniversary of His Holiness Tamal Krishna Gosvami Maharaja's disappearance from our physical vision.

At about 9:30 AM today in ISKCON Mayapur his *samadhi mandira* was formally established with a *yajna*, a series of homages offered by his Godbrothers, Godsisters and disciples, a *puspanjali* offering, a *bhoga* offering, and an *arati* and *kirtana*. It was very sweet--intimate actually, even though there was a large gathering of at least 500 devotees.

It was a historic event, the establishment of the first *samadhi* of a disciple of Srila Prabhupada. I know everyone present felt Tamal Krishna Maharaja's presence very strongly.

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Since arriving in Mayapur on 17 February, I have not been able to regularly write for In2-MeC due to circumstance beyond my control. Now that the GBC meetings have ended, things are more peaceful. So henceforward you are sure to see more journal entries.

Here's an update about myself. I attended the GBC meeting which began on February 20 and ended on March 1. This was the first meeting I participated in for two years. That was because in 2001 I took a leave of absence from the GBC for reasons of health. In particular, I was suffering from depression. In those two years I was able, by the grace of Srila Prabhupada and Sri Krsna, to (after a great struggle) overcome the depression by a four-pronged attack of 1) Ayurveda, 2) *arcana-seva* to Shaligram-shila, 3) spending more time in India, and 4) what HH Bhaktividyā Purna Maharaja calls "an extreme *sattvik* diet."

During the two-year leave of absence I put the question of, "Shall I stay on the GBC Body?", completely out of my mind. My plan was to answer that question at this last GBC meeting in year 2003. And answer it I did.

I came into the first day of the meeting feeling quite refreshed and optimistic after my preaching tour in Maharashtra. But after four or five days I found myself sinking into depression again. A number of reasons became very clear to me why I am not able to continue with this service.

So I met with a subcommittee staffed by HG Ravindra Svarupa Prabhu, HH Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja, HH Bir Krishna Maharaja and other GBC Godbrothers and requested that I be allowed to give up my zonal duties. But because I remain very concerned about the creeping influence of non-Prabhupada philosophies upon the members of ISKCON, I also requested that I be admitted to the SAC (the Shastra Advisory Committee, made up of Drutakarma Prabhu, Mother Urmila, Krishnaksetra Prabhu and chaired by Purnachandra Prabhu). The SAC was formed last year to assist the GBC in answering philosophical challenges.

Both of my requests were approved by the GBC Body. So this means that I now a

"GBC Emeritus" (or in other words, an honorably retired member of the GBC Body). I have no zone to manage. I am no longer the GBC representative for Norway, Finland, Benelux, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece. I suppose that HH Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja will continue to act as the zonal secretaries for most of these countries, although I am not sure about that. I will continue to visit these countries as part of my yearly preaching tour. But I intend to gradually, year by year, expand my preaching to the whole world.

As I mentioned above, I feel much better in my physical and mental health. But I will wait one more year before giving initiations. I have been advised by my Godbrothers to be very sure that my condition is stable before accepting new disciples. Another point in this connection is that I shall no longer act as "an institutional *guru*." Which means that I will not agree to accept aspiring disciples just because they are recommended to me by a temple president. Those aspiring disciples that I have already accepted may receive initiation, after I speak with them personally. But after that I will only consider giving initiation under special conditions that are stricter than the standard set by the ISKCON institution.

*Sridhama Mayapur, West Bengal  
5 March 2003*

Since the end of the GBC meetings (March 1) I've been giving a class at my Tarunpur *bhajan kutir* between 4 and 5 in the afternoon. Yesterday I spoke about Lord Nityananda's mercy, and my memories of His Holiness Tamal Krishna Maharaja.

Unfortunately today I feel ill. It was moonless last night, very cool, with a chilly breeze that kept blowing through the *chettai* (woven bamboo walls) of my house. I did not have sufficient blankets. This morning I awoke from bad dreams feeling sick in my bones and in my stomach. I believe I will cancel today's class.

\* \* \* \* \*

I hoped to publish in In2-MeC a photograph of the school that my good friend, HH Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja, is constructing in Mayapur. I asked Madhu Puri to take a picture of it but as he has been busy I don't know if he got the chance. Anyway, the project looks impressive. He is building it on a mound of raised earth to lift it above the flood level. (Every few years, Mother Ganga floods the Mayapur project, sometimes with waters nine or ten feet high). Maharaja is bricking the sloping sides of the earth mound; so from a distance the construction looks like an



ancient fortress.



The basic work should be finished in a year--that's when Maharaja and his team are planning to move into the new school. I will play a part in the project, though my exact involvement is at present not defined in detail. I did, a few days back, sit with Maharaja and Sri Prahlada to guide them in planning out a history class. Sri Prahlada, who tours with HH Indradyumna Maharaja about six months out of the year, is the principal of school.

Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja's school is on the eastern side of the ISKCON Mayapur land (i.e. it is several hundred meters further from the Ganges than the main complex of Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandira buildings); my Tarunpura *asrama* is even further down the same more or less straight path that begins at Srila Prabhupada's *samadhi* and carries on eastward behind Sri Sri Radha-Madhava's temple into the fields and then across the paved Tarunpur road. Leaving Maharaja's school and stepping onto that path, you would turn left and walk another five to seven minutes to reach my place.

\* \* \* \* \*

I say "my place" because from the Vastu point of view, the land on which the *kutir* is built is actually separate from Murari Gupta Prabhu's property. He is the legal owner of all the land, but since Vastu says it is not auspicious for that front piece on which I live to be connected to the piece on which he and his family lives, the two plots have been separated by a line of brickwork that is buried beneath the topsoil. This separation was done within the last few months. So in the Vastu sense, the property on which the *bhajan kutir* stands belongs to me. Interestingly enough, this fulfills an astrological prophecy from a couple of years ago that in the year 2003 I will acquire land.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now that I am free from GBC responsibility, I am dedicating myself to deep study of Vaishava *sastra*. I want to learn 900 new verses within the next 2 years, and preach to devotees about their internal life in Krishna Consciousness. The latter seems to be greatly needed. I received a letter a couple of days ago in which I was informed that in a very successful ISKCON farm project in Europe, only 10 percent of the large number of devotees who live there are satisfied to commit themselves to remaining there. The other 90 percent, despite all the advantages of living within that nicely developed ISKCON community, want to move out and live on their own, even if it

means working in the *karmi* world. I suppose that most of these devotees will continue to serve Krishna at some level or other. But are they missing something from their internal spiritual development that prompts them to work out their own independent existence? This is a question I shall try to delve into deeply, so that hopefully I can give a seminar on it at some point in the near future.

\* \* \* \* \*

A GBC Deputy from Russia spoke with me a week ago or so. (You, dear reader, may not be informed that ISKCON's top management consists of two parliamentary houses, the upper one being the traditional Governing Body Commission or GBC, and the lower one being the GBC Deputies who are local leaders--like temple presidents--from various countries.) Anyway, this Russian devotee told me he finds In2-MeC most interesting. He mentioned he liked the explanations I gave about "beatniks and hippies."

Well. One point is, I never used the word "beatnik." The Beats did not like that word. Here's the history. On 4 October 1957--one day after Allen Ginsberg's poem *Howl* was cleared of obscenity charges in a San Francisco court, and one month after the publication of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*--the Russians launched Sputnik One into orbit. As I pointed out in an earlier entry in this journal, Sputnik was a great shock to American self-complacency. A week or two later, a newspaper columnist named Herb Caen wrote about the mad young bohemians who could be seen hanging around in coffee shops on San Francisco's North Beach. Herb Caen declared these Beats to be as "far out" as the Sputnik, hence they were "beatniks." The word immediately caught on in the American press. Suddenly any young male who wore a beard or goatee, and any young woman who kept her hair long (at least down to the middle of her back) and natural (not artificially styled by some beauty salon), and whomever--male or female--affected casual dress, especially black turtleneck sweaters and blue jeans, and who enjoyed the honks and bleats of modern jazz, the word-mash of modern poetry, the color-blotches of modern art, and who mumbled an argot of terms like "cool," "man," "wow," "far out," "dig it," was now labelled by the media as a beatnik.

The founder-*acaryas* of the Beat movement were suitably dismayed. Allen Ginsberg protested in *The New York Times* that beatnik was "a foul word." Very ironical, since he himself had been taken to court for publishing foul words (of the more traditional Anglo-Saxon type) in his poetry.

Now that I'm on the subject of the Beats again, and now that I am in Mayapur where I keep my very eclectic library of books I have gathered over many years, I'll remind you, o dear reader, of an entry in this journal I made in January in which I referred to the autobiography of Leroi Jones. He was an influential Beat poet and jazz critic who, after the assassination of Malcolm X, became a controversial figure in radical black politics. As an affirmation of his African roots, Leroi Jones converted to Islam and changed his name to Amiri Baraka.

He was one of my great heros when I was a teenager. Now he is an elderly professor in some university somewhere; or maybe he is retired, because at this date he is about seventy years old. But even after so many years, Leroi Jones remains a

smoking pistol. In the aftermath of the worldshaking events of September 11, 2001, when Muslim terrorists crashed two hijacked aircraft into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, he published an impassioned poem excoriating the American government for its sins against the oppressed people of the world. ("Who killed the Rosenbergs? Who? Who? Who?") This man has *not* mellowed with age!

Anyway, the reason I am bringing up Leroi Jones is, as I mentioned in an earlier entry in this journal, he criticized the bohemian lifestyle of the Beats as being ultimately nothing more than sense gratification. That's significant, since he used to be one of the big guns of the Beat movement. I wasn't able to give you the exact quotation because I did not have his autobiography before me. But now I do. I keep it in my Mayapur collection.

On page 177, as he traces out his conversion in the 1960s from Beat-ism to black nationalism, Leroi remembers:

I also wrote a piece for *Kulchur* called "Milneberg Joys, or Against Hipness as Such," taking on members of our various circles, the hippies (old usage) of the period who thought merely initialing ideas which had currency in the circles, talking the prevailing talk, or walking the prevailing walk, that that was all there was to it. I was also reaching and searching, life had to be more than a mere camaraderie of smugness and elitist hedonism.

He states here that he criticized "the hippies (old usage)." Leroi means the jazz era hippies. The era of American jazz music began in New Orleans in the late 1800s. The long-haired rock music freaks of the 1960s, whom Srila Prabhupada once said were "our best customers," were the embodiments of a new usage of the word hippie.

American jazz-slang words like "hippie," "hipster," and "hepcat," go back to the Wolof language which is still spoken in West Africa. It was the language of the first slaves shipped to Virginia in the early 1600s. In Wolof, a *hipikat* is a sage or intelligent fellow, someone who is alert as to what is really going on. Another Wolof expression is *bugal*, to annoy. Thus speakers of jazz-slang warn others, "Don't bug me, man!" *Deg* or *dega* means to understand or appreciate; thus speakers of jazz-slang ask one another, "You dig me?"

So dig this. The word "hippie" was not invented in the 1960s. Its roots go back 400 years.

There is a rather odd little movie made in 1950 of the title *DOA*. This stands for Dead On Arrival, which is American police jargon for an injured or sick person who dies en route while being transported by ambulance to the emergency ward of a hospital. Hence the victim is written into the police report as DOA, dead when the ambulance arrives. So anyway, in this old black-and-white movie starring Edmund O'Brian, there is a scene shot inside of a jazz club on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. We see a bebop combo--saxophone, piano, upright bass, drums, played by black musicians in baggy suits--wailing away on stage. The audience is all white people. At one table a quite ordinary-looking young guy turns to a girl and says, "Man, am I hip!" She laughs and replies, "You are nowhere, nowhere!" (Translation: he's telling her that the frenetic sounds of the jazz band are lifting him up to some higher state of awareness; she's telling him that no matter what he thinks the music is doing for

him, he's still just a jerk.) We also see a scruffy-looking bearded character wearing an odd hat who shouts ecstatically at the saxophonist, "Blow! Blow!" (Translation: he is encouraging the player to get the most out of his instrument.)

These were the hippies (old usage) of the jazz era. Leroi's characterization of their culture as "a mere camaraderie of smugness and elitist hedonism" is brilliant. Later, on pages 316-317, he writes about the artistic intellectualism of the bohemians of New York's Greenwich Village, which was the birthplace of the Beat movement.

Art. It pushed around me...It fought. It ran. It shivered. It screamed. That was art. I could feel myself touching it to understand...just sweet simple beautiful art. I came to New York then [in the 1950s] in search of it. I thought it had something to do with intellectuals, intellectualism, white people, "classical" music, the smell of coffee downtown late fall. ...There are several hundred explanations and rationales for not dealing with reality such artists, intellectuals, poseurs have...Certainly when I was downtown the "mass line" was *hedonism*.

Deeply influenced by Leroi's insightful critique, which exposed hedonism (the doctrine that the ultimate ethical good is whatever pleases the senses) to be at the heart of the meandering rhetoric of the Beat intellectuals and the posturing of hippies old and new, I started looking for a spiritual alternative in the late 1960s. And at last I found what I was looking for at Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet in 1971.

I remain grateful to Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka for publishing his own soul-searching while I was growing up. Reading his writings as a teenager dislodged me from my own smugness and elitist hedonism. Of course, though he turned his back on bohemianism, Leroi embraced leftist politics and academia, which is just another trap of *maya*.

Too bad. On page 119 of his autobiography, Leroi mentions his visits in the 1950s to Orientalia, a bookshop that used to be located around 12th Street in the Village. This shop specialized in the religion and philosophy of Asia; it due to his readings of books purchased here that Leroi became very interested in Buddhism.

In the *Prabhupada Memories* video series, Pradyumna Prabhu recalls the same Orientalia bookshop. It was here, around 1967, that he and another early disciple of Srila Prabhupada purchased Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's edition of *Sri Brahma-samhita*. Srila Prabhupada was happy to learn that his American disciples found this book of his Guru Maharaja in a New York bookstore. He told them that *Sri Brahma-samhita* was a favorite book of his; while still in householder life he had learned all the verses by heart. This inspired Pradyumna to learn Sanskrit so that he could prepare Roman transliterations of the *Brahma-samhita* verses ("the Govindam prayers") for recitation by devotees in ISKCON. Prabhupada was most pleased by this effort, and engaged Pradyumna Prabhu as the Sanskrit editor for his own translations of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

Poor Leroi Jones did not have the *bhakti-sukriti* to take up study of the *Brahma-samhita* during the 1950s, though the book was there on the shelves of the Orientalia. Perhaps he touched the book, even lifted it off the shelf and scanned the pages. Srila Prabhupada said that anyone who even touches his books would be assured of human birth in his next life.

\* \* \* \* \*

My beloved disciple Gaura Bhagavan das wrote me a few days ago about another January entry in this In2-MeC journal. There I proposed that while on a morning walk in Boston in 1971, Srila Prabhupada gave a special spin to the word "intoxicants." In normal English usage the word refers to substances that bring about a state of intoxication: drugs, alcohol, etc. But I noted that on this walk Srila Prabhupada seemed to use the word as a designation for persons who take intoxicants. There is a word, "dilettantes," for example, for people who dabble in the arts or some other sophisticated pursuits, who put on airs of being very expert in such pursuits, but who are actually just poseurs. And there are other words for people that end in "-ants" (e.g. savants). Such words have a genteel ring to them. So it seemed to me that Srila Prabhupada was playing an ironic word-game by styling the drunks who staggered out from under a Boston bridge as "intoxicants," echoing these high-class words. Now, Gaura Bhagavan Prabhu has drawn my attention to a 1969 lecture by Srila Prabhupada in which he clearly uses that word in just this way. Here is the relevant quotation:

Don't you see that the intoxicants, intoxicated person, they have become automatically? There is no university. There is no educational system that "You become... Take LSD like this." No. That is a natural tendency."

Confirmed!

*Sridhama Mayapur, West Bengal  
6 March 2003*

In January's In2-MeC I mentioned a piece of magazine fiction published in *Harper's* in 1951. It was titled "Grandma and the Hindu Monk" and written by Seymour Freedgood. I keep a photocopy in my Mayapur library. Here are some quotations.

I still remember the shock I had when I first saw him. He couldn't have been four foot six. He had an ingenuous smile and protruding, fan-shaped teeth. Around his head was wrapped a turban, upon which a series of Sanskrit prayers had been scrawled in red and yellow crayons. A similar cloth hung around his shoulders. Beneath it was a gray undervest which did not entirely hide a woolen sweater and the tops of some brown underwear. And below all of this a white cotton skirt dropped clear to his feet. These, mercifully, were not naked: instead he had shod them in a pair of blue tennis shoes. Taken together, this outfit was his version of khaddar--Indian homespun--for adoption in northern climates. The sneakers he wore for religious reasons: any other footwear is of leather, which would be in violation of sacred cows. I don't know why they were blue. He also had a string of wooden prayer beads wrapped around his neck.

. . .

"I am Mahanan Brata Brahmachari," he told them, in the meanwhile ordering the taxi driver to deposit his luggage on the veranda, "a Hindu mendicant from the Sri Angan Monastery, Faridpur, East Bengal. Your son has invited me to stay with you for the summer. Ay, Saymour," he said, noticing me for the first time in the crowd that by now had gathered around the taxi, "there you are. Delighted to see you. Please pay this man. "

. . .

In the background Josey hovered, concerned about his meals. These, it appeared, must consist entirely of vegetables. No eggs, no fish, no meat. "Not even eggs?" asked my mother. "Can Josey fix you a salad for lunch?" He agreed that a salad would be splendid and the two women bustled off, full of plans. It was apparent that he would have to do all the cooking himself.

. . .

My brothers and I got on with his luggage. This consisted, in addition to three tin suitcases, of a box full of philosophy books, and a potted plant, securely wrapped in brown paper, which he asked me to unbind and set in a window seat. . . Brahmachari explained, wagging his finger at us from where he sat in the middle of the couch, that it was a Tulasi plant, a bush sacred to the Hindus for a reason I now forgot. His abbot had given it to him when he first left India. He never travelled without it.

. . .

It's my impression that Brahmachari was comparing the attitudes toward God and salvation that obtained in his Hindu monastery with those of the Hasidic Jews. His order was devoted to Lord Krishna, he told Mr. Isaacs. This meant it was opposed to Brahmanic formalism and put its stress on music and dancing and ecstatic union with God. As among the Hasidim there is a preference for the Psalms of David over the priestcraft and legalisms of the Mosaic testaments, so among the members of his order less attention was paid to the Vedic writings than to the *Bhagavad-gita*, a song by the same Lord Krishna in praise of Himself.

. . .

He had again stripped down to his loincloth, his turban and the holy beads, and with his long brown fingers he was tapping on the two-headed drum. Bolt upright in front of Grandma and with a slight smile on his lips he weaved the upper half of his body and his tapped. "Hari Krishna," the monk hummed.

*Sridhama Mayapur, West Bengal*  
*7 March 2003*

The Gaura Mandala Parikrama begins today. The sound of three different amplified kirtanas reverberates across the landscape as I write this. The vast number of ISKCON devotees who have gathered here from many lands, as well as parties of local Bengali devotees of other Gaudiya institutions, are "patrolling on the Lord's command."

*Ajna-Tahal*

"The Lord's Order to Patrol Around Town"  
from Gitavali by Bhaktivinoda Thakura

*nadiya-godrume nityananda mahajan  
patiyache nam-hatta jiver karam*

In the land of Nadiya, on the island of Godruma, the magnanimous Lord Nityananda has opened up the marketplace of the holy name, meant for the deliverance of all fallen souls.

*(sraddhavan jan he, sraddhavan jan he)  
prabhur ajnay, bhai, magi ei bhiksa  
bolo 'krsna,' bhajo krsna, koro krsna-siksa*

O people of faith! O people of faith! By the order of Lord Gauranga, O brothers, I beg these three requests of you: Chant "Krsna!". worship Krishna, and teach others about Krishna.

*aparadha-sunya ho'ye loho krsna-nam  
krsna mata, krsna pita, krsna dhana-pran*

Being careful to remain free of offenses, just take the holy name of Lord Krishna. Krishna is your father, and Krishna is the treasure of your life.

*krsnera samsara koro chadi anacar  
jive doya, krsna-nam--sarva-dharma-sar*

Giving up all sinful activities, carry on your worldly duties only in relation to Lord Krishna. The showing of compassion to other souls by loudly chanting the holy name of Krishna is the essence of all forms of religion.

\* \* \* \* \*

How long we battled to shake off the heavy metal paralysis of the Western techno-industrial disease! Just to come to this! Just to lift our trembling arms into the air of this holy land, draw a deep breath and with a blossoming smile let the divine names of Sri Krishna burst forth from our throats! An atmospheric burst! A liberating bomb of *ahamkara*-dissolving spirito-solar energy! (Yes! The *Kalisantarana Upanisad* describes it like that: *iti sodasa kalasya jivasya varanam vinasanam tatah prakasate parambrahma megha paye ravi rasmi mandale veti*, that just as the sun burns away clouds in the sky to reveal itself to everyone, so the syllables of the Hare Krishna *mahamantra* destroys the layers of material consciousness, revealing the divine Form of the supreme absolute truth!)

Let me take liberty with Gregory Corso's 1958 poem *Bomb* (Greg Corso: another beatnik!). Let me transmute it into a praise of the radiating blast of the holy name across the earth:

KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA

KRISHNA ye skies and KRISHNA ye suns

KRISHNA KRISHNA ye moons ye stars KRISHNA

nights ye KRISHNA ye days ye KRISHNA

KRISHNA KRISHNA ye winds ye clouds ye rains

go KRISHNA ye lakes ye oceans RAMA

Barracuda KRISHNA and cougar KRISHNA

Ubangi KRISHNA orangoutang

RAMA KRISHNA HARE HARE bee bear baboon

ya KRISHNA ye RAMA ye HARE

the drum the cymbals the beads

Yes Yes into our midst a *maha-mantra* will descend

Flowers will leap in joy their roots aching

Fields will kneel proud beneath the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* of the wind

Kirtans will blossom Fauna will perk their ears

Ah many a holy name that day will awe the bird a gentle look

Yet not enough to say the holy name will resound

or even contend celestial fire goes out

Know that the earth with madonna the name

that in the hearts of men to come more holy names will leap forth

magisterial holy names wrapped in silk all beautiful

and they'll sit plunk on earth's grumpy empires

fierce with moustaches of gold

\* \* \* \* \*

We've been waiting for this for many decades, many centuries, many lifetimes. Groping for this. Stumbling, lurching to this. John Clellon Holmes wrote in *Go*, the first Beat novel, published in 1952:

What I mean is that with all our knowledge, things have gotten worse, more hopeless. We know everything but the one binding fact, don't you see? The binding, unifying fact of human life that will make it all real, and not some vicious prank! I finally realized that so clearly. And that fact has got to be God!

Thirteen years later, Srila Prabhupada came to give us that fact...yes, that FACT! Not just some gossamer idea, some vaporous doctrinal formula, some ephemeral vision of a hopeful world to come.

*Yajñaih sankīrtanāih prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah.* The short-cut method. Intelligent class of men will take this *sankīrtana* movement for his spiritual elevation of life. It is a fact, it is scientific, it is authorized. So don't neglect. Take this chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa heart and soul, and anywhere...  
*Niyamitah smarane na kalah.* There is no rules and regulations, that "You have to chant at this time or that time, in this position or that position."  
No. Because it is especially meant for these fallen conditioned souls, there is no hard and fast rule.

*Sridhama Mayapur*  
*12 March 2003*

A few days ago I wrote that I received a letter from a devotee who lives in a flourishing ISKCON farm community in Europe; in her view, only 10 percent of the devotees residing there are satisfied with their lives in that community, despite the enormous spiritual and material advantages of the project. And I wrote that I hoped to apply my mind to the question of why so many devotees remain restless and unfulfilled, even after years of steady practice of devotional service.

Now I shall begin a series of articles in In2-MeC on the subject of Transcendental Psychology, or the spiritualization of the mind. Today I publish here an introduction to this series.

I beg the reader to kindly, with just a bit of care, discern my motive here. Passing psychological or moral judgements on devotees is not my intention. However, it cannot be denied that devotees do fall into the grip of troubled psychological states. In these states they do blunder into mistaken life choices. Mistakes proceed from misunderstanding, and may lead to grave misfortune. For years I have observed in ISKCON how not a few devotees, myself included, attempted to handle delicate psychological issues without a clear understanding of the Vedantic Vaishnava philosophy of the mind, and without the cultured touch of Vaishnava etiquette. Needless to say, the result of that "rough and ready" approach was too often disastrous.

Regarding the situation I mentioned in the first sentence of this journal entry, I am in no position to say whether the 90 percent of the devotees who are allegedly considering to leave that ISKCON farm are right or wrong, or whether they are in good Krishna consciousness or are in *maya*. I am not even suggesting they ought to take psychological-spiritual counseling. What I shall firmly argue here is that every devotee in ISKCON has an individual duty to know that he or she is not the mind. And so it follows we should not permit these minds to drag us into misfortune. Srila Prabhupada mercifully provided us with encyclopedic transcendental knowledge; it is up to each individual to take advantage of this knowledge, to apply it wisely and thus maximize his or her good fortune in this otherwise precarious human condition.

Just a note before you begin reading the introduction: these articles are a work in progress, not the chapters of a finalized book. (It *may* become a book in the future; no guarantees on that, however!) Anyway, because I am in the process of researching and writing this series, I cannot give you a schedule of when each article will appear here in In2- MeC. Just know that from time to time I will share with you the fruits of my study and reflection of Transcendental Psychology.

#### INTRODUCTION to *Transcendental Psychology*

It appears that as ISKCON evolves from its origins as a tightly-focused missionary movement into a broad-based spiritual culture ("a house in which the whole world can live"), more and more devotees find it important to understand the mind. There is no doubt that in his teachings Srila Prabhupada emphasized the importance of discriminating between mind, intelligence, false ego, and the actual self.

In the past, say 10 and more years ago, it was more fashionable for devotees to advertise themselves as being callous and insensitive toward the mind. The mind was just something to be beaten a hundred times every day, like a mangy flea-bitten dog. Or it was a thing that simply is not real.

No, the mind is a very real thing. It is listed among the eight elements of creation. It is subtle, but it has substance. It *is* substance. In this connection, kindly note these two quotations from Srila Prabhupada's purports.

Since mind is a product of the mode of goodness, if it is fixed upon the Lord of the mind, Aniruddha, then the mind can be changed to Krsna consciousness. It is stated by Narottama dasa Thakura that we always have desires. Desire cannot be stopped. But if we transfer our desires to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that is the perfection of life. As soon as the desire is transferred to lording it over material nature, it becomes contaminated by matter. [ *SB* 3. 26. 31p]

The essential point is that the mind, which is contaminated by material attraction, has to be bridled and concentrated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. [ *SB* 3. 28. 7p]

In these two quotations, five basic points can be discerned. The five points make up the foundation of this introduction, and indeed the whole series I plan to write. What are they?

1. The essential substance of the mind is the mode of goodness, which is the energy of Lord Aniruddha, who is the localized Supersoul feature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

2. When that *sattvik* mental substance is dedicated to the Lord, it is transformed to Krishna consciousness, the state of infallible goodness above the three material modes of nature.

3. To dedicate the mind to the Lord, we must channel the flow of our desires toward His lotus feet. Hence there is no question of "controlling the mind," "fixing the mind," "pacifying the mind," without the reformation of desire. Our quality of mind is subject to the quality of our desire.

4. From the logic of the above point 2, it is clear that the original condition of the mind is Krishna consciousness. That original condition is contaminated as soon as our desire flows toward the lording over of matter.

5. Thus what we know to be "the material mind" is in essence *the condition of material attraction*.

The mind is a real thing because it is the energy of the Supersoul. Thus on the energetic level our mental activities--thinking, imagination, visualization, concentration and so forth--are real movements. They are real movements that unfold as per a complex pattern. And why so complex? Why does the study of the mind's movements (the study we know by the word psychology) become so mysterious and convoluted? That is because the mind moves *according to our desires*. Hence, it is our desires--meaning, in our present state, our material attraction--that complicates our mental processes.

The mind can be perceived as a real thing due to the fact that by nature's arrangement, the movements of the mind have physical effects. These effects are both immediate and remote. In *Bhagavad-gita* your immediate environment is called "the field of activities." What is that field? It is your body. The remote environment is practically everything beyond your body.

Because the body and the world surrounding it respond to our state of mind, we have this often-discussed notion of "mind over matter." Some people believe "mind over matter" means that they can change themselves and their whole world simply by a mental adjustment. However, as indicated above, changes of mind, or what we term mental activity, is itself impelled by desire. Yes, you can control matter with your mind. In fact this is happening constantly. But what controls your mind? Desire.

To wrest the mind from the control of desire is not easy. (Actually, it is impossible; the only option we have is a choice as to whether our mind shall be controlled by material or spiritual desire--but more about that later.) Repeatedly we find ourselves girding up for a final battle with our desires, the aim being to defeat desire once and for all and to be free of it at last. This is very daunting, to say the least.

But before we enter the fight we must know that our desires constitute an extremely powerful and mostly invisible army called *kama* (lust) that has captured our senses, mind and intelligence. This is made clear in *Bhagavad-gita* 3. 40. In the purport,

Srila Prabhupada explains that the mind is the reservoir of all ideas of sense gratification, and therefore lust infiltrates the senses and the intelligence from the mind.

After their minds get them into trouble, people are so quick to say, "I never wanted this!" But are you so sure you know what you want? Desires are by nature more subtle than the mind. To illustrate this fact, I offer you a quotation from a 1974 *Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture by Srila Prabhupada:

Just like in the water, in a pond sometimes you will find all of a sudden one bubble comes from within. Phat! That means the dirty things are within, stocked.

The surface of the pond is the surface awareness of the mind. The bubble that rises from the bottom of the pond is a desire. Suddenly, phat! There it is, a filthy desire breaking into our sublime thoughts. "Why?" we ask ourselves. "Why am I again troubled by this nonsense which I thought, after so many years of chanting Hare Krishna, I had rid myself of?"

Well, the point here is that it is not all that difficult for *sadhakas* (devotees engaged in the practice of *bhakti-yoga* under rules and regulations) to make the visible surface of the mind calm and peaceful; yet mostly we don't even know about the host of desires that lurk beneath the surface. That stock of hidden desires is sometimes called the subconscious, a more subtle level of mental activity than commonplace thinking.

This rising of desire bubbles, this unexpected bursting of the subconscious into your surface awareness, demonstrates that your mind is capable of reproducing any type of sensual impression you have ever experienced. It can even manufacture impressions you have never before experienced, as long as they are constructed out of known elements. (We find in Srila Prabhupada's books the example of the mind combining the known elements of "gold" and "mountain" to create an impression of a golden mountain. ) Thus the mind is a most formidable television into the storehouse of subconscious desires. By the power of mind you may see, hear, taste, smell and feel things that are not directly present before the senses. As *sadhakas* we control our external sensory impressions. For example we do not permit our eyes to see forms that stimulate lust. But the mind is capable of introducing such forms into our consciousness even without the help of the eyes.

Except in deep sleep, the mind is always active. It is always responding to your various desires. Not only that, but there is also a feedback. As you contemplate the mind's "show," new desires are generated out of the mind's contemplation of the mind! Therefore it is often said that the mind produces unlimited desires.

*maya manah srjati karmamayam baliyah  
kalena codita-gunanumatena pumsah  
chandomayam yad ajayarpita-sodasaram  
samsara-cakram aja ko 'titaret tvad-anyah*

O Lord, O Supreme Eternal, by expanding Your plenary portion You have created the subtle bodies of the living entities through the agency of Your external energy, which is agitated by time. Thus the mind entraps the living entity in unlimited varieties of desires to be fulfilled by the Vedic directions of *karma-kanda* [fruitive activity] and

the sixteen elements. Who can get free from this entanglement unless he takes shelter at Your lotus feet?" [ SB 7. 9. 21]

Prabhupada, in his word-for-word translation, marked the word *manah* (mind) with an asterisk and in the footnote elaborates: "The mind is always planning how to remain in the material world and struggle for existence. It is the chief part of the subtle body, which consists of mind, intelligence and false ego. "

It is not possible at this stage to know what all your desires are. You are only able to perceive desires that are well-established, those that took tangible shape earlier in your life in the context of your social, moral and other patterns of conditioning. For example, some of our desires are agreeable to most other people around us; they match the idea of what we think we are or want to be. I observe here in Tarunpur how Sudevi, the daughter of my friend Murari Gupta, likes to pay careful attention to what clothes she wears each day. Murari's three sons, on the other hand, are not nearly so attentive to how they dress. So even though Sudevi is only three years old, some of her feminine desires are already apparent. The female interest in looking nice is socially agreeable. It gets reinforced by family and friends and thus becomes a part of a grown woman's identity.

But there are other desires--and here I am still talking about the ones we are conscious of, that get "concretized" into our identity from a young age-- that are disagreeable. We are well aware we have such desires, but we hide them from others and even from ourselves. An apt example is masturbation. Studies show that many, many people, both men and women, form this habit early in life. But people are conditioned by society and morality to be ashamed of masturbation. Nobody wants to talk about it. So masturbation constitutes a dark side of the personality. The mind censors it from our public self-image by mental contortions that are well-understood by psychologists to be unhealthy.

Many desires are so "underground" that they get their chance only when we sleep. Our dreams alone are where we act them out. But even these desires exert their influence on the mind during the wakeful state.

It is generally not so practical for devotees to go through a process of identifying all their desires. We begin with an assumption that our basic desire, the one that brought us to the material world, is to enjoy and control, or in other words, to be God. To meditate on this point is the beginning of Transcendental Psychology.

It can seem really uninspiring for a devotee to have to contemplate, "The undercurrent of my psycho-physical being is: 'I actually HATE Krishna and do not want to serve Him. Rather I want to take over His position. '" But to admit this to oneself and to others is the evidence that one is becoming purified! Consider the message of such songs of Srila Narottama dasa Thakura and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura as *Hari Hari Biphale* and *Gopinatha*.

Basically, there are two sides to gaining control of the mind. One is positive and the other is negative. The negative aspect consists of rules, restrictions and mechanical exercises that close off the channel to lower, material consciousness. The positive aspect opens up the channel of higher consciousness that leads the soul back home, Back to Godhead. Opening this channel means contemplating transcendental subject matter plus occupying the senses with varieties of devotional service.

A devotee in the *sadhaka* category masters both positive and the negative systems. It is actually not possible to separate these two processes and to become accomplished in only one of them. We are advised to develop sbvskills in both.

Here is more from the purport to *SB* 3. 28. 7 that I cited earlier:

*Etair anyais ca*. The general *yoga* process entails observing the rules and regulations, practicing the different sitting postures, concentrating the mind on the vital circulation of the air and then thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His Vaikuntha pastimes. This is the general process of *yoga*. This same concentration can be achieved by other recommended processes, and therefore *anyais ca*, other methods, also can be applied. The essential point is that the mind, which is contaminated by material attraction, has to be bridled and concentrated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

"Bridling the mind" means the negative aspect, and "concentrating on the Supreme Godhead" means the positive aspect. Both constitute what Srila Prabhupada here terms "the essential point." Dear reader, kindly note carefully that Srila Prabhupada states, "This same concentration can be achieved by other recommended processes, and therefore *anyais ca*, other methods, also can be applied." In this series of articles on Transcendental Psychology I shall discuss the process of gaining control over the mind from a number of angles of vision, all of which can be helpful in this formidable task of turning our worst enemy (the mind) into our best friend.

We must come to the point of discriminating between the self and the mind. Memorizing the technical details of *sastra* is not enough to do that. Mechanical repetition of rituals is not enough to do that. We need to enact the transcendental level of our existence. This is so because the self is by nature pure spiritual energy. We are spirit soul, and so the nonmaterial force innate to the real self must be initialized. By the mercy of a pure devotee you can rise to the transcendental level and catch a glimpse of your true nature. This is initiation, the entry point into your *svarupa* or original identity. In a 1970 initiation lecture, Srila Prabhupada explained:

If you simply stick to this principle, *gopi-bhartur pada-kamalayor dasa-dasa-dasanudasa*, that "I am nothing except the eternal servant of Krsna," then you are in the liberated platform. Krsna consciousness is so nice. You keep yourself. And for keeping yourself in that consciousness, the simple method is this chanting, Hare Krsna. You keep yourself chanting as many hours, twenty-four hours. Why as many hours? Twenty-four hours. *Kirtaniyah sada harih*. Lord Caitanya says, this is to be practiced twenty-four hours. And that you can do. It requires simply practice. Even in sleeping you can chant Hare Krsna. Even in sleeping. And there is no bar. In sleeping, in eating, in going to the toilet room, there is no restriction. You can go on, "Hare Krsna." You see. That will keep you in your *svarupa*, in your real identification, and you'll never be attacked by *maya*.

Chanting twenty-four hours? "I am not on that platform," the mind wants us to say. But Srila Prabhupada says, "That you can do. It requires simply practice." By the mercy of the spiritual master, we are initiated into the chanting of Krsna's names. Look in the dictionary. Initiation means beginning. So our task at hand is to work on the practice of perfecting what initiation has introduced us into. The perfection of initiation is described by His Divine Grace in the preceding quotation.

Understand that as you continue to chant Hare Krsna, the merciful favor of the spiritual energy flows your way and enlivens the real self, the soul. Without this chanting, there is no way to know how to discriminate between mind and the self. Thus there is no way to control the mind.

Your endeavor to control the mind begins and ends with chanting. This chanting is a combination of the positive and negative control I explained before. The positive part is the holy name itself. The negative part is the exclusion of any other thought and activities other than the holy name and service to the holy name.

Again, only a small fraction of your desires are known to you. So many strong desires lurk deep within the subconscious portion of the mind. The mind is thus your personal battlefield.

Know that you can win over the secret army of anti-devotional desires. How? By investigating the difference between you and your mind. Yes, it is not easy. Still, you must at least be interested in doing it! Maintaining that interest by trying to chant seriously is your key to ultimate victory.

The *Paingala Upanisad* 2. 11-12 states that the *jiva* remains in bondage as long as there is no desire in him for liberation. Bondage is lack of investigation, while liberation follows investigation. In the years I have been part of this movement for Krishna consciousness, I have known more than a few devotees whose *krishnanushilanam* (determination to serve Krishna) crumbled because the investigation into the difference between their selves and their minds held little appeal for them. With apparent humility some folded their hands and begged, "Please forgive me for my ignorance. " Then, flashing the badge of "honesty," they dove straight into the depths of ignorance and disappeared. "It's *my nature* to be this way, so what can I do?" they sighed. "After all, as the *Gita* says, 'What can repression accomplish?'"

Yes, but the *Gita* has a lot more to say than just that; what we actually find out from Krishna's instructions to Arjuna is that this way of arguing "don't repress your nature" is but a feeble, soul-ignoring excuse for shirking what Krishna really wants us to do. It's fatalism, and *Bhagavad-gita* is certainly no text that advocates fatalism. Krishna does not tell Arjuna, "O son of Prtha, I hate to admit it, but you are fated that your present conditioned nature will not allow your eternal spiritual nature to rise to follow My command. Fate is indeed insurmountable. Maybe when you're older you'll get serious about spiritual life. Or maybe in another life. "

One who resorts to such pleas about his insurmountable fate and about the heavy weight matter has loaded upon his fragile spirit soul often defends his position with half-baked *varnasrama* arguments. In this connection, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura writes in *Brahmana and Vaishnava*:

If *varnasrama* and other fruitive activities enjoined in the *sastras* become prominent in one's life, then one cannot become *kincana*, or fully dependent on the Lord; rather these activities provoke offenses against the chanting of the holy names in the form of conceptions of "I" and "mine. " If a person who is fully surrendered to Krishna becomes proud of following *varnasrama* principles, then it must be considered he has become most unfortunate. Due to the influence of association with women, the whole material world is daily advancing in aversion to Hari.

This resistance to God- and self-realization in the name of "accepting my nature" really just proves that one takes more comfort in the gross and subtle bodily conception than in his or her true identity. And *that* is what is unfortunate: not simply that one is in the bodily conception (after all, who isn't?), but that one finds comfort in it and is loath to being shaken out of it.

*yathaihikamusmika-kama-lampatah  
sutesu daresu dhanesu cintayan  
sanketa vidvan kukalevaratyayad  
yas asya yatnah srama eva kevalam*

Materialists are generally very attached to their present bodily comforts and to the bodily comforts they expect in the future. Therefore they are always absorbed in thoughts of their wives, children and wealth and are afraid of giving up their bodies, which are full of stool and urine. If a person engaged in Krsna consciousness, however, is also afraid of giving up his body, what is the use of his having labored to study the sastras? It was simply a waste of time. [ *SB* 5. 19. 14]

No doubt the bodily conception continues for a long time to haunt those who attempt *sadhana-bhakti*, but if we can keep alive a burning interest to be free of our false identity, this interest will create an atmosphere of watchfulness around us. We will take note how our attempt to hear Krsna's name is repeatedly interrupted by various thought patterns. Though we really don't want to get involved with these things, they keep attacking our concentration. This disturbance is indeed troublesome, but it shows us that what is actually going on is that two opposing desires--one spiritual, one material--are battling over which will have control over our mind. And in the beginning we will find the spiritual desire to hear Krsna's name is the weaker one. But take heart in Sri Krishna's personal encouragement!

Lord Sri Krishna said: O mighty-armed son of Kunti, it is undoubtedly very difficult to curb the restless mind, but it is possible by suitable practice and by detachment. [ *Bg* 6. 35]

In short, this spark of interest to know the difference between self and mind takes practical shape in the form of practice (positive) and detachment (negative). And when our practice and detachment is directed by Lord Krishna's teachings, our efforts attract His mercy.

Now, there is another challenge to our attempt to purify the mind. Not only do we have conflicting material and spiritual desires, but furthermore the mind is not inclined to accept any control at all--neither spiritual nor material. The mind has a natural proclivity to roam about, to "flip out" and to zoom in as near and zoom out as far away as it likes. There needs only be a little push in some direction and the mind will doggedly pursue that line of thought for a long time. Great effort is required to stop it or to change its direction. Thus as I indicated at the start of this introduction, we must admit to ourselves, "This mind is a real thing--a stubborn, independent thing. It is not a mere wisp or shadow, something I can trifle with. " The mind is a powerful mechanism that needs to be handled with great expertise.

Then there is what is sometimes called compulsive thinking. "Compulsive thinking" is actually a term for a pathological mental state, but to some degree it is present in all of us. We all know that the mind babbles constantly like some inner radio. Some call

this the inner dialogue. It is the nature of the mind to generate a continuous stream of thoughts and images; but along with the mind's babble is our fear of losing things we are attached to. The combination of the two yields compulsive thinking. How does it effect you? When you read here that a devotee ought learn to control the mind, your mind may get all excited and shout that if you did this you would lose your ability to make decisions or to solve problems or to deal with even the most simple things in the world, because you *need* to have this inner voice ranting and raving in your head all the time. Compulsive thinking is rooted in the notion that "I will cease to exist if my mental dialogue stops. "

Gradually, by trying to chant properly and by giving the mind and senses higher engagements, you will begin to uncover the desires that are stored deep in your heart. When you know these desires, you can perfect your mind control. You can support the spiritual desires and uproot the bad ones. You will also begin to discover things about your personality. For example, you may see that you have been only artificially humble, or simply not humble at all. But now that your mind has become a little clear, now that you have learned to keep it bridled, you can have a closer look at the material conditioning that for so long you took to be your own self: lust, anger, greed, madness, illusion, and envy. It is not pretty. Some devotees protest: "I can't bear to see myself so negatively. " But here's the point. That ugly thing you see is not your self. You only think it is, and that's your mistake. When you *really* see this false self for what it is, then you can *really* become humble. Only then can you *really* appreciate other devotees because you stop struggling to surpass them. Instead you struggle to serve them. A pure devotional servant: that is our real *svarupa* or form. From out of the spiritual heart of this liberated form the true desire of the living entity shines forth in absolute pristine glory. That desire is to love Krishna.

Spiritual truths--"I am not the body; I am the servant of the servant of the servant of Sri Krishna"--are simple truths. Srila Prabhupada told Dhananjaya Prabhu, "Krishna consciousness is so simple you'll miss it. " "Simple" means "straightforward. "

It is a fact that our mental problems have something to do with our *karma* from previous lifetimes and our childhood upbringing in this life. They may have something to do with genetics (for example in my case, on my mother's side of the family there have been numerous cases of depression, and thus I have inherited from her the tendency to become depressed). All such factors can be analyzed in so many ways, and in this series I will look at some of these factors and their psychological ramifications. But in the end there is a simple, spiritual explanation for the mental troubles we suffer as devotees. And that is, we are not always well-situated in the pure, blissful practice of *bhakti-yoga*. Thus we become affected by material psychological disturbances. Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to texts 23-24 of Chapter Twenty-six of *Srimad- Bhagavatam* Canto Three:

Not only must one come to the stage of pure Krsna consciousness, but one must also be very careful. Any inattentiveness or carelessness may cause falldown. This falldown is due to false ego. From the status of pure consciousness, the false ego is born because of misuse of independence. We cannot argue about why false ego arises from pure consciousness. Factually, there is always the chance that this will happen, and therefore one has to be very careful. False ego is the basic principle for all material activities, which are executed in the modes of material nature. As soon

as one deviates from pure Krsna consciousness, he increases his entanglement in material reaction. The entanglement of materialism is the material mind, and from this material mind, the senses and material organs become manifest.

In his purport to Text Two of *Bhagavad-gita* Chapter Seventeen, Srila Prabhupada makes the same point in short summary as follows:

Those who know the rules and regulations of the scriptures but out of laziness or indolence give up following these rules and regulations are governed by the modes of material nature.

If one remains under the modes of nature, where there can be no pure service to the Lord, why would one still assume for himself the prestige of being an advanced devotee? The devastating answer is found in Chapter 89 of Krsna book, where Srila Prabhupada writes,

One should therefore not take to the demoniac activity of claiming to be a Vaisnava just for false prestige, without performing service to the Lord.

Look at your condition in the light of these simple, straightforward truths. Is there any wonder you suffer from mental stress in your life as a devotee? You are warring with your own demonic nature! Or rather it is a war with an ancient ignorance that covers your true nature. Ignorance is at the heart of the demonic nature. "But those who are *asuras*," said Srila Prabhupada in a lecture, "they do not know how to end this life of suffering and accept the life of *anandamayo 'bhyasat*, simply *ananda* in Vaikuntha, in Goloka Vrndavana. "

Fortunately, as Lord Krishna confirms in the Third Chapter of the *Gita* , the soul's innermost nature is to be the *jnani* or knower of the Absolute Truth. This is what "psychology" is really about. *Psyche*, a Greek word, means soul, and *logy* means "knowledge of. " Real psychology reveals the knowledge that the soul needs to have in order to be what he really is: a pure eternal servant of the Supreme Soul, Sri Krishna. This is the psychology we shall be discussing in this series here in In2-MeC.

*Sridhama Mayapur, West Bengal*  
*18 March 2003*

Today is the all-auspicious appearance day of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri Patita-pavana Gaura Hari Ki Jaya!

Two sound files are available here at In2-MeC for you to listen to (also available for download). One contains a recording of a *bhajan* by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura called *Gay Gorachand Jiver Tore*. You may also listen to it on your computer by using any standard sound-playing software like Windows Media Player or Winamp by downloading the MP3 file in the end of this text.

Here are the words to *Gay Gorachand Jiver Tore* and their translation:

*gay gorachand jiver tore hare krishna hare krishna krishna krishna hare hare hare  
rama hare rama rama rama hare hare*

"Lord Gaura-chandra sings the *maha-mantra* for the deliverance of all the fallen souls. "

*ekbar bolo rasana ucchaih-sware bolo nandera nandan yashoda jivan sri-radha-  
raman, prema-bhare*

"Fill yourself with divine love by chanting loudly just once all these names of Krishna:  
'Oh Nanda-Nandana! O Yashoda-jivana! O Sri Radha-Ramana!'"

*bolo sri-madhusudan, gopi-prana-dhana, murali-vadana, nrtya kore bolo agha-  
nisudan, putana-ghatana, brahma-vimohana, urdhva-kare*

"Dancing with your arms in the air, chant "'O Sri Madhusudana! O Gopi-Prana-  
Dhana! O Murali-Vadana! O Agha-Nisudana! O Putana-Ghatana! O Brahma-  
Vimohana!'"

The second sound file is a recording of *Gauranga Karuna Koro* by Srila Narottam Das Thakura.

*gauranga karuna koro, dina hina jane mo-samo patita prabhu, nahi tri-bhuvane*

"O my dear Lord Gauranga! Please show Your mercy to this lowly and destitute soul.  
O Lord! There is no one more fallen than myself in all the three worlds. "

*dante trna dhoru gaura, daki he tomar krpa kori eso amar, hrdoya mandire*

"Holding grass between my teeth, O Lord Gaura, I am calling out to You now! Please  
be compassionate upon me and come to reside within the temple of my heart. "

*jadi doya na koribe, patita dekhiya patita pavana nama, kiseru lagiya*

"If You do not give Your mercy, seeing how fallen I am, then why are You known as  
Patita Pavana--the merciful Savior of the fallen?"

*podeci bhava tufane, nahika nistar sri carana tarani dane, dase koro par*

"I am plunged amidst the violent hurricane-stricken waves in the ocean of this  
material world, from which there is no escape. Kindly give me the gift of Your divine  
lotus feet, which are compared to a boat in which Your servant may cross the ocean  
of birth and death. "

*sri krsna caitanya prabhu, daser anudas prarthana koraye sada, narottam das*

"Narottam Das, the servant of the servant of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu,  
ceaselessly makes this prayer. "

MP3-files for download:

[Gay Gorachand Jiver Tore \(492kByte\)](#)

[Gauranga Karuna Koro \(937 kByte\)](#)

*Sridham Mayapur, West Bengal*

*19 March 2003*

The entries I put into this journal about the Beat Generation, and about memories of my pre-Krishna conscious life, are in pursuance of this principle of mysticism:

Knowledge is an infinite series of images in the memory. Understanding, which penetrates into their significance, is the power to perceive their essence and interrelationship.

The point made in the above quotation is that all our life experiences that are now stored in the memory have something to teach us. Even unpleasant memories are lessons for one who understands their significance. That understanding comes from the Supersoul by way of *guru*, *sastra* and *sadhu*.

A couple of years ago I had an interesting conversation with HH Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja as we flew via British Airways from London to Calcutta. (He is a most understanding and sympathetic Vaishnava, I must say.) He told, "Every day I join ISKCON." He meant that every day he remembers how and why he made the transition from his former existence in the material world to the association of his Godbrothers and Godsisters.

That sort of meditation is very strengthening and fruitful, I believe. And so therefore I often thinking of those days when I was stumbling through life in search of meaning, catching a glimpse of what I was looking for in this book and in that poem, this piece of music and that talk with some insightful person. And I remember how it all fell into place when I read a Back to Godhead magazine, one (if I remember correctly) that had a painting of Garbhodakasayi Vishnu on the cover. I was in Detroit at the time. I was so impressed with the BTG that I decided to travel 500 miles to Boston simply because this magazine was published in that city. There was a temple in Detroit at this time, but I wanted to meet the devotees who produced this wonderful magazine. So Lord Krishna, in His mercy, arranged an easy passage for me from Detroit to Boston. But that's another story.

A little while back you saw a couple quotations from the autobiography of Leroi Jones, about his disillusionment with the life values of the Beats and the hippies. Actually, there was just one quotation I was looking to reproduce here in In2-MeC, and only today I found it. It really hits the spot.

In the wildness of our groping lives there was a deadly hedonism that answered all questions. That offered all explanations. The pleasure principle. That finally was the absolute--what gave pleasure, and that alone. Our lives were designed (to the extent

that they could arrange themselves according to our love of spontaneity) around pleasure. "Anything goes" was the word. Like Raskolnikov's line, "All is permitted." The same stance.

Flashes of what that was, a rush of sparks, kicks, comings, lies, sadistic exchanges, masochism, a swarm of individuals sucking on life for instant gratification. It didn't matter how. With the cover story of Art to provide an arrogance and sense of superiority for some really low sh\_t.

Yes, *that* is the quotation I was trying to remember! It says everything about "the search for meaning" in the bohemian lifestyle that is still so prominent in cities like Amsterdam and Prague, Tokyo and Seattle, and of course good old New York. In his poetic words, Leroi transmits the *virakti* (disgust) that must rise in the mind before one can become serious about spiritual life. Please let us all never lose touch with that *virakti*.

Gaura Purnima Day I sent you two transcendental sound files in praise of Gauranga Mahaprabhu. Someone here in Mayapur suggested I also send out a not-so-transcendental sound file of a piece of music that I thought was transcendental when I was sixteen years old. All right, this could be fun.

I've named this MP3 file Pharaoh. Like the name for the kings of ancient Egypt. It was recorded in 1967 in New York. It is an example of what Leroi Jones called The Music. It was a new trend in jazz at the time, represented by such musicians as John Coltrane, Albert Ayler, and Sun Ra. Because I do not have official permission to distribute this recording over the Internet I shall not give the name of this particular musician. But he was a key figure on the scene.

The music goes for more than seven minutes. It starts off as a hypnotic, repetitive bass, drums, piano and guitar piece with layers of background percussion. A saxophone breaks in at last, sounding sometimes like an Indian shenai and sometimes like a wounded animal. It's loud! The saxophonist was trying to cut through the layers of the universe with his crazy sounds. Then he put the instrument down and started singing in what he imagined is some ancient Egyptian priestly language. At the end he sang "Aum" a couple of times.

In '67 other sixteen-year-old kids were listening to the Beatles; I thought the Beatles were bubblegum for the ear. This sound file, "[Pharaoh](#)", was my favorite music. I listened to it every day for years. It was my meditation.

*Sridham Mayapur, West Bengal  
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A little while back you saw a couple quotations from the autobiography of Leroi Jones, about his disillusionment with the life values of the Beats and the hippies. Actually, there was just one quotation I was looking to reproduce here in In2-MeC, and only today I found it. It really hits the spot.

In the wildness of our groping lives there was a deadly hedonism that answered all questions. That offered all explanations. The pleasure principle. That finally was the absolute--what gave pleasure, and that alone. Our lives were designed (to the extent that they could arrange themselves according to our love of spontaneity) around pleasure. "Anything goes" was the word. Like Raskolnikov's line, "All is permitted." The same stance.

Flashes of what that was, a rush of sparks, kicks, comings, lies, sadistic exchanges, masochism, a swarm of individuals sucking on life for instant gratification. It didn't matter how. With the cover story of Art to provide an arrogance and sense of superiority for some really low sh\_t.

Yes, *that* is the quotation I was trying to remember! It says everything about "the search for meaning" in the bohemian lifestyle that is still so prominent in cities like Amsterdam and Prague, Tokyo and Seattle, and of course good old New York. In his poetic words, Leroi transmits the *virakti* (disgust) that must rise in the mind before one can become serious about spiritual life. Please let us all never lose touch with that *virakti*.

Gaura Purnima Day I sent you two transcendental sound files in praise of Gauranga Mahaprabhu. Someone here in Mayapur suggested I also send out a not-so-transcendental sound file of a piece of music that I thought was transcendental when I was sixteen years old. All right, this could be fun.

I've named this MP3 file Pharaoh. Like the name for the kings of ancient Egypt. It was recorded in 1967 in New York. It is an example of what Leroi Jones called The Music. It was a new trend in jazz at the time, represented by such musicians as John Coltrane, Albert Ayler, and Sun Ra. Because I do not have official permission to distribute this recording over the Internet I shall not give the name of this particular musician. But he was a key figure on the scene.

The music goes for more than seven minutes. It starts off as a hypnotic, repetitive bass, drums, piano and guitar piece with layers of background percussion. A saxophone breaks in at last, sounding sometimes like an Indian shenai and sometimes like a wounded animal. It's loud! The saxophonist was trying to cut through the layers of the universe with his crazy sounds. Then he put the instrument down and started singing in what he imagined is some ancient Egyptian priestly language. At the end he sang "Aum" a couple of times.

In '67 other sixteen-year-old kids were listening to the Beatles; I thought the Beatles were bubblegum for the ear. This sound file, "[Pharaoh](#)", was my favorite music. I listened to it every day for years. It was my meditation.

*Sridhama Mayapur, West Bengal  
4 April 2003*

Today, in a transcendental ceremony conducted by HH Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja, my dear disciple Gaura Bhagavan das graduated from his schooling in the Sri Rupanuga Vidyapitha. He is only the third devotee in ISKCON to have gone through this traditional Vedic graduation. This ceremony confirms that he has mastered the Vedic knowledge the Vidyapitha teaches and is now on the sanctified path to his next stage of life. He has decided to get married, so during the ceremony he received white cloth to wear. Gaura Bhagavan has been invited to go serve in the ISKCON *yatra* in Mauritius (which Srila Prabhupada said could become the first Krsna conscious country in the world). He is departing for there in a few days. I am so happy for him. I remember when he joined ISKCON at age 15, having come from Iceland to Germany. In those days he was considered quite an odd character. But now he is a bonafide *brahmana* graduate of a Vedic Vaishnava school whose priestly services are much desired in an important branch of our ISKCON movement. Jai Nitai! Jaya Srila Prabhupada!

*Sridhama Mayapur,  
5 April 2003*

The Introduction to the series of essays on Transcendental Psychology was first posted to In2-Mec in a raw format. The margins were not properly fixed and the Sanskrit quotations were not set down in four- line verse format. A few days later that raw version was replaced by a corrected Introduction. If you only downloaded the old version, please go back online to the same entry date (12 March 2003) to download the new one.

Anyway, my writings here are works in progress. Nothing you read here is "final. " The series on Transcendental Psychology is a basis for a seminar I will give throughout the coming year. Later on, after I've gotten feedback from the seminars, I will think about polishing these essays into chapters of a book.

## Essay One Relationship and Attachment

My humblest respects go out to all of you intelligent devotees who wish to investigate with me the subject of psychology from the point of view of Vaishnava *siddhanta*. This is the first essay of the series I call Transcendental Psychology. In writing it I have tried my best to connect each argument clearly with Srila Prabhupada's teachings. You, dear reader, may find the different quotations and philosophical insights difficult to absorb. I am sorry if they tax your brain. But each item of information should be noted as significant because it probably will be developed in essays to come. This first essay, I hope you will see, is built upon basic ideas I laid down in the Introduction. This is how I plan the series to move forward, as a steady clarification of points that came before.

It is only to be expected that any process of clarification will be more difficult in the beginning. But step by step, as we become more familiar with the issues, the subject matter gets easier to grasp. This is especially true of Vedic psychology, which starts with principles (harder to grasp) and progresses to practical behavior (easier to grasp). Western psychology proceeds oppositely; it tries to uncover principles by starting with the study of behavior. This approach leads one deeper and deeper into confusion.

I'd like to make clear now, at the start, that even when this series arrives at behavior, I will be more concerned with "how to see one's self" than "what one's self should do. " I'm aiming at the subject of psychology, after all, not at rules of conduct, social issues, institutional reform, or controversies of the moment. Psychology certainly has a lot to do with those concerns. But I think of Transcendental Psychology as self-realization, which for devotees means spirit-soul realization, eternal servant of Krishna realization. Srila Prabhupada said "realization means discrimination. " When one is self-realized, one is blessed with proper discrimination in all kinds of practical affairs.

A major theme of this first essay will be one Sanskrit word, *anyonya*, a contraction of *anyah anya* (literally "other-other"). It crops up repeatedly in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. From Srila Prabhupada's word-for-word translation for different verses we learn that *anyonya* can mean "one after another," "each other," and "one another. " In essence, this word is about relationship.

Relationship is the central issue of psychology. I have before me a book by an American psychiatrist. He begins the prologue with a Yiddish proverb: "The one wishes to remember, the other wishes to forget. " So here we have it: "one," "another"--*anyonya*.

A conflict between two persons usually means that one wishes to remember something that happened between them, while the other wishes to forget it. Even a single individual can be torn by opposition between "one-another. " This is called mental conflict. One part of us wants to remember something, another part wants to

forget. According to the Western disciplines of psychiatry and abnormal psychology, the condition of neurosis--which includes anxiety states, obsessions, and hysteria--is all about mental conflict.

### The Conflicted Mind

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11. 13. 8, Uddhava asks a question of Lord Krishna about the conflicted mind.

Sri Uddhava said: My dear Krishna, generally human beings know that material life brings great future unhappiness, and still they try to enjoy material life. My dear Lord, how can one in knowledge act just like a dog, an ass or a goat?

In the course of His answer to Uddhava, Sri Krishna recounts a question the four Kumaras asked of Brahma. This is found in verse 17 of the same chapter. In this question of the small sages to their father, the word *anyonya* makes its appearance.

*sanakadaya ucuh  
gunesv avisate ceto  
gunas cetasi ca prabho  
katham anyonya-santyago  
mumukSOR atitirsoh*

The sages headed by Sanaka said: O Lord, people's minds are naturally attracted to material sense objects, and similarly the sense objects in the form of desire enter within the mind. Therefore, how can a person who desires liberation, who desires to cross over activities of sense gratification, destroy this mutual relationship between the sense objects and the mind? Please explain this to us.

Here the word *anyonya* is translated as, "of the mutual relationship between the sense objects and the mind. " It is extremely important for us to note that this verse outlines for our understanding *the mechanics of material attachment*. What topic is more sensitive, more provocative, more painful in the lives of devotees than material attachment?

Today I heard a *Bhagavatam* class given by an ISKCON *sannyasi*. He remarked that even senior disciples of Srila Prabhupada have confided to him how difficult they find it to completely overcome the mind's attachment to material things. Now, through the pages of *Srimad- Bhagavatam*, let us now try to see clearly just how attachment works.

### The Puzzling Nature of Attachment

Yes, we all know from *Gita* that when we contemplate the *pancha- tanmatra*, the five objects of the senses--*sabda* or sound, *sparsa* or touch, *rupa* or visible form, *rasa* or taste, and *gandha* or smell--the mind becomes attached to those objects (*Bg* 2. 62: *dhyayato visayan pumsah sangas tesupajayate*). Out of this relationship between the mind and the sense objects, desire makes its appearance (*sangat sanjayate kamah*).

The Kumaras pointed out a dimension to this process that we may not have considered from our study of the *Gita*. It seems quite an insidious arrangement, but

the fact is that the mind and the sense objects are made for each other. They fit together so seamlessly that the four great sages found no way to separate them. So invaded is the mind by the sense objects, and so invaded are the sense objects by the mind, that trying to precisely tell them apart is a profound challenge to the intellect.

Consider for a moment the smell of puris being fried in ghee. As soon as you perceive that smell your mind forms an attachment to it: "Hmmm, this is good. " But *where* is the good?

Is the good of the smell *objective*, meaning that the vapors of the fried food "outside you" are themselves good? Or is it *subjective*, meaning that the sensation "inside you" stimulated by the vapors is good? After thinking about it awhile, we'd most likely venture that the good in the smell is a result of the combination of objective and subjective factors.

Fine. Let's accept that for starters. Next question: is the good of the smell real? "Yes!" would be our answer as devotees of the Lord. The reality of the good smell is confirmed again and again by our collective experience.

When Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati's disciples were frying up feast preparations for a Hare Krishna festival in Burma, the local people complained about the horrible stench. Burmese people consider a good smell to be that of fish sauce left to ferment inside a clay pot for three years. If the "good" of the smell of fried puris is a real, substantial value, and not just a matter of personal attachment, how could the Burmese react as they did?

Does a smell exist in *any* way, good or bad, if there are no minds around to perceive and judge it? Consider the same problem from the opposite approach. Would a mind really be a mind if it was absolutely devoid of even the slightest impression of sense objects? Such questions are paradoxical, and they provoked this witty response from Thomas Key (1799-1875): "What is mind? No matter. What is matter? Never mind. "

Beyond the ontological problems of where to position the existence of a good smell (outside us? inside us? inbetween?), and whether a good smell all by itself is really anything at all, and whether a mind all by itself is really anything at all, there is the psychological consideration: if, as the Kumaras said, the mind and sense objects are always and inseparably attached to one another, then desire must be ever-present in us. If so, how can a person seeking liberation ever overcome desire?

### Complementarity

Allow me, dear reader, to observe that the question of the four Kumaras is about "the principle of complementarity in attachment mechanics. " Now just what do I wish to indicate by using such cumbersome terminology? My hope is that you may better appreciate that the question the Kumaras posed to their father is capable of baffling even the greatest intelligence in the universe. Thus the problem of the relationship of the mind and sense objects can be compared to the principle of complementarity in quantum mechanics, which baffles the greatest minds among our present-day scientists.

I ask the reader to kindly indulge me while I take a few moments to try to make the above paragraph as clear as I can. There is a system of mechanics that is supposed to operate at the subatomic level. Scientists call it quantum or wave mechanics. It is based on a duality observed in, for instance, radiant phenomena like light. Experiments show that photons, the subatomic units of light, behave as waves and as particles, depending upon circumstances. In 1927 the Danish physicist Neils Bohr put forward a principle derived from such experiments. It is called the principle of complementarity. It argues that an experiment on, for example, the wave aspect of photons destroys the possibility of learning about the particle aspect. The opposite is true as well: an experiment on the particle aspect destroys knowledge of the wave aspect. Thus a photon is called a wave-particle because the two aspects are complementary. Even though scientists cannot observe both simultaneously, the wave aspect and the particle aspect complement one another to form a more complete *theory* of what a photon is like. I stress the word theory because what scientists do observe--"photon as wave" and "photon as particle"--exist only as experimental models. . . models that are not only incomplete but mutually contradictory! Since they contradict one another, they do not add up to a concrete whole. Thus a wave-particle is not a "real thing" like a pebble or an orange. Yet light is a "real thing," and light appears to be made up of wave-particles. Of course, this state of affairs is baffling. Thus Neils Bohr concluded that the study of physics reveals only what we can say about nature, not how nature actually is.

It is possible that you, o intelligent reader, are already glimpsing from the above explanation the complementarity that the four Kumaras found baffling in the relationship of the mind and sense objects. But kindly allow me to strengthen the bridge between wave-particle complementarity and mind-sense objects complementarity. I shall now turn to a book entitled *Physics and Philosophy* (Cambridge 1948) by the eminent British scientist Professor Sir James Jeans. In a section beginning on page 136, he argues that the wave aspect of a photon may be understood as "waves of knowledge" because they are nothing other than mathematical maps of probability. He writes on page 139 that "the waves, as we have seen, are mere mental constructs and possess no physical existence. " Hence the quantum waves are mind. But what are the quantum particles? From page 201: "The particle-picture depicts the phenomena; its ingredients are those of the ordinary picture of the material world. " In other words, quantum particles are sense objects. On page 204 he comes to this conclusion: "There is no longer a dualism of mind and matter, but of waves and particles; these seem to be the direct, although almost unrecognizable, descendants of the older mind and matter, the waves replacing mind and the particles matter. "

A word of caution: it is not my purpose to endorse, or speculate upon, the philosophical link that Professor Jeans draws between the complementarity of wave-particles and that of mind and sense objects. What I find useful is that both dualisms, one described by modern science, and the other described by the ancient Vedic sages, tax the intellect severely.

#### Mind and Sense Objects: Dual Aspects of a Higher Reality

Kindly allow me to make one more point in this regard. Some scientists propose that the wave-particle is all that we know of a higher- dimensional state intruding into our lower-dimensional awareness. A thought experiment is given as an illustration. Set up two video cameras to view an aquarium with a single large fish in it. Focus one

camera on the front of the aquarium, and train the other to view one side of it. Connect each camera to one of two monitors positioned side-by-side in another room. The one fish will always look like two fish when observed through the two monitors. This is because the fish itself exists in three dimensions but the monitors are only able to show us two dimensions. Whenever in one monitor we see the front of the face of the fish, in the other we see only its side. And so it may be with the wave-particle. As we shall learn shortly from *Srimad- Bhagavatam*, this is precisely the case with the dualism of mind and sense objects: it is of a higher order of reality than we are able to grasp.

#### Even Brahma Had No Answer

Let us return to Sri Krishna's narrative about the question put by the Kumaras to their father Brahma. "My dear Uddhava," the Lord says in Text 18 to His dear friend and devotee, "Brahma himself, who is born directly from the body of the Lord and who is the creator of all living entities within the material world, being the best of the demigods, seriously contemplated the question of his sons headed by Sanaka. The intelligence of Brahma, however, was affected by his own activities of creation, and thus he could not discover the essential answer to this question. "

Again I must beg the reader's indulgence as I attempt to shed light on why Brahmaji found the question of his sons so challenging. Here Lord Krishna points to Brahma's activities of creation as blocking his sight of the answer. This indicates that the structure of the universe (i. e. its cosmology) is so subtle and involving that it diverts even the creator's intelligence from the Absolute Truth.

Modern science invests much brainpower in problems of cosmology; in the world of antiquity it was no less a topic of investigation, although then the investigation proceeded along Vedic lines. This was true even in the ancient Western world. I shall take the liberty of citing a British philosopher of mysticism, G. S. R. Mead, from a book he published in 1919 entitled *The Doctrine of the Subtle Body in the Western Tradition*, page 9.

The astral or sidereal religion of antiquity revolved around the central notion of an intimate correspondence between man's psychical and sensible apparatus, or his inner embodiment, and the subtle nature of the universe. . . The ground conviction of astral religion held that there was a subtle organon of great nature, an interior economy of the world-soul. Man's nature was so to say an excerpt from this greater nature; and it was conceived of as a germ or seed as it were of the universal tree of life. Man was the microcosm of the macrocosm.

On page 8, Mr. Mead notes that in India, this doctrine ("of an intimate correspondence between man's psychical and sensible apparatus. . . and the subtle nature of the universe") reached its most mature expression.

Now, even my most attentive readers may find Mr. Mead's language somewhat obscure. His style of writing harks back to the Victorian era. Let me try to make it plainer.

#### The Subtle Nature of the Universe

I will start with Mr. Mead's term, "world-soul. " Visvatma (soul of the universe) is a name of Sri Vishnu, the Supersoul. "In the Vedic hymns it is said: *patim visvasyatmesvaram*. Therefore, the Lord of the living entities is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu. " (*Bg* 3. 10p) In the same purport Srila Prabhupada writes, "The *praja-pati* is Lord Vishnu, and He is the Lord of all living creatures, all worlds, and all beauties, and the protector of everyone. " Krishna tells Arjuna in *Bhagavat-gita* 13. 5:

The Supersoul is the original source of all senses, yet He is without senses. He is unattached, although He is the maintainer of all living beings. He transcends the modes of nature, and at the same time He is the master of all the modes of material nature.

For the purpose of creation, the Supersoul invests His son Brahma, born from the lotus of His navel, with the fiery spiritual essence that fomented the *rajo-guna* (see *Brahma-samhita* 5. 62). Thus Brahmaji, though not a direct *vishnu-tattva* expansion of the Lord, also acts as the world-soul. In the Vedic literatures he too is addressed as Prajapati. But unlike Sri Vishnu, Brahma is himself possessed of material senses even as he bestows material senses on all other creatures. Brahma tends to become attached to his work of creation, while the Lord Himself is never attached. Brahma is not beyond the modes of nature, for he is the *rajo-guna avatara* of the Supersoul. This is why Brahma was unable to answer the question of his sons. From the purport to *SB* 11. 13. 18:

Srila Jiva Gosvami has quoted three verses from the Second Canto of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* as follows. In the Ninth Chapter, verse 32, Lord Krishna blessed Brahma with realized knowledge of the Lord's actual form, qualities and activities. In the Ninth Chapter, verse 37, the Lord ordered Brahma to rigidly carry out the Lord's injunctions and affirmed that Brahma would thus never be bewildered in his cosmic decision-making. In the Sixth Chapter, verse 34, Lord Brahma assured his son Narada, "O Narada, because I have caught hold of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, with great zeal, whatever I say has never proved to have been false, nor is the progress of my mind ever deterred, nor are my senses ever degraded by temporary attachment to matter. " In the present verse in this Thirteenth Chapter of the Eleventh Canto, Lord Krishna states that Brahma unfortunately did become bewildered by his creative functions, thus providing a grave lesson to all of the Lord's empowered representatives. Although one may be elevated to an exalted position in the Lord's transcendental service, at any moment there is danger of false pride polluting one's devotional mentality.

Mr. Mead wrote of "the astral or sidereal religion of antiquity. " The words astral and sidereal refer to the patterns of stars and planets we see arrayed in the night sky. "This great machine, consisting of the stars and planets," states Srila Sukadeva Gosvami in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 23. 4, "resembles the form of a *sisumara* [dolphin] in the water. It is sometimes considered an incarnation of Krishna, Vasudeva. Great *yogis* meditate upon Vasudeva in this form because it is actually visible. "

Mr. Mead used the term "subtle organon of great nature. " This means that the subtle principles of the cosmos are comparable to the organs of a living body. As we see in *Bg* 13. 3p, there are three principles fundamental to reality: *bhoktya* (the individual *jiva*-souls), *bhogyam* (matter) and *prerita* (the controller of both). On the

cosmic scale of manifestation, *bhoktya*, *bhogyam* and *prerita* are the triune (*tri-vidham*) of 1) four-headed Brahma who leads all other *jivas* in creation, 2) the *virat* or the elemental universe, and 3) Lord Vishnu. In our own body, we find countless microscopic cells, which Srila Prabhupada confirmed are each animated by an individual *jiva*. Out of all these *jivas*, we ourselves are the one individual soul chosen by the Lord to execute the mission He has ordained for this body. The body is a conglomeration of material elements (earth, water, fire, air and so on). The localized Paramatma dwelling in the core of the heart is the *antaryami* (inner controller).

Mead stated that there is "an interior economy of the world-soul. " Here the word economy is not to be understood in its ordinary usage as the management of national wealth; rather, its theological usage is intended. In this sense economy means God's management of His creation. Thus the universe functions as a vast organic system, as a single living entity of tremendous proportions.

Man's nature, according to Mr. Mead, is a germ or seed of the universal tree of life. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 8. 15 and its purport we learn that the lotus flower upon which Brahma appeared is the *virat* or universal form of the Lord. The source of this *virat* is the subtle Hiranyagarbha (a feature of Garbhodakasayi Vishnu) who is glorified in the Vedic hymns as having thousands of heads, eyes and feet (see *Cc. Madhya* 20. 292). He is the master of the universe; the *tri-murti* of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu who attend to the universe's three modes of nature are His secondary expansions (see *TLC* Chapter 8). Merged within Hiranyagarbha are countless individual souls who, like so many seeds, await germination (see *Brahma-samhita* 5. 22). Within the lotus stem sprouted from His navel are fourteen planetary systems (see *Cc. Adi* 5. 103). Brahma appears within the center of the blossoming petals of that lotus as the creative force of Hiryanagarbha; he brings forth the seedlike *jivas* from the body of the Lord, physically embodies them, and positions them within suitable planets according to their *karma*. Thus *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 14. 36 states, "The entire universe, which is full of living entities, is like a tree whose root is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Acyuta [Krishna]. Therefore simply by worshiping Lord Krishna one can worship all living entities. "

Mr. Mead concluded, "Man was the microcosm of the macrocosm. " Hence the mind and senses of mankind (his "psychical and sensible apparatus") are tiny reproductions of the cosmic form of Prajapati. The perceptions, thoughts, desires and activities of an individual person are related to the entire universe in a most intimate and subtle manner. *Srimad- Bhagavatam* 11. 28. 16 informs us, *jivo 'ntar-atma guna-karma-murtih sutram mahan ity urudheva gitah*, that the individual living entity's qualities, activities and form are bonded to the original form of material nature by *sutra-tattva*, a fundamental tie. (For more insight into this tie, see *SB* 5. 17. 23-23 about the *sutra-yantritah*, and *Bs* 5. 21 and 22. ) The tie is actually *personal*. For example, the cogitations of intelligent human beings on questions of cosmology and the duality of mind and matter are, on a deep level, stimulated by the world-soul Brahma's thoughts on the same issues.

I hope, dear reader, the scientific and philosophical evidence presented in the preceding pages has not sidetracked you from the main path of this essay. I do not intend here to delve into the structure of the macrocosmic mind and its recapitulation in microcosmic human psychology. (That will be examined in the next essay. ) For the present we are concerned with the mystery of relationship-- particularly the relationship of the sense objects and the mind--and how attachment

flows, honeylike, out of relationship to glue the attention of the soul to this material world.

### The Reply of the Hamsa-*avatara*

Even Brahma, the first of Vedic sages, was stymied by his sons' inquiry into the nature of relationship and attachment. And so he fixed his mind upon the Lord, who then appeared as the Hamsa- *avatara* to separate Brahma's consciousness from the modes of nature, just as a *hamsa* (swan) drinks the milk alone from a blend of milk and water. Let us now take a close look at two verses spoken by the swan incarnation:

*manasa vacasa drstya  
grhyate 'nyair apindriyaih  
aham eva na matto 'nyad  
iti budhyadhvam anjasa*

Within this world, whatever is perceived by the mind, speech, eyes or other senses is Me alone and nothing besides Me. All of you please understand this by a straightforward analysis of the facts.

*gunesv avisate ceto  
gunas cetasi ca prajah  
jivasya deha ubhayam  
gunas ceto mad-atmanah*

My dear sons, the mind has a natural proclivity to enter into the material sense objects, and similarly the sense objects enter into the mind; but both this material mind and the sense objects are merely designations that cover the spirit soul, who is part and parcel of Me. [SB 11. 13. 24, 25]

These verses make clear that at any time, place, or circumstance, the only real relationship the *jiva* has is with the Lord. But--and here, dear reader, kindly excuse me for introducing an exotic word into this explanation--this relationship is *multivalent*. The word valence means "the capacity of something to unite, react or interact with something else. " In short, valence is the potential for attachment as well as attachment's opposite, aversion. Now, a thing is called monovalent when it has only one site of attachment. For example, a room in which there is just a single electrical wall outlet could be said to have a "monovalent power point. " If you live in that room and are in need of house current to run your laptop computer, you have only one site of attachment to insert the plug. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, is unlimitedly multivalent.

### Everyone Relates to Krishna Only

In the course of His reply to the sages, the Hamsa -*avatara* indicated that the living entities relate with Him in multiple *material* and multiple *transcendental* ways. But to relate with the Lord materially yields a different result from relating spiritually with Him. In his purport to *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* Adi 1. 56, Srila Prabhupada brings out the difference with the sharpest clarity.

One should understand, through the transparent medium of the spiritual master, that the Supreme Lord exists everywhere in His transcendental spiritual nature and that the living entities' relationships with the Lord are directly and indirectly existing everywhere, even in this material world. In the spiritual world there are five kinds of relationships with the Supreme Lord-- *santa, asya, sakhya, vatsalya and madhurya*. The perverted reflections of these *rasas* are found in the material world. Land, home, furniture and other inert material objects are related in *santa*, or the neutral and silent sense, whereas servants work in the *dasya* relationship. The reciprocation between friends is called *sakhya*, the affection of a parent for a child is known as *vatsalya*, and the affairs of conjugal love constitute *madhurya*. These five relationships in the material world are distorted reflections of the original pure sentiments, which should be understood and perfected in relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. In the material world the perverted *rasas* bring frustration. If these *rasas* are reestablished with Lord Krsna, the result is eternal blissful life.

The material ways of relating to the Lord are hinted at in the two verses ( *SB* 11. 13. 24, 25) cited earlier. Even a nondevotee who is firmly absorbed in mundane consciousness has only Krishna to think about, to look at, and to discuss. Though agreeing with the Kumaras that the material mind pervades the material sense objects and the material sense objects pervade the material mind, the Hamsa-*avatara* pointed out that the covering of the spirit soul by designations of "I" (identification with mind) and "mine" (identification with sense objects) does not separate the living entity from Him. These designations are false. The fact is that in his true transcendental identity, the *jivatma* is always intimately related to Krishna as His part and parcel.

Earlier in this essay I remarked, "As we shall learn shortly from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, this is precisely the case with the dualism of mind and sense objects: it is of a higher order of reality than we are able to grasp. " So now we have learned from Lord Hamsa's own lotus mouth that "Within this world, whatever is perceived by the mind, speech, eyes or other senses is Me alone and nothing besides Me. " The reality of what we think about, see, and discuss is found in the transcendental dimension of Krishna's own existence. It is outside the sphere of material consciousness.

#### Are the Mind and Sense Objects Real?

If everything we think about, see, and discuss is actually Krishna and His energy, we ought to have a care for comprehending rightly how the Lord's energy divides our consciousness from Him. It is careless logic to first concede that our conceptions of "I am the mind" and "the sense objects are mine" have no substance at all, and then proceed to the conclusion that the mind and sense objects are not real. (This is the logic of the fox and the grapes, by the way. ) If it be so that the mind and the sense objects are actually void, then ridding oneself of material consciousness would be snap. But it is not so, as we see so clearly from these prayers of Sri Prahlada Maharaja.

*tvam vayur agnir avanir viyad ambu matrah  
 pranendriyani hridayam cid anugrahas ca  
 sarvam tvam eva saguno vigunas ca bhuman  
 nanyat tvad asty api mano-vacasa niruktam*

O Supreme Lord, You are actually the air, the earth, fire, sky and water. You are the objects of sense perception, the life airs, the five senses, the mind, consciousness and false ego. Indeed, You are everything, subtle and gross. The material elements and anything expressed, either by the words or by the mind, are nothing but You. [ SB 7. 9. 48]

*tvam va idam sadasad isa bhavams tato 'nyo  
maya yad atma-para-buddhir iyam hy apartha  
yad yasya janma nidhanam sthithir iksanam ca  
tad vaitad eva vasukalavad asti-tarvoh*

My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, the entire cosmic creation is caused by You, and the cosmic manifestation is an effect of Your energy. Although the entire cosmos is but You alone, You keep Yourself aloof from it. The conception of "mine and yours," is certainly a type of illusion ( *maya*)because everything is an emanation from You and is therefore not different from You. Indeed, the cosmic manifestation is nondifferent from You, and the annihilation is also caused by You. This relationship between Your Lordship and the cosmos is illustrated by the example of the seed and the tree, or the subtle cause and the gross manifestation. [ SB 7. 9. 31]

The mind (the focal point of the false sense of "I") and the sense objects (the focal point of the false sense of "mine") are very real and, even more importantly, are very personal energies. *Right now they are working against us.* They work against us because we are plugged into a lower order of relationship--a sinful relationship--with their Lord, the Supreme Person. Therefore His energies punish us by enshrouding our consciousness with bewilderment. In our lower order of relationship with Krishna and His energy, we are helplessly sucked into dilemmas of "What am I and what is mine?" "What is mine and what is yours?" "What is mind and what is matter?" "What is true and what is false?" "What is good and what is evil?" "What is bondage and what is liberation?" This is *dvandva-mohah*, the illusion of duality (see *Bg 7. 27*). Srila Prabhupada said, "This *dvandva-mohah* exists with the sinful man, but one who is freed from all sinful reactions, resultant actions, he can understand Krishna. "

Lord Hamsa explained that as long as we do not understand the Lord's transcendental nature--which includes our own nature as His pure, nonmaterial parts and parcels--our relationship with Him will remain steeped in falsity. At present we believe ourselves to be the controllers and enjoyers of all we survey. But all we survey is really Krishna, Who is the real controller and enjoyer. This, our material perspective, forces upon our consciousness the material mind, senses, and sense objects, just as looking through red lenses forces us to see the world as red. But the world is not red. Similarly, Krishna and His energy are not ours to control and enjoy. Nor is consciousness a product or function of mind, senses, and sense objects. All that is merely the false perspective of material vision.

When materialism is renounced, the mind, senses and their objects are at last understood to be different from the true self. "A person who has thus achieved Me by understanding that he is not different from Me," said Lord Hamsa in Text 26, "realizes that the material mind is lodged within the sense objects because of constant sense gratification, and that the material objects are existing prominently within the material mind. Having understood My transcendental nature, he gives up both the material mind and its objects. "

## A Useless Question

Because our identification with the mind and sense objects is false, in Text 23 the Lord mildly chastised the four Kumaras with the phrase, *iti vah prasno vacarambho hy anarthakah*. This means that their inquiry about the self as something involved in the mutual relationship ( *anyonya*) of the mind and sense objects was a useless string of words. The self is never enmeshed in the interaction of the mind and sense objects; its relationship is with Sri Krishna alone. Thus all the talk since the beginning of history about our mental problems, about our struggles with our attachments, amounts to merely the persistence of human illusion.

The destruction of that illusion starts when we seek to revive our relationship with the Lord as per His instructions. In verses 39 and 40, the Hamsa- *avatara* approved Vedic methods of knowledge, action, austerity, culture and so on by which the living entity may begin to associate with Him and thus share His transcendental presence everywhere.

O best of the *brahmanas*, please know that I am the supreme shelter of the *yoga* system, analytic philosophy, virtuous action, truthful religious principles, power, beauty, fame and self-control.

All superior transcendental qualities, such as being beyond the modes of nature, detached, the well-wisher, the most dear, the Supersoul, equally situated everywhere, and free from material entanglement--all such qualities, free from the transformations of material qualities, find their shelter and worshipable object in Me.

### The Instructions of the Hamsa- *avatara* Summarized

According to My instructions, one should fix the mind on Me alone. If, however, one continues to see many different values and goals in life rather than seeing everything within Me, then although apparently awake, one is actually dreaming due to incomplete knowledge, just as one may dream that one has wakened from a dream. [ *SB* 11. 13. 30]

You will recall that the Hamsa- *avatara's* transcendental instructions are narrated by Lord Krishna in reply to a question of Uddhava about the conflicted self: how can it be that a man of knowledge is still capable of acting like a dog, an ass, or a goat? This verse 30 above is a beacon into the heart of the problem raised by Uddhava. That person is simply dreaming who fails to see that his immediate field of activities and the world beyond are ever within Krishna. He may believe himself awake due to some theoretical knowledge or pious conviction. But in fact his spiritual nature is still asleep. Now, we all have ample experience of the craziness of the dream state. Yesterday a friend told me that he dreamed of playing golf with a prominent ISKCON *guru* who has thousands of disciples around the world. Such irrational mental imagery illustrates the power of our subconscious desires over our surface thought processes. In verse 30 the Hamsa- *avatara* warns us that a person who is not Krishna conscious lives twenty-four hours a day in such a dream-world. At any moment, despite the neat structures of reason he has installed in his head, his mind may be overcome by irrational desires. He will suddenly find himself acting like a dog, an ass, or a goat.

### Human Mentality is a Passionate Dream

In a later chapter of this Eleventh Canto, Sri Krishna reveals that beneath our wakeful thoughts and perceptions is an undercurrent of mental energy known as *svapna*, the level of dreaming--which, as we shall soon see, Srila Prabhupada identifies as "the subconscious mind. " This *svapna* is an effect of the mode of passion upon consciousness.

*sattvaj jagaranam vidyad  
rajasa svapnam adiset  
prasvapam tamasa jantos  
turiyam trisu santatam*

One should know that wakefulness is born of the mode of goodness, dreams from the mode of passion, and deep dreamless sleep from the mode of ignorance. The fourth element, pure consciousness, is different from these three and pervades them. [SB 11. 25. 20]

A detailed understanding of the three modes of material nature is indispensable to Vedic psychology. But now I must limit the scope of this essay to the key points of relationship and attachment. These are features of the mode of passion.

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 24. 22, Lord Krishna tells Nanda Maharaja, *rajasotpadyate visvam anyonyam vividham jagat*. Here again we meet the word *anyonya*, by which the Lord refers to sexual relationships. He says that the mode of passion is the cause of 1) universal creation, 2) the sexual relationships of all creatures, and 3) all varieties within creation. In *Bhagavad-gita* 14. 12 He tells Arjuna that as the mode of passion increases, great attachment is the result.

The material intelligence is described by Lord Kapiladeva in *Srimad- Bhagavatam* 3. 26. 29. He says its function is to distinguish between varieties of sense objects and to help the senses make choices among them. This type of *buddhi*, which plans our relationships with the objects of the senses, is a creation of the mode of passion. Explaining the effect of the mode of passion on intellectual activities, Srila Prabhupada states in a *Gita* purport that it gives rise "to many theories and doctrines by dint of mundane logic and mental speculation. " [Bg 18. 22p]

In another *Gita* purport, Prabhupada writes:

There are two classes of intelligent men. One is intelligent in material activities for sense gratification, and the other is introspective and awake to the cultivation of self-realization.

Activities of the introspective sage, or thoughtful man, are night for persons materially absorbed. Materialistic persons remain asleep in such a night due to their ignorance of self-realization. The introspective sage remains alert in the "night" of the materialistic men. The sage feels transcendental pleasure in the gradual advancement of spiritual culture, whereas the man in materialistic activities, being asleep to self-realization, dreams of varieties of sense pleasure, feeling sometimes happy and sometimes distressed in his sleeping condition. [Bg 2. 69p]

This is life in the mode of passion. This is *our* life, o fellow human being! *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 6. 28 informs us that the human species is *rajah-svabhavena*, of the

nature of the *rajo-guna*. Psychologically speaking, what this means is that we have a strong proclivity for dreaming even while we are awake. Day and night we relate to varieties of sense objects that pervade the mind. Day and night we form emotional attachments to mere mental images! Remember, as was explained before, even the greatest intellects of earth and heaven are unable to separate the "mental" from the "image" and so reveal a factual *anyah* (other) with whom we could have a *real* exchange.

In dreams we create so many things out of various impressions in the subconscious mind, but all such creations are simply temporary and unreal. In the same way, although apparently we are awake in material life, because we have no information of the soul and the Supersoul, we create many friends and enemies simply out of imagination. [SB 4. 9. 33p]

We become attached to these imaginary friends and enemies, develop strong desires for them--especially sexual desires--and then, as happens in dreams, our lives spin out of control due to these same desires born of attachment. Attempting to make sense of all this, we resort to many theories and doctrines, including those of mundane psychology. These ideas too are simply products of the mode of passion.

#### Who is Behind Passionate Attraction?

*avidyamano 'py avabhasate yo  
vaikariko rajasa-sarga esah  
brahma svayam jyotir ato vibhati  
brahmendriyarthatma-vikara-citram*

Although thus not existing in reality, this manifestation of transformations created from the mode of passion appears real because the self-manifested, self-luminous Absolute Truth exhibits Himself in the form of the material variety of the senses, the sense objects, the mind and the elements of physical nature. [SB 11. 28. 22]

Here the attractive features of creation are depicted as illusory exhibitions of the Lord's Brahman feature (*brahma svayam jyotir*); but another verse describes how the bodies, senses, minds, names and forms of the world are exhibitions of the transcendently beautiful forms of the Personality of Godhead and His divine consort.

*guna-vyaktir iyam devi  
vyanjako guna-bhug bhavan  
tvam hi sarva-sariry atma  
srih sarirendriyasayah  
nama-rupe bhagavati  
pratyayas tvam apasrayah*

Mother Laksmi, who is here, is the reservoir of all spiritual qualities, whereas You manifest and enjoy all these qualities. Indeed, You are actually the enjoyer of everything. You live as the Supersoul of all living entities, and the goddess of fortune is the form of their bodies, senses and minds. She also has a holy name and form,

whereas You are the support of all such names and forms and the cause for their manifestation. [SB 6. 19. 13]

As Srila Prabhupada explains in a 1976 *Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture, there is no contradiction between the One Absolute Truth presented in SB 11. 28. 22 and the Divine Couple depicted in SB 6. 19. 13. "She [Goddess Laksmi] is Narayana in a different energy only. *Radha-krsna- pranaya-vikrtir ahladini saktih*. She is the manifestation of the pleasure potency of the Lord. The Lord has got unlimited potencies, *parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate*. So one of the potency is Radharani or Laksmi or Sita. They are equal. There is no difference. *Radha- krsna-pranaya-vikrtir ahladini-saktir asmat*: these loving affairs between Radharani and Krsna or Narayana and Laksmi or Sita and Rama. They are both of Them the same. One is potency; another is potent. That is the difference, potent and potency. "

In our human condition of the mode of passion, we mistake the pure, spiritual, intimate affairs of the supreme potent and His potency to be the macrocosmic and microcosmic exhibition of material relationships and material attachments. This is due to the bedazzling hold of the Lord's potency over the fallen souls: *iyam hi prakrtih suksma-maya- saktir duratyaya*--"Mother Laksmi is extremely difficult to understand because she is so powerful that the jurisdiction of her power is difficult to overcome. Mother Laksmi is represented in the material world as the external energy, but actually she is always the internal energy of the Lord. " [SB 6. 19. 11]

#### Finding the Truth in Relationships

Fortunately for us, there is a program of rectification built into the passionate, perverted misconception of the relationship between the Lord and His consort.

*tasya adhisvarah saksat  
tvam eva purusah parah  
tvam sarva-yajna ijjeyam  
kriyeyam phala-bhug bhavan*

My Lord, You are the master of energy, and therefore You are the Supreme Person. You are sacrifice (*yajna*) personified. Laksmi, the embodiment of spiritual activities, is the original form of worship offered unto You, whereas You are the enjoyer of all sacrifices. [SB 6. 19. 12]

It was explained before that the "subtle organon of great nature" means the organic relationship of *bhoktya*, *bhogyam* and *prerita* (soul, matter and Supreme Lord). Matter is actually Mother Laksmi, who is the original form of worship offered to the Supreme Lord. The Lord is the personification and enjoyer of *yajna*, sacrifice. The soul is nondifferent from the Lord as His subordinate part and parcel. Thus the soul is the Lord's assistant in *yajna*. The ideal organic interaction of *bhoktya*, *bhogyam* and *prerita* is therefore devotional sacrifice, in which the soul follows the Lord's instructions: *tam eva yuyam bhajatatma-vrttibhir mano-vacah-kaya- gunaih sva-karmabhih*, "Unto Him, the Supreme Controller, you, the spirit soul, are to render worshipful engagements of body, words, and mind according to the qualities of your work. " [SB 4. 21. 33] In the purport Srila Prabhupada assure us, "If one engages himself seriously in devotional service, working with body, mind and intelligence, he is sure to be successful in going back home, back to Godhead. "

Such is the "subtle organon of great nature," the healthy state of thought and action throughout the universe. Unfortunately, we who exist at the human level of consciousness are susceptible to the infection of the mode of passion. This perverts our part in the *rasa* (relationship) of the Lord and His consort; and as we have seen Srila Prabhupada explain before, the perversion of *rasa* brings frustration.

#### Frustration and Voidism

In frustration, under the influence of passionate mental speculation, we worry our brains about how to negate the natural relationship of the energies of the Lord and His consort. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 27. 17, Devahuti asks her transcendental son Lord Kapila a question very similar to the the one the four Kumaras asked their father Brahma. She too employs the word *anyonya*:

*purusam praktir brahman  
na vimuncati karhicit  
anyonyapasrayatvac ca  
nityatvad anayoh prabho*

Sri Devahuti inquired: My dear *brahmana*, does material nature ever give release to the spirit soul? Since one is attracted to the other eternally, how is their separation possible?

We saw before that Lord Hamsa regarded the inquiry of the four sages to be *anarthakah*, "useless. " In his purport to Devahuti's question, Srila Prabhupada writes, "This question asked by Devahuti of Kapiladeva is more or less impelled by the philosophy of voidism. The voidists say that consciousness is a product of a combination of matter and that as soon as the consciousness is gone, the material combination dissolves, and therefore there is ultimately nothing but voidness. This absence of consciousness is called *nirvana* in Mayavada philosophy. "

#### The Reply of Lord Kapiladeva

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One can get liberation by seriously discharging devotional service unto Me and thereby hearing for a long time about Me or from Me. By thus executing one's prescribed duties, there will be no reaction, and one will be freed from the contamination of matter. [SB 3. 27. 21]

Srila Prabhupada comments, ". . . the liberated soul is not affected, although he is in the material nature. Even the Supreme Personality of Godhead is supposed to be in association with material nature when He descends, but He is not affected. One has to act in such a way that in spite of being in the material nature he is not affected by contamination. Although the lotus flower is in association with water, it does not mix with the water. . . *Yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra*: all activities should be performed simply for Yajna, or the satisfaction of Vishnu. Anything done otherwise, without the satisfaction of Vishnu, or Yajna, produces bondage, so here it is also prescribed by Kapila Muni that one can transcend material entanglement by acting in Krishna consciousness, which means seriously engaging in devotional service. This serious devotional service can develop by hearing for long periods of time. Chanting and hearing is the beginning of the process of devotional service. "

Commenting upon a statement by Maharaja Pariksit in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 1. 4 (*nivṛtta-tarsair upagiyamanad bhavausadhac*), Srila Prabhupada adds, "Actually, chanting can be perfectly done by persons who are already liberated. But those who are not liberated? Then he says, *bhavausadhi*. But it is the medicine of this material entanglement for becoming liberated. That is also, it is also medicine. When we are liberated, we'll chant and relish what is actually love of God. That is liberated. But even if we are not liberated, this will act as medicine to become liberated. So any stage, *nivṛtta-tarsair upagiyamanad bhavausadhac*. Those who are chanting, they'll be liberated. "

### The Topmost Relationship, the Topmost Attachment

Thus the infection of the mode of passion is cured by chanting the holy names of the Lord. And when one is cured, the chanting is the pure expression of transcendental relationship. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 22. 6 it is said of the *anyonya* or relationship that the *gopis* enjoyed amongst one another:

*usasy utthaya gotraih svair  
anyonyabaddha-bahavah  
krsnam uccair jagur yantyah  
kalindyam snatum anvaham*

Each day they rose at dawn. Calling out to one another by name, they all held hands and loudly sang the glories of Krishna while going to the Kalindi to take their bath.

We have seen that in reference to the material world, the word *anyonya* indicates passionate sexual relationships. In reference to the spiritual world, it means the pure passion of conjugal *rasa*. The following verse, so stunning in its beauty, is a perfect illustration of that divine love:

*tatrarabhata govindo  
rasa-kridam anuvrataih  
stri-ratnair anvitah pritair  
anyonyabaddha-bahubhih*

There on the Yamuna's banks Lord Govinda then began the pastime of the *rasa* dance in the company of those jewels among women, the faithful *gopis*, who joyfully linked their arms together. [SB 10. 33. 2]

### The Middle Ground

So far, much of this essay has compared and contrasted *rajas* and *rasa*: passionate material attachment and the attachment of transcendental love. As seen from the reply of Lord Kapiladeva, graduating from the lower attachment to the higher takes a long time (*ciram*) of serious devotional service (*tivraya mayi bhaktya*) and hearing about Krishna (*sruta*). During that long time, we must stand upon a middle ground between the attachment we have but don't want (*rajas*) and the attachment we want but don't have (*rasa*). What is that middle ground?

It is not my wish to overload the reader's mind with an excess of information. But as I cited from an Upanisad in the Introduction to this series of essays, only one who

desires liberation can attain it; and the desire for liberation is evident in one's willingness to investigate the philosophy of liberation, Vedanta. So, in order to explain the middle ground between *rajas* and *rasa* I must introduce you to two important terms of Vedanta philosophy: *vyavahara* and *paramartha*. You will meet these words again as this series of essays develops. Let us now go through the small austerity of learning what they mean.

A simple definition of these two words is found in *Cc Antya* 4. 159. Here *vyavahara* means "ordinary dealings" and *paramartha* means "affairs of spiritual advancement." In his purport to *Bhagavat-gita* 7. 24, Srila Prabhupada cites a verse by Sri Yamunacarya (*Stotra-ratna* 12) that classifies the characteristics, form and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as *paramartha* (transcendental subject matter). This verse concludes, *naivasura-prakrtayah prabhavanti boddhum*, those of demonic nature (i. e. those whose minds are polluted by *rajas* and *tamas*) never understand *paramartha*. In the *Manu-smṛti*, the Vedic lawbook of mankind, *vyavahara* means eighteen institutions of social, moral and justice administration that keep in check the demonic nature. Among these eighteen institutions are marriage, obeying orders, keeping promises, legal settlement of disputes, civil speech and civil behavior. In short, *vyavahara* is the relationship of human beings guided by Vedic regulation. *Paramartha* is the transcendental relationship of liberated souls and the Supreme Lord.

But it is a mistake to think that *vyavahara* affairs, being "of this world only," are unrelated to the Supreme Lord. In fact He has His own *vyavahara* pastimes:

*virat hiranya-garbhā ca  
karanam cety upadhayah  
isasya yat tribhir hinam  
turiyam tat pracaksate*

In the material world the Lord is designated as *virat*, *hiranyagarbha* and *karana*. But beyond these three designations, the Lord is ultimately in the fourth dimension [i. e. the transcendental realm of *paramartha*].

*yadyapi tinerā maya la-iyā vyavahara  
tathapi tat-sparsa nahi, sabhe maya-para*

Although these three features of the Lord deal directly with the material energy, none of them are touched by it. They are all beyond illusion. [*Cc Adi* 2. 53, 54]

We have met with the words *virat* and *hiranyagarbha* already; the first is the universal form of the lotus flower upon which Brahma sits to do his work of creation, and the second is Garbhodakasayi Vishnu out of whose navel the lotus grows. The word *karana* refers to Maha- Vishnu. He is known as Karanabdhisayi Vishnu because He lies down on the *karanabdhī*, the Causal Ocean. Garbhodakasayi Vishnu or Hiranyagarbha has thousands of heads, eyes, arms and legs because He expands from Maha-Vishnu into thousands of universes. The universal form (*virat*) that expands from each and every Garbhodakasayi Vishnu is said to be a feature of Ksirodakasayi-Vishnu, who lies on the Milk Ocean and guides the wanderings of the living entities from within their hearts (see *Cc Madhya* 21. 39p).

As we have seen above in *Cc. Adi 2. 54*, the three Vishnus are said to be *maya la-iyā vyavahara*, "taking up dealings with the material energy. " But, *tathāpi tat-sparsa nahi*, "they are not touched by *maya*. " The verse that follows the two quoted above begins with the words *etat isanam isasya*, which means "This is the opulence of the Lord. " The Lord displays the wonder of His material creation for the spiritual upliftment of souls in the lower modes of nature. Srila Prabhupada explains in *Nectar of Devotion*:

Even uncivilized men like the aborigines offer their respectful obeisances to something wonderful exhibited by nature's law, and they appreciate that behind some wonderful exhibition or action there is something supreme. So this consciousness, though lying dormant in those who are materially contaminated, is found in every living entity. And, when purified, this is called Krishna consciousness. [NOD Ch. 2]

Now, a *sadhaka* may ask, "What do the Lord's *vyavaraha* pastimes have to do with me?" Well, *sadhana-bhakti* is like a regimen of medical treatments aimed at curing the infection of the lower modes of nature. One of the treatments is learning about the cosmic opulence of the Lord. This knowledge curbs down our passionate propensity to imagine ourselves the lords of creation. In *Narada-bhakti-sutra 23*, Narada Muni harshly condemns those who attempt to penetrate the intimate *paramartha* pastimes without having been schooled in the greatness of the Lord's *vyavahara* pastimes of creating, maintaining and destroying the material manifestation.

*tad-vihinam jaranam iva*

Shows of devotion without knowledge of God's greatness, on the other hand, are no better than the affairs of illicit lovers.

As the Lord performs His own *vyavahara* duties ever untouched by *maya*, so should the Lord's devotees. *Narada-bhakti-sutra 62*:

*na tad-siddhau loka-vyavaharo heyah kintu phala-tyagas*

Even after devotional service has been achieved one should not abandon his responsibilities in this world, but rather should surrender the results of work. And while still trying to reach the stage of pure devotion one certainly must continue executing prescribed duties.

Lord Caitanya says, *dharma-sthapana-hetu sadhura vyavahara*: "A devotee's behavior establishes the true purpose of religious principles. " [*Cc. Madhya 17. 185*] In other words, *sadhura vyavahara*--the behavior of devotees within the material world--is the middle ground where *dharma-sthapana-hetu*, the difference between right and wrong, is made clear. Furthermore it is said, *bhava-grahanera hetu kaila dharma-sthapana*, "To accept ecstatic love is the main reason Lord Caitanya appeared and reestablished the religious system for this age. " [*Cc. Adi 4. 53*] Thus by following the practical example of Lord Caitanya and His pure representative Srila Prabhupada, we too can obtain ecstatic love, which is *paramartha*. The conclusion is that since *paramartha* is beyond our present comprehension, we must form our understanding of healthy psychology from the *vyavahara* pastimes of the Lord and His pure devotees.

## Mental Torment

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11. 28. 28 describes the abnormal psychology of devotees who are somehow or other slow to the cure of *vyavahara* (relationships regulated by Vedic culture).

Just as an improperly treated disease recurs and gives repeated distress to the patient, the mind that is not completely purified of its perverted tendencies will remain attached to material things and repeatedly torment the imperfect *yogi*.

Therefore a well-known verse encourages us to enter strong relationships with devotees who are nicely situated in devotional service; thus in their association, our attachments will surely be purified.

*prasangam ajaram pasam  
atmanah kavayo viduh  
sa eva sadhusu krto  
moksa-dvaram apavrtam*

Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation.

[SB 3. 25. 20]

But it is right here, in our relationships with devotees, that a working understanding of transcendental psychology becomes crucial. As I stated in the beginning of this essay, "relationship is the central issue of psychology. " If we are not aware of the workings of our own mind, if we are not aware of the nature of its interaction with other minds, if we are not attentive to the *vyavahara* culture of relationships, then we won't be able to guard ourselves from envy. When envy creeps into the relationships of devotees, the purification of lusty desires that *sastra* says comes from *sadhu-sangha* is severely hampered.

In the following verse we once again meet the word *anyonya*, "relationship. " But now it is coupled with *vairah*, "enviousness. " Just see the terrible result!

*lokah svayam sreyasi nasta-drstir  
yo 'rthan samiheta nikama-kamah  
anyonya-vairah sukha-lesa-hetor  
ananta-duhkham ca na veda mudhah*

Due to ignorance, the materialistic person does not know anything about his real self-interest, the auspicious path in life. He is simply bound to material enjoyment by lusty desires, and all his plans are made for this purpose. For temporary sense gratification, such a person creates a society of envy, and due to this mentality, he plunges into the ocean of suffering. Such a foolish person does not even know about this. [SB 5. 5. 16]

## **Siddhanta-alasa**

In *Prakṛta-rasa Sata-dusini*, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura writes, *siddhanta-alasa jana anartha to' chade na*: "A person who is *siddhanta-alasa*, lazy in understanding philosophical truth, cannot cross over the obstacles of his material conditioning. "

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 14. 29 and 30 we find a link between a careless, misguided and lazy attitude toward the investigation of the Vaishnava Vedanta philosophy and the appearance of lust, envy and offensiveness in association with devotees.

The pseudo *svamis*, *yogis* and incarnations who do not believe in the Supreme Personality of Godhead are known as *pasandis*. They themselves are fallen and cheated because they do not know the real path of spiritual advancement, and whoever goes to them is certainly cheated in his turn.

(My dear reader, I am shortly interrupting this quotation to point out that most of us came to ISKCON after having been cheated by bogus spiritualists. These cheaters infected us with *siddhanta-alasa*, laziness to know the science of Godhead. Now let us continue the translation of *SB* 5. 14. 29, 30. )

When one is thus cheated, he sometimes takes shelter of the real followers of Vedic principles (*brahmanas* or those in Kṛṣṇa consciousness), who teach everyone how to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead according to the Vedic rituals. However, being unable to stick to these principles, these rascals again fall down and take shelter among *sudras* who are very expert in making arrangements for sex indulgence. Sex is very prominent among animals like monkeys, and such people who are enlivened by sex may be called descendants of monkeys.

In this way the descendants of the monkeys intermingle with each other, and they are generally known as *sudras*. Without hesitating, they live and move freely, not knowing the goal of life. They are captivated simply by seeing the faces of one another, which remind them of sense gratification. They are always engaged in material activities, known as *gramya-karma*, and they work hard for material benefit. Thus they forget completely that one day their small life spans will be finished and they will be degraded in the evolutionary cycle.

The Sanskrit of the above two verses is too lengthy to reproduce here in full, but a couple of phrases are of special relevance. One is *ati-kṛpana-buddhih*, "whose intelligence is dull because he does not properly utilize his assets;" and another is *anyonya mukha-nirikšana- adina*, "by seeing the faces of one another (when a man sees the beautiful face of a woman and the woman sees the strong build of the man's body, they always desire one another). " No need to elaborate. There are enough graphic illustrations of this tragic process of falldown in the nearly forty years of ISKCON's history.

#### Humility or Argumentation?

With sincerest humility, Sri Prahlada Maharaja counts himself among the souls who have drifted down to the abominable state of helpless addiction to sense gratification. He is most embarrassed to observe how his senses drag him in many directions at once.

*jihvaikato 'cyuta vikarsati mavitrpta  
sisno 'nyatas tvag-udaram sravanam kutascit  
ghrano 'nyatas capala-drk kva ca karma-saktir  
bahvyah sapatnya iva geha-patim lunanti*

My dear Lord, O infallible one, my position is like that of a person who has many wives, all trying to attract him in their own way. For example, the tongue is attracted to palatable dishes, the genitals to sex with an attractive woman, and the sense of touch to contact with soft things. The belly, although filled, still wants to eat more, and the ear, not attempting to hear about You, is generally attracted to cinema songs. The sense of smell is attracted to yet another side, the restless eyes are attracted to scenes of sense gratification, and the active senses are attracted elsewhere. In this way I am certainly embarrassed. [SB 7. 9. 40]

Therefore in the next verse Prahlada Maharaja prays most fervently to the Lord to deliver him from *anonya janma-marana-asana-bhita-bhitam*: birth and death, one after another, which come from *asana*, consuming vulgar sense objects on one side, and *bhita-bhitam*, being pursued by many fears on the other side.

Unlike the great soul Sri Prahlada, that person who has turned his back on devotion to the Lord due to enviousness and offensiveness does not humbly pray for deliverance from birth, death, sensual hunger, and gnawing fear. He resorts instead to passionate speculation and argumentation. Lord Krishna tells Uddhava:

The speculative argument of philosophers--"This world is real," "No, it is not real"--is based upon incomplete knowledge of the Supreme Soul and is simply aimed at understanding material dualities. Although such argument is useless, persons who have turned their attention away from Me, their own true Self, are unable to give it up. [SB 11. 22. 34]

Such endless speculative argumentation over various dualities--the sort of topics discussed at many a vegetarian pizza party in our present day--is a symptom of mental disturbance. That is the verdict of Krishna Himself in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11. 28. 36.

Whatever apparent duality is perceived in the self is simply the confusion of the mind. Indeed, such supposed duality has no basis to rest upon apart from one's own soul.

This means that as long as we are not self-realized, the problems we complain that we meet "out there" in the world around us are really met by us within our own selves. Repeatedly in this chapter 28 of Canto 11, Lord Krishna dismisses the spirit soul's troubled experience of the material world as being no better than a dream, which is just an illusory vision seen by the soul within the mental layers of his contaminated consciousness. (See 11. 28. 3, 13, 14, and 32; and elsewhere in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, see 3. 27. 4; 4. 29. 35 and 73; and 11. 22. 56. )

In 11. 28. 37, Krishna sweeps away all attempts to argue otherwise.

The duality of the five material elements is perceived only in terms of names and forms. Those who say this duality is real are pseudoscholars vainly proposing fanciful theories without basis in fact.

Unfortunately, I have observed a tendency in more than a few members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to sweep away all such statements of Lord Krishna as being "just for the *karmis*." It is as if we have just to place a *tilak* mark upon the forehead of the dream of duality, just "ISKCONize" it, then it is real. But rather than sweep away pages and pages of *Bhagavatam* verses with a shrug, we should investigate their proper application.

Lord Krishna does not say that the disturbances of duality that affect the lives of devotees are to be *ignored* because they are just dreams. He does not say *we ought to do nothing about them*. What he does say is that speculating, gossiping, and arguing about them is no solution!

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One should neither praise nor criticize the conditioned nature and activities of other persons. Rather, one should see this world as simply the combination of material nature and the enjoying souls, all based on the one Absolute Truth.

Whoever indulges in praising or criticizing the qualities and behavior of others will quickly become deviated from his own best interest by his entanglement in illusory dualities.

One who has properly understood the process of becoming firmly fixed in theoretical and realized knowledge, as described herein by Me, does not indulge in material criticism or praise. Like the sun, he wanders freely throughout this world. [SB 11. 28. 1, 2 and 8]

#### The Psychological Treatment Prescribed by Krishna Himself

"So what should we do about our problems?" comes the agonized wail. Well, the first step is to take the humble position. That means to accept that we are struggling with duality (which means only that our minds are giving us trouble) because *we are weak in knowing ourselves to be pure spirit soul*. Having accepted this, we can go on to accept Lord Krishna's personal prescription for curing our weak psychological condition. (Remember, *psyche* means "soul," so real psychology lifts us up to transcendental self-realization.)

As we have seen above, in Chapter 28 of Canto 11 Lord Krishna instructs Uddhava how to separate the soul from duality by transcendental knowledge. But Uddhava, like Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gita* 6. 33, feared the mind is too powerful to be subdued by yogic knowledge alone. In the first verse of Chapter 29 he says:

My dear Lord Acyuta, I fear that the method of *yoga* described by You is very difficult for one who cannot control his mind. Therefore please explain to me in simple terms how someone can more easily execute it.

In the next verse he makes an important observation:

O lotus-eyed Lord, generally those *yogis* who try to steady the mind experience frustration because of their inability to perfect the state of trance. Thus they weary in their attempt to bring the mind under control.

The word frustration (*visidanti*--"becomes frustrated") is indicative of the mode of ignorance, which is where passionate endeavors end up. The human being, situated as he is in the mode of passion, works himself to frustration even in "spiritual" activities. Thus he grows weary of *sadhana* and may become victimized by voidistic ideas. Like the Kumaras and Mother Devahuti, he may speculate on how to separate the mind from the sense objects. He soon finds himself facing only two choices: to either negate his existence, or to surrender to "his nature" (meaning material nature). Nowadays the second choice is by far the more popular one. It is defended by arguing wrongly from the *Gita*, "What can repression accomplish?"

Sri Krishna answers Uddhava by speaking about the performance of devotional service in unbroken consciousness of Him. The Lord's reply in Chapter 29 of this *Uddhava-gita* covers many verses; I shall only cite a few here.

*kuryat sarvani karmani  
mad-artham sanakaih smaran  
mayy arpita-manas-citto  
mad-dharmatma-mano-ratih*

Always remembering Me, one should perform all his duties for Me without becoming impetuous. With mind and intelligence offered to Me, one should fix his mind in attraction to My devotional service. [SB 11. 29. 9]

*Kuryat sarvani karmani*: a devotee should do all his duties. This may place him in the midst of conflict, just as Arjuna found himself at Kuruksetra. But that is no excuse for becoming impetuous (passionate). Here the word *sanakaih* means we should go forward "gradually" or "step by step." The same point is made by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gita* 6. 25 (*sanaih sanair upamed*). As a poet wrote, "The bird that flutters least is longest on the wing." A bird like the albatross soars along the wind currents above the ocean for hundreds of miles with hardly a beat of its wings; the wings of the small birds we see in our garden flap rapidly, but these birds travel short distances only. We should patiently work at becoming truly attached to the Lord in all our services, and through that attachment, always remember Him. Thus by His grace we may soar like the albatross over the great ocean of material existence, back home, Back to Godhead.

*naresv abhiksnam mad-bhavam  
pumso bhavayato 'cirat  
spardhasuya-tiraskarah  
sahankara viyanti hi*

For him who constantly meditates upon My presence within all persons, the bad tendencies of rivalry, envy and abusiveness, along with false ego, are very quickly destroyed. [SB 11. 29. 15]

Here Lord Krishna explains how envy steals into our minds to poison our relationships. When we are with equals, it appears in the mind as rivalry. When we are with superiors, it appears as envy in the sense of resentment towards those in

higher positions. And when we are with subordinates, it appears as abusiveness. The cure is in learning to see Krishna within the hearts of all our associates, whether they are above, below or equal to us.

A question might be, "What about when we are with people who are themselves bad? How do we relate to them?" In *vyavahara* culture there are codes of civilized conduct. Civilized persons, whether personally "good" or "bad", observe these codes out of respect for the social order. Someone who flouts such codes is barbaric and thus subject to punishment by law, if not the law of the state then certainly the law of *karma*. However, if we view a person, no matter how barbaric, as *wicked to the core*, then that is the beginning of wickedness in ourselves. Beyond the wickedness that our senses and mind perceive in passionate human nature is the all-good Sri Krishna. We must gradually come to the *paramartha* platform of seeing and hearing Him always.

Coming to the *paramartha* platform is likewise the answer to all our questions about personal low self-esteem. Low self-esteem is the condition of an individual who relates badly to his own self. He is discouraged, ashamed, despairing, and angry at his imperfections and falldowns. We should learn to see beyond the faults that cover our hearts to Krishna within the core of our hearts. Furthermore we should learn to see how Krishna sees us. Only looking at "ourselves" (our minds) through the modes of nature that pervert our minds is the problem of the conflicted mind described at the beginning of this essay. In the following verse, so wonderfully inspiring and strength-giving, the Lord assures Uddhava:

*samahitaih kah karanair gunatmabhir  
guno bhaven mat-suvivikta-dhamnah  
viksipyamanair uta kim nu dusanam  
ghanair upetair vigatai raveh kim*

For one who has properly realized My personal identity as the Supreme Godhead, what credit is there if his senses--mere products of the material modes--are perfectly concentrated in meditation? And on the other hand, what blame is incurred if his senses happen to become agitated? Indeed, what does it mean to the sun if the clouds come and go? [SB 11. 28. 25]

The next verse from Chapter 29 of the *Uddhava-gita* is a hammer-blow to the mode of passion that infects our human minds and emotions.

*yo yo mayi pare dharmah  
kalpyate nisphalaya cet  
tad-ayaso nirarthah syad  
bhayader iva sattama*

O Uddhava, greatest of saints, in a dangerous situation an ordinary person cries, becomes fearful and laments, although such useless emotions do not change the situation. But activities offered to Me without personal motivation, even if they are externally useless, amount to the actual process of religion. [SB 11. 29. 21]

We get so excited over our relationships and attachments. We burn up so much emotional energy in fear, anger and lamentation. But for what result? All human relationships must end, all human attachments must break. Yet it is difficult for us to

find the energy to do a little service for Krishna, to chant his holy name and offer Him a flower, because in the mode of passion we fail to catch the eternal benefit of such acts of devotion.

This verse is also an interesting lesson about boldness and self- control in Krishna consciousness. One who thinks the greatest evil is danger to his body, his mental peace, or the security of his social position cannot be bold in serving Krishna, even though he may be self- controlled. One who thinks that the greatest good is the reward, respect and honor that follows his doing externally useful service cannot be self-controlled, even though he may be bold.

Now I shall cite three verses from Chapter 29 of this *Uddhava-gita* in which Lord Krishna echos 18. 68-71 of His *Bhagavad-gita*.

One who liberally disseminates this knowledge among My devotees is the bestower of the Absolute Truth, and to him I give My very own self.

He who loudly recites this supreme knowledge, which is the most lucid and purifying, becomes purified day by day, for he reveals Me to others with the lamp of transcendental knowledge.

Anyone who regularly listens to this knowledge with faith and attention, all the while engaging in My pure devotional service, will never become bound by the reactions of material work. [SB 11. 29. 26-28]

To conclude this essay, let me remind the reader of a statement made by Kapiladeva concerning *bhakti-yoga*, the process Sri Krishna recommends to Uddhava and to Arjuna for overcoming the uncontrolled mind.

*jarayat asu ya kosam  
nigirnam analo yatha*

*Bhakti*, devotional service, dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate effort, just as fire in the stomach digests all that we eat. [SB 3. 25. 33]

Srila Prabhupada explains:

*Bhakti* is in a far higher position than *mukti* because a person's endeavor to get liberation from the material encagement is automatically served in devotional service. The example is given here that the fire in the stomach can digest whatever we eat. If the digestive power is sufficient, then whatever we can eat will be digested by the fire in the stomach. Similarly, a devotee does not have to try separately to attain liberation. That very service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the process of his liberation because to engage oneself in the service of the Lord is to liberate oneself from material entanglement. Sri Bilvamangala Thakura explained this position very nicely. He said, "If I have unflinching devotion unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, then *mukti*, or liberation, serves me as my maidservant. *Mukti*, the maidservant, is always ready to do whatever I ask. "

ISKCON Radha-Rasabihari Mandira, Juhu Beach, Mumbai  
12 April 2003

There is a website--

[www.shoutcast.com](http://www.shoutcast.com)

--where you can hear over the Internet the daily *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class here in ISKCON Juhu. You have to enter this site and search for "krishna". Other temple broadcasts are also online at shoutcast. com; in fact I am told you can see a daily video of the Los Angeles temple *Bhagavatam* lecture. But you'll only be able to hear/see the classes live, at the time they are being spoken. Recordings are not stored at the website for you to download. At least not the ones here in Juhu. The classes I've been giving since I have arrived here have been broadcast each morning in that way. (For even more transcendental Internet entertainment, there is a [www.radiokrishna.com](http://www.radiokrishna.com) website. )

HH Sridhara Maharaja told me this morning that he received an e-mail from one of the leaders of ISKCON in Australia, who had heard our (Maharaja's and mine) joint class on Lord Ramachandra's appearance day. This devotee commented that it was "the most far out class I've ever heard"! I asked Maharaja what "far out" means in this context. He thought it meant the devotee enjoyed the class very much.

I owe a great debt to HH Sridhara Maharaja, by the way. On Rama-*navami* morning I felt very morose. It had something to do with my being here at Juhu temple which Srila Prabhupada sacrificed so much for, and feeling myself totally out of place here. Like a person who does not belong because he does not share the history of the place. I was thinking at *mangala-arati*, "What did I do for Srila Prabhupada in this city of Bombay where so many of his early disciples risked their lives to save the ISKCON property from being stolen by that rascal Mr. Nair? What is the meaning of my even entering this grand monument to my spiritual master's unswerving devotion to Sri Krsna, what to speak of giving lectures here?"

But HH Sridhara Maharaja, in his portion of that Rama-*navami* morning's *Bhagavatam* class, uplifted my spirits tremendously. He spoke so nicely of the power of devotional service, and the mercy of the Lord and Srila Prabhupada.

He spoke of the tests all devotees must face in their spiritual lives. Actually, that is a great lesson to be gleaned from Rama-*lila*. Lord Ramachandra, though He is the complete (*purna-bhagavan*) Supreme Personality of Godhead, underwent so many wordly difficulties. He showed us that life in this material existence is not easy. It is not meant to be easy. It is meant for *tapasya*.

I got inspired by these words of Sridhara Maharaja and when my turn came I spoke on *Bhagavad-gita* 5. 22. The *Gita As It Is* just happened to be sitting on the table in front of me, so I opened to that verse where Sri Krishna concludes, *na tesu ramate budhah*, "the wise man does not delight (*ramate*) in sense pleasures. " In the purport, Srila Prabhupada cites a verse from *Padma Purana* that explains the meaning of the name Rama. And in the same purport a verse from Canto 5 of *Bhagavatam* is cited in which Lord Rshabhdeva instructs his sons to perform *tapo-divyam* (transcendental austerities) to achieve *brahma-saukhyam* or transcendental bliss. *Brahma-saukhyam*, Srila Prabhupada explained in a lecture, means Rama.

"Krishna tested Srila Prabhupada by taking everything away from him during his householder years," said Sridhara Maharaja. "And then Krishna tested Prabhupada again, after he took *sannyasa*, by giving him much, much more than all he had had before. "

So whether a devotee seems in prosperity or in poverty, in grace or disgrace, he is always under the protection of the Lord. And all that the Lord metes out to us is for our spiritual advancement so that we may attain the blissful state of pure devotion to Him. *Pasu-paksi ho'ye thaki swarge va niroye*, prays Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, "Be my life in heaven or hell, be it as a bird or a beast," *tava bhakti rahu bhaktivinoda-hrdoya*, "my devotion to You always remain within my heart. "

I just finished writing my Vyasa Puja offering for Srila Prabhupada. That brought back the morose feelings. But you know, even sadness can be dovetailed in Krishna consciousness.

*Pakhi na jani kon aparadhe mukhe hare krsna nam bolo na*, wrote Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in another song:

"The bird of my heart does not know what past sinful activities it has committed to cause this inability to chant Hare Krishna properly. "

Such beautiful poetry. Sadly beautiful. Sad beauty dovetailed in longing glorification of the Lord. I say openly to you, dear my reader, there seems little else in my life I can do than to try to serve my spiritual master by whatever preaching opportunities are offered me by his ISKCON society, and while I try to do this, I also simply long for his mercy. The bird of my heart droops its head, feeling the weight of its disqualifications. But a bird must sing, chatter, make some kind of sound, whether it makes spiritual sense or not. So that I go on doing, hoping that Sri Sri Guru Gouranga will accept it as devotional service.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

*ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai*  
*14 April 2003*

Beloved Vaishnava readers, now here on your computer screen is a real "into me see" text. I am laying in bed as I write these very words. It is 1:35 AM Mumbai time on Monday, April 14. I've just spontaneously woken up with some thoughts and experiences to share with you.

We've been having a little trouble getting texts onto the In2-MeC website. For a week since we parted company at the Howrah train station in Calcutta I didn't hear from Madhu Puri das. I, with Martanda das, boarded the Gitanjali Express for Mumbai. Madhu, half an hour later, boarded a train for Bhubaneswar in Orissa. I sent Madhu some texts to be edited and published here in In2-MeC but it was a long wait before they finally appeared. I pray that Madhu Puri has not met with some inconvenience that stops him from doing his service of editing.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yesterday, Sunday, was Ekadasi. Instead of the usual *Bhagavatam* class the devotees here normally listen to a reading of Srila Prabhupada *Lilamrta* by HH Satsvarupa das Gosvami. It so happened that we began the chapter describing Srila Prabhupada's move to the Bowery in New York City after his typewriter and other items were stolen after his arrival in NYC from Butler, Pennsylvania. At the Bowery he took up residence at an A.I.R. loft.

I explained to the devotees that A.I.R. stood for "Artist in Residence." And "loft" meant that the place was a large room, usually covering a whole storey or floor level, in a building that had formerly been a factory of some sort, probably a textile factory. The company running the factory would have moved out to a new address or would have simply gone out of business. So in this way these old factory buildings became vacant; because the area had become degraded, other companies would not move into these buildings. In the 1960s the NYC city government permitted artists to rent spacious lofts in the Bowery and in other run-down areas of the city to do their painting and sculpting.

One of these artists, Harvey Cohen, had become friendly with Srila Prabhupada; he had grown weary of living in NYC and planned to move to San Francisco. This Harvey Cohen would later be initiated as Hari Das and would be the first ISKCON temple president in Frisco. But at this point in time in NYC, Harvey just wanted out of the Bowery, a low-class area mostly populated by alcoholics, drug addicts and petty criminals. So Harvey left his loft for Srila Prabhupada to stay in, who did not want to remain in his previous apartment from which his things were stolen.

Srila Prabhupada shared the loft with David Allen. I wrote about David in an In2-MeC entry in January. Prabhupada planned for David to become his first initiated American disciple. But David didn't receive initiation because he could not give up his heroin habit. One day David went crazy at the Bowery loft; so with the help of Michael (Mukunda) and Carl (Karlapati) Srila Prabhupada moved to the "Matchless Gifts" storefront in the Lower East Side, where the history of ISKCON begins.

I told the Juhu devotees that as a new devotee in Boston I'd met David Allen, who came for a visit in late 1970 or early '71. I wrote about this here in In2-MeC. David was very much respected by the devotees even though he was not practicing Krishna Consciousness *sadhana*. He was special because Prabhupada personally groomed him for initiation before any other of his American disciples. Though David failed to come up to the standard to receive formal *diksa*, his heart was deeply impressed by his association with the Lord's pure devotee. Such a fortunate soul, to have shared a residence with Srila Prabhupada! I wonder what he is doing now; I wonder if he is still alive on this planet.

Anyway, at this yesterday's *Lilamrta* class I told the story of my first meeting with Srila Prabhupada, which you've read here in In2-MeC...my having to stay to clean the kitchen while all the other devotees went to the Boston airport to greet his Divine Grace, and my getting the mercy of offering a fruit plate to Srila Prabhupada after his arrival lecture in the Boston temple. That was sweet, telling the Juhu devotees the inner meaning of this first encounter with my Spiritual Master.

After the class I reflected on an interesting point. Here in Mumbai I've been lecturing on the second of the *chatuh-sloki* (four nutshell verses of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 2.9.33-36) which express in essence the meaning of the whole *Bhagavatam*. When Srila Prabhupada came to Boston in 1971, I had four encounters with him, each being the nutshell of an essential aspect of my relationship with my Spiritual Master.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sunday afternoon I visited HH Sridhara Swami Maharaja at his "Nrsimha Kutir." On the ISKCON Juhu land, besides the big temple and guest house, there is an apartment complex that has stood here since before ISKCON bought the property. Gradually all the nondevotee residents of those apartments moved out; now the building is occupied by ISKCONians only. So HH Sridhara Maharaja stays in one apartment where he worships his three amazing Nrsimha *shilas* and one Sudarshana *shila*.

I wish I could publish here a photo of his big Nrsimha *shila*, but with Madhu Puri being in Bhubaneshwar there is no digital camera for that. Anyway, the *shila* is truly amazing. And the story behind Maharaja's getting it is also amazing. He used to worship Nrsimha *shilas* gifted to him by HH Indradyumna Maharaja. But a few years back these *shilas* were stolen from a car he had been traveling in while visiting America. So Maharaja felt very bad about this, of course. Then an astrologer told him his *shilas* would return.

So recently it happened that a devotee came to tell Maharaja that in a shop just near the Juhu temple, a man was selling *shaligram shilas* along with Rudraksha beads (the kind of beads the Shaivites chant on, just as Vaishnavas chant on *tulasi* beads). Maharaja went to that shop and was attracted to one particular *shila*. This form of the Lord is quite large and round, the size of a small melon, and very smooth. And he has a mouth. This mouth is simply amazing. If you look into the opening you can see that the mouth cavity is much larger inside the *shila*. The inner sides of the cavity are shaped as perfect *chakras*.

Now, the traditional account of how *shilas* get their different shapes, particularly the *chakra* marks, is that in the Gandaki river in Nepal where *shaligrams* are to be found, there dwell special worms with tusks that carve markings into the *shaligram* stones. It goes without saying that modern scientists will scoff at such an explanation. They call *shaligram shilas* "ammonites," meaning a kind of fossil stone formed from the shell of ancient creatures of the nautilus type. When I saw this big *shila* I understood how deficient this "scientific" explanation is.

This is no fossil. This is a big round stone with a hole in the front that inside expands into a large chamber carved in a *chakra* shape. Looking at it, logic impels you to conclude that some worm-like animal bored into the stone and did a "tour" around inside of it, then left the stone through the same hole it entered.

The word ammonite comes from the name of a Roman god, "Ammon", who was associated with rams (male sheep). Male sheep have coiled horns growing out of their heads. Scientists say that in ages past undersea creatures like the nautilus, which is a sort of octopus that has a shell shaped like a ram's horn, died and by some process science can't really explain, turned into ammonites, spiral stones that look like the horns of the rams of Ammon.

In places like Whitby, England, there are such stones one can find along the sea beach that *could* be fossils of the nautilus. Actually you can see these stones yourself by typing "whitby" and "ammonite" into your Internet search engine. You'll come to websites where such stones are pictured. And you'll notice they do *not* look like *shaligram shilas*, even though, yes, ammonites and *shaligrams* sometimes show similar spiral *chakra* marks. Anyway, HH Sridhara Maharaja's *shila* makes a farce out of the "ammonite" theory.

The man in the shop selling the *shilas* had put a price tag on this particular one for Rs 21 000! Maharaja preached to him that a *shaligram shila* is Vishnu. Anyone who sells a Vishnu shila goes to hell for the entire duration of the universe. The man then offered Maharaja any *shila* in the shop for free--except the big one! Maharaja kept preaching and insisting he wanted only the big *shila* with the *cakra* mouth. And the man ended up giving the *shila* to Maharaja without cost! Jaya Narasimhadeva! From other sources Maharaja got two *ugra-Nrsimha shilas*, plus the Sudarshana-*chakra shila* that was the first *shila* ever to be worshiped by HH Indradyumna Maharaja, when he took *sannyasa*.

So the astrologer's prediction was not wrong.

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I had a long and intimate talk with Maharaja yesterday. He is one of my Godbrothers with whom I can reveal my mind in confidence. He jokingly says it is because our initials are the same, "SS." In many ways he and I have the same mind about a lot of things. For example, he resigned from the GBC a few years ago, just as I resigned this year. His "excuse" for resigning is that he has a liver condition that endangers his health.

And that is true. Twice he went into a coma from this condition. But now he is doing better, has lots of energy, travels around the world, preaches, and his major project is to raise funds to build the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium in Sridhama Mayapur. It is to this project that he has dedicated the rest of his life.

But his liver sickness is not the deepest reason for his resignation from the GBC. He told me he used to be "a company man." That is an expression that refers to a man who totally identifies with the company he works for, who is unquestioningly loyal to the management. But after 10 years or so on the GBC, after seeing how the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON works from the inside, he began to have questions. He sees that too much institutionalization stifles the spontaneous enthusiasm that Srila Prabhupada liked to see in his disciples. But at the same time Maharaja remains an ISKCON man. He quit the GBC feeling that his participation on that Body was not very fruitful, but he continues to work for ISKCON as Prabhupada taught him. He does not point a finger of blame at anyone.

After all, the GBC is made up of devotees who are also trying to serve Srila Prabhupada and Krishna. Their service in the difficult and controversial area of management of the Society is sure to be problematic. Yes, they *do* make mistakes. I recall so clearly the meeting at which they made Harikesha Prabhu the GBC chairman for 3 years straight. The Body was completely convinced that this would help solve many of ISKCON's long-standing problems. But Prabhupada had clearly established that a GBC chairman may only hold office for one year. Within half a

year, Harikesh Prabhu not only left his post as GBC chairman, but left his position as ISKCON *guru*, BBT Trustee, and *sannyasi*. Indeed, he left the Society itself. Since then he has been an advocate of New Age-ism. His dropping out of ISKCON left a good portion of the Society in chaos. At the time the GBC voted him into 3-year chairmanship, I abstained from casting a vote because I sensed a big mistake was being made. And I was right.

But who doesn't make mistakes? Even Srila Prabhupada once said, "You can find faults in me too" (that is to say, if you are the type of person who looks for faults in others to explain away your own faults.) But that isn't healthy psychology; it is a process of the mind that is called projection, in which one projects deficiencies inside himself upon others. "I can't get along with this devotee because he gets too angry," one may argue; but all that means is that you have anger inside yourself to begin with, and your anger is rubbing against his, causing friction. As Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati said, "Because my vision is so honeycombed with faults, wherever I look I see only faults." We must all find a way to go on trying to serve Guru and Krishna despite the faulty nature of our collective conditioned existence. And we must avoid the offense of criticizing Vaishnavas.

I feel exactly the same way as Sridhara Maharaja does about institutionalization. I too used to be a company man; I used to think that all of ISKCON's problems are "manageable." But as we saw Lord Krishna Himself explain in a verse I quoted in the last Transcendental Psychology essay, so-called external problems are really internal problems.

A disciple once started to ask a question of Srila Prabhupada, that "If devotees are transcendental, then..." Prabhupada cut him off: "Devotees are *trying* to be transcendental!" The members of the GBC are no exception. They are trying to be transcendental, but as I have personally seen, many of the problems they are trying to solve are problems they created themselves in the first place. So-called external problems are really internal problems. You can't manage away anomalies that are inside of you.

To see this truth, which is explained by Krishna himself to Uddhava, is not to be offensive to the GBC or to any devotee manager. And it is not to say that there should be no management in ISKCON whatsoever, just some smiley walking-on-clouds spiritual anarchy. Management in ISKCON is necessary; Srila Prabhupada made no doubt about that. However, to be loyal and respectful to ISKCON management does not mean to ignore or dismiss as unimportant those areas, those qualities, of Krishna consciousness that management cannot actually manage!

For example, how can your taste for hearing and chanting the holy name of Krishna be managed? Now, it is true that we can manage to get ourselves into the temple in the morning, and manage to get our hands in the beadbag, and manage to perform 16 rounds of *japa*. But that doesn't guarantee you will chant good rounds with rapt attention. Still, there is a connection between good management of the circumstances of chanting on the one side, and taste for chanting on the other. Srila Prabhupada indicated this nicely in these words:

There is an English proverb that "God helps him who tries to help himself." That is an English proverb. So to become Krishna conscious is not a very difficult thing. People

have no taste. They do not understand the importance of this Krishna consciousness movement. But this is the only way by which one can become perfect and happy.

Maybe you did not catch the point Prabhupada is making here. It is that even though people have no taste and thus cannot understand the importance of Krishna consciousness, God will help them if they help themselves. Thus "to become Krishna conscious is not very difficult thing." We "help ourselves" by trying to manage our spiritual activities nicely. We don't have taste, but we should try to get it. We don't understand, but we should try to. This is what *sadhana-bhakti* is all about. Still, in the final analysis, whatever we do or don't do, the taste "by which one can become perfect and happy" *comes to us by the grace of God.*

In the practice of *sadhana-bhakti*, we realize that this grace becomes more apparent in our lives *as we try to help ourselves* attain it. So because there is a connection between God's help (His mercy) and our helping ourselves (by nicely managing our devotional activities), it may seem that if we are not getting that taste, then it is a problem of management. Well, certainly if we lack taste in Krishna consciousness, *something* has come up between ourselves and Krishna. But is that "something" really *only* just external management--our temple president for example, or the GBC? Has anyone ever had the experience that *just by blaming the management as being bad* their taste for chanting the holy name improves?

In reply to that question, someone may reasonably answer, "No, of course not. That's not the way. Let's not talk about blaming anyone. But we have to take steps to create a pure atmosphere in which we can try our best to make advancement and thereby attract the Lord's mercy." That is a good answer. But...even if we do that, the mercy of the Lord that we attract by our efforts may manifest in a way we don't expect. Maharaja Bharata nicely "managed" to leave his throne and go to the forest to cultivate his taste for Krishna consciousness. But God arranged that he became attached to a deer instead. Not that God forcibly attached his mind to the deer, but He made the arrangement by which Maharaja Bharata's latent material attachments came up in his heart to focus upon the deer. The result was that even though he had attained the exalted state of *bhava-bhakti*, Maharaja Bharata had to take birth as a deer in his next life.

But while he was in that deer body, the Lord permitted him to remember his previous life's devotional service. And so, as a deer, Maharaja Bharata took to hearing about Krishna with the greatest urgency. *Then* he was blessed with the full measure of higher taste. Thus after giving up that deer body, he became the spiritually famous Jada Bharata. Obviously, Krishna's plan for delivering His devotee and Maharaja Bharata's own plan for getting himself delivered were a little different!

We are not being offensive to the principle of good management in ISKCON by reflecting upon these truths that are so plainly stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

Offenses are created by the way we express ourselves, and by the way we act. If we express anger and frustration and act impetuously (i.e. in the mode of passion), denouncing other devotees for faults that we ourselves carry in our own hearts, *then* we commit offenses.

We should persevere. This word means "to persist in or to remain constant to a purpose, an idea, or a task in the face of obstacles or discouragement." I personally

find institutionalization discouraging. So discouraging I was forced, by a condition of depression, to resign from the GBC. But I remain constant in my purpose as a disciple of Srila Prabhupada and as a servant of his Society. It is a question of finding the position and service for yourself in which you can best persist.

There is another state of mind called obstinacy. It can look a lot like perseverance. But obstinacy is defined as: "the state or quality of being stubborn or refractory." Refractory means "to be resistant to authority." Therefore it is said: "The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is that one often comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't."

Another English saying is, "Where there is a will, there is a way." Conversely, where there is a won't, there isn't a way. If we look at the ISKCON institution only in terms of "I won't," then there is a good chance we won't find our way back to Godhead. "I won't surrender to these power-hungry ISKCON managers! I won't tolerate their hypocrisy! I won't listen to their classes, which are just the same old dry preaching over and over! I won't obey their instructions, I won't cooperate with them, I won't associate with them!" This insistent "won't" is just a weed in the heart choking the life of the devotional creeper.

Trials teach us what we are; they dig up the soil, and let us see what we are made of; they just turn up some of the ill weeds on to the surface.

Anyway, I so much appreciate Sridhara Maharaja's mood. He has realized that management can't solve our most fundamental problems in Krishna consciousness. Only Krishna can do that. And Krishna does that in His own way, according to His own plan, because He is independent and supreme and all-powerful, and charmingly clever, too. But Maharaja does not take Krishna's supremacy over all as an excuse to be obstinant towards management. Rather, Maharaja perseveres. He has a strong will, not a strong won't. And thus he continues to go forward. Seeing his example, many devotees are inspired in their own spiritual lives. I am one of them.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sridhara Maharaja has started a computer media preaching mission he calls VAST (the Vedic Academy for Spiritual Technology). I told him a story from a *darshan* Srila Prabhupada had with the BBT Library Party in Chicago 1975. I was a member of that party, so at one point in the discussion I asked Srila Prabhupada about Vedic technology. This question was impelled by my meetings with professors at universities. When I showed them the BBT books, they wanted to know if they explained anything about ancient Vedic technology like *brahmastra* weapons and *vimanas* (airplanes).

All Srila Prabhupada told me in reply was, "Vedic technology means Sri Guru Parampara." It was a very short answer. But it was enough. I consider it an extremely important *sutra*, because technology is the means by which a society progresses. Modern society progresses by material, scientific technology; Vedic society, which ISKCON represents, can only progress by following *guru-parampara*. If ISKCON does that, it can overtake the world, just as nowadays the Western scientific-technological culture has overtaken the world.

ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai 15 April 2003

In yesterday's entry to this journal, I expressed some concern that my writings here were getting logjammed because Madhu Puri Prabhu, who is in Bhubaneswar, was not answering his email. At last I got a letter from him. He tells me it is extremely hot there; thus he's been having trouble to move about in the daylight hours. I pray to Krishna that He protects Madhu Puri from health problems caused by the burning Indian summer sun. Heat stroke is very disabling.

\* \* \* \* \*

I was ill yesterday with fever and exhaustion, and this sickness continues today. It's not from the heat, because it does not get extremely hot here in Mumbai. Year-round this city gets fresh breezes from the Arabian Sea, so whether in summer or winter the temperature is tolerable. Anyway, I've been taking medicine and resting a lot. I should be back in action tomorrow.

So things have been pretty quiet for me in the last 24 hours. Before that, since my arrival in Juhu on the 8th, I was quite busy. Class every day, sometimes twice a day, a program at a devotee family's house. I did a couple days of shopping here too. I've been downsizing my altar paraphernalia. Previously I'd been carrying with me rather large pots and plates for my *puja*; most of that is now replaced with much smaller, lighter items. I got a wood-and-brass Sudarshan throne for the Jagannatha-Sudharshan *shilas*, and a brass throne for Giriraja, Sri Govardhana-*shila*. Giriraja's new throne looks like a little temple with arched windows all around and a dome on top. I also purchased a couple more 40-gigabyte external hard drives for my computer.

In Mumbai and Delhi you can pick up quite cheaply good compact external drives. I have five of these now, adding up to 200 gigabytes memory more than the 20 gigabytes built into my laptop. These five drives fit very easily into my computer carry-bag.

The advantage of external hard drives is that I save CD material to them: for example, Srila Prabhupada's audio and video recordings and so much other ISKCON nectar that is available on CDs these days. At first I was collecting the CDs, but that quickly became cumbersome. I was dragging around a shoulder bag full of them that was getting heavier and heavier the more CDs I acquired.

It was Madhu Puri Prabhu who got me onto the method of storing CD data to external hard drives. You can transfer the data of about 60 CDs to one of these drives which is the size of (sorry for the comparison) a pack of cigarettes. The 40-gigabyte drive is convenient because it does not need a separate power supply; you just connect it to the USB port of the laptop and it runs off your computer's power. There are larger drives available; I've seen an 80-gigabyte drive in one shop and I've heard you can get up to 120. But these are much more expensive and need their own power adaptors.

Another nice thing Madhu Puri introduced me to is digital photography of books. You photograph the pages of a book to a memory card that can be inserted into a computer. Then with a program called Adobe Photoshop you can compress the data of these photos into what are known as .gif files. If this is done well, the .gif files of

the pages are easier to read than the original photographs, because the compression takes out unnecessary color. You see, to read a page, you really only require black and white. A raw photo of a book page includes so many subtle shades of colors. The .gif compression takes away all the unnecessary stuff and leaves you with basically just the letters of the book. There is a further process by which you can turn those letters into computer characters; then you could put the photoed books into the Vedabase, for example, or some other folio-type program. But that is a lot of work. Photographing and compressing books doesn't take too much time if you know what you are doing. Then you can read the books on the computer screen, page by page, with a program called ACDSsee.

In Mayapur, Madhu Puri and I did a marathon of photoing and compressing about 50 books (new ISKCON-related publications, plus other books of Vedic studies, and academic texts about philosophy, science, psychology, etc.). Previously I used to carry around so many books with me, but now I can put them all on my computer.

I am not really into all the complexities of computer technology. I am just mentioning these things because they can be of use to devotees who would find it convenient to have a lightweight, portable library of a great deal of audio, video and printed material.

Madhu Puri Prabhu was a great help to me during this visit of mine to India. If he hadn't been here with me, this In2-MeC journal could not have happened as it did. Madhu Puri Prabhu ki jaya!!!

\* \* \* \* \*

Brajahari Prabhu just came to see me as I was writing this. He is the temple manager here at ISKCON Juhu. Very, very, nice brahmacari. He is on his way to an ISKCON manager's meeting in Tirupati and just wanted to say goodbye. He requested that I stay in Juhu three months every year! Well, I think that won't be possible; but I do want to visit this beautiful Radha-Rasabihari Mandira every time I come to India.

\* \* \* \* \*

I was too busy in Mayapur doing the books-to-computer marathon and writing the Transcendental Psychology essays to report here about the c e n t i p e d e s ! ! ! (Oooh!)

My *kutir* in Tarunpur became a home to these creatures. Those of you readers who don't speak English as a first language may not know what a centipede is. It is what scientists call an arthropod, which is a fancy word for "bug." The name centipede comes from the Latin *centipeda*, meaning "100 feet." They are long and run rapidly across the ground on many legs with a snake-like movement of their whole body.

In India centipedes are considered a kind of *vrscika* or scorpion. They don't look like scorpions, but they do have poison fangs that inflict a painful bite if the centipede is a big one. So because centipedes are *vrscikas*, we have to kill them. Srila Prabhupada explained in 1968:

So once I saw in our Mayapur, Lord Caitanya's birthplace, so a snake was going, a black snake with... In Bengal there are many snakes. So my Guru Maharaja was on the upstairs and everyone asked the permission whether this should be killed. He said immediately, "Yes. He should be killed." So at that time I thought that "How Guru Maharaja ordered for killing the snake?" Then, after so many years, when I began to read *Bhagavatam* and came to this passage, Prahlada Maharaja's assertion, *modeta sadhur api vrschika sarpa hatya*, then I thought that "My Guru Maharaja did right thing." Here also, *modeta*. Even a *sadhu*. Then why a *sadhu* is pleased when a *sarpa*, a scorpion, or snake is killed? The reason is that these two kinds of creatures, they bite innocent persons without any fault. Without any fault.

I saw about 5 centipedes during my month and a half stay in Tarunpur. I killed 4 and managed to cut one in half with a small knife before it escaped. These things are so attached to the body that when I cut it in half, both halves ran in different directions. I did kill the back half, but the front half, with the head, escaped.

One morning during *puja*, when two of Murari Gupta's sons were with me watching me worship my *shilas*, the boys saw a centipede crawl up my clothing. Right in the middle of *puja*! I had to stop everything and kill the little rascal.

That one and three others (including the one I cut in half) were "little," not more than 5 centimeters long. But another one, the fifth, was huge!

Early one morning, just after I turned on the light to get up from rest, I felt something run across my foot. I looked down. Though I did see for an instant something disappear into the darkness, I wasn't sure what it was. I thought it might be a lizard, one of those geckos that the Bengalis call tikki-tikki because of the clicking sound they make. But in the brief instant I saw the thing, I noted that it did not look like a lizard. It crossed my mind it might be a centipede, but I did not want to believe that. Because from what I did see of it in the dark, if it was a centipede, then it was a *big one*!

Anyway, whatever it was, it had vanished. I rolled up my bedding from the floor and set about getting the *kutir* in order before going to take a shower. I gradually noticed that my foot, over which the thing had run, was feeling a little itchy. When centipedes are really big, the touch of their feet on human skin causes an itch. In some cases their feet leave a row of red dots across skin. But as my foot was not itching bad, not even as bad as a mosquito bite, I didn't mind it.

Then suddenly I saw it. It was on the straw mat that covers the central area of the *kutir*, and was right in front of my *shila* altar. The thing was the color of a brick, sort of brown-red. And it was as big and as fat as a fountain pen. Fifteen centimeters long!

It was nightmarish to see. Very disturbing to the mind. Frightening, yes, but even worse, disgusting in a very sinister way. It loitered in one place but sort of stretched and unstretched itself with a lazy motion.

I could have just smashed the thing, but I didn't want to make a big mess that I would have to clean up before doing *puja*; plus I wanted to show the body to Murari Gupta Prabhu. So I took a flashlight and used the back end of it to crush the

centipede's head. The little monster writhed around for a second and then strained backwards, trying to pull its head out from under the flashlight.

I took my small knife and cut its head off.

Now, what kind of creature can still see and think without a head?

I found out that a centipede can.

After the head was gone, the thing was free from the flashlight. It started moving directly toward me, as if to attack. Centipedes are aggressive if provoked. And this one was really mad now. But it had no head! I could understand at that moment how demonic these creatures are. Their predatory life force is so strong that they have a kind of mystic power that over-rides their physical senses.

Still not wanting to smash the thing into a big bloody mess on my straw floor mat, still wanting to preserve the body to show Murari, I started stabbing it along its "spine" with the knife blade. It kept coming after me. Finally after ten stabs it stopped, but it was still not dead. It just couldn't walk any more. I suppose stabbing it like that damaged its central nervous system. Its legs stopped working. But it was still trying to drag itself in my direction. I carefully wrapped it up in a piece of tissue paper and took it over to Murari's house to show him. But he had already seen such big centipedes before, and since he had begun his morning *puja* of his Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai Deities, he did not want interrupt his spiritual meditations to look at such a horrible beast from hell.

These creatures have an aura about them that deeply disturbs the mind. I was upset for days after that. Even now, writing this down, I get a creepy feeling inside.

I hope reading this didn't disturb *you* too much. But it is something I just had to put into my journal.

I hope next year the centipedes will have moved out. Last year the *kutir* was home to a colony of red ants. This year there were very few ants; but for the first time, there were centipedes.

*ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai*  
*16 April 2003*

Sorreeeeee...but I have to write about centipedes again.

I received an email today that expressed some dismay over my description in yesterday's journal of my killing of centipedes. An argument was made that centipedes are a different species from scorpions. Better to just catch the centipede in a cup, chant Hare Krishna to it, and toss it out the door.

Okay. If that's how you want to deal with these creatures, you won't get any argument from me. To want to avoid killing living entities (*ahimsa*) is saintly. Srila Prabhupada stated about his own life:

*Vrscika* means scorpion and *sarpa* means snake. Naturally, whenever a scorpion is found or a snake is out, every man is prepared to kill it. Every man. "Oh, here is a snake. Kill it." When I was in Allahabad, in my bed there was a snake. I do not know how it came, but I informed to the servants, and they came with all stick immediately. So when the bed seat was taken away, it was under the, I mean to say, quilt. So that snake was there, and from the face of the snake I could understand that she was, it was so afraid. He could understand that "Now I'm going to be killed by so many people. They have come." So I told them that "Don't kill this poor fellow. Better take it and send it to the forest." But they took it away, but I later on understood they killed it.

So here we see in his householder life, before taking initiation from his spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada did not like to be party to the killing of a snake. That is natural to the heart that is soft with compassion for all living entities.

But as Srila Prabhupada pointed out, "whenever a scorpion is found or a snake is out, every man is prepared to kill it. Every man." That is the practice in India. It is not just that *poisonous* snakes are killed like this in India. *Every* snake is killed.

I quoted Srila Prabhupada yesterday (this is actually from the same talk as the above quotation) that he was bothered in his mind when he saw his Guru Maharaja approve the killing of "a black snake." From that description, I doubt that this particular snake was poisonous. The poisonous snakes of India are the cobra, the Russell's viper, the krait, and a kind of tree snake the name of which I've forgotten. None of these types of snakes are all black, though some have black and white bands or black spots on red. Anyway, the culture in India is, "If you see a snake, you kill it. No questions asked."

And this is supported in the *Bhagavatam*. Prahlada Maharaja uses the word *sarpa*, which means simply "snake." The Sanskrit word for cobra is *ahi*. So Sri Prahlada is not taking the trouble to distinguish between poisonous and non-poisonous snakes. *Sarpa hatya*: "snakes are to be killed." When Srila Prabhupada read this, his doubts about why his spiritual master agreed that a black snake be killed were allayed.

Of course, I must add that Western-born devotees like HH Bhaktividyā Purna Maharaja and Murari Gupta Prabhu, my good friends who've lived in Mayapur for over twenty years, will not allow non-poisonous snakes to be killed. They are useful; they eat rats. But the Indian people themselves? They kill all snakes they see in an instant.

The understanding is that snake life is the lowest of the low, and killing a snake delivers it from that low condition. In the holy *dhama*, a killed snake is liberated.

Same is with scorpions (*vrscika*).

So what about centipedes?

Actually, I first asked Murari Gupta Prabhu before I started killing the centipedes in my *kutir*. I said, "This is your property, all creatures here are under your protection, so what is the policy with centipedes?"

His answer: "Whenever I see one I kill it."

His Indian-born wife, who speaks several Indian languages, explained that a centipede is also called *vrscika* in Bengali.

Another point is--since the email I received defending centipedes comes from Europe--that we are here talking about a type of centipede that is found from India across Asia to the Philippines. Its scientific classification is *Scolopendrida*. According to the *Encyclopedia Brittanica*, this Asian centipede can grow as large as 28 centimeters long. The *Brittanica* states that "these forms are capable of inflicting severe bites."

The European centipede is classified as *Scutigera* and does not grow longer than 2.5 centimeters in length. So you civilized Europeans have no experience of the kind of centipede I am talking about. Every one of these creatures in my *kutir*, if allowed to live, would grow and grow and grow into something huge, nasty and dangerous.

Therefore Indians kill centipedes on sight, considering them a type of scorpion. Even Murari Gupta, who is cautious about killing non-poisonous snakes etc., kills any centipede he finds in his house. He has four children, including a 3 year old daughter. I found on the Internet a report of a little girl in some Asian country who died as a result of a *Scolopendrida* bite.

I think I've said enough about these creatures.

*ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai*  
*17 April 2003*

Attention all members of the North European CLF (Centipede Liberation Front):

Go to

[www.tarantulaspiders.com/pages/centipedegallery.htm](http://www.tarantulaspiders.com/pages/centipedegallery.htm)

Scroll down to *Scolopendra Subspinipes* or as it is commonly known, "Giant Vietnamese Centipede." Note the range of its habitat (I quote): "SE Asia, Africa, India, and Indian ocean islands..." (etc).

Note the warning (I quote): "Only centipede that has caused death from its bite--beware!"

Then you may go to

[www.arachnopets.com/arachnoboards/showthread.php?s=&threadid=254](http://www.arachnopets.com/arachnoboards/showthread.php?s=&threadid=254)

Read here some accounts of what it's like to be bitten by the *Scolopendra Subspinipes* centipede.

Then have fun with your capturing this cute little thingie in your paper cup and chanting Hare Krishna to it...

*ISKCON Juhu, Mumbai  
19 April, 2003*

This is the text of a letter I wrote to a devotee named Ananda Mohana dasa who came to see me here at Juhu. The letter explains itself. Readers of In2-MeC readers might appreciate it.

"Audio - listen to Suhotra Maharaja reading this letter about Nandarani [HERE](#)."

My dear Ananda Mohana Prabhu,

Please accept my humble and heartfelt obeisances. All glories to His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada. All glories to your spiritual master and my Godbrother, Sripad Gopal Krsna Maharaja.

This is the letter of comment I promised I would write you after I read the book you offered me, *Remembering Nandarani*, dedicated to your daughter who was taken from this world by Lord Krsna at age thirteen. Prabhu, you may be surprised that I am putting this letter in your hand just one day after you visited me. After all, I did tell you yesterday--which was the first day you and I had ever in our lives spoken to one another--that "I'll have to read the book first," "I am leaving Mumbai day after tomorrow and I'll be traveling for days, so it will take me time," "I did not know your daughter before, so I'll have to give this event of her passing some consideration," and so on.

But two things impelled me to go through the book cover to cover last night, and to write this letter this morning. The first thing was your emotional state as you recounted both the glories of your little girl and the tragedy of her sudden departure. And the second is the charming photo of her *gopi*-like face on the cover of the book, which, whenever I glance at it, tugs at my heart.

About your emotional state during our talk yesterday, I cannot characterize it merely as the grief of a father who has lost a beloved child. There was a much deeper element to it. I think it may be expressed in this quotation from a saintly person of the ancient Middle East: "Not until a person detaches himself from the creation will he be joined with the Creator. "

Now, this is a major theme of our *Bhagavata* philosophy. We find it, for example, in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 17. 31. Lord Siva is speaking to Goddess Parvati about the glories of Maharaja Citraketu. As you well know, Citraketu lost a most beloved son. That tragedy became the impetus for his detaching himself from the creation and taking up the path back home, Back to Godhead. So in this verse Mahadeva tells his consort that the devotees of Lord Vasudeva have perfect knowledge and perfect detachment from this world. Therefore they are not interested in so-called happiness and distress.

In that way, your emotional state was as Siva says, *na hi kascid vyapasrayah*, not sheltered in something material. By the grace of your unique daughter Nandarani Devi Dasi, you are detached from creation, detached from the parental conception of "I am the creator of this child" which is typical of the *rajo-guna*. And so now, as a result of this knowledge of the real nature of your relationship to your beloved Nandarani, Sri Krsna Himself has joined you. *Aho dine'nathe nihita-carano niscitam idam*, states this line attributed to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself--"Alas, this is certain: Lord Jagannatha bestows His lotus feet upon those who feel themselves fallen and have no shelter in this world but Him. "

Prabhu, I have to now reveal my mind to you in a way that may surprise you. As we sat together yesterday, I began to think to myself, "How I wish I myself was in the position of this Ananda Mohana Prabhu. This would be for me the greatest mercy that Lord Jagannatha could bestow. " (My personal Deity is Sri Sri Jagannatha-Sudarshana, and to Him daily I chant the *Jagannathastakam* from which the line I just quoted comes. )

Your heart, your very life force, has been invaded by Sri Krsna in the form of the mood of separation from one who is beloved to Him. You may know that in Srila Prabhupada's final pastimes, when my senior Godbrothers were emotionally overcome, anguishing at their spiritual master's withered health, Prabhupada told them, "This is my business. " Meaning that His Divine Grace's final *lila* was to bind their hearts to him forever, so as to bind them to Krsna. Similarly the hearts of you and your good wife Mother Vrndavandesvari Devi Dasi have been bound to Krsna by the *lila* of your daughter's passing from this world.

What a preacher Nandarani was! She knew by heart many *slokas* from various *sastras*. I went carefully through the handwritten notes of her Vaisnava studies that you reproduced in the book. Amazing! For example, I was struck by her refutation of the *smarta* conception of *purusartha* (*dharma, artha, karma, moksa*) on page 45. For a girl of 13 to have such a grasp of Vedanta-*darsana* is extraordinary. Was she Gargi returned, the female Vedic sage of ancient times who baffled the great *smarta* Yajnavalkya Muni by her penetrating inquiry into Who is the foundation of sacrifice? (Gargi is glorified as a Vaisnavi Vedantist by Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana in his *Govinda-bhasya*).

But Nandarani's mission was not to grow up and preach to the whole world. Her mission was stay just long enough to preach to you and your wife. Naturally, her association deeply affected so many other devotees, as we see from the published realizations of *sannyasis* and other devotees. But Nandarani especially blessed you two by being *your* daughter, by living with *you both* every day of her life.

I am a *sannyasi*. What do I know of the emotional bond between parent and child? Indeed, this is a thing that through my whole life I wanted to avoid. As we all well know from the *sastras*, such emotional bonds in their material version constitute *hrdaya-grantha*, the hard knot of attachment that drags the poor soul back to the womb again and again. But meeting you, and reading this wonderful book, opened my eyes to the spiritual version of emotional bondage which is glorified in the *sastras*, for example in this famous verse:

*prasangam ajaram pasam  
atmanah kavayo viduh*

*sa eva sadhusu krto  
moksa-dvaram apavrtam*

Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation. [*Bhag.* 3. 25. 20]

It is significant that this verse is spoken by Lord Kapiladeva to Devahuti, from whose womb He appeared in this world. Need I elaborate? It is clear to me that Nandarani's brief sojourn in this world was to impress this same lesson into the hearts of her father and mother. I do sincerely believe that Sripad Jayapataka Maharaja has revealed the whole truth of this in his statement on page 87 of *Remembering Nandarani*:

Both Ananda Mohana Dasa and Vrndavanesvari Devi Dasi were devotees in their previous lives and their *guru* had come as their daughter just to bring them back to the path and after getting them firmly fixed up she has gone back to Godhead.

Similarly the palmist-devotee quoted in Chapter Ten of *Remembering Nandarani* instructed you:

Normally, when one loses their child it is a case of grief. However, in this case I would say it is an occasion to rejoice. She has directly gone to Krsna. Now she is giving power, ideas and guidance to both of you and will make you pure devotees.

This house is so purified and therefore I repeat, you should never think of disposing this house. No doubt, money is required by everyone. Nevertheless, you should never dispose of this house. It is not a house now. It is a temple. . . You should consider yourselves as the most fortunate parents in the world to have had a child like Nandarani as your daughter.

Again revealing my mind to you, I consider myself most unfortunate because I never met Nandarani. You told me, and the book confirms, that she was dear to all *sannyasis* who knew her. That means these Maharajas were blessed by her innocence, her devotion, her purity. But I, the unlucky one (luck=Laksmi, and Nandarani was a little Laksmi) missed her blessings.

In comparison to you, my devotional attraction to Krsna is feeble because it is mainly intellectual. I glimpse the Lord through the words of the *sastra* and through the lofty philosophical concepts therein. I try to develop attachment to Lord Jagannatha by rituals of daily *puja*. As a *sannyasi* I am careful about getting involved in mundane entanglements, so generally I don't associate closely with others. In fact I don't mind being alone for long periods of time. Now, in my *asrama*, that nature is perhaps advantageous--but only in some *jnana-misra-bhakti* sense. Real *bhakti* is purely personal. It is awash in oceanic transcendental emotions. I have to admit to you that I am far away from that.

But you and your wife, the fortunate parents of this extraordinary soul Nandarani Devi Dasi, have been caught up in a pure personal relationship with a devotee who is beloved by Krsna and His associates. Remember I told you yesterday that there is an English saying, "Whom God loves most He takes soonest from this world. " And

Sripad Radhanatha Swami said as much on the tape you played to me of his realization.

Krsna loves your daughter. As we see from her offering to her Spiritual Master Sripad Gopal Krsna Maharaja, your daughter loves *guru* and Krsna. And that is why Krsna took her back, because there was so much love flowing between them that He wanted her to be with Him in His pastimes again.

I think before she was conceived she asked Krsna for "time out" from her part in His *nitya-lila* so that she could come down here to get you and your wife deeply attached to her. After thirteen years of her absence, the Lord became impatient and abruptly took her back to Him. But Nandarani did not actually leave Krsna to come here; she brought Him with her. And she did not actually leave you to return to Him; she entered your hearts in a *bhava-rupa*.

I witnessed myself how, when you to me spoke about her, tears flooded your eyes and your voice broke. That is her! That is your dearest daughter, still present! And that is Krsna, from whom she is never apart.

*Aho dine 'nathe nihita-carano niscitam idam*, "Alas, this is certain: Lord Jagannatha bestows His lotus feet upon those who feel themselves fallen and have no shelter in this world but Him. " I ritualistically repeat this line daily to my Jagannatha-Sudharsana *silas*, but yesterday I met a devotee who exemplifies those beautiful words. And that devotee is you, my dear Ananda Mohana Dasa. So at last I, a dry renunciate, became a little lucky. I was able to meet your little Laksmi of a daughter, Nandarani, by tasting a drop of the *rasa* that you share with her. *Rasa vai sah*, says the Upanisad: "Rasa is He (Krsna Himself). "

Even the way she departed this world, which from material vision seems so brutal, was a shaft of *viraha* (emotion of separation) aimed by Krsna at the deepest core of your heart. I recall, years ago, watching a stage play performed in Bhaktivedanta Manor of *Ramayana*. The devotee-actress who played Sita was so heart-wrenching in her performance of the scene in which Sita is seized by Ravana that many in the audience started weeping openly. "This is my business," Srila Prabhupada said of his own pathos-inducing final pastimes.

To use an American expression, it is this particular type of pastime-mercy that "separates the men from the boys. " I suppose even some members of this ISKCON movement, what to speak of members of worldly religions, will have a difficult time seeing God's purpose in His taking a saintly young daughter from her pious parents. Nandarani was celebrated by the hundreds who knew her as a pure, learned, blissful Vaisnavi, a special soul from birth. She was so blessed that in her brief life she visited all important holy places of pilgrimage in the holy land of India. Yet a demon in human form choked her to death. So often this sort of "ungodly" event is the subject of theodical doubts. "How could some bad man get the chance to throttle an innocent devotee-child? Why would Krsna let her die at the hands of a demon?"

But in a lecture Srila Prabhupada explained, "Because he has got enemy, therefore it is not that he is Krsna-*bhakta*. He is Krsna-*bhakta*, even having his enemies, just like Krsna, despite having enemies, is Krsna. " And in a *Srimad-Bhagavatam* purport he writes,

A devotee's conclusion is that no one is directly responsible for being a benefactor or mischief-monger without the sanction of the Lord; therefore he does not consider anyone to be directly responsible for such action. But in both the cases he takes it for granted that either benefit or loss is God-sent, and thus it is His grace. In case of benefit, no one will deny that it is God-sent, but in case of loss or reverses one becomes doubtful about how the Lord could be so unkind to His devotee as to put him in great difficulty. Jesus Christ was seemingly put into such great difficulty, being crucified by the ignorant, but he was never angry at the mischief-mongers. That is the way of accepting a thing, either favorable or unfavorable. . . By God's grace, the devotee tolerates all reverses. . . In other words, a devotee has no suffering at all because so-called suffering is also God's grace for a devotee who sees God in everything.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura sings:

*tomara sevaya dukha hoya jato  
seo to' parama sukha  
seva-sukha-duhka parama sampad  
nasaye avidya-dukha*

Troubles encountered in your service shall be the cause of great happiness, for in Your devotional service joy and sorrow are equally great riches. Both destroy the misery of ignorance. [*Atma-nivedana* 8. 4]

The misery of our ignorance is destroyed when we understand the truth behind Sita's abduction, or Christ's crucifixion, or the bull Dharma's being tormented by the personality of Kali, or Haridasa Thakura's being whipped by the Kazi's men, or Sripad Tamala Krsna Maharaja's leaving the world in a car accident. The truth of the passing of Nandarani destroys the ultimate misery of your life. Your ultimate misery is not, "Alas, our daughter was murdered. " All our relationships in this temporary world are lost as a matter of course, whether to disease, old age, mishap or murder. The ultimate misery is that we have forgotten Krsna. So Krsna may come even in the form of "a mischief-monger", to use Srila Prabhupada's expression, to pull us out of that ultimate misery. It is just His mercy when He *forces* us to remember Him. That type of mercy is reserved only for His strongest devotees. Therefore it "separates the men from the boys. " In the face of such special mercy, immature devotees may lose their faith. They may lament, "If there is a God, why did He not save our family from this tragedy?" I witnessed yesterday that you are made of sterner stuff. My obeisances to you again and again.

Dear Ananda Mohana Prabhu, your daughter Nandarani Devi Dasi wants you to remember what Lord Krsna told Uddhava:

*yo yo mayi pare dharmah  
kalpyate nisphalaya cet  
tad-ayaso nirarthah syad  
bhayader iva sattama*

O Uddhava, greatest of saints, in a dangerous situation an ordinary person cries, becomes fearful and laments, although such useless emotions do not change the situation. But activities offered to Me without personal motivation, even if they are externally useless, amount to the actual process of religion. [*Bhag.* 11. 29. 21]

She wants you to absorb your emotions completely in devotional service to the Lord, not to waste them in useless lamentation. But wonder of wonders, mercy of mercies, she herself is inseparable from Krsna. So if, as is natural for a father who has lost his child, you sometimes break down in remembrance of your little girl--and isn't it, when daughters reach about age 13, the *gopi* age, that they most captivate the heart of the parent?--then that lamentation will bring forth remembrance of Krsna in the most piercingly sweet mood of *viraha*, transcendental separation.

I cannot fathom the intimate depth of this mercy Lord Krsna has showered upon you. I am only able to appreciate it from the remove of philosophical insight. In this way I know without a doubt you are most fortunate. I wish I had even a fraction of that fortune. To be so bound to the lotus feet of the Lord by such a strong emotional tie!

Your daughter, Nandarani Devi Dasi, is the light of your life back home, Back to Godhead. Just let that light lead you always. It is so easy, it is so natural, because we human beings are above all creatures of emotion. And so I must say it again: how very, very fortunate you are that Krsna has forced His way into the core of your heart via your kinship to a soul He personally sent into this world and personally called back to His lotus feet.

My heart overflows with the best of wishes for you and your good wife,  
Vrndavanesvari Devi Dasi.

Your servant,

Suhotra Swami

*ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama, Govardhana, Sri Vrndavana Dhama  
21 April 2003*

### **First Day at IBSA**

Yesterday (Sunday) Martanda dasa and I entrained on the Sankranti Rajdhani Express that left Mumbai at about 18:00. We arrived at Mathura at 9:00 the next morning. At Mathura station we hired a small van for ourselves and our luggage and drove to the ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama (IBSA) which is situated across the *parikrama* road from Sri Govardhana Hill. A January entry of In2-MeC gives you photos of this most holy and most unique place; you'll recall from that entry that I stayed here for a month, between November and December in 2002.

I've only been here a few hours and already two extraordinary things have transpired. But first, before getting into these, let me just say that I plan to be here at IBSA until the 25th. Then I will leave for Delhi to prepare for flying out of India early on the morning of the 28th. Internet access is possible here at Govardhana but sometimes it is problematic. So what I will do while I am at IBSA is just keep adding to this journal entry as I feel like it, for the next 4 days. When I reach Delhi I will upload the whole thing to In2-MeC. So this entry that you have begun reading will cover all the days that I was here in Govardhana.

Back to the extraordinary things that happened in this few hours since I arrived. One thing was that--after settling in the room that the IBSA temple commander, Asita Krsna Prabhu, had reserved for me, then taking shower, setting up the altar, doing a quick *puja* and *bhoga* offering, then going to get my head and face shaved, then going to offer obeisances to Manasi Ganga and sprinkle her sacred water on my head--I found out that Keshava Bharati Maharaja is here. He walked into my room after I got back from Manasi Ganga!

That was extraordinary because nobody told me he was at IBSA. I thought he was in America or somewhere else. Here at IBSA my Godbrother and old, old friend, Keshava Bharati Maharaja (until recently KB dasa *brahmacari* because he stepped down from *sannyasa* in the 1980s), holds no official position. But it is his humble but powerful service to the IBSA project over the last decade that has made this *ashrama* what it is today.

Now KB (as his close friends call him) is *sannyasa* again. When we were together last November and December he and I talked about his renewing his *sannyasa*. He told me he would do it without putting it through the GBC system of *sannyasa* approval. As I revealed here in In2-MeC a few days ago, I am no longer a "company man. " So I told him, "Great! Just do it. You should have never have let those paper-pushers talk you into stepping down from *sannyasa* in the first place. " So not long ago, in a quiet ceremony, he re-accepted the *danda* from an ISKCON *sannyasi* Godbrother whose name I will not mention here.

How about that, sports fans?

Predictably, a few days after he took *sannyasa* two representatives of the (ahem) GBC Sannyasa Ministry sped up in a taxi to the front door of the IBSA with Samsonite attache cases in their hands. "We're here to investigate. " Kesava Bharati Maharaja preached gently but firmly to them for hours. He mentioned my name as one who supported his return to *sannyasa* (I'm not the only one; he had a list of 25 devotees backing him up, not only *sannyasis* but even two Godsisters). One of the two GBC Sannyasa Ministers sent me an email about it. This was last March, while I was in Sridhama Mayapur. I replied, "I stayed a month in Govardhana with Keshava Bharati Prabhu. He should have never stepped down from *sannyasa*. His case is just one symptom of many things I find sad about the ISKCON institution; but I'll not go into that here. It's depressing and that is why I resigned from the GBC. Anyway, I go on record supporting Keshava Bharati Prabhu's taking up the *danda* again. "

It seems the two minsters went away satisfied. The question remains, of course, what the GBC Body will have to say about Keshava Bharati Swami. Whatever. I wish him all the best. He is a most personal kind of preacher, extremely humble, understanding and kind-hearted, and he knows there is a huge preaching opportunity in the world today--particularly in America-- that the ISKCON institution is not addressing. So go and preach, Maharaja. That's what *sannyasa* is all about, not getting votes and stamps of approval from bureaucrats.

Now, the second extraordinary thing that happened today is that after 32 years I met P R A B H U P A D A D A S A again!!!!!!

Readers of In2-MeC will find reference to him in a January entry, the same one in which I told you about my meeting David Allen in Boston in late '70 or early '71.

Prabhupada dasa was the one to whom in 1966 Srila Prabhupada offered a *sannyasi lungi* when he came complaining to His Divine Grace about his material sufferings.

After talking with him today I can fill out the whole story. Prabhupada dasa was then Lon Solomon. In 1966 he lived in the East Village, in an apartment on East 9th Street between Avenues B and C. He was together with a black woman who was very attached to him.

At one point he had a drug experience that cost him his hold on reality. He ran away from the girl and started living on the street. Sometimes he slept in the Paradox and the Forum, two bohemian hangouts. Sometimes he slept in a city park. And sometimes, by the kindness of the devotees, he slept at 26 2nd Avenue (Matchless Gifts), the first ISKCON center.

In that drug-crazed condition he thought of himself as a preacher. He had attended some of Prabhupada's lectures and knew the basic teachings of Krishna Consciousness. And he tried to spread those teaching among his own associates. His hippie friends used to complain, "Lon, don't preach. " But they'd hand him a guitar and say, "Just chant. " He could play guitar nicely, so he'd lead them in a *kirtana*. At least they were enthusiastic about that.

Srila Prabhupada knew Lon. Once, while under the influence of lysergic acid diethylemide (LSD), he came Matchless Gifts to hear His Divine Grace lecture. Srila Prabhupada looked right at him and said, "Lon, did you take LSD?"

In those days it was very easy to meet and talk with Prabhupada in his apartment behind Matchless Gifts. So once Lon came up to explain the state of his mind to His Divine Grace. Actually, Prabhupada dasa admits, he was in a psychotic condition, so he was not able to speak in any sensible manner. But Srila Prabhupada listened patiently as he babbled, "I'm just like you, Swamiji. I am a mendicant preacher. But I can't maintain! I have no place to stay! I have a message but no way to give it to the world!"

Srila Prabhupada responded, "Tsk, tsk, tsk. " He reached behind him and picked up a *lungi*, holding it out to Lon. "Simply join us, we will solve all your problems. " Prabhupada dasa told me at that instant his mind began churning out one insane thought after another. In exaggerated panic he wondered, "Now what am I supposed to do? Just take my pants off and put this thing on?" He got to his feet and backed away from Srila Prabhupada in the direction of the door behind him. Prabhupada stood up too and followed him, still holding out the *lungi*. At the door, as Lon was leaving, a crystal tear glided down from the corner of one of Srila Prabhupada's eyes. "Please come back," he said.

Prabhupada dasa remembers a class from October 1966 in which Srila Prabhupada said to his listeners, who were mostly still in *karmi* dress and hardly able to follow the four regulative principles, "Some of you will go to England. Some of you will go to Europe. You will spread Krishna consciousness all over the world. " At that time Lon was very much into Beatles music, particularly their album *Revolver* (I believe the mystical song *Tomorrow Never Knows* is on this LP). When Lon heard Prabhupada talk about his followers going to London, he thought, "Wow! If I hang around the Swami, I'll meet the Beatles. " He foresaw himself preaching to the Fab Four about Krishna.

I commented, "You know, Prabhu, that could have actually happened, had you really hung around Srila Prabhupada. Syamasundara Prabhu and his wife Malati, Gurudasa and the others who went to London were themselves hardly more than hippies at the time. But by hanging around Prabhupada they got the mission to go to England and preach to the Beatles. " He nodded and smiled. "Oh yes. I know that very well. But I was too crazy in those days. "

Through the years, Lon Solomon gradually overcame his craziness. By the time I met him in Boston, he was the manager of what he calls a "junk shop. " He considers that he was still half out of his mind even at that time, but at least he was doing something productive. Later, after I left Boston to travel with Vishnujana Maharaja, he got a bigger shop that became quite successful, and he began donating regularly to the temple. He met Srila Prabhupada again during the early '70's and tried to explain to His Divine Grace that his mind was finally getting in order. But perhaps it wasn't in order enough. He once wrote a letter to Prabhupada complaining about something the Boston temple president had done that Lon thought was unfair, but got no reply.

Finally he joined the Boston temple. On Rama-*navami*, April 1975, he was initiated by Srila Prabhupada, through the mail, as Prabhupada dasa. This name was especially arranged for him by the Boston temple president in light of all the early association Lon had with Prabhupada. The initiation ceremony was performed by HH Tamal Krishna Maharaja.

At his initiation ceremony Lon had an experience that reminded me of my own when I was initiated, when I thought my name was not on the list. Generally when a *bhakta* or *bhaktin* got a spiritual name from Srila Prabhupada, it would start with the same letter as the first *karmi* name. Hence, for example, Bruce Sharf was initiated as Brahmananda, Greg Sharf as Gargamuni, Steve Guarino as Satsvarupa, Howard Wheeler as Hayagriva, and so on. So in Lon's initiation ceremony the names were being announced in alphabetical order, and as usual every spiritual name started with the same letter as the devotee's *karmi* name. The names progressed past the letter "I" and still Lon was not called up to take his beads. So he started thinking that because he had done so poorly on *sankirtana* the day before, he had been passed over. He would not get initiated!

Actually, he had even said the day before to a devotee named Srinatha (a very saintly Godbrother who years ago passed away from this world) that "I collected so little today, I should not take initiation tomorrow. " Srinatha replied sweetly, "You just take the mercy. " Now that the "I" names were finished up, Lon's heart sank into deep depression. Suddenly the Boston president said, "Now it is time for a very special devotee to receive his name and beads. Since he had so much merciful association with Srila Prabhupada in the very beginning of ISKCON's history in New York, Bhakta Lon is now Prabhupada dasa!" You can imagine the loud shouts of "Jaya!" and the heavy beating of the *mrdangas*.

Ten days before Srila Prabhupada left this planet, Prabhupada dasa received his second initiation. It wasn't until the 1980's, long after I had left the States to preach in Europe, that I received word from others that "that guy in Boston who owned the junk shop, you know, who knew Srila Prabhupada in 1966, is initiated as Prabhupada dasa. " I was under the impression that he was initiated by a disciple of Srila Prabhupada. But no, he is my Godbrother. How wonderful.

My meeting him again after all these years was a beautiful experience for both of us. He is just now reading my book, *Substance and Shadow* and likes it very much. He wants to talk again with me about it after he's had a day to put some questions down on paper. He is a real old-style intellectual who majored in philosophy at Brooklyn College. Just wonderful to talk to!

This is how we met here at IBSA. During *prasadam* time, he was sitting some distance from me. I was talking with Keshava Bharati Maharaja, but I noticed this older devotee in *brahmacari* dress glancing at me again and again and smiling. After we finished *prasadam* he shyly came over to introduce himself. He said, "Suhotra Maharaja, you probably don't remember me. . . ," then he started recounting some things from the old days in Boston. I couldn't tell who he was because the last time I saw him he had long hair and a full beard. Then finally he said, "My name is Prabhupada dasa. "

I got all excited and almost shouted, "Don't remember you? Prabhu, I have never forgotten you! It's just that I never saw your face without hair and beard. You were a major influence on me when I was a new devotee!" Very humbly he said, "But I was crazy then. " I said, "But you got Prabhupada's mercy in 1966. I always considered you a very special person. " Then we offered each other obeisances.

Prabhupada dasa is full of stories of the old days. He told me for example that he started an underground newspaper in New York called *Nova Vanguard*. It only lasted four issues. But he dedicated a full page of one issue to an article on Srila Prabhupada written by a devotee.

He used to visit Allen Ginsberg, sit down in his kitchen and chant Hare Krishna while strumming his guitar. Ginsberg would come and join him playing finger cymbals. Lon's sister was married to N. S. (name abbreviated for legal reasons), who was a close friend of Richard Alpert (Baba Rama Das, who wrote the hippie classic *Be Here Now*. Alpert was Timothy Leary's partner in launching LSD as a fad among American youth. ) N. S. and Lon's sister used to manufacture huge quantities of LSD and another powerful hallucinogen called DMT in the basement of N. S. 's mother's house. N. S. often walked around the house with no clothes on, just being "natural," I suppose. N. S. 's mother loved it. She thought it was great that her son and all his bearded weirdo friends were buzzing around her place day and night. Lon used to wash the test tubes in which the drugs were cooked up.

I brought up the question of beatniks versus hippies that I had discussed with Brahmananda. Prabhupada dasa said, "Brahmananda was old enough to be a beatnik, but I was younger. I became aware of the Beat scene at age 13 or 14, and I wanted to become a poet. The Beats were creative. They were into poetry, art, jazz, and they could intellectualize. They were also totally into drugs and illicit sex, but they studied too; Allen Ginsberg took the trouble to learn some Tibetan, for example. But by the time I was old enough to myself take up the bohemian life, the hippies had taken over. And yes, like Brahmananda told you, it was because Allen Ginsberg, one of the top Beats, himself turned into a hippie. So I guess I was a hippie who started out wanting to be a Beat. When I got into LSD, all my intellectual pretensions just went to hell. My poetry consisted of line after line of dirty words. Even Allen Ginsberg didn't like it.

"I know what Brahmananda meant about them (beatniks and hippies) being two different tribes," Prabhupada dasa continued. "I remember a talk in a coffeeshop by David Lacombe, who was a name among the Beat Generation. He was speaking to a whole roomful of people, just condemning the hippies. 'These hippies don't create,' he was complaining. 'They don't even think. Hippies are just passive drug zombies. They've ruined the whole underground scene. I'm leaving New York to live in the forest. '"

Sriman Prabhupada dasa Brahmachari is truly my long-lost brother. I didn't know until he told me today, but he met HH Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja in Mayapur for the first time this year. As you may know, Maharaja is my best friend. Prabhupada dasa was so happy to meet Maharaja! He said, "Like you, he's a philosopher. He can talk about any subject and bring it into the light of Vedic knowledge. And this is what I want to learn to do. I've been in South America doing business to keep ISKCON going down there, but now that's finished. I can't hustle for money any more. I'm wearing saffron now and I just want to study Srila Prabhupada's books, preach, and help devotees come to a deeper understanding of the philosophy. " I hugged him. "We talk the same language," I said.

Prabhupada dasa and I exchanged emails. We'll be talking again tomorrow, so readers, stay tuned, because more of his lore which is not a bore will be its way to your computer display in just one day. That's only *here* at [www.in2-mec.com](http://www.in2-mec.com). Remember, friends and neighbors out there in Internet land, at In2-MeC you read by far the most unconventional, free-associative and outright bizarre presentations of Krishna Consciousness to be found on the World-Wide Web. We're proud that In2-MeC is a private site, totally unconnected and unaccountable to iskcon. net, pamho. net or any other "bona fide" ISKCON communications system.

The reason I write, as I declared in the very first entry of this journal, is that in 1978 Srila Prabhupada asked me in a dream, "Why don't you write?" So I write. And the oldtimers know that Srila Prabhupada did appreciate off-beat creative writing. In an early BTG article Hayagriva dasa analyzed a long-winded poem written in 1930 by Hart Crane called *The Bridge*. Somehow or other he connected that poem to Krishna consciousness. Srila Prabhupada was very pleased, even proud, of his "Professor Wheeler's" pioneer literary efforts. We try to keep that pioneer spirit alive here at In2-MeC. So don't flip, even if you think centipedes are hip, In2-MeC's gonna catch you in its grip. Your responses have been hugely supportive. Keep those cards and letters coming, folks.

So completely wonderful, this meeting with Sriman Prabhupada dasa Prabhu! So completely meaningful. I pray, pray, pray to Sri Sri Jagannatha-Sudarshana that what I am experiencing here in my talks with Godbrothers like Sridhara Maharaja, Keshava Bharati Maharaja, Bhaktividya Purna Maharaja, and Prabhupada Prabhu, is the start of a spiritual revolution. I feel incredible spiritual nourishment whenever I get the mercy of their association.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another thing that happened today is that I met with Bhakta Gennadi, originally from Moldova. I've known him for years. He wants to stay here and be a permanent part of IBSA. I told him, "I'm not giving you a green light for that. I'm giving you 108

green lights. " He's an aspiring disciple, but of the new generation. I told him, "You read all of Srila Prabhupada's books first, then we will talk about initiation. "

IBSA is a perfect place for such an education. Keshava Bharati Maharaja is very enthusiastic about Bhakta Gennadi's wish to remain here for the rest of his life, if possible. Maharaja is an excellent guide in Gennadi's learning of *sastra*, since he is a BBT editor. He worked on the recently-published edition of *Bṛhad-Bhagavatmṛta*.

Bhakta Gennadi is getting new silver facial fixtures (smile, *tilaka*, eyebrows) for Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarshan, Sri-Sri Laksmi-Sesasayi and Sri Giriraja *shilas*. These are being made in a shop in Vrndavana. Premavanya Prabhu is paying for them. They will be delivered here at IBSA on the 24th.

### **Second Day at IBSA**

*ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama, Govardhana, Sri Vrndavana Dhama  
22 April 2003*

Prabhupada dasa--I'll be calling him Lon a lot, by his pre-initiation name--first heard the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* in 1965 from Allen Ginsberg, who sang *kirtana* in two live performances accompanied by an East Village rock group called the Fugs. At this time I lived in Mount Clemens, Michigan (the greater Detroit area). In 1966 or '67 I bought a Fugs album that featured Hare Krishna sung by Ginsberg; this was my own first aural introduction to *kirtana*. (Not a pure source for receiving the real name, I am afraid; but I did start to chant in imitation as a result. )

The first time Lon ever saw Srila Prabhupada and heard him speak was when he appeared as a guest on *The Alan Burke Show*, a New York television program. Now, this TV show has been described by others-Satsvarupa Maharaja in the *Lilamṛta* and Nanda Kishore Prabhu on the *SPM* video series--but for the first time I learned from Prabhupada dasa that by the end of the show Burke had become so moved by Prabhupada's saintly demeanor that in an emotion-choked voice he told His Divine Grace, "Swamiji, you are a very charming gentleman. "

"That was not Alan Burke," remembers Prabhupada dasa. "Burke's program was aired from inside his opulent skyscraper penthouse. He used to bring 'weird' guests on, like a guy from the Flat Earth Society, and poke sarcastic fun at them; he was fond of lighting up big cigars during his interviews and blowing smoke into his guests' faces. But with Prabhupada, Burke could not act like Burke. Prabhupada was too aristocratic, too calm, too gentle, too scholarly, too much *in control* to be mocked by a man like Alan Burke. "

Lon used to walk past Matchless Gifts, on 26 Second Avenue, when it was still a gift shop. "No wonder it went out of business. The only thing on sale was a collection of wooden match boxes. Artsy-craftsy sorts of things, these boxes. They were highly glossed with a thick coat of varnish painted over color pictures of movie stars and other popular faces. But the boxes had no matches in them! And that was it. That's all that was on sale. Therefore the shop was called 'match-less. ' Not a profitable line of business. "

Tomkin's Square Park was right in the middle of Lon's neighborhood. After Srila Prabhupada moved to Matchless Gifts from the Bowery, Lon would see the *harer-nama sankirtana* performed by Swamiji and his earliest disciples. "They sat, sang, played their instruments and danced on a big rug. This had been donated by a fellow named Robert Nelson. He once asked Srila Prabhupada for the recipe for *chapatis*. Prabhupada replied, 'Oh, this will cost you \$100.' Somehow Robert got the money for Prabhupada and learned from him how to make *chapatis*."

Lon was the type of guy who put his nose into everything. "I knew all the 'spiritual scenes' in the East Village. I knew Buddhists, I knew meditators, I knew mystics. Like for example, there was this local mystic poet named Benjamin Schwarzberg. He used to write for an underground newspaper called the *East Village Other*. Ben would only speak in poetry. Somehow, without effort, he could make everything he said rhyme. He'd throw in words like Shiva and Bodhisattva, connect them in funny ways, toss together a spontaneous mystical word-salad. Just having a conversation with him meant your mind went for a ride on a roller-coaster of metaphysical ideas. And on top of it Benjamin was completely celibate, which was very unusual for those times. So in the midst of this explosion of wacky spiritualism that was going on at that time in the East Village, I also used to visit the 26 Second Avenue temple. That's how I became known to Srila Prabhupada. He even called me by my first name, Lon. But I never intended to get serious about Krishna Consciousness. The temple was just one of many scenes for me.

"I knew this psychedelic artist called Ron Lawson who used to help me with my underground newspaper, *Nova Vanguard*. He lived downstairs from Alan Ginsberg. One night at his place Ron gave a friend and I a dose of very potent LSD. I couldn't believe what was happening. The hallucinations were so extreme that this Ron just turned into a grinning skeleton before my eyes. There he was, a skeleton sitting at his kitchen table, chanting 'Om' again and again. Then he got up and stood over my friend and I. He just stared at us with a skull face and popped-out eyes. Then he intoned '*Tat tvam asi*, 'I am He,' 'I am God,' with this ferocious intensity.

"This was the acid trip that pushed me over the edge. I stayed at Ron's place for ten hours, until dawn. Normally after ten hours on LSD you come down off the high. When I left Ron's place and walked out in the new light of the day, I realized, 'My God, this trip is just starting!' The sunshine, the color, the waking up of the city, it all built up into a madhouse circus in my head. I didn't come down for two weeks, and by that time I had gone clinically insane. I even jumped from the roof of a subway entrance station, thinking I could fly. Fortunately the station was not very high, so I didn't hurt myself. Eventually I ended up in the Bellvue psychiatric hospital where I was diagnosed as an ambulatory schizophrenic.

"In the meantime my personal life went to pieces. That's when I left my apartment and my girlfriend. I couldn't handle normal life anymore. On top of that, this Ron Lawson had put this crazy idea into my head that he was God, I was God, everything was God.

"So anyway, at some point I came to the temple and attended one of Swamiji's *Srimad-Bhagavatam* classes. That's when Prabhupada asked me, 'Lon, did you take LSD?' I answered, 'No, Swamiji.' Which in a way was true because this was at least several days after I had taken Ron's acid. So normally I would not be high. But in fact I was out of my head and Prabhupada knew it immediately. After the lecture

everyone bowed down except me. I stood up before Srila Prabhupada and held my hands up over my head. In my mind I was showing him my universal form. I was wearing this long muskrat fur coat that I had bought cheap from a second-hand shop. The thing was so thick and fuzzy it weighed five kilos. I had a day-glo third eye pasted on my forehead. Swamiji took a look at me in this crazed state and then he did something totally unpredictable. He offered his *pranams*. Seated in the *vyasasana*, he pressed his palms together before his face and bowed his head. What I think he was doing was, he was offering his respects to Maya-devi who had me firmly in her grip. 'All glories to the powerful illusory energy. '

"But of course I couldn't fathom that. Prabhupada's *pranams*, oh, that convinced me. 'Swamiji knows who I *really* am,' I thought. 'He knows I'm different from all these others here who bow down, who are merely servants. He knows I am an *incarnation!*'

"Srila Prabhupada left the *vyasasana* and went out the back door of the temple into his apartment building. Now, the way things were in the temple of that time, the devotees were hardly more than hippies themselves. There was no discrimination as to who is fit or unfit, who is sane, who is crazy. So they were urging me, in my totally insane frame of mind, 'You gotta talk to Swamiji. Go on up, talk to him. ' So I went up. In those days Prabhupada's door was open to everyone. There was even a sign on it that said something like 'Door open, come in. ' But when I turned the doorknob to enter, the door was locked. I should have understood what that meant. But I was insane, completely insane. 'OK, Swamiji's door is locked. Never mind. He has already given me my leave to become a *guru*. There's nothing more to talk about anyway. I'll just do it. '

"So I went to Tomkins Square Park. There is a big round fountain in the middle, and because it was autumn season and chilly, the park authorities had shut the water off. So this fountain became my *mandala*. I sat in the middle of it, upon the metal nozzles that in the summer shot the water into the air. And in my fur coat and third eye I preached. I preached in a screaming voice hour after hour, sometimes in English, sometimes in Spanish, sometimes in Hebrew, throwing in a few Sanskrit words I knew. The whole rest of the morning went by like that. It's New York, so mostly the people walking by didn't look at me twice. But finally a crowd gathered, I guess because I just wasn't going away. And at last a really beautiful looking couple, this young boy and girl, very *sattvik* in their features, they stepped up and laid a vegetarian meal before me.

"I thought, 'Yeah! Here they are! My disciples!' I ate the meal and after that I don't know what I did; the day had ended so I slept somewhere, maybe in the park. Who knows? I mean, in that state I used to sometimes just walk into people's homes, strangers. I'd just walk in, they might be painting their living room so that's why the door was open. I'd just walk in, start helping them to paint.

"So the next day I returned to the fountain to continue my mission. This time a policeman came up and ordered me out of the fountain. One thing led to another and I was arrested. The cops understood I was nuts. So I was sent to Bellvue. My parents came to see me; they were almost crying, 'Our poor son, locked in the madhouse. ' 'No, it's great here,' I told them with a big smile. 'I'd like to stay here for the rest of my life. ' Then they really started to cry. After a week or two in the nuthouse I managed to talk my way out.

"I went back to the temple. While I was in Bellvue they cut off all my hair and beard. So when Srila Prabhupada saw me, he said, 'Ah, Lon. Now you look very nice.' Now, during the time I was locked up, the devotees had newly printed this booklet Prabhupada wrote. It was called *Who is Crazy?* I saw these booklets all over the place; it was one of the very first pieces of distribution literature. And I felt sort of proud. 'Ah, this is all in my honor. I've just come from the madhouse, and here I am greeted by all these newly published booklets called *Who is Crazy?*'"

Soon after that a documentary movie crew came to the temple to film *Happiness on Second Avenue*, a very interesting piece of ISKCON history that has been transferred to video by the ITV (ISKCON Television Network). The film is seven minutes long and appeared on New York TV as part of a longer program called *Eye on New York*. Lon Solomon can be seen in *Happiness in Second Avenue* wearing glasses, his hair neatly cut. In two sequences he bows down before Srila Prabhupada with the rest of the devotees and guests.

"I'm really glad that my paying obeisances to Srila Prabhupada was captured on film. Because that was definitely *not* my style in those days. I was the guy who would stand up to show his universal form while everyone else was down on the floor. But on that day, because of the film crew, I behaved properly. "

Srila Prabhupada was always kind to Lon. But several times he was dismissed from Prabhupada's presence, in a firm but gentle way, because of his crazy behavior. Once he came into Prabhupada's apartment while some early disciples were present. Again, these devotees were hardly above the hippie stage themselves. Lon was in a restless state; he paced back and forth in Srila Prabhupada's room and then started re-arranging Prabhupada's things, moving the writing materials on his desk from one place to another and so on. Not one of the disciples thought to do anything about Lon's strange behavior. In fact they were saying to one another, "Hey, dig this cat, man. He's flipped out. Look what he's doing. Man, that's *weird*, really *weird*. Is he high or what? Wow!"

Finally Srila Prabhupada stood up and smiled. He started shaking Lon's hand, clapping him on the shoulder, moving him very gently but quickly to the door. In this way he got him out of the room. Prabhupada dasa commented, "You see, that's how a host will deal with a drunk at a party. You've got guests, it's your own home, so don't want an ugly scene to break out. So you just smile, keep shaking the guy's hand like he's a good friend, and edge him through the door and out of your place. Srila Prabhupada, as pure and saintly and innocent as he was, even knew how to do this, a tactic used by the kind of people who hold parties where alcohol is served. "

In 1967 Srila Prabhupada left New York to start his ISKCON in San Francisco. Not really intending to follow Swamiji, more to check out what's happening on the West Coast, Lon also took off for Frisco. This was the height of the Haight-Ashbury scene . "I remember seeing the posters for the famous Mantra Rock Dance at the Avalon Ballroom. That event is elaborately described in the *Lilamrta*. I was in San Francisco at the time. I could have gone to see Prabhupada at the Avalon and at the temple on Frederick Street. I mean, I was really glad for the Swami to see his Krishna Consciousness catching on in Frisco like wildfire. But unfortunately I took LSD again. This was the last time I ever touched that drug. Once more I went totally bonkers and had to return to New York. "

After that, Lon managed to pull himself together a bit. He kept chanting Hare Krishna but he got more involved in his own affairs. He got married, moved up north to Vermont for a while, then moved a bit south to the city of Boston, which is still north of New York City.

It was 1969 and by now Lon was out of touch with ISKCON. He needed a job. His wife found an advertisement in a hippie newspaper called *The Phoenix*. It offered an "antique and junk shop" for sale. So Lon and his wife went to the place, located at 95 Glenville Avenue. He found a group of hippies sitting around on the old furniture that was stocked in the shop. He saw amidst the junk a big sign that said *Hare Krishna Temple*. There was a good number of ISKCON books scattered around too.

"What's this?" he asked the hippies, pointing at the sign and the books.

"Hey, man," one replied languidly, "this joint used to be the Boston Hare Krishna temple. They moved over to North Beacon Street. " Lon had saved some money so he bought 95 Glenville Avenue for a cheap price and went into the second-hand business. The hippies had a big wooly monkey in a cage in the cellar. He was named Zeke. When he bought the shop, he got Zeke as part of the deal, so Lon named the place Zeke's Old-Time Furniture Store. Eventually Lon had to sell Zeke the Monkey because as a pet he was too expensive to maintain.

It was during 1970-72 when, as a new devotee at 40 North Beacon Street, I got to know Lon. Glenville Avenue is not far from North Beacon Street. So I'd sometimes run into him, either when he visited the temple, or just on the street in the neighborhood.

He told me something very interesting from this period. You'll recall my description of the first time I met Srila Prabhupada in July of 1971. Everyone went to the airport except me, who had to stay and clean the kitchen. I heard some *kirtana* music coming from somewhere in the ether, so at one point I searched the building top to bottom to see if someone else was there. I found no one. But Prabhupada dasa told me that on that same day, *he* was alone in the temple room after everyone went the airport. He thought *he* was the only person in the whole building. Meanwhile, I too was in the building thinking the same thing about myself: "I'm all alone here. " Somehow during the search I missed finding him. By the way, he was not playing a tape of *kirtana*. So that mystery remains unexplained.

His business improved, so he moved to a better location at 1357 Commonwealth Avenue. He kept the name Zeke's and continued to sell second- hand furniture, appliances, antiques, junk. There was a rock band that used to often shop at Zeke's on Commonwealth Avenue. These guys had long wild-looking hair and regularly needed handheld electric hair dryers. This band, at that time struggling in Boston to make a name for themselves, was named Aerosmith. In the late '70's and '80's they became one of the most successful American rock bands. The lead singer is Steve Tyler; Liz, his daughter, is a famous Hollywood actress. She plays an elven princess in the *Lord of the Rings* series.

Later Zeke's moved to its next location on Harvard Square, a busy commercial center in the city of Boston. This shop was a large space that Lon managed to buy at a sweet price. But Lon and his two co-workers had no separate living facilities, so they used to just bunk in the store at night. One night they couldn't get to sleep because

of the loud rock music of a jukebox in a nearby pizza restaurant. So they all got up and went into the pizza place. They learned that the manager of the pizza joint had left the night business to some freaky character with hair down to his waist. He was playing the jukebox super loud and just giving pizzas out for free. So Lon got a guitar from somewhere and started chanting Hare Krishna.

The long-haired Pizza Freak broke into a big smile and said, "Hey, man! I really dig that! You guys gotta live with me! I got this big place over on Chester street. C'mon, let's go!" So he closed down the pizza place and they went to his house. Pizza Freak had a room free for each of the three Zeke's workers. He put Lon in a room that had the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* painted all over the walls and the ceiling. There were BBT posters of Sri Krishna on the wall too.

It turned out that just previous to Lon's moving into that room, it had been occupied by a young woman who joined the Boston Hare Krishna temple. (All this transpired after I had joined Visnujana Maharaja, so I do not know this *mataji*.) This lady went on to be one of the big book distributors in America during the 1970s. An interesting fact is that her boyfriend, who did not go with her to join ISKCON, was named Harry Kershner.

Another interesting fact is that when the Boston temple was located at 95 Glenville Avenue, before Lon had even come to Boston, there was no place at that address to house Srila Prabhupada when he visited. According to Satsvarupa Maharaja's diaries, the Boston devotees found Srila Prabhupada an apartment in a building on Hester Street. But there is no Hester Street in Boston; there is only a Hester Street in Chinatown in New York. In Boston there is a Chester Street. After she became a devotee, this *mataji* did research and learned that Srila Prabhupada had been put up by the devotees in an apartment in the very same building on Chester Street that she, and then Lon, later lived in.

### **Third Day at IBSA**

*ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama, Govardhana, Sri Vrndavana Dhama  
23 April 2003*

Today I had planned to do Govardhana-*parikrama*. But yesterday I developed a cold that worsened as the day when on. I began drinking fruit juice (orange and pineapple) and taking medicines. Last night my condition reached its worst point: I couldn't sleep until some mad hour like 4:00 AM, and when I woke up at about 8:00 AM I felt dazed and feverish. So I arranged for Martanda das to do a simple *puja* for Sri Sri Jagannatha-Sudarshan. I chanted my rounds, rested and continued to take only juice. Gradually I find I'm feeling better. It's strange because this hot and dry season is not the weather for catching cold. I am vowing to do Govardhana-*parikrama* tomorrow, starting at 4:00 AM, no matter what. I'll have to get up very early to the *puja* first. But that's OK; today I will have gotten lots of rest.

This morning Prabhupada dasa went with Martanda to visit Sri Radhakunda. Before leaving they asked my advice about bathing there. I told them that my practice was

to sit on the step nearest the water surface and to use a *lota* to pour Radha-kunda water over my head. Later Prabhupada dasa came by just before 14:00 to take *darsan* of Jagannatha-Sudarshana, Laksmi-Sesasayi, Ananta Nrsimha and Giriraja. I told him a bit about my usual *puja* program. We had a short discussion about the importance of taking extra effort to remember Krishna and to develop a relationship with Him.

I also had him point out exactly where he appears in the *Happiness on Second Avenue* video, which I have stored on an external hard drive. Unfortunately the image in the film is not very clear. He sat more to the back of the crowd so the camera did not focus on him.

Later in the afternoon Prabhupada dasa and I had another long talk, lasting for four hours. Much of it was about *Substance and Shadow*. He knows philosophy himself, so it went quite deep. Then we turned to more personal, Godbrotherly matters. It is said that one who has many friends has none. There are a few persons with whom I can speak freely with, to get advice as well as to give advice. Prabhupada dasa is one of these persons. As I grow older, such association as his becomes more and more important. Friendship is the shadow of the evening, which increases with the setting sun of life.

#### **Fourth Day at IBSA**

*ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama, Govardhana, Sri Vrndavana Dhama  
24 April 2003*

Awoke at 2:15. Did full *puja* and *yajna*, then left for Govardhana- *parikrama* as 5:00 with Martanda and Bhakta Gennadi, all walking barefoot. The sky was just getting a little light at this hour. The pace was brisk: we first went to Manasi-ganga to pay obeisances and take her transcendental waters, then walked to Govinda-kunda to do the same. We chanted *japa* with every step. By the end of the *parikrama* I'd done nearly 32 rounds.

By 8:00 we were entering Radha-kunda village. Three-quarters of the *parikrama* was completed. We took bath by sitting at Sri Radha-kundas's shoreline, pouring Her nectarean waters over our heads with *lotas*. Here we were joined by two Kazakhstani devotees who had lost their own *parikrama* party. After we left Radha-kunda village and were halfway to Kusuma-sarovara, we stopped for sugarcane juice refreshment. I needed a sugar boost as I had not eaten solid food the day before. I only had taken juice because of my cold--which is still not completely gone away. So I had 5 glasses. Up to then on this morning I had not even taken a drink of water yet. So the sugar cane juice, with a little lemon and black salt, was great!

But after this the going got rough. The late April sun was high in the sky. Summer officially starts here in a few more days, the early part of May. Summer in the Vrndavana area is intolerable for most Western-born people. I'm told that the highest temperature ever recorded anywhere in the world, something like 135 degrees Fahrenheit (I believe that is 57 degrees Celsius), was at Govardhana.

Anway, by 10:00 the late April sun baked the asphalt roadway and the sandy walkways on both sides of the road. Just after we passed Kusuma-sarovara I had to surrender to wearing flip-flop beach sandals. The bottoms of my feet felt like they were on fire! By the time we reached Govardhana village, it was so hot that the asphalt road surface was melting! Somehow Martanda and Gennadi managed to walk the whole way barefoot. One of the Kazakhstanis, who had no shoes, jumped aboard a passing tractor because for him walking was like taking step after step upon fiery coals. We returned to ISBSA a bit after 11:00, which was a record. I'd never done Govardhana-*parikrama* faster than 8 hours before. The whole *parikrama* is, roughly figured, an 18 kilometer walk.

Now is not *parikrama* season--at least not for daytime pilgrimages. I sometimes hear *sankirtana* parties going by on the *parikrama* path at night. But when I stayed here last November-December, thousands and thousands of pilgrims went around the Hill at all hours. Now it is too hot. The *parikrama* path is largely deserted during the day.

After I returned to IBSA the skin on my head, back, shoulders and arms was a dark reddish-brown; it doesn't feel burned now as I am writing this but the pain and peeling of sunburn may set in a little later. I'm physically beat. My legs ache, my feet hurt and I am in a daze of heat exhaustion. But it surely was blissful.

*hantayam adrir abala hari-dasa-varyo  
yad rama-krsna-carana-sparasa-pramodah  
manam tanoti saha-go-ganayos tayor yat  
paniya-suya vasa-kandara-kanda-mulaih*

Of all the devotees, this Govardhana Hill is the best! O My friends, this hill supplies Krsna and Balarama, as well as Their calves, cows and cowherd friends, with all kinds of necessities-water for drinking, very soft grass, caves, fruits, flowers and vegetables. In this way the hill offers respect to the Lord. Being touched by the lotus feet of Krsna and Balarama, Govardhana Hill appears very jubilant. [*Bhag.* 10. 21. 18]

### **Fifth Day at IBSA**

*ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama, Govardhana, Sri Vrndavana Dhama  
25 April 2003*

It is a little after 10:00 AM. With great sadness I am leaving Govardhana for Delhi. I rose from sleep very painfully at 4:30 AM, still aching from yesterday's *parikrama*. I did my *puja* and *yajna*, then I went to the IBSA Deity greeting, Srila Prabhupada *vyasapuja*, and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class (which I was asked to give). After class I packed up the Deities and the rest of my luggage. Keshava Bharati Maharaja and Prabhupada dasa came in to say their fond farewells. Gennadi loaded the luggage into this little red car, and at this very moment *Vraja-dhama* is rolling through my field of perception, going, going, going.

In this instant I feel my existence has no meaning whatsoever. O my dear Lord Krishna, when will I attain your lotus feet? I suppose I am closer to You than countless sleeping souls spread throughout the creation. But this slightly nearer proximity to You, this bit more of awareness of You, is my only pain. Otherwise, to material suffering I am anesthetized by the chanting and the teachings given me by the mercy of my spiritual master. The only pain left is You, my Lord.

*Sant Nagar, Delhi  
26 April 2003*

I am now in the huge overheated city of *maya* that devotees jokingly call "smelly Delhi," because the air here is so polluted. Tomorrow night I shall board a KLM flight for Amsterdam. Today I am going shopping for a small luggage bag. Otherwise, mercifully, I shall do nothing here except chant my rounds. I am still soooo tired from the Govardhana *parikrama*. It is difficult to even walk short distances because every joint of my body aches so much. Yesterday I was dazed most of the time with heat stroke.

Rasa-lila dd, who stays here in Sant Nagar 62 working on a degree in Bharat-natyam dance, thinks she also suffered from a little heat stroke yesterday from being out in the city sun. It is like an oven here. In any case, she is her smiling usual self, and that is a comfort to see. Comfort, because...

...my having to leave India now is so sad. This morning I felt so useless. But in the midst of that inner lost feeling, I also felt Srila Prabhupada's helping hand. I do have a plan for these coming times--to study hard and develop as a preacher. Srila Prabhupada stands with me to protect me and drag me forward.

I am of the *kapha* nature, according to Ayurveda, and *kapha* people are prone to depression. So it is not uncommon that I feel the night of sorrow enclose me; but I know that just as night brings out stars, sorrow shows us truths. Srila Prabhupada is always there to show the truth of Krsna consciousness in this world of pain and misery. Anyway, a *sannyasi* should not have optimism about life in this material world. As Sri Sukadeva Gosvami prays, devotees have only Krishna as their cure for unhappiness:

*bhuyo namah sad-vrjina-cchide 'satam  
asambhavayakhila-sattva-murtaye  
pumsam punah paramahamsya asrame  
vyavasthitanam anumrgya-dasuse*

I again offer my respectful obeisances unto the form of complete existence and transcendence, who is the liberator of the pious devotees from all distresses and the destroyer of the further advances in atheistic temperament of the nondevotee-demons. For the transcendentalists who are situated in the topmost spiritual perfection, He grants their specific destinations.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Sant Nagar, Delhi*  
*27 April 2003*

All flowers will droop in absences of the sun that waked their sweets.

But Srila Rupa Gosvami instructs us:  
*tam nirvyajam bhaja guna-nidhe pavanam pavananam*  
*sraddha-rajyan-matir atitaram uttamah-sloka-maulim*  
*prodyann antah-karana-kuhare hanta yan-nama-bhanor*  
*abhaso'pi ksapayati maha-pataka-dhvanta-rasim*

O reservoir of all good qualities, just worship Sri Krishna, the purifier of all purifiers, the most exalted of the personalities worshiped by choice poetry. Worship Him with a faithful, unflinching mind, without duplicity and in a highly elevated manner. Thus worship the Lord, whose name is like the sun, for just as a slight appearance of the sun dissipates the darkness of night, so a slight appearance of the holy name of Krsna can drive away all the darkness of ignorance that arises in the heart due to greatly sinful activities performed in previous lives. [*Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* 2.1.103]

Melancholia has deeply smitten me. I droop like a flower deprived of the sun, pierced by the arrow of realization that in but a few hours from now, I will be trapped inside a metal banshee screaming high in the sky away from the holy land of Sri Krsna and Gouranga Mahaprabhu. My heart sags in my breast like a heavy stone. Desolation rules my mind.

But Sri Rupa Gosvami tells us that the Krishna sun that nourishes the inner sweets of our flower-like spiritual identity is exactly identical to His holy Name. This Name must be worshiped with a faithful, unflinching mind, without duplicity. We must strive to worship that Name in a highly elevated manner. Then that transcendental life-giving sun may shine upon us always.

His verse evokes in me a rapture in blue. Rapture, yes, for when we hear such transcendental poetry by our *rasa-acarya* it transports us into the realm of bliss; but the blue of sadness still clings, for I am extremely far beneath that highly elevated state of *nama-seva* that Sri Rupa Gosvami advises us to cultivate.

Happiness is not a reward--it is a consequence. Suffering is not a punishment--it is a result. I must humbly submit to the result of my sinful activities and try to persevere. I try to take heart in the truth that by suffering comes wisdom. Yet alas, my own efforts are never enough.

Will you not gather round to help me, o merciful devotees? For I think a true friend is somebody who can make us do what we can. With your help, I do believe I *can* make the Name of Krishna the eternal sun of my unfortunate life.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
*30 April 2003*

The KLM flight took off from Indira Gandhi airport shortly after midnight on 28 April, and landed me in Schipol-Amsterdam airport at about 6:30 AM the same day. Everything went very smoothly, by the grace of Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarshana. Vidyagati Prabhu and Bhakta Michael were there in the arrival lounge with a car

outside; Mukti-dhatri dd had come also but she left separately by train to the Amsterdam temple. Myself, Vidyagati and Bhakta Michael went to the village of Wormer, some 20 km from the city. Here I stay in Michael's nice apartment, which is comfortably large enough for the three of us. It is very peaceful here.



Here is a photograph of the temple room in Michael's apartment. That's my *shila* altar in the middle. Bhakta Michael is on your right.

Today I gave *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class at the temple. We go and come back to Amsterdam city via Michael's car.

It's Queen's Day today, a heightened time of craziness in a city where craziness is almost normal. Queen's Day is a holiday dedicated to the Queen of the Netherlands; on this day most businesses shut down and everyone turns out into the street wearing weird orange headgear, orange clothing, orange plastic garlands. Orange is the color of the Dutch royal family. The whole town becomes a flea market and fast food joint, because people set up stalls everywhere to sell snacks, drinks and junk. All kinds of music bands perform outside too. Almost everyone on the street is drunk or otherwise intoxicated. For me, it's a big change from my half a year in India.

The devotees are also out in force. They did a *harer-nama-sankirtana* in town. I wanted to go but didn't because of the constant rain and chill. It may be April on the calendar, but it does not look like spring in Amsterdam. It looks, and feels, like winter. I've already picked up a mild chest cold with cough and I am trying to keep it under control. Anyway, the devotees have set up a stall at the Rijksmuseum where they will sell books, *prasadam* and devotional items.

I have a series of university lectures scheduled in the Benelux that starts on May 7. Until then I'll give class once a day in the temple, alternating between *Bhagavatam* class one day and *Gita* the next day, i.e. switching between morning and evening classes.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
05 May 2003

Regular readers of In2-MeC have probably noticed that over the last several days they have not been able to enter the site. This was due to our decision to change our Internet host company. The previous one did not give us very good service. Hopefully things will go better from now on.

Hare Krsna! Suhotra Swami

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
07 May 2003

At 8:00 PM we had a program in the library of the student union at Wageningen University. This is an agricultural institution, so the students were not very schooled in philosophical issues. Hence I spoke in a simple, basic way. There were a number of questions, some, surprisingly, were quite thoughtful. It was not a big program in terms of attendance--but the student union library is not a big space, so along with the devotees present, the place was full enough. Books were sold and everyone took prasadam.



All glories to Srila Prabhupada's preaching mission to every town and village!

For the last several days, Mother Silpakarini dd visited from Germany to attend my lectures. She used to distribute my books (*Substance and Shadow* etc.) in Amsterdam. Then she married Brhad Bhanu Prabhu, a leading distributor in Germany, and moved to Heidelberg. She has a beautiful daughter.

Mataji Silpakarini has had to face some challenges in her spiritual life over the past several years, but she has borne them well. She asked a question about the nature of the mind in a class which was the impetus of an interesting discussion. And she and I had a couple of nice discussions after classes. It is so encouraging to see

someone maintain their faith in Krsna consciousness despite the inevitable obstacles that rise up to block the path. Ralph Waldo Emerson, to whom Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura sent a copy of his *Sri Krishna Samhita*, wrote somewhere that "Self-truth is the essence of heroism." Silpakarini dd is working on uncovering the truth her self in Krishna consciousness, and that is very brave.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
12 May 2003

Besides giving classes in the temple this past weekend, Vidyagati Prabhu and I have been engaged in a digital photography marathon, like the one I did in Mayapur with Madhu Puri Prabhu. Vidya and I have photoed, compressed, and saved to disk some 18 books so far. There are still 24 more to do. Today is holy Ekadasi; this evening I have a university program. We'll do no more today in the way of book photography. But tomorrow the effort will continue, hopefully with the help of a second camera provided by a friend.

The series of essays, "The Transcendental Psychology of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*," is dependent upon my getting many of these books onto disk. So I haven't been doing any further writing in this area since completing the last (the second) essay. But I've had some interesting discussions on the subject of Bhagavata psychology during question-answer sessions after class. And it has come up during personal talks with devotees. So the project continues to percolate!

The *shila*-worship that I do here in Bhakta Michael's flat is a daily dose of nectar. There will be more here in In2-MeC about that shortly! And stay tuned for reports plus photos of the upcoming university programs.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada, and I hope your Ekadasi will be transcendently fruitful!

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
13 May 2003

Yesterday afternoon a party of six devotees plus myself drove for several hours from Amsterdam to Maastrich. Here I gave a talk at a student society that is directed by a Christian pastor named Roel Bosch. Unfortunately, Pastor Bosch had been called away to a funeral and was not present. But my Godbrother HG Gurupadma Prabhu, who lives and preaches in Maastrich, arrived with some of his *namahatta* members. So the audience was a composite of students and ISKCON devotees and congregation.



*Prabhu*

*Meeting His Grace Gurupadma*

We had *kirtan* for about 20 minutes in the beginning, and then at 8:00 PM I

commenced with a talk. Pastor Bosch had left word that he was interested in the subject of the three modes of material nature and how they affect human consciousness. By the Lord's grace I found inspiration in this subject, and spoke for an hour and twenty minutes. There were several good questions afterward. I stopped at 9:30 PM. Several students came to me afterward to express their appreciation and thanks for the talk.



*The Maastrich program*

The drive back was long; I didn't take rest until around 1:00 AM. Today (Tuesday May 13) we are going to Nijmegen for program that, mercifully, is in the afternoon. We'll leave Michael's flat at 1:00 PM.

I do love this preaching. Last night while I was speaking I realized that if somehow I could just do this "24-7" (an up-to-date phrase which means "24 hours a day, 7 days a week") then I would be perfectly happy. But having these material bodies prevents that. Instead, because of these bodies, keeping up such a program of long drives and late nights is taxing. But it is solid devotional service.

Such taxing but solid service is humbling; it obliges the heart to reach out to Krsna's lotus feet, to take the holy name more reverently. Sometimes during these drives to and fro I think, "What would happen if my life in this body were to abruptly end now?" The only answer I can find is to simply close my eyes and try to chant the Lord's holy name more seriously.

Some days ago at the Amsterdam temple, I recollected for the devotees an auto accident I experienced in 1991. This was when I was traveling with my Godbrother

Avinasa Chandra Prabhu (now HH AC Bhakti Vaibhava Maharaja) in Romania. At that time ISKCON had no permanent center in this country. We were in two vehicles. Avinasa Prabhu and myself were in a white Fiat van following Romanian-born Harshi das in his car. With Harshi was Krishna das, a nice Dutch devotee who now lives in Vrndavana and keeps a guest house for ISKCON devotees there.

Night had fallen. A full moon sometimes peeked out from behind a thick layer of clouds. So it was mostly very dark out. We were in the region of Romania called Transylvania, which has a spooky reputation. The way this accident happened seems to confirm that there is something unearthly about that place.

Avinasa Prabhu was driving. We had lost sight of Harshi's car; he had driven too far ahead. The road we were on was a straight, lonely, two-lane stretch of asphalt lined by trees on both sides. All at once something happened that was most bizarre. The wheels of our van seemed to no longer be in touch with the road surface. The van began drifting into the left lane, even though Avinasa Prabhu steered to keep it in our lane. Fortunately there was no oncoming traffic.

In desperation he turned the steering wheel all the way to the right. The van kept drifting leftward for one or two seconds more, then suddenly the wheels seemed to connect again to the road surface. Because the front wheels were now turned totally to the right, the whole vehicle went into a spin. The last thing I remember of the accident is just sitting there, observing without any emotion whatsoever, as the van went *backwards* off the right side of the road. There was a bump, the sound of broken glass, and then blackness came over me.

I clearly recall floating in a void. I was so removed from this body and mind that I could not even think. I was just *there*, enveloped in total insentience. Then gradually the thought dawned on my that I might be dead. I wanted to chant Sri Krishna's name. That desire connected me to my tongue. I began chanting, and consciousness spread to the rest of my body. I felt a dull pain in my ribs and in my left forearm. I found myself lying face-down in the dirt of a potato field.

I slowly got up. Behind me, the van was on its roof. The cab of the van, where Avinasa Prabhu and I had been sitting, was crushed. We were fortunate that at the time of the crash to have not been wearing seat belts. Both of us had been thrown through the windscreen onto the soft sandy soil of the field. Had we been secured in those seats we would have either been killed or seriously injured.

I wobbled around on my feet. I saw Avinasa Prabhu laying on the ground off to one side; he seemed unconscious or dead, but at last he stirred and moaned. I tried to help him stand, but he was in too much pain (it turned out that a couple of his ribs were cracked).

I prayed to Lord Nrsimhadeva, and within seconds, I found myself looking at a picture of Lord Nrsimhadeva that we'd kept on the dashboard of the van. I picked it up off the ground and held it pressed to my heart. By doing that, some intelligence seemed to enter my brain.

I wanted my bead bag. Where was it? The moon was behind clouds; everything was dark. I stumbled around a little until I caught sight of the bead bag on the ground just in front of me, almost between at my feet, amidst other debris from inside the van that was now scattered around the potato field. With a cry of joy I picked up my beads and began chanting on them.

Then I started thinking about flagging down a car and getting Avinasa Prabhu to a hospital. But I knew once I commenced that process of involving the locals in our accident, I would need my passport and laksmi. Where was that? The last I'd seen of my billfold was that it was on the dashboard of the van. So I stumbled around a little more in the dark, chanting and keeping Lord Nrsimha to my heart, and in a few seconds found the billfold containing my personal papers and money. I have to tell you, dear reader, that I was so dazed, and it was so dark, and there was so much stuff (books, suitcases, and so on) scattered about the van, that without the Lord's guidance from within the heart I would not have been able to locate the picture of Nrsimha, my bead bag, and my wallet.

In a few minutes a car, a typical Romanian Dacia (a knock-off of a 1962 Peugeot), came along. I lurched up to the roadside, waving it down. It stopped. Two men, both former Army guys, got out. They knew exactly what to do with Avinasa Prabhu, how to lift him and set him in the back of their vehicle without worsening his injuries. In the light of their headlights I looked myself over. I was dirty and bloodstained. The flesh of the back of my left forearm was torn by broken glass. There was no room in the little Dacia for me, so the two Romanians drove Avinasa to the hospital and I flagged down a truck that came by a little later.

Riding in the truck, I soon I saw Harshi's car parked by the side of the road. I told the driver to let me out, and I accompanied a shocked Harshi and Krishna das to the hospital. The doctors treated my arm and made me stay overnight in the observation ward when they noticed I was trembling from the shock of the whole experience. They had already committed Avinasa Prabhu to a room in the emergency ward. He had to stay there for three days.

The next morning I went with Harshi to the site of the accident. It turned out that two other vehicles, a truck and a car, had also lost control along the same strip of road. Unfortunately for the driver/passengers, both these vehicles had collided with roadside trees. Our Fiat had run off the road at a point where a tree had been cut down. We traced the tracks of the van right over the stump. Had the tree still been standing, I might not be standing now.

I looked at the road surface. There was just no physical explanation why a car's tires would lose their grip on that asphalt. It was hard and dry. I found no patches of oil anywhere. Harshi asked the police, who were there to investigate the three accidents, how such a thing could happen--in the same night, on the same stretch of road, three vehicles lose control. The cops had no answer either. They just shrugged their shoulders.

Anyway, we recovered our property from the van and arranged the transportation of Avinasa Prabhu to Germany. He stayed on ISKCON's farm in Bavaria where it took him a month to recover. I still have scars on my forearm from the broken glass.

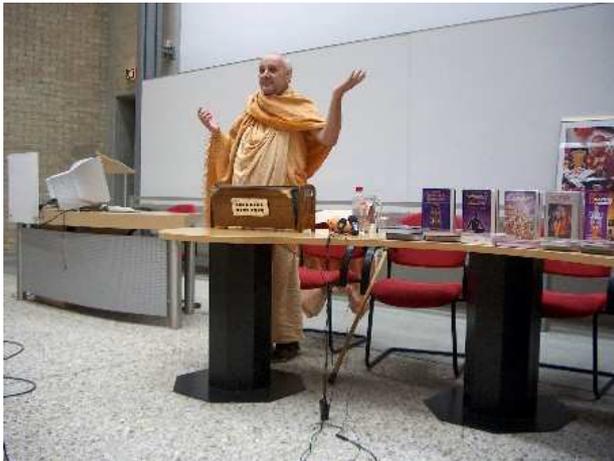
All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

*14 May 2003*

Last year I took part in a quite amazing program at the same school, the Catholic University of Nijmegen. It was held in a large lecture hall that was packed with psychology students. The format was a discussion between myself and a professor of cognitive psychology. He is one of the world leaders in this field. In the question and answer session it was clear that the students were much more interested in what I had to say than in what he had to say.

This year the program was more subdued. It took place in the same large lecture hall but it was not officially sponsored by a university department of faculty. The organizer was herself a student. However, I liked this program very much. And so did the philosophy students. The subject of the talk was "Essentialism, Existentialism and Vedanta Philosophy."



*First I introduced the students to the chanting of Hare Krishna, then I settled down into a talk about philosophy*

I explained that in Western philosophy it is often said that there are two camps: essentialism and existentialism. The essentialists seek to define reality in terms of "being." They speak of the essential

ingredients that make up our life and the world we live in. The existentialists seek to define reality in terms of "doing." They tend to be sceptical about talk of essences, which presupposes a fixed reality. They tend to think man can define his own reality by what he does.

I told the students that Vedanta philosophy harmonizes essentialism and existentialism by 1) identifying the spirit soul as the essential identity of all living beings, and defining the material world in terms of the essences of earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego; and by 2) presenting the law of *karma* as the means by which living beings, who are all of the same essence, create their various destinies.



*After the kirtan and lecture, these philosophy students were eager for more transcendental knowledge!*

I stopped at 5:30. All the students accept *prasadam*. Many bought books and were eager to know more about Krsna consciousness.



*Outside the Catholic University of Nijmegen*

The Catholic University of Nijmegen is one of the most prestigious educational institutions on the European Continent, so I thank Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Sudarshana for bringing me there year after year to do some small service for my spiritual master.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
15 May 2003 (Nrsimha Chaturdasi)*

**Program at the University of Amsterdam, 14 May**

I lectured to a gathering of philosophy students at the University of Amsterdam in a program that started at 7:00 PM. My talk was similar to the one I gave at Nijmegen, but it was briefer since after me another speaker was scheduled to speak. At the end we two speakers had a discussion and answered questions from the students.



The second speaker was Andre van der Braak, who teaches philosophy at the U of A and at Luzac College in Alkmaar. He is soon to complete his PhD on Nietzsche and Buddhism. He will shortly publish a paperback entitled *Enlightenment Blues--My Years with an American Guru*.

I found this program very interesting in an amusing way. Poor Mr. van der Braak is very devoted to Friedrich Nietzsche, a 19th century thinker who prided himself in being a genuine "German philosopher. " All this really means is that Nietzsche was a very frustrated individual who gradually lost faith in everything. He ended up as an incoherent madman for the last 10 years of his life.

Mr. van der Braak tried to be a spokesman for what he called "relative scepticism" towards God and religion, particularly Eastern religion of which he had some personal experience. By "relative scepticism" he meant that he will never insist that life has no ultimate meaning--although it became quite clear in his talk that this is *exactly* how he thinks. Thus in truth he is an absolute sceptic. But to appear reasonable, he must once in a while put in the footnote: "My scepticism is only relative. "

After studying philosophy at the U of A, van der Braak spent five years as a Buddhist and another eleven years as an Advaita Vedantist. Naturally his was a very Westernized practice of these Mayavadi philosophies. So naturally he got nowhere. Even if he had learned Buddhism and Advaitism in India he would have gotten nowhere. These are nowhere philosophies.

So after 16 years of chasing The Void, he has "realized" that all religious systems in the world are merely forms of cheating--although as a "relative sceptic" he pulls back one millimeter short from saying that directly. But he loves quoting Nietzsche who proclaimed to the world "God is dead. "

I felt I should act very relaxed in this gathering, as many of the students were themselves inclined to the sceptical line of thought and were perhaps hoping to be entertained by an outburst of "religious fanaticism" from my side. So I dealt with Mr. van der Braak in the Socratic *maieutic* manner of just asking him questions.

One point he repeatedly argued was that his "relative scepticism" was a way to clear the mind of "cosmic assumptions" in order to make room for finding the truth. Again and again he told us that for Nietzsche, the ultimate reality is *chaos* (the total absence of order), which is opposed to the "cosmic assumption" that the world is given order by a God. But he was careful to drop the footnote that as a "relative sceptic" he was unable to say whether the world is *chaos* or *kosmos* (the word *kosmos* to the ancient Greeks meant an ordered universe). He just wanted room to conduct his own philosophical investigation into the nature of the world. I asked him if his investigation led him from Nietzsche's chaos to a new realization of order, would he accept that order? He admitted that he would.

I pointed out that in making his presentation he was using language, and language is order in itself. He admitted that, but said language is only man-made, not absolute. I asked him whether he could prove that statement. He said no, he couldn't. I explained to the students that according to Vedanta there are deeper levels of language or *śabda* than human speech. Even human language is amazing, in that sounds issuing from a mouth or the squiggle of writing on a page somehow manifests information in our consciousness. The mystery of language is admitted even by Western philosophers.

A student spoke up that he thought that we just needed to say that "language is the way we communicate," and that solves the mystery of information exchange through words. This student also believed that language is man-made. "Are you sure?" I asked him. He answered, "One hundred percent." I replied, "So in this way, at least, you are not sceptical at all." The student smiled weakly.

I went on to say that some western scientists depict the "microworld" (the world of the fundamental "wave-particles" of matter) as a flux, an undulation, or wave, of potential energy. (This generally corresponds to the Vedic "sound in ether.") "The whole universe is mysteriously given order by this underlying vibration. Man did not create that vibration," I told the group. At this point Mr. van der Braak's girlfriend had some kind of an "aha" experience. "Oh, now I see what you mean about deeper levels of language!" she mused aloud. Mr. van der Braak just nodded and smiled. I explained that matter is by itself chaotic, but it is given order by sound or language. We humans do it in a relative way, and God does it in an absolute way. Thus there is an absolute language that expresses the absolute truth.

I asked Mr. van der Braak what the practical consequences of his *chaos* doctrine are. . . I wanted to know if he could say with certainty that "Here we are at the University of Amsterdam, having a philosophical discussion," or if this experience we are having right now is just an illusion, since everything is "really" chaos. His answer: "I don't know."

As I said, I found the program amusing. Well, what can be expected from a university that is located just one block away from the infamous Red Light District of Amsterdam? (For the innocent ones among my readership, the Red Light District of Amsterdam is several city blocks reserved for legal, open prostitution and drug use.) When we left the Uni building it was 10:00 PM, and one could see down the street the eerie red aura of the neon lights of that sinful area. This aura spreads far beyond the visible glow of the red lights and casts a gloom over the university. I've done many programs at that school through the years and each time could feel the murk of ignorance in the air.



*With Andre van der Braak, an advocate of Nietzsche's "God is Dead" philosophy. Previously, as a Buddhist and a Mayavadi, he had "religious experiences," but came to see them as having no meaning. A textbook case of impersonal calamity.*

### **Nrsimha Caturdasi Morning in Amsterdam Temple**



*Darshan of Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai and Lord Nrsimhadeva, Amsterdam*



*Giving Srimad-Bhagavatam class on Nrsimha-Chaturdasi*

*Antwerp, Belgium  
16 May 2003*

### More about Andre van der Braak

As I mentioned yesterday, Andre van der Braak, with whom I did a program at the University of Amsterdam, will shortly publish a book entitled *Enlightenment Blues*. By referring to the info on a press release he gave me about his book, I was able to do a little Internet research. Like the program I did with him, what I found out was interesting and amusing.

Andre presents himself as a former disciple of an American Advaitist *guru*. The *guru* is named in the press release as Andrew Cohen, someone I'd never heard of before. But I found quite a bit about him on the Net. See, for example, [www.johnhorgan.org/work7.htm](http://www.johnhorgan.org/work7.htm).

Andrew Cohen is certainly no traditional Advaitist, although he claims to have realized that all is one. He comes in no *sampradayic* line. Cohen claims he received "enlightenment" from an Indian *guru*, but later on he rejected that teacher as being himself imperfectly enlightened. That Indian *guru* in turn claimed to be a disciple of Ramana Maharishi, who died in 1950. Ramana Maharishi is a well-known impersonalist, but he is not of the *sampradaya* of Sankaracarya. And as it turns out, Ramana Maharishi apparently had no disciples, at least none that he instructed to become *gurus* after him.

One thing Andre van der Braak said in his talk was, "What I know is that I don't know." I found that Andrew Cohen makes the same claim for himself. Yes, Mayavadi philosophy as understood, practiced and preached by the Cohens and van der Braaks of this world is quite amusing. First they accept *gurus* who are not *gurus*, learn from them that to know is to not know, and then they reject their *gurus* as unenlightened. Then they go on to make a name for themselves by preaching what they learned: to know is to not know.

*Antwerp, Belgium*

*18 May, 2003*

From a letter I received today:

It was nice to hear about Nijmegen in in2- mec, as the last year program you had there is very vivid in my mind.

There was an other professor there too, the moderator, Van Mijk was his name, I think. He was quite intrested in Krsna conscious philosophy. You said you had an interesting conversation with him in the beginning.

Later on, during the program, I could see his face while you were speaking. He was visibly oscillating between a real interest and a fear of his academic frame of mind being pierced. He seemed to be a jnani trying to make a step further from his "pure jnana", and being kept back by the conservatorism in his heart. The fight to overcome the jnani identification in himself was interesting and somehow inspiring. One felt like wanting to help this person to advance somehow. And one would also become thoughtful about one's own self-purification.

Yesterday I had lunch with my long-time and very dear disciples Vrndayanya-priya Prabhu and his wife Ananda-laksmi dd. They've moved to a bigger flat and are preparing a room for me to stay in the next time I visit Antwerp. I was driven to and from their place by Madhava Prabhu, Vrndaranya-priya's father, who is a disciple of HH Bhakti Caru Maharaja. Madhava Prabhu has for years preached regularly to congregations in cities around Belgium, despite a poor health condition. Very inspiring.

My own health has declined since coming to Antwerp. In this room I stay it is either too cold or too hot. Anyway, life goes on. I'm giving one class per day. Tomorrow after *Bhagavatam* class we pack up to go to Sridhama Radhadesh.

*Radhadesh, Durbuy, Belgium*  
*20 May 2003 (Disappearance Day of Sri Ramananda Raya)*

### **Sunday Feast in Antwerp, 18 May**



*A historical site in the Benelux  
(Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg):  
ISKCON Antwerp has been located in  
this venerable old building for almost  
20 years*



*"Chant Hare Krishna..."*



*"...and be happy!"*

**Radhadesh, 20 May**



*A major tourist attraction in the Benelux, this stately chateau in French-speaking Belgium is owned by ISKCON...*



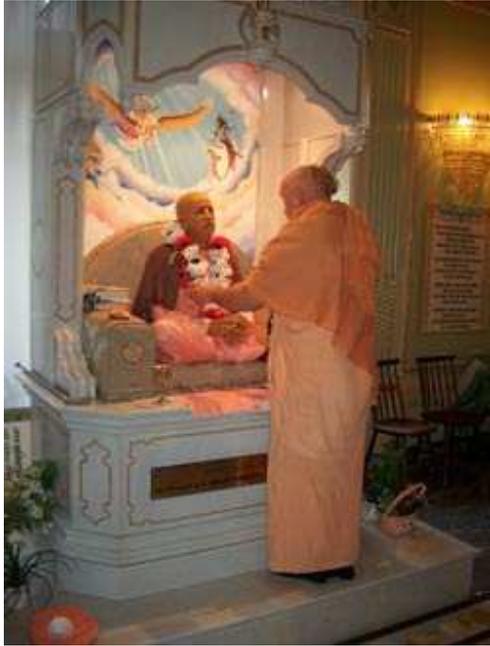
*...and is the home of Sri-Sri Radha-Gopinatha  
Lalita-Vishakha-Sakhi, Sri-Sri Gaura Nitai and  
Sri-Sri Jagannatha-Baladeva-Subhadra-devi*



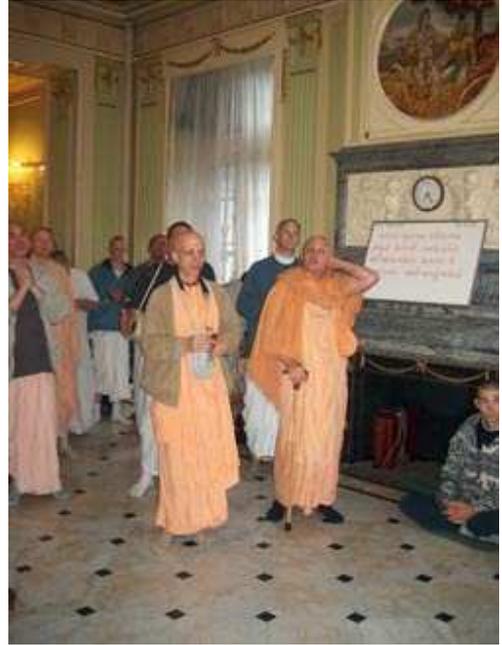
*The recently-constructed Radhadesh guesthouse  
and Vaishnava seminar facility*



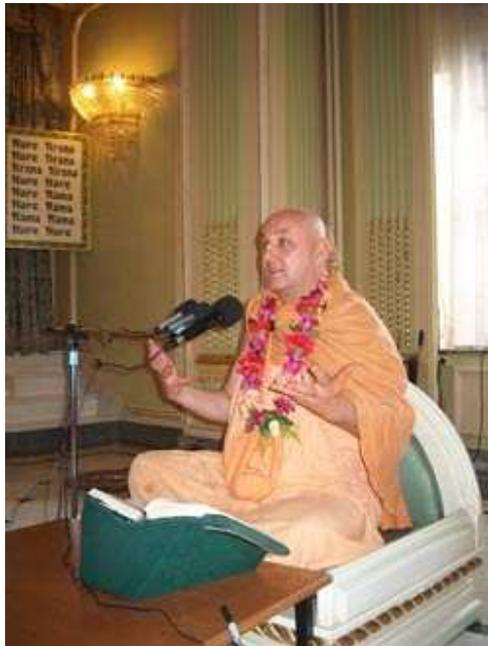
*Chanting japa in the window of  
guesthouse room 36*



*Garlanding Srila Prabhupada*



*HH Prahladananda Maharaja leads Srila Prabhupada guru-puja*



*Srimad-Bhagavatam lecture*

*Den Haag, The Netherlands  
26 May 2003*

**Sunday Feast in Den Haag, 25 May**



*This is the inside of ISKCON's preaching center in the city of Den Haag. The Sunday Feast is always well-attended.*



*The altar of the Den Haag center. The Panca-tattva painting, done many years ago by a Benelux devotee, has become well-known in ISKCON. It graces the cover of one of Satyaraja Prabhu's (Steven Rosen's) books. He considers this painting the best he has ever seen of Sri Panca-tattva.*



*Sunday feast lecture*



*Gaura-arati*

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands,  
29 May 2003*

Yesterday evening I gave a lecture at the library of the student union at the University of Leiden. Often Dutch politicians visit this university to speak to the students in the same library. The place was packed.

Unfortunately we, the devotees, were not permitted to photograph or video the program. Only a student photographer took pictures; ISKCON can get copies of these photos, but that takes time. Thus I have no pictures to share with you here.

Anyway, it seemed to me that this program was the best of the whole tour. In the beginning, though, it threatened to be otherwise. Students were wandering in with glasses in their hands containing beer or wine. At one point someone brought in a tray of beer glasses and passed it around the audience. Some students were obviously intoxicated.

What could I do? I led a kirtana for a long time to start the program off. Mercifully, a good number of devotees were present to fill the library hall with the pure vibration of Lord Krsna's name. This truly changed the atmosphere.

I kept the lecture simple and to the point. The students, even the drunken ones, were peaceful, polite and attentive. After my talk there were some very good questions. As the program closed, many from the audience came forward to tell myself and the other devotees present that they were very satisfied.

Today Vidyagati and I are going to Groeningen, a city in the eastern Netherlands, near the German border. We are staying for the weekend at the home of Dharmaksetra Prabhu and his wife Pitambara dd. On Monday Vidya and I return to Amsterdam to board a long-distance tour bus that will take us to Prague.

I'll have more to write when I am in Groningen.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Groningen, The Netherlands  
31 May 2003*



*Myself, Dharmaksetra Prabhu and  
his wife Pitambara dd in Groningen*

The weather in Groningen is warm and sunny, as compared to Amsterdam. There it was mostly cloudy and cold. The nice weather corresponds with the pleasant personalities of these two nice devotees and disciples, Dharmaksetra Prabhu and Pitambara dd. Every year for the past several I have visited them for a few days. It is a peaceful retreat. Groningen is a university city set in the middle of the Dutch countryside. According to Dharmaksetra there is no city so isolated from other cities in the Netherlands than Groningen.

*Groningen, The Netherlands  
1 June, 2003*

In an interesting book called *My Search Through Books*, HH Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami relates his quest for the truths of life before he met Srila Prabhupada via his readings of "deep" authors like Shakespeare, Kirkegaard, Nietzsche, Rilke and Hesse. Looking through Maharaja's book, I remembered an author that similarly "hit me

deep" when I was a youth. His name is Philip Wylie. He wrote many titles, but the one that caught my attention was *Generation of Vipers*, published in 1942. I came across it when I was eleven or twelve years old. At that point in my life, books written for kids my age did not hold my attention. Whenever I visited the library I immediately went to the shelves for grown-ups. And so I came across *Generation of Vipers*. In the late '70's or early '80's, *Back to Godhead* magazine published an article I wrote in which I quoted from Wylie's book. If I remember correctly, it was an article about the threat of war in modern civilization. The quotation from Wylie underscored that the society we live in is not really civilized at all.

A few days ago on the Internet I found an advertisement for *Generation of Vipers*. The book is now 60 years old, but it's still for sale. The ad stated that what Wylie wrote in 1942 is just as true now as it was then.

*Generation of Vipers* is a diatribe. Written with a sarcastic wit that often veers into the heady realm of caustic excess, it unmercifully attacks the cultural and philosophical foundations of American materialism. It seems amazing that in 1942 this book became an instant best seller; remember that America had just entered the Second World War. The pulse of the U. S. citizenry was hammering with patriotic fervor. Yet in the midst of this upswing of nationalism, Wylie's blast against American values struck a chord. After its initial publication, *Generation of Vipers* was regularly reprinted for more than a decade. I think this was another example of American consciousness getting "prepped" for Srila Prabhupada's mission.

Wylie's critique has a lot in common with Srila Prabhupada's exposure of the animalism at the heart of Western so-called civilization. But Wylie missed a lot, too. Meat-eating he totally overlooked. He was an advocate of modern psychological theories that Srila Prabhupada would later lay waste to; psychology falls far short of true spiritual science. And of course he knew nothing of Lord Krishna and Lord Chaitanya. Yet it is still fascinating to see all the places where Philip Wylie got it right. On pages 9-12 of *Generation of Vipers*, he writes about modern religion and modern science. What follows are some spliced-together quotations.

You have considered this a Christian nation, all your life. Our constitution implies as much. But a minute's thought might have shown you years ago--decades ago--that the United States of America was not in any *real* sense a Christian nation at all. Numerically? Less than half the people had any nominal church membership. There goes the sacred majority. Dogmatically? Those who belonged to churches belonged to so many different faiths at swords' points with each other on matters of creed and technique that even the definition of Christianity crumples into absurdity. . . The church has failed. It failed to create an individual philosophy acceptable to an "educated" modern man. It failed to enlist an American majority. Its component parts failed to agree with each other on any basis. So our Christian civilization is neither Christian nor civilized. Look at it. The failure of science is even more grotesque. . . . Mankind abandoned the true with the false and made his place of worship into a joke because science has revealed that not all its ceremonies and offices were "rational." The average man was shorn of his Sunday lecture, his conscience, his logarithms of right and wrong. "Intellectual" men stamped upon the grave of religion so that the ghost would never rise: the business was done, they

decreed. Science made almost no study of the thing it had destroyed, or of the vacuum left in the spirit of man by the confiscation. Science, by God, was science, and religion was positively not scientific! Down with it!

Srila Prabhupada, speaking in Detroit on June 13, 1976:

They have failed, these Christian priest, to explain everything philosophically. So advanced Westerners, they are now educated in science philosophy, they are not attracted with these dogmatic views. So to remain in ignorance is animal life. To be enlightened is human life. And the topmost enlightenment is to understand God and to love Him. That is the topmost enlightenment. Unfortunately, there is no education to know what is God, and what to speak of loving Him. This is modern civilization. Ignorance. A civilization of ignorance. They do not know what is what. Simply speculating, wasting time, talking all nonsense. This is going on in the name of education, but actually they are in ignorance. They do not know what is what. They are reading so many philosophical speculation, horrible condition of the so-called philosopher, scientist. Simply "I believe," "In this believe, that believe. " You believe. . . . Believe something. That is your (indistinct). But your belief is not final. That is creating chaotic condition. You believe some way, I believe something, he believes something. What is the profit? Chaos.

In the same section, (pages 9-11), Wylie argues:

. . . Man's physical senses were extended enormously by science. The degree and the speed of that achievement are, indeed, the most common sources of our contemporary vanity; they form the whole preposterous case for the claim that we are civilized. No other attributes of man were, in any way, either extended or vitalized by science. Man's personality, his relations with other men, his private ethics, his social integrity, his standards of value, his love of truth, his dignity or his contentment, were not even potentially improved by the scientists. . .

In a 1973 *Bhagavad-gita* class, Srila Prabhupada said:

Therefore, we can challenge these scientists, so-called scientists. Their basic principle of knowledge is on the bodily concept of life, *pratyaksa*, experimental knowledge. Experimental knowledge means this gross sense perception. That is experimental. *Pratyaksa*. Everyone says: "We do not see God. " God is not such a subject matter that you can see with this *pratyaksa*, direct perception.

On pages 123-124 of *Generation of Vipers*, we find this interesting and amusing analysis of male *vis a vis* female behavior.

Thus a man who is good and mad will be frightened out of his masculinity and suddenly start behaving in a womanish manner. His voice will rise to a treble; his points in argument will become irrational and "feminine"; he will turn himself into a consuming fury; when he reaches the slapping and hair-pulling stage, he may often, because of the Marquess of Queensbury, double his fists to force the issue; but he may merely slap--like a woman. Slapping, indeed, with gloves or bare hand, is the classical invitation-in-wrath of noble males too mad to act like men, who wish, when they calm down, so to act later, with guns and swords. Women, on the other hand, in the same circumstances, go into a mediocre but palpable imitation of men. They

become as if cold and intellectual, though thought has nothing to do with the change; they argue icily (manlike) with "facts" and "data" and "logic. " Defeated in their natural province of feeling values, they undertake to make war from man's province of detached thoughts. The "reasons" of an angered woman become multitudinous and articulate; she argues, and insists as she does so on the justice and integrity of her points--even while she ignores all actual laws of logic and throws her words about ad hominem, begging the question, debating in total non sequitur, forgetting that pos hoc is not necessarily proper hoc, and so forth.

In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 25. 11, Srila Prabhupada gets to the false heart of material "maleness" and "femaleness" thusly:

The living entities, in the guises of men and women, are trying to enjoy the material energy; therefore in one sense everyone is *purusa* because *purusa* means "enjoyer" and *prakrti* means "enjoyed. " In this material world both the so-called man and so-called woman are imitating the real *purusa*; the Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually the enjoyer in the transcendental sense, whereas all others are *prakrti*. The living entities are considered *prakrti*.

Wylie, on page 318, makes a stunning observation that one rarely finds in writings of mundane intellectuals.

The male is an attachment of the female in our civilization.

In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 25. 30, Srila Prabhupada makes exactly the same point.

Conditional life means being under the control of a woman.

On pages 68-69 of *Generation of Vipers* we find a hilarious depiction of the crass use of the female form in advertising, especially for products that are supposed to make women

. . . more kissable, engageable, marriagable, popular at parties, and in demand for moonlight strolls--or caused them to be okay in the matter of feminine hygiene, breath, armpit and perspiration odor. . .

Such products include

Various medicaments, pads, pledgets, salves, gargles, girdles, rinses, soaps, douches, rubber devices, elastic undergarments, negligees, cigarettes, automobiles, house furnishings, washing machines, kitchen appliances, cosmetics, deodorants, perspiration arrestors, booklets of intimate advice, dandruff removers. . .

Wylie concludes that the whole point of such advertising is to stimulate sex.

. . . the purpose of every syllable of such copy and every expression on the face of every such model, photographed or painted, is to startle the woman reader into an inquiry of whether or not her body is thoroughly prepared and equipped for nonrancid sex service. . .

In a conversation in Durban on October 13, 1975, Srila Prabhupada pointed out:

This is the life and soul of the modern civilization. Just see the advertisement--sex. You see, illicit sex.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
2 June, 2003

I was just looking at HH Satsvarupa Maharaja's *My Search Through Books*. In Chapter 5 he reminisces about J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. If I am not mistaken, this book was first published in the year of my birth, 1950. *Catcher in the Rye* is a perennial favorite among American high school students. Satsvarupa Maharaja, writing about the main character, Holden Caulfield, states, "I would say that every devotee ought to aspire to be as honest and loving as Holden. We could use more Holdens in the world. I haven't renounced my affection for *Catcher in the Rye*. I think it is a wonderful book and J. D. Salinger must have received Krsna's mercy to write it. He must have been very sincere in his desires." I never opened *Catcher in the Rye* before I became a devotee. The reason, I suppose, was that it was a book that every American kid read when they turned sixteen or seventeen. I didn't much care for doing the same thing all the other kids did. Perhaps in that way I was like Holden myself. About a year ago I picked up a *Progress* paperback edition of *Catcher in the Rye*. It might have been during a visit to Prague. *Progress* was a Soviet publishing house that printed literary works from around the world, in their original languages. It appears that *Progress* chose the works of Western authors that depicted the dark side of life in capitalist countries. Anyway, when I sat down with the *Progress* edition of *Catcher in the Rye*, it was the first time I'd ever read the book. It's a very engaging read. After a few pages I was hooked. I finished the whole book in just one day. But I got a rather different impression of Holden Caulfield than did Satsvarupa Maharaja. Holden seemed a very unhappy individual, alienated from the world around him to the point of borderline insanity. Indeed, at the end of the novel Holden is put into a mental institution. He's somewhat of a "beat" character. The Beats felt themselves beaten down by society; they didn't fit in, and they thought it was a "cool" inner adventure to be diagnosed insane and locked up in a psycho ward. A fledgling idealist, Holden sees no place in a materialistic society to spread his wings. But I wouldn't agree with Maharaja that he was very loving and very honest. To me he seemed selfish in a petty, juvenile way. It's true that many young people from a pampered middle-class background are in the same emotionally deprived boat. So Holden, though selfish, is not unsympathetic. You feel sorry for him. It is furthermore true that he does cherish a romantic notion to save others, especially other young people. But he can't even save himself. And that's the core of his dishonesty. To be honest with yourself you have to be a little clear as to your actual position in life. Perhaps it is too harsh to rate Holden as consciously dishonest; but he is certainly too confused to see where he is really at. No later than quarter of the way through the book, he should have realized he had drifted into psychological and emotional storm waters. But instead he just carries on following his increasingly ridiculous mental whims. Finally he cracks up. His "loving" nature? It seems to me whatever love he has is morbidly fixated on his younger sister Phoebe. Apart from that, my reading was that he really doesn't care much about anyone else. . . well, okay, maybe he cares about the ducks in the Central Park pond, about what happens to them in the winter. And

there's some vague caring for unfortunate young folks like himself. But that's rather abstract. He certainly doesn't care for his friends at school. He doesn't care for his parents. And regarding his attachment for his sister, it is hard to say for sure, but there is a suggestion of something incestuous there. It does not seem normal. About half way through the novel Holden hires a good-looking prostitute his same age, 18 years old. But he's a virgin as well as an idealist, so it turns out he is captivated by the mere *idea* of being with her. He uses up his allotted time just trying to talk to her. That is more intimacy than she, bored and jaded as she is, is willing to give.

But still he has to pay. In 1950, this scene with the tart might have been a bit of a shocker to some people: "A woman so young already doing *that*?" But eight years before, Philip Wylie wrote in *Generation of Vipers* about what American girls much younger than this one were up to as troops were mustered at military bases across the nation at the start of World War Two.

Police began to notice, also, a curious phenomenon; late at night, and on into the early hours of the morning, swarms of school girls, some as young as twelve, were seen skulking about the edges of public parks. It was soon found that these children were prostituting themselves in large numbers to the soldiers and sailors--for very small sums of money.

Reading Salinger and Wylie now, it's fascinating to realize that the moral and psychological fiber of young people was not any better in the "good old days" fifty, sixty years ago. The difference is that today, degradation is more openly celebrated.

If you're a young man who can somewhat articulate his psychosis, you start a rock band. If you're a young woman who can find nothing better to do with your life than to market your naked body, never mind skulking around public parks risking AIDS.

There's the Internet for you. No, I'm not telling you, "Every devotee ought to aspire to be as honest and loving as Holden. We could use more Holdens in the world." My plea would be, "Every Holden ought to aspire to be a devotee. We could use more devotees in the world." There are surely enough Holdens out there: misguided idealists, maybe suicidal, maybe even murderous. The young man who shot John Lennon did so in the name of Holden Caulfield. He was a great "devotee" of Salinger's book, and he believed that were Holden alive today, *he* would kill Lennon for being such a phoney. The young Saudi Arabians who flew the airliners into New York's World Trade Center probably never heard of Holden Caulfield. Yet they were nothing else than frustrated-idealistic youth in an extremist Islamic mold. Even in the West, from the Fifties through the Nineties, we saw alienated youth mutate from Beats to hippies to ecological revolutionaries, from New Left radicals who demonstrated with signs to violent anarchists who exploded bombs, from rowdy drunken skinheads to brutal neo-Nazis. The trend gets uglier as Kali-yuga gets worse. I pray that Srila Prabhupada's mercy may penetrate the hearts of all the world's confused youth.

*Prague, Czech Republic*  
*3 June, 2003*

On page 329 of *Generation of Vipers*, Philip Wylie wrote in 1942 of the future of technology:

In your living room, in a few years, will be a continual moving picture, with color and sound, of any place where something is going on. Your son will talk to his girlfriend in Ceylon over a gadget that shows her moving picture.

Television and Internet-connected computers. Guided by Srila Rupa Gosvami's *yukta-vairagya* principle, we try to use these gadgets in Krsna's service. Therefore here we are at In2-MeC.

I received a nice letter today about *Catcher in the Rye*. Yes, the book truly has held an influence over readers world-wide for more than 50 years. Holden Caulfield's core personality, his basic alienation, is still very relevant today. Besides, it is a funny book. It's about the human condition, which is sad and funny at the same time. Therefore Srila Prabhupada more than once used to remark about the state of this modern world, "Whether to laugh or cry?"

Vidyagati and I have arrived in Prague. It's sunny and hot here, typical Central European summer weather; this is a welcome change from the blustery North Sea climate of the Netherlands. Yesterday at 11:00 we departed a sunny, pleasant Groningen and arrived at 12:45 in a gray drizzly Amsterdam. But here in Prague, I'm told, the sky has been steadily clear and bright for days and days.

I am staying at the home of my disciples Prahlada Nrsimha Prabhu, his wife Adhika Daya dd, and their small daughter Narayani devi. Today I'll just me getting myself in order after the all-night bus trip (that's much like an all-night flight on an airliner: you sleep, but you don't sleep, and after you've physically arrived at your destination, you're subtle body hasn't caught up yet.)

Tomorrow we have a preaching program at the "new" Govinda's at Soukenicka Street in downtown Prague. One year ago the city of Prague suffered a widely-reported flood. The waters of the Vltava, which flows through the low-lying Old Town, surged over the riverbanks and inundated many of the Baroque buildings of the prime touristic area. ISKCON's two Govinda's restaurants (the other is on Na Hrazi Street) were heavily damaged. Now both are functioning again but more as preaching centers than as restaurants... although the restaurant aspect continues. A new "professional" devotee restaurant, Balarama, has in the meantime opened in another part of Prague, safely away from the Vltava. Balarama is maintained by the devotees who are dedicated to the transcendental business of prasadam distribution.

Anyway, I'll be preaching at the new Govinda's tomorrow evening. You'll see a photo report here. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

*Prague, Czech Republic  
5 June, 2003*

Yesterday at 19:00 I held a program at the Govinda's preaching center in downtown Prague. More than 50 guest attended. A most pleasant surprise was that HH Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja came to attend the class. Afterwards we took *prasadam* together. He told me about



a video he is producing of a recent trip he took from Gangasagara in Bengal up to Gomukh, the starting point of the river Ganges in the Himalayas.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!



*Prague, Czech Republic  
7 June 2003*

### **My Travel Schedule Through 27 July**

- 9 June: from Prague to Bratislava, Slovakia
- 10 June: from Bratislava to Preshov, Slovakia
- 14 June: from Preshov to Budapest, Hungary
- 17 June: from Budapest to Szeged, Hungary
- 20 June: from Szeged to Timisoara, Romania
- 26 June: from Timisoara to Belgrade, Yugoslavia

30 June: from Belgrade to Sofia, Bulgaria

11 July: from Sofia to Timisoara

14 July: from Timisoara to New Vraja Dhama, Hungary

17 July: from New Vraja Dhama to Bratislava

18 July: from Bratislava to Lutotin, Czech Republic

21 July: I take part in Czech Yatra "summer camp" near Lutotin

27 July: to Prague

### **ISKCON Prague**



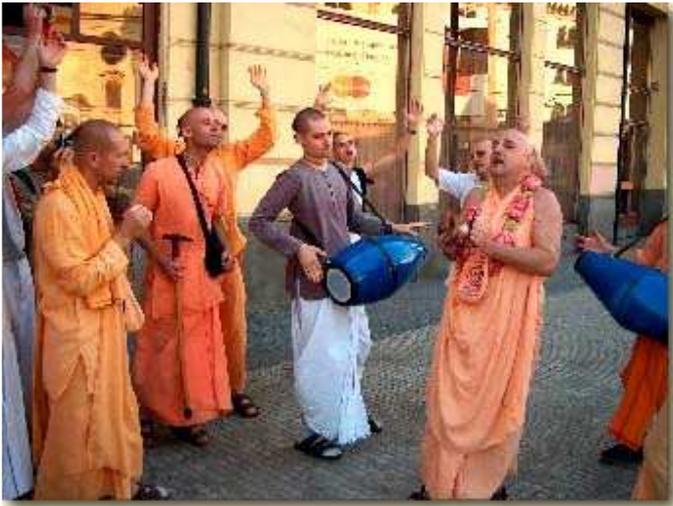
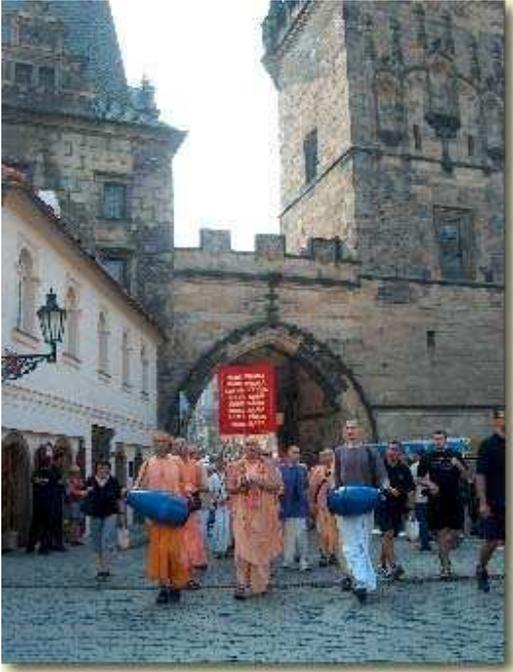
*This is the ISKCON Prague temple building located at 290 Jilova Steet in the suburban Zlicin district. Directly across the street stands a similar building that houses the brahmacaris (top floor) and brahmacarinis (middle floor).*



*Their beautiful golden Lordships Sri-Sri Nitai-Navadvipacandra, presiding over Prague from the Zlicin temple. Prague advertizes itself as The Golden City; the presence of Sri-Sri Nitai-Navadvipacandra gives that title a new meaning.*

*I am in the Balarama Restaurant (downtown Prague) with manager Lomancitta Prabhu. Balarama opened in October 2002 as the city's third devotee-operated restaurant. The first Govinda's, on Na Hrazi Street, has been running ten years; the second Govinda's, on Soukenicka Street, has been running seven years.*





*Sharing the nectar with HH Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja. Sankirtana-yajna ki jaya!*

*Harer-nama Sankirtana in the magical Old Town of The Golden City.*



While on harer-nama I noticed that an exhibition of 100 live poisonous bugs (spiders, scorpions and centipedes) is being advertized all over town. Here a lady from the Prague branch of the CLF (Centipede Liberation Front) takes darshan of a very large *Scolopendra subpinipes*. Look carefully...I think she is chanting to it. The influence of sankirtana is everywhere!

*Prague, Czech Republic  
8 June, 2003*

Want to learn practically everything there is to know about Shaligram and Govardhana shila worship? Visit this extraordinary website:

[www.hknet.org.nz/sstp-1.html](http://www.hknet.org.nz/sstp-1.html)

If you go from there to [www.hknet.org.nz/sstp-SuhotraS.html](http://www.hknet.org.nz/sstp-SuhotraS.html), you'll see a report about my own shila worship, taken from In2-MeC of May 15. It is worth your time to explore the whole site. For unlimited nectar, click, on the homepage, the "articles" icon!

The devotee behind this website is Jayatirtha Charana Prabhu. I've known him since the 1980s. I'm planning to visit New Zealand this winter. He lives in a town called Tauranga (just like Gauranga, but with a "T" in the front. ) I'm eager to spend some time with Jayatirtha Charana Prabhu, as he knows so much about Deity worship and *yajna*. He's mastered these devotional arts under the tutelage of South Indian *brahmanas* of the Ramanuja and Madhva *sampradayas*.

Over the last several weeks, through email, we've been discussing Sri Sudarshana Chakra. It started when I got an idea about a way to perform a "flameless" or in other words a *manasa* (mental) *homa* (fire *yajna*) for my shilas. I daily do a fire sacrifice for Them, but not every place I visit welcomes the idea of having a flame burn inside the house for an hour every morning. Even if it is just a small flame, it generates smoke, and smoke means soot. So I started to contemplate how a

flameless mental *yajna* might be done when a normal one was not possible.

I have a translation of a Pancharatra text called *Laksmi Tantra*, which is respected in the Ramanuja Sampradaya. That disciplic succession is also known as the Sri Sampradaya because it emanates from Goddess Laksmi. The Laksmi Tantra is spoken by Her. She devotes a whole chapter to Sudarshana. The word *sahasra* (one thousand), which is the first word of the Purusha-sukta hymn of the Rg Veda, is said by

Laksmi to refer to Sudarshana who is *sahasra-jwala* (thousand-flamed). He is a personification of the *kriya-sakti* of the Lord; it is by *kriya-sakti* or the power of divine activity that *nitya-kriyas* (regulated actions) like *yajna* are manifest in this world. Agni is manifest from *kriya-sakti* and Sudarshana is the essence of Agni. The syllable *ra* in *sahasra* stands for fire. (Jayatirtha Charana Prabhu pointed out that one name for the sun is Ravi, and in that name *ra* means fire. ) Laksmi Tantra says that Sudarshana is to be contemplated within the sacrificial fire.

So I proposed to Jayatirtha Charana that a *manasa-homa* might be performed by seating the Nila Sudarshana Deity in the small brass fire *kunda* and there offering Him worship as the sacrificial fire. He replied that this would be in order, since Vaishnavas worship the original Agni, Lord Narayana. The original Agni is specifically represented by His divine potency, Sri Sudarshana Chakra. Lord Narayana is the *antaryami* (inner Lord) of the blazing Sudarshana who burns all that is material to utter destruction and thus dispells all darkness and ignorance.

The Nila Sudarshana Deity is a combined form of Lord Jagannatha (Narayana or Krsna) and His blazing chakra. The lotus face of Lord Jagannatha beams at the center of a ring of flames.

"There is nothing in the three worlds," says Goddess Laksmi, "that cannot be attained by this *sakti* [the *kriya-sakti* appearing as Sudarshana] who dwells in every single ritual. . . "

Jayatirtha Charana Prabhu informed me that Sripada Madhvacarya has explained the *Vishnu-sahasra-nama-stotram* (Thousand Names of Vishnu Hymn) word for word. From this we learn that the following holy names (numbered as they appear in the *stotram*) refer to Sri Sudarshana Chakra as well as to Lord Narayana Himself:

233) *vahnih*: Fire

293) *analah*: Fire

358) *samayajnah*: One whose worship is nothing more than keeping an equal vision of the mind by the devotee

359) *havirharih*: The receiver of all oblation

546) *chakra-gadaadharah*: Bearer of the disc and mace

826) *sahasraarchih*: He who has thousands of rays

827) *saptajihvah*: He who expresses himself as the seven tongues of fire (Types of agni)

828) *saptaidhaah*: The seven effulgences in the flames

879) *hutabhuk*: One who enjoys all that is offered in yajna

908) *chakree*: Holder of the chakra

967) *bhoor-bhuvah svas-taruh*: The tree of bhur, bhuvah and svah

971) *jnahya*: One whose very nature is yajna

972) *yajnapatih*: The Lord of all yajnas

973) *yajvaa*: The one who performs yajna

974) *yajnaangah*: One whose limbs are the things employed in yajna

975) *yajnavahanah*: One who fulfils yajnas in complete

976) *yajnabhridd*: The ruler of the yajnas

977) *yajnakrit*: One who performs yajna

978) *yajnee*: Enjoyer of yajnas

979) *yajnabhuk*: Receiver of all that is offered

980) *yajnasadhanah*: One who fulfils all yajnas

981) *yajnaantakrit*: One who performs the concluding act of the yajna

982) *yajnaguhyam*: The person to be realised by yajna

995) *chakree*: Carrier of Sudarsana

Jayatirtha Charana himself sometimes does *manasa-homa* in circumstances where the physical appearance of Agni is not possible. He very kindly explained how he does it with special *mudras*. He finishes the ceremony with *dhyana* (meditation) upon the glories of Lord Vamanadeva. Explaining this, he drew my attention to this verse and purport:

Whenever the activities of Vamandeva are described in the course of a ritualistic ceremony, whether the ceremony be performed to please the demigods, to please one's forefathers in the Pitrloka, or to celebrate a social event like a marriage, that ceremony should be understood to be extremely auspicious. [*Bhag.* 8. 23. 31]

Srila Prabhupada's purport:

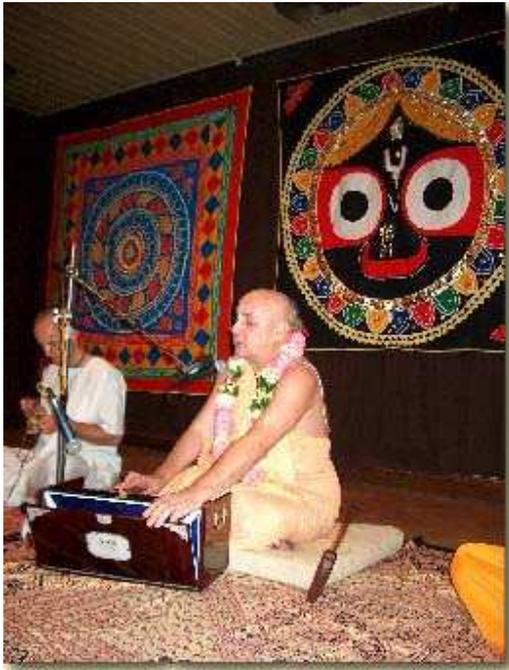
There are three kinds of ceremonies -- specifically, ceremonies to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead or the demigods, those performed for social celebrations like marriages and birthdays, and those meant to please the forefathers like the *sraddha* ceremony. In all these ceremonies, large amounts of money are spent for various activities, but here it is suggested that if along with this there is recitation of the wonderful activities of Vamanadeva, certainly the ceremony will be carried out successfully and will be free of all discrepancies.

So now, to close every *homa* (whether it is done with flame, or with Nila Sudarshana standing in when a physical flame isn't feasible), I chant

*chalayasi vikramane balim adbhuta-vamana  
pada-nakha-nira-janita-jana-pavana  
keshava dhrta vamana-rupa jaya jagadisha hare*

"O Keshava! O Lord of the universe! O Lord Hari who have assumed the form of a wonderful dwarf-*brahmana*! All glories to You! With Your massive steps You deceived King Bali, and with the Ganges water emanating from the nails of Your lotus feet You deliver all living beings in this world. "

*Prague, Czech Republic  
9 June, 2003*





*The lecture went for an hour. The questions from the guests showed their attentive interest.*

*Sunday, 8 June--The temple arranged for the weekly feast to be held at a public hall in Zlicin, thus allowing for a larger attendance. It started at 17:30 with kirtan.*

*New Ekachakra, Abranovche (near Preshov), Slovakia  
11 June, 2003*

**Prague, 9 June morning**



During my stay in Prague, I lived here at the home of Prahlada Nrsimha and family. We are about 12 minutes drive from the ISKCON temple in Zlicin.



Before departing Prague for Slovakia, I visit the Nitai Bakery's production kitchen, located in the village of Cherveny Ujezd (not far from Zlicin). Panasa Prabhu briefs me on the booming business of bread-baking;

the Prague devotees now have two bakery shops in the city and are looking for a third.



With Prahlada Nrsimha Prabhu (manager of Nitai Bakery), his wife Adhika-daya dd and daughter Narayani dd, I visit a castle in Cherveny Ujezd. The place looks as if it is from the Middle Ages and is constructed in the authentic Gothic style, but it is only a couple of years old! It was built for tourists by a Czech millionaire who is a customer of Nitai Bakery. Fresh bread-*prasadam* and other items are sold at the castle's restaurant.

#### **ISKCON Bratislava, Slovakia, 9 June evening**

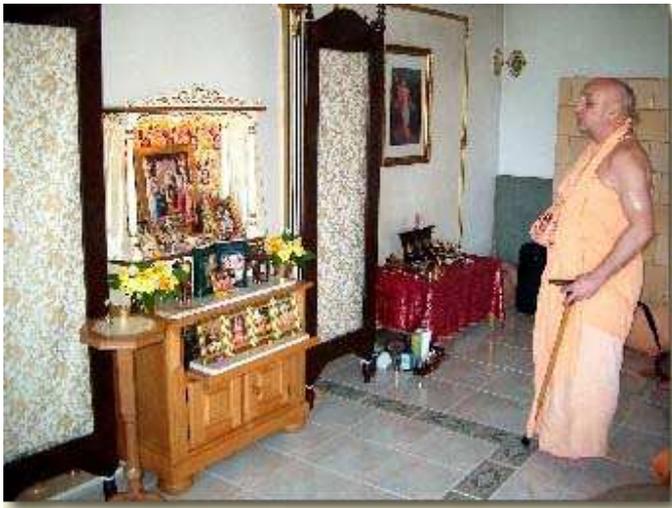


Bhagavad-gita class at the Bratislava preaching center.

#### **On route to New Ekachakra, 10 June**



After *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class Vidyagati Prabhu and I were driven to New Ekachakra, located in the village of Abranovche outside of Preshov. The drive took five hours, which is amazing since Slovakia is such a small country. But as you can see, the landscape is mountainous; thus the roads are tortuous.



Darshan of Sri-Sri Panchatattva and Sri Bala-gopal at New Ekachakra. My Shila altar is set up in the temple room here. My puja starts at 3:30; at 5:00 the devotees have *mangala-arati* for Panchatattva. After Tulsi-*puja* I do the *nitya-homa* for the Shilas.

New Ekachakra, Abranovche (near Preshov), Slovakia  
12 June, 2003

## Essay Two:

### A Vedic Schema of the Mind and its Processes

#### Introduction

The word *schema* has specific usages in modern psychology. In this essay, I accept the following usage: that a schema is a pattern imposed upon a complex reality in order to assist in explaining it.

The complex reality under discussion here is the mind. I use the word *mind* in the sense that Srila Prabhupada uses it in the following phrase from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*

1. 3. 33p: ". . . the living being misinterprets the gross body and subtle mind to be his own self. " Mind, then, means the *linga-sarira* or subtle body. It follows that I do not take the processes of *buddhi* (intelligence) and *ahamkara* (false ego) as independent of the processes of the mind. This indeed makes for a complex subject matter, especially since I refer to Vedic sources for a description of the mind.

In Chapter 22 of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Canto 11, Sri Krsna tells Uddhava that Vedic sages have analyzed the *tattvas* (gross, subtle and spiritual categories of reality) in multifarious ways. The Lord personally teaches Uddhava twenty-eight *tattvas*; plus He validates eight enumerations of *tattvas* by other sages. Thus there are at least nine different Vedic accounts of creation that are met with approval in the Eleventh Canto of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. In *Bhagavad-gita* Chapter 13, Sri Krsna teaches Arjuna yet another enumeration of *tattvas*. Logically, then, one might bring forth out of these ten accounts ten different descriptions of the mind and its processes.

That is why this essay presents you, the reader, a "schema" of the mind. The schema is drawn from Vedic sources; as I will take pains to show you, it is backed up by Srila Prabhupada's editions of *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* and other books. But being a schema, it a simplification of a more complex reality.

This schema comes to you in four parts:

- 1) An Overview of the Conditioned State of the *Jivatma***
- 2) *Maha-samasti*, *Samasti* and *Vyasti*: How Consciousness is Conditioned**
- 3) Vedic Depth Psychology**
- 4) An Overview of the Psychology of *Bhakti-yoga***

### **Part One: An Overview of the Conditioned State of the *Jivatma***

There are two kinds of covering powers exhibited by *maya*. One is called *praksep atmika*, and the other is called *avarana tmika*. When one is determined to get out of material bondage, the *praksep atmika-sakti*, the spell of diversion, impels one to remain in conditioned life fully satisfied by sense gratification. Due to the other power (*avarana tmika*), a conditioned soul feels satisfied even if he is rotting in the body of a pig or a worm in stool. To release a conditioned soul from material bondage is very difficult because the spell of *maya* is so strong. [C. c. Madhya 20. 6p]

Thus we begin with a general account of the conditioned state of the *jivatma*. What is meant by the word "conditioned"? The definition given by modern psychology is, "Exhibiting or trained to exhibit a conditioned response. " A much-cited example is Pavlov's dogs; in 1904 the Russian scientist Ivan Pavlov won the Nobel Prize for discovering the *conditioned response* when he instilled in dogs the behavior of salivation at the ring of a bell. Dogs were first trained to associate their feeding time with a bell's ringing. When the conditioning was complete, the mere sound of the bell--absent the appearance of food--was enough to make the dogs salivate. Thus, "to be conditioned" means to mentally associate the satisfaction of a desire with a stimulus that cannot satisfy that desire.

This is precisely what happens to the *jivatma* when it is covered by *maya*.

Therefore, in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* the conditioned soul is likened to the camel. The camel is very fond of eating thorny twigs that cut his tongue. While he is eating them, blood issues from his tongue and mixes with the thorny twigs. They become a little tasty, and he is thinking, "Oh, these twigs are very nice. " That is called *maya*. *Maya* means "that which is not. " *Ma* means "not," and *ya* means "this. " So *maya* means "not this. " That is the explanation of *maya*, or illusion. [*Life Comes From Life, The Eleventh Morning Walk*]

*hoya maya-das kore nana abhilasa*

"A servant of *maya* is always overwhelmed by many desires. " [From a Bengali song cited by Srila Prabhupada in Hyderabad 1975, lecture tape 4, side B]

In the quotation about the two potencies of *maya* that opens this Part One of Essay Two, we saw that *maya* covers the *jivatma* by first diverting it from the real path of satisfaction, just as Pavlov's dogs were diverted to respond to the sound of a bell as if that was food. Next, *maya* trains the soul to passively accept the false satisfaction again and again, life after life, even when the soul is put into the body of a hog.

This process--by which the real object of desire is switched for a false one--is termed *manoratha upagata* in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 14. 17. The term is significant. *Manoratha* means "chariot of the mind. " *Upagata* means "obtained. " The indication here is that the mind is the seat or vehicle of the process by which the soul obtains something false and yet accepts it. *Iti svapna-nirvrti-laksanam anubhavati*, the verse concludes: "In this way the soul feels the happiness one sometimes feels in a dream, and the conditioned soul sometimes takes pleasure in such mental concoctions. " The reader will recall from Essay One that the *sastra* repeatedly compares the human condition to a dream-experience.

Another suitable comparison is to intoxication and addiction.

We are already intoxicated. Being under the influence of *maya*, the material energy, we are already forgotten of ourself. Everybody. Nobody knows that he's not this body. This is another intoxication. He is not this body, this is a fact, but go to the outside of this temple, ask anybody, "What you are?" "Yes, I am this body. " They are already intoxicated. [Lecture on *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 2 December 1973, Los Angeles]

Those who are addicted to fruitive activities and speculative knowledge cannot understand the value of the holy name of the Lord, Krsna, who is always completely pure, eternally liberated and full of spiritual bliss. [*C. c. Adi 7. 72p*]

Let us consider addiction for a moment. It begins with intoxication; by those who enjoy it, intoxication is experienced as bliss and freedom. As addiction takes hold by way of repeated intoxication, it becomes apparent that this bliss and freedom is actually repressive. The addict is caught in a ever-closing spiral of habituation. At first the circle drawn by addiction is very broad. It allows within its diameter the affairs of a normal life: family, job, friends, respectable social position. But as the spiral descends and the circle tightens, such interests are squeezed out. Soon there

is no room at all for a normal life. The addict's entire energy is dedicated to the gratification of his one, all-consuming "need. "

But addiction is not a real need at all. It is a conditioning of consciousness whereby, like a dog who cannot help but drool at the sound of a bell, a living entity is forced by nature to be attached to something that incites uncontrollable desires but cannot deliver relief from those desires. To be addicted means to desire to consume a thing that consumes the addict with desire.

The logistics of addiction are provided by *maya*. What are logistics? These are the procurement, distribution, maintenance, and replacement of the materiel and personnel of addiction. In short, *maya* gives the facility. But the individual soul himself creates the "need. " Thus he cannot blame *maya* for his addiction. He creates the need by his choice of what he deems to be bliss and freedom.

*karya-karana-karttve  
hetuh praktir ucyate  
purusah sukha-duhkhanam  
bhoktrtve hetur ucyate*

Nature is said to be the cause of all material causes and effects, whereas the living entity is the cause of the various sufferings and enjoyments in this world. [B. g. 13. 21]

Srila Prabhupada explains:

Everything is suffering according to the body, and the body is supplied by the nature. That is explained here. *Karya-karana- karttve hetuh praktir ucyate. Karttve*, my action, that is also directed by the material nature. Originally directed by *Isvara*, who is sitting within your heart, *sarvasya caham hrdis sannivistho mattah smrtir jnanam apohanam ca*, but it is being acted through the agency of material nature.

*Karya-karana-karttve hetuh praktir ucyate. Praktir*. Just like one criminal is punished by the magistrate, that "This man should undergo six months' imprisonment. " So the judge or the magistrate superficially is the cause of his punishment, but actually he's not. He's giving him punishment according to law. I have created such a situation, I have made myself a criminal, and the magistrate, according to law, giving me punishment. So actually, directly, the magistrate is not the cause of my suffering. Why he should be cause? He's not your enemy. This is going on.

*Karya-karana-karttve ketuh praktir ucyate purusah sukha-duhkhanam bhoktrtve hetur ucyate*. So *bhoktrtva*, my enjoyment, because we have come to this material world for enjoyment. So everyone's enjoyment is not on the same standard. We can see that. Somebody is enjoying some way, another is enjoying. . . "One man's food, another man's poison. " What is enjoyed by the hog is not enjoyed by other animal. This is going on.

Therefore when we get real consciousness by good association, if we can understand that "I am under the clutches of *maya*, *prakrti*, and I'm dictated according to my association with the quality of the nature and I am getting different types of bodies,

different types of situation for my distress or happiness. This is my position, under, fully under the control of the *prakṛti*. " [Lecture on *Bhagavad-gīta* 13. 21, 15 October 1973, Bombay]

Srila Prabhupada's example of a magistrate sentencing a criminal to imprisonment is yet another suitable comparison. Addiction is a choice of criminal behavior and also a type of imprisonment. The judge is material nature. Behind material nature is the Supersoul. From Him we get the knowledge, remembrance and forgetfulness that constitute our particular notion of bliss and freedom. But the seed of that notion is *what we want*. Hence, our choice comes first. Supersoul helps us realize our choice, whatever it may be. Though we get assistance from Supersoul and His *prakṛti*, our choice is *our* responsibility.

We have seen that the conditioning of consciousness is a two-fold covering of the soul by *māyā*. We have gone through several analogies to help us grasp how pure consciousness gets covered: it is like Pavlov's experiment on dogs, it is like a dream, it is like intoxication, it is like addiction, it is like choosing to do a criminal act and getting imprisoned as a result. Let us now go from analogy to a summary overview given by a great Vaisnava *ācārya*. In his *Govinda Bhasya* commentary to *Vedānta-sūtra* 4. 4. 19, Srila Baladeva Vidyābhūṣana writes,

*vikare prapance janmadi satake va na vartate  
iti vikaravarti niravadyam brahma svarupam  
tadgunabhutam taddhamadikam ca tattadvisayaya  
vidyaya tattadavrtti pariksayan muktastadanubhavams  
tisthatiti na kincidunam  
hi yathah kathasrutirmuktasya tatha sthitim aha  
puram ekadasadvaramajasyavakrtatejasah  
anusthaya na socati vimuktasca vimucyate iti  
svarupavarikaya vrttya mimukto vidvangunavarikaya  
taya vimucyate ityathah*

There are six kinds of transformations (*vikāra*) that living entities undergo in material existence [birth, growth, sustenance, reproduction, dwindling and death]. Whatever is transcendental to *vikāra* is called *vikāra-avartī*. The Lord, His abode and all that share the divine qualities of the Lord are *vikāra-avartī*. The liberated soul knows all the realms (*vikāra* and *vikāra-avartī*) and everything about the Lord, the source of these realms. The liberated soul and the bound soul dwell within the same realms, but the liberated soul is not covered. *Kāthā Upaniṣad* 2. 2. 1 explains, "There is a city of eleven gates [the human body] belonging to the unborn, pure-hearted Supreme. One who meditates on Him never laments within that place. Being free of that which covers the form of Lord, he is free of the covering of material nature. " Thus the liberated soul is free of *svārūpa-avarikā* (ignorance that covers spiritual form) and *guṇa-avarikā* (the covering of consciousness by the three modes). The first point here is transformation. The six kinds of transformation listed in the above quotation are indicative of a *transformation of consciousness*. Those souls who are affected by the six *vikāras* are themselves transformed in consciousness from the liberated state of spiritual bliss to bondage and lamentation.

But can consciousness really be transformed? Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5. 11. 11,

One should not think that all the interactions of the physical elements, gross and subtle, that cause the transformation of mind and consciousness are working independently. They are under the direction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In *Bhagavad-gita* (15. 15), Krsna says that the Lord is situated in everyone's heart (*sarvasya caham hr̥di sannivisto mattah sm̥tir jñanam apohanam ca*). As mentioned herein, Supersoul (*ksetrajna*) is directing everything. The living entity is also *ksetrajna*, but the supreme *ksetrajna* is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the witness and order giver. Under His direction, everything takes place. The different inclinations of the living entity are created by his own nature or his expectations, and he is trained by the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the agency of material nature.

The Mayavadis hold to the doctrine that consciousness is *nirvikara* or untransformable. Thus to explain the conditioned state, they resort to illusionism: that our present perceptions and conceptions of material existence are utterly subjective and insubstantial. Such perceptions and conceptions, they argue, are in every sense disconnected from reality. This logic of utter disconnection obliges the Mayavadis to decry perceptual and conceptual qualities in the Absolute Truth. Names, forms, characteristics, personalities, activities and relationships are never more than hallucinations because without exception they have no existence in Reality.

The Vaisnavas hold that mundane names, forms, characteristics, personalities, activities and relationships are unreal because they are temporary; but still *maya* has real power to bewilder consciousness because it is a perverted reflection of the real and original transcendental names, forms, characteristics, personalities, activities and relationships eternally manifest in the spiritual world by Bhagavan Sri Krsna. The Mayavadis are quasi-atheists. They cannot accept Krsna as the Supreme Truth and the Supreme Controller, although He declares this of Himself in *Bhagavad-gita* 7. 7 and 8. 9. Their search for God ends only with consciousness of the self. Thus they cannot accept that consciousness can be transformed. But it can be--by *Lord Krsna's will*.

Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana states above that the realms of *vikara* (transformation) and *vikara-avartī* (transcendence) are both under the authority of the Lord. The transcendental realm is of the Lord's personal divine nature. The material realm--the "city of eleven gates," i. e. the human body--is of a different nature, but nonetheless it is the property of the Lord.

We are familiar with "the city of nine gates" (*nava-dvara pura*) from *Bhagavad-gita* 5. 13, in which the two eyes, two ears, one genital, two nostrils, one mouth and one rectum are the gates. The city of eleven gates (*puram ekadasadvaram*) is just a different enumeration of the sensory openings that is taught in *Katha Upanisad*. These are: *srotra* (hearing), *tvak* (tactile sensation), *caksus* (eyes), *jihva* (tongue as taster), *vak* (voice), *pani* (hands), *pada* (feet), *payu* (anus), *upastha* (genital) and *manas* (mind).

The point is that both the spiritual and material realms are controlled and owned by the Lord, and the liberated soul--the Lord's pure devotee--knows both realms and indeed dwells within them. The conditioned soul likewise dwells within both realms. He is always an infinitesimal part and parcel of Lord Krsna's spiritual nature. But he has forgotten Krsna. Thus he is covered by ignorance of the Lord's form, and his own

spiritual form too. In other words, he is diverted from the actual object of his desire, which is the transcendental satisfaction of loving exchange with the Lord. In his ignorance of spiritual form, the conditioned soul is further covered by the three modes of material nature. . . which means he takes on a material form. This is all effected by a transformation of consciousness. And so the conditioned soul experiences himself subject to birth, growth, sustenance, reproduction, dwindling and death.

These six transformations are experienced because the conditioned soul finds his identity within eight kinds of elements in the form of the gross and subtle bodies: earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego. Through the agency of these gross and subtle energies he acquires thirteen kinds of senses:

All our ordinary actions and perceptions depend on various forms of energy supplied to us by nature in various combinations. Our senses of perception and of action, that is to say, our five perceptive senses of (1) hearing, (2) touch, (3) sight, (4) taste and (5) smell, as well as our five senses of action, namely (1) hands, (2) legs, (3) speech, (4) evacuation organs and (5) reproductive organs, and also our three subtle senses, namely (1) mind, (2) intelligence and (3) ego (thirteen senses in all), are supplied to us by various arrangements of gross or subtle forms of natural energy. [Bhag. 2. 2. 35p]

The conditioned soul is covered by seven kinds of gross bodily layers: skin, flesh, bone, muscles, marrow, fat and semen. [See *Krsna*, Chapter Two, "Prayers by the Demigods for Lord Krsna in the Womb"] He is covered by five kinds of subtle conceptions imposed by the controlling deity of the mind, the moon: *annamaya* (the conception that life is food), *pranamaya* (the conception that life is bodily movement), *manomaya* (the conception that the good life is the culture of the mind), *vijnana-maya* (the conception that the better life is the culture of discrimination), and *anandamaya* (the conception that the best life is full of the bliss of self- realization). [See *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 22. 9, 10 and 6. 15. 12-15p].

In the subtle body are manifest the living symptoms, which are consciousness and convictions. [See *Bhagavad-gita* 13. 6-7p] The interaction of the five elements of the gross body gives rise to desire, hatred, happiness and distress. [ibid. ]

The conditioned soul is beaten by the six material whips: hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death. [See *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 1. 35] He becomes addicted to the four acts of conditioned life: eating, sleeping, mating and defending. He is tempted by the four vices of conditioned life: illicit sex, gambling, intoxication and meat-eating. By committing these, the soul passes through the three gates to hell: lust, anger and greed. Or it may be said he falls into the clutches of six enemies [see *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 7. 33], namely lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, and jealousy. He can avoid hell and the six enemies by passing religiously through the four stages of regulated material life: *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksa*. In any case, he is subject to the fourfold material miseries: birth, death, old age and disease.

The six transformations and all the other permutations associated with them manifest within the field of material activity, consisting of twenty-four components. [See *Bhagavad-gita* 13. 6-7] Most of these twenty-four have been mentioned already; here I shall simply summarize them. There are five gross elements called *mahabhutas*; three subtle elements; the unmanifested stage of the three modes of

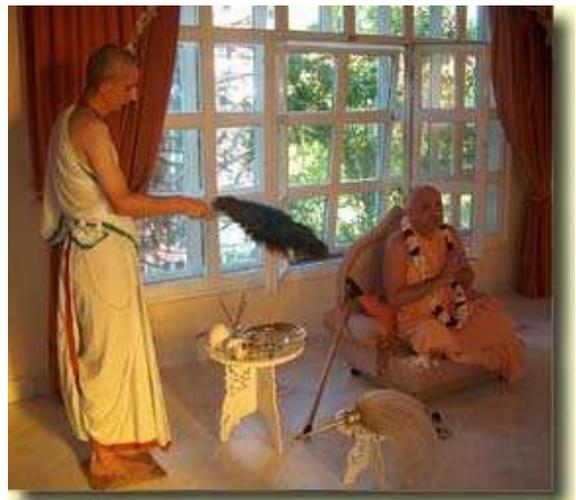
material nature, called *avyakta*; five knowledge-acquiring senses; five working senses; and five sense objects. *Idam sariram kaunteya kestram iti abhidhiyate*, "This body, O son of Kunti, is called the field." [B. g. 12. 2] Thus the field of twenty-four components is the material body, the city of nine (or eleven) gates.

How consciousness is transformed, and how the field of activities manifests from the three modes of material nature, is the subject of Part Two of this essay, coming soon to In2-MeC.

*ISKCON Budapest, Hungary*  
*17 June 2003*



*Their Divine Lordships Sri Sri Dayal Nitai Vijaya Gauranga, who preside over scenic Budapest from Their temple in the Huuvoesoelgy ("Cold Hills") on the outskirts of the city.*



*A warm Vaisnava welcome. Such is the hospitality sannyasis are greeted with at the Budapest temple. Cold Hills, warm hearts. I arrived on 14 June.*



*Sunday feast lecture. Vaikunteshvard, one of my first disciples, is translating.*



*The devotees and guests listen attentively. The temple may be in the Cold Hills, but the programs are well-attended.*



*Monday afternoon I gave a lecture at Govinda's Restaurant in downtown Budapest. Entering this door, one walks downstairs to below street level into an extraordinarily large place.*



*The so-called meditation hall in Govinda's is a spacious facility for devotional programs. This hall is about one-third the total space in Govinda's; the rest is for regular restaurant activity (cooking, table service, boutique).*

*ISKCON Szeged, Hungary  
18 June 2003*

Over these last few days, while working on part 2 of the Transcendental Psychology essay, I have also gone back and polished part 1. Today a revised version of part 1 has replaced the earlier one (even the earlier one appeared in several incarnations from June 12 to June 14). This version is probably the final one.

*ISKCON Szeged, Hungary  
19 June 2003*

### **Essay Two:**

#### **A Vedic Schema of the Mind and its Processes**

##### **Part Two:**

##### ***Maha-samasti, Samasti and Vyasti:* How Consciousness is Conditioned**

We begin this second part of the essay by laying down a foundation of six scriptural quotations. The schema that follows is built upon these *sastric* evidences.

*Taittiriya Upanisad 2. 7:*

*raso vai sah  
rasam hy evayam labdhanandi bhavati  
ko hy evanyat kah pranyat  
yad esa akasa anando na syat  
esa hy esanandayati*

The Supreme Truth is *Rasa*. The *jiva* becomes blissful on attaining this *rasa*. Who would work with the body and *prana* (sensory powers) if this blissful form did not exist? He gives bliss to all.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam 3. 25. 15:*

*cetah khalv asya bandhaya  
muktaye catmano matam  
gunesu saktam bandhaya  
ratam va pumsi muktaye*

The stage in which the consciousness of the living entity is attracted by the three modes of material nature is called conditional life. But when that same consciousness is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is situated in the consciousness of liberation.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 32. 19

*nunam daivena vihata  
ye cacyuta-katha-sudham  
hitva srnvanty asad-gathah  
purisam iva vid-bhujah*

Such persons are condemned by the supreme order of the Lord. Because they are averse to the nectar of the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they are compared to stool-eating hogs. They give up hearing the transcendental activities of the Lord and indulge in hearing of the abominable activities of materialistic persons.

*Rg-Veda* 10. 129. 4:

*kamas tad agre samavartatadhi manaso retah prathamam yadasit*

In the beginning there was desire, which was the primal germ of the mind.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 9. 43:

*naivodvije para duratyaya-vaitaranyas  
tvad-virya-gayana-mahamrta-magna-cittah  
soce tato vimukha-cetasa indriyarthamaya-sukhaya bharam udvahato vimudhan*

O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 1. 4:

*nivrtta-tarsair upagiyamanad  
bhavausadhac chrotra-mano-'bhiramat  
ka uttamasloka-gunanuvadat  
puman virajyeta vina pasughnat*

Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *parampara* system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?

The first quotation informs us that the Absolute Truth is *rasa*, the reservoir of pleasure for everyone, even *jivas* in the conditioned state who work with physical bodies. In the beginning of his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (Nectar of Devotion), Srila Rupa Gosvami testifies that Lord Krsna is the *akhila-rasamrta-murti*, the form of all

kinds of nectarean *rasa* or taste. The word *akhila* is rendered by Srila Prabhupada as meaning "all kinds," "all sorts," "universal," "all that be," "complete," and so on. The second quotation, spoken by Lord Kapiladeva, tells us that the living entities are grouped into two categories--conditioned and liberated-- by the quality of their attraction, or in other words, by the quality of their taste. Liberated souls are attracted to Krsna, and they obtain *akhila-rasa*, the complete taste of nectar. Conditioned souls are attracted to the modes of nature, and they obtain *khila* (incomplete) or *jada* (dead, insentient) *rasa*. In a *Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture given on 7 December 1974 in Bombay, Srila Prabhupada explained:

You are captivated by this material *jada-rasa*, material *rasa*. There is *rasa*; otherwise why a man is working so hard to maintain the family? Unless there is some *ananda*, why he is taking? Nobody is taking so much hard responsibility for others. But children, wife, family, they take. There is. . . Unless there is some *ananda*, how he can take? So the relationship has got *ananda*. But this *ananda* is flickering, illusion.

At this point it is opportune to introduce the words *samasti* and *vyasti*, which appear in the title of this second part of the essay. *Sama* means "same," *vyasa* means "divided," and *asti* means "it is so." The Lord is *akhila* ("universal", "all that is," etc. ), thus His point of view is *samasti*, as we see in *Gita* 15. 7: *mamaivamso jiva-loke jiva-bhutah sanatana*, "The living entities in this conditional world are My eternal fragmental parts." But the point of view of the conditioned souls is that they are divided (*vyasti*) by matter from God and from one another. In fact, the very word *jiva* or *jiva-bhuta* carries with it the sense of this division. "In the conditioned state, the living entity is known as *jiva-bhuta*, or 'the living force within matter.'" [C. c. *Madhya* 6. 269p] (In the same purport Srila Prabhupada explains that the liberated soul is called *brahma-bhuta*.) *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1. 3. 32 states, *sa jivo yat punar-bhavah*, "the *jiva* takes repeated births." Similarly, 4. 29. 74 tells us, *jiva ity abhidhiyate*, "thus the *jiva* is understood" as the *cetana* (conscious living entity) that is *yuktah* (combined) with *sodasa-vistrtam* (sixteen expansions), namely the five sense objects, the five sense active organs, the five knowledge-acquiring senses and the mind.

The third quotation, also spoken by Lord Kapila, explains that those divided from the Lord are most unfortunate. They are averse to *akhila-rasa*, which appears in this world as *acyuta-katha*, the topics of Lord Acyuta. Those who have no taste for Krsna consciousness are compared to stool-eating hogs; i. e. there *is* a *rasa* they are mad after, but unhappily it is the taste to hear, discuss and imitate the nasty affairs of animalistic people.

Thus the conditioned souls are *daivena-vihata*, condemned by divine order. They are separated from the complete nectar of Krsna's association. And so they are forced to slake their need for nectar in obnoxious ways. It is on this point that we may discern the precise manner their consciousness is transformed. The *jiva-bhutas* are no less spirit souls than the *brahma-bhutas*. They are even no less parts and parcels and eternal servants of Krsna. But they have no taste to serve Him.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 11. 8 compares the mind to the flaming wick of a lamp. If the wick burns improperly, if the flame smokes and sputters, the lamp will be blackened and its light will be unsteady. If it burns nicely, the flame will illuminate brightly without blackening the lamp. This verse points out in no uncertain terms that there are two states of mind: *tattva* and *vrtti*. *Tattva*, which commonly means

"truth," is translated here by Srila Prabhupada as "its original position. " *Vrtti* is translated here as "various engagements. " Like *tattva*, *vrtti* is a word that appears quite often in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. It is a way of designating activities that are geared to material sustenance.

Thus the liberated mind, the pure mind, has no other engagement than Krsna consciousness. The impure mind is bound to *vrttis*. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 11. 9 lists eleven such engagements in three divisions. When the mind is absorbed in hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling, it is engaged in sense objects. When the mind is absorbed in grasping, walking, talking, urination/defecation and sexual intercourse, it is engaged in organic activities. When the mind is absorbed in mental concoction and self-importance, it is engaged in *abhimana* (false egoism).

The verse from the *Rg-Veda*--the fourth scriptural quotation that lays the foundational logic of this second part of the essay--informs us that the seed of the mind is desire. It also points to the mind as the starting point of material existence. If the living entity has no taste for full Krsna consciousness, he will have unsatisfied desires. Material desires are the root of the material mind and its processes (*manaso-vrtti*).

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 1. 42 states that the nature of the mind is *vikaratmaka*. The reader may recall the word *vikara* from the first part of this essay. It means "transformation. " The specific *vikaras* of the mind are three: thinking (consciousness and contemplation), feeling (emotions) and willing (determination). There is even a pure, original form of these transformations of mind.

From the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* we understand that Krishna is the Original Consciousness and the center of all psychological movement, namely thinking, feeling and willing. We are all parts and parcels of the Supreme Thinking, Feeling and Willing, but our present thinking, feeling and willing being contaminated by the cloud of ignorance, we are thinking, feeling and willing in a perverted way. [Letter to Mrs, Cline, 69-02-22]

Thus the impure *vyasti* mind of the conditioned souls develops out of the original pure *samasti* mind of the Lord. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10. 1. 42 declares that the material body develops from the material mind.

The reader will recall Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana's comment in the first part of this essay to the effect that the liberated soul knows and dwells within both the realm of *vikara* (transformation) and *vikara-avarti* (transcendence). This is illustrated by the fifth quotation above, spoken by Sri Prahlada Maharaja. He prays that he lives without fear in the material world because he is always remembering the glories and activities of the Lord. His only purpose for being here is to deliver the fallen conditioned souls, whose minds are absorbed in carrying the heavy burden of false material happiness.

The sixth quotation instructs us that while pure glorification of the Lord is the satisfaction relished by liberated souls, it is also the medicine for curing the conditioned souls of their spiritual weakness, strong material desires, and dissatisfaction. Only very unfortunate persons infected with extreme self-loathing, who are perversely determined to annihilate their hopes for spiritual life, fail to be attracted.

We have looked carefully at the transformation of consciousness and seen that it is a transformation of *rasa* or taste. From out of this transformation, the field of activities appears. How does that take place? A basic understanding can be gleaned from the following quotations, both from purports to verses in Chapter 10 of Canto 2 of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

As such, before the creation or manifestation of the material cosmic world, the Lord exists as total energy (*maha-samasti*), and thus desiring Himself to be diffused to many, He expands Himself further into multitotal energy (*samasti*). From the multitotal energy He further expands Himself into individuals in three dimensions, namely *adhyatmic*, *adhidaivic* and *adhibhautic*, as explained before (*vyasti*). As such, the whole creation and the creative energies are nondifferent and different simultaneously. Because everything is an emanation from Him (the Maha-Visnu or *Maha-samasti*), nothing of the cosmic energies is different from Him; but all such expanded energies have specific functions and display as designed by the Lord, and therefore they are simultaneously different from the Lord. The living entities are also similar energy (marginal potency) of the Lord, and thus they are simultaneously one with and different from Him. [*Bhag.* 2. 10. 13p]

The heart of every living entity is the seat of the Supersoul, Paramatma, a plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Without His presence the living entity cannot get into the working energy according to his past deeds. The living entities who are conditioned in the material world are manifested in the creation in terms of respective inclinations inherent in them, and the requisite material body is offered to each and every one of them by the material energy under the direction of the Supersoul. This is explained in the *Bhagavad-gita* (9. 10). When, therefore, the Supersoul is situated in the heart of the conditioned soul, the requisite mind is manifested in the conditioned soul, and he becomes conscious of his occupation as one is conscious of his duty after waking up from slumber. [*Bhag.* 2. 10. 30p]

A question may be raised--as it was raised by Mahatma Vidura before Sage Maitreya in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 7. 6--that if creation is a *lila* of the Lord, and that all-blissful Lord is directly present in the heart of the living entity, why does His presence and His *lila* result in misfortune for the living entities? Maitreya replied that the misfortune of the living entities is *atma-viparyaya* or perverse identification. They have lost touch with their actual identity as part and parcel of the Lord and are trying to find their identity within the energies of creation. The Lord never loses His original transcendental sense of self even as He sports with His illusory potency.

This brings us back to the subject of this second part of the essay: *samasti* and *vyasti*. The Lord has His own divine purpose in performing His *lila* of creation, and that purpose includes (*samasti*) the ultimate welfare of every one of His parts and parcels. "The material creation by the Lord of creatures (Visnu) is a chance offered to the conditioned souls to come back home--back to Godhead. " [*B. g.* 3. 10p] But from their conditional *vyasti* point of view, the living entities see this creation differently, and thus they suffer. Therefore: "Krsna consciousness means constantly associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in such a mental state that the devotee can observe the cosmic manifestation exactly as the Supreme Personality of Godhead does. " [*Bhag.* 4. 29. 69]

Let us consider in a more detailed manner how the *lila* of creation unfolds. *Sastra* describes it as having four stages. Each stage is a by-product of an expansion of the Lord.

The supreme living entity, Krsna, eternally manifests Himself as the *catur-vyuha*, or quadruple plenary expansion. The purport of this prayer is that one should give up his false ego and pray to this *catur-vyuha* by offering Them obeisances. Although the Absolute Truth is one without a second, the Absolute Truth displays His unlimited opulences and potencies by expanding Himself in innumerable plenary forms, of which the *catur-vyuha* is a principal expansion. The original being is Vasudeva, the Personality of Godhead. When the Godhead manifests His primeval energies and opulences, He is called Sankarsana. Pradyumna is the basis of the Visnu expansion who is the soul of the entire universe, and Aniruddha is the basis of the personal manifestation of Visnu as the Supersoul of every individual entity within the universe. Among the four plenary expansions mentioned here, the original expansion is Vasudeva, and the other three are considered to be particular manifestations of Him. When the living entity forgets that both he himself as well as the material nature are meant for the Lord's service, the quality of ignorance becomes prominent, and the conditioned entity desires to become himself the master. [*Bhag.* 11. 5. 29-30p]

The first *purusa-avatara*, Maha-Visnu in the Causal Ocean, who is the creator of the aggregate material energy, is an expansion of Sankarsana; the second *purusa*, Garbhodakasayi Visnu, is an expansion of Pradyumna; and the third *purusa*, Ksirodakasayi Visnu, is an expansion from Aniruddha. [*C. c. Adi* 2. 56]

As Srila Prabhupada notes in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1. 14. 8, understanding the *catur-vyuha* (Lord Krsna in His four-fold Visnu-tattva manifestation that begins with Vasudeva) poses "complex problems for the layman." We will start unraveling these complexities by mentioning that in these four forms, Krsna expands His pastimes beyond Goloka Vrndavana. For example, Lord Ramachandra is the original Vasudeva; He and His three transcendental brothers are the *adi-caturvyuha*. [*Bhag.* 3. 1. 34p] Sri Narayana, the Lord of Vaikuntha, is an expansion of Vasudeva. [*Bhag.* 1. 16. 26-30p] Besides being eternally present in the spiritual world, the four personalities of the *catur-vyuha* also appear in the *mahat-tattva*. [See *C. c. Madhya* 20. 276p].

How these quadruple forms of Godhead give shape to the *mahat-tattva* by Their divine presence is a major topic of discussion among great sages of the Vedanta philosophy. What follows is a summary from the Upanisads. Please take note of the states of consciousness and their symptoms that are associated with each of the four. Also note that in the Upanisads, the *catur-vyuha* are named Brahman (for Vasudeva), Isvara (for Sankarsana), Hiranyagarbha (for Pradyumna) and Virat (for Aniruddha).

<b>Aspect of Absolute</b>	<b>State of consciousness and symptoms</b>	<b>Creative manifestation (type of body)</b>	<b>Stage of creation</b>
Brahman	Turiya: pure consciousness (above three gunas)	Brahma-bhuta (beyond material embodiment)	Brahman (above three gunas)

Isvara	Prajna (intelligence in avyakta): susupti (unconsciousness)	Karana-sarira (causal body)	Mahat
Hiranyagarbha	Taijjasa (creative intelligence); svapna (dream-sleep)	Linga-sarira (subtle body)	Taijasa
Virat	Ahamkara (false ego): jagrata (wakefulness)	Sthula-sarira (gross body)	Visva

Now let us compare this to key statements from Srila Prabhupada's books. We begin with a quotation from *Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya* 20. 276p.

The three types of egotism (*ahankara*) are technically known as *vaikarika*, *taijasa* and *tamasa*. The *mahat-tattva* is situated within the heart, or *citta*, and the predominating Deity of the *mahat-tattva* is Lord Vasudeva (SB. 3. 26. 21). The *mahat-tattva* is transformed into three divisions: (1) *vaikarika*, egotism in goodness (*sattvika-ahankara*), from which the eleventh sense organ, the mind, is manifest and whose predominating Deity is Aniruddha (SB. 3. 26. 27-28); (2) *taijasa*, or egotism in passion (*rajasa-ahankara*), from which the senses and intelligence are manifest and whose predominating Deity is Lord Pradyumna (SB. 3. 26. 29-31); (3) *tamasa*, or egotism in ignorance, from which sound vibration (*śabda-tanmatra*) expands. From the sound vibration, the sky (*ākāśa*) is manifest and, the senses, beginning with the ear, are also manifest (SB. 3. 26. 32). Of these three types of egotism, Lord Sankarsana is the predominating Deity.

The first point to understand is that Lord Vasudeva predominates over the *mahat-tattva* from an aloof, transcendent situation. Srila Prabhupada brings this nicely into focus in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 26. 21. He writes that the Vasudeva state is also called clear consciousness or Kṛṣṇa consciousness; in *Bhagavad-gītā* it is called *kṣetra-jña*, wherein the field of activities--manifest at the *samasti* level within the *mahat-tattva* and at the *vyasti* level within the individual body--is perfectly understood along with the Supersoul.

In the portion of the purport from *Madhya-līlā* Chapter Twenty quoted before, Srila Prabhupada writes that Lord Sankarsana is the predominating Deity over the three kinds of egoism that manifest within the *mahat-tattva*. As we have already seen, the three personalities of the *catur-vyūha* beginning with Sankarsana are associated with the three *puruṣa-avatars* who generate the material creation. The first *puruṣa*, Maha-Visnu, expands from Sankarsana.

He is called Isvara in the Upanisads and is said to preside over the *karana* (causal) feature of embodiment. From Srila Prabhupada's books we know that Maha-Visnu lies upon the *karana-jal* (causal ocean) to breathe uncountable universes out from His pores. The Upanisads say that Isvara is the Lord of dreamless sleep (*susupti*). Srila Prabhupada writes in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 9. 32, puport:

The *ādī-puruṣa*, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead--Kṛṣṇa, Govinda--expands Himself as Maha-Visnu. After the annihilation of this cosmic manifestation, He keeps Himself in transcendental bliss. The word *yoga-nidram* is used in reference to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should understand that this *nidra*, or

sleep, is not like our *nidra* in the mode of ignorance. The Lord is always situated in transcendence. He is *sac-cid-ananda*--eternally in bliss--and thus He is not disturbed by sleep like ordinary human beings. It should be understood that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is in transcendental bliss in all stages. Srila Madhvacarya concisely states that the Lord is *turya-sthitah*, always situated in transcendence. In transcendence there is no such thing as *jagarana-nidra-susupti*--wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep.

This quotation is full of significance. We see here that while there is an apparent difference in Their influence upon the consciousness of the *jivas*, there is no difference in the transcendental positions of Lord Vasudeva and Lord Sankarsana (Maha-Visnu). You will recall from Essay One a quotation from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11. 25. 20 stating that wakeful consciousness is symptomatic of goodness, dream-consciousness is symptomatic of passion, and unconsciousness is symptomatic of ignorance. Thus while Lord Sankarsana's influence over the *jivas* is *tamasic*, He Himself is always *turiya-sthitah*, beyond the modes of nature. All Visnu-tattva forms are equally transcendental. "All the plenary expansions are one and the same *visnu-tattva*, and there is no difference in Their potency. " [*Bhag.* 3. 1. 34p] "Anyone who knows these three Visnus can be liberated from material entanglement. " [*B. g.* 7. 4p]

We see once more the relationship of *samasti* to *vyasti* or *akhila* to *khila*. The deep sleep of the *vyasti* living entities is an incomplete imitation of the *lila* of complete transcendental bliss enjoyed by *Maha-samasti*, Lord Maha-Visnu. *Vedanta-sutra* 1. 3. 15 (*gati-sabdabhyam tatha hi drstam lingam ca*) indicates that the *dahara*, i. e. the Supersoul, intimately associates with the living entities in deep sleep, although they fail to realize it. *Chandogya Upanisad* 8. 3. 2 says that every day the living entities go to the spiritual world of Brahman without knowing it. Deep sleep (*susupti*) is an energy of Maha-Visnu. Every night He comes to associate with us (the Paramatma in our heart is no different in potency from Maha-Visnu), and we are wrapped in the blanket of His *susupti* potency. *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* 4. 2. 18 compares the *jiva* soul to a fish in a river, in that the self moves from one state of conditioned consciousness to another like a fish swims from one bank to another. The river is the energy of the three Visnus: *jagarana-svapna-susupti*.

*evam jagaranadini  
jiva-sthanani catmanah  
maya-matrani vijnaya  
tad-drastaram param smaret*

All the conditions of deep sleep, dreaming and wakefulness are but energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should always remember the original creator of these conditions, the Supreme Lord, who is unaffected by them. [*Bhag.* 6. 16. 54]

The Upanisads say that Isvara (Maha-Visnu) is the Lord of Prajna. In Canto One of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Srila Prabhupada translates *prajna* as "introspective knowledge. " *Gita* 2. 57 explains *prajna* to mean knowledge by which one is unaffected by any condition in the material world. Maharaja Yudisthira achieved such introspective knowledge by merging the five gross elements of the body into the three modes of material nature (which also refers to the three aspects of the subtle body: mind the product of goodness, intelligence the product of passion and false ego the product of ignorance). He then merged the modes into one nescience, which

Srila Prabhupada terms *avyakta mahat-tattva*. [See *Srimad Bhagavatam* 1. 15. 42p] This one nescience Yudisthira finally absorbed into Brahman, the pure self.

The same progression is outlined in this quotation from *Bhagavad-gita* 13. 6-7p.

The five great elements are a gross representation of the false ego, which in turn represents the primal stage of false ego technically called the materialistic conception, or *tamasa-buddhi*, intelligence in ignorance. This, further, represents the unmanifested stage of the three modes of material nature. The unmanifested modes of material nature are called *pradhana*.

The *avyakta mahat-tattva* is the root stage of the material creation (*karana*). The Upanisads call it Mahat. Beyond this Mahat is Brahman or *vasudeva-sattva*, pure consciousness. Lord Vasudeva presides over *vasudeva-sattva*, Lord Sankarsana presides over *avyakta mahat-tattva*, and Lord Pradyumna presides over *vyakta* (manifest) *mahat-tattva*. The Upanisads term this third stage of creation *tajjasa*.

Again kindly recall the quotation from *C. c. Madhya* 20. 276p. There it is said: "(2) *tajjasa*, or egotism in passion (*rajasa-ahankara*), from which the senses and intelligence are manifest and whose predominating Deity is Lord Pradyumna (SB. 3. 26. 29-31). " Garbhodakasayi Visnu expands from Lord Pradyumna. Essay One referred you to a quotation from *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya* 2. 292 that stated Garbhodakasayi Visnu is the Hiranyagarbha or Supersoul of the whole universe. The Upanisads call Him Hiranyagarbha; they say the *linga-sarira* (subtle body) emanates from Him. This is confirmed in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 28. 68-70:

The ocean entered His abdomen with hunger and thirst, but the Cosmic Being [Garbhodakasayi Visnu] refused to rise even then. The moon-god entered His heart with the mind, but the Cosmic Being would not be roused.

Brahma also entered His heart with intelligence, but even then the Cosmic Being could not be prevailed upon to get up. Lord Rudra also entered His heart with the ego, but even then the cosmic Being did not stir.

However, when the inner controller, the deity presiding over consciousness [Paramatma or Ksirodakasayi Visnu], entered the heart with reason, at that very moment the Cosmic Being arose from the causal waters.

The subtle active senses (*prana-sarira*) of the *linga-sarira* constitute the dream-body. "One can experience the distinction between the subtle and gross bodies even daily; in a dream, one's gross body is lying on the bed while the subtle body carries the soul, the living entity, to another atmosphere. " [*Bhag.* 4. 12. 18p] Thus Hiranyagarbha or Garbhodakasayi Visnu presides over the *svapna* state of consciousness, which is in the mode of passion.

Ksirodakasayi Visnu, the Paramatma, enters into the heart of the *linga-sarira*. Within the individual heart He is the localized feature of Lord Aniruddha, who presides over the *vaikaraka* phase of creation (false ego in the mode of goodness, *sattvika-ahankara*). The Upanisads call Him Virat (a name of Ksirodakasayi Visnu; see *C. c.*

*Madhya* 21. 39p). He is said to preside over *jagrata*, the wakeful state of embodied consciousness.

But some measure of contradiction seems to surface here between the Upanisads and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. This fourth phase of creation is termed Visva by the Upanisads; the indication is that it is the most gross stage of development, by which the *sthula-sarira* (body of five physical elements) appears. The Lord of Visva, named Virat, is said to hold the *jivas* in the thrall of *ahamkara*, false ego. The gross elements and false ego suggest the mode of ignorance, which is ruled by Sankarsana. What is the connection of that to Aniruddha, ruler of the mode of goodness?

A solution is found in *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* Adi 5. 41p and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 17. 16. We learn from the first reference that the source of the Visnu forms is Mula-Sankarsana (the "root Sankarsana"). From Him emanate Pradyumna and Aniruddha, Maha-Visnu, Garbhodakasayi Visnu and Ksirodakasayi Visnu, the *jivas* and the whole material manifestation. Turning to the *Bhagavatam* reference, we learn that Sankarsana is the *final* expansion of the *catur-vyuha*, and He is worshiped by Lord Siva as the cause of that great demigod's existence. How can Sankarsana be the root of the *purusa-avatars* and yet be the last expansion of the *catur-vyuha*? The answer becomes more clear in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 25. 1: apart from His form as Maha-Visnu, Sankarsana appears within this universe as Ananta, who is Godhead in the form of a thousand-headed snake of cosmic proportions.

Sri Sukadeva Gosvami said to Maharaja Pariksit: My dear King, approximately 240,000 miles beneath the planet Patala lives another incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the expansion of Lord Visnu known as Lord Ananta or Lord Sankarsana. He is always in the transcendental position, but because He is worshiped by Lord Siva, the deity of *tamo-guna* or darkness, He is sometimes called *tamasi*. Lord Ananta is the predominating Deity of the material mode of ignorance as well as the false ego of all conditioned souls. When a conditioned living being thinks, "I am the enjoyer, and this world is meant to be enjoyed by me," this conception of life is dictated to him by Sankarsana. Thus the mundane conditioned soul thinks himself the Supreme Lord.

Ksirodakasayi Visnu (Aniruddha) and Ananta (Sankarsana) both preside over the Visva phase of creation. The former takes charge of the inner direction of the living entities. The latter takes charge of their gross elemental bodies and the false ego. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 24. 36 proclaims Aniruddha, Ananta and Sankarsana to be the same Personality of Godhead. Therefore in some places in Srila Prabhupada's books, Lord Aniruddha is said to be the Deity of the total ego of the living entities. Another gloss on the revelation that there are two Sankarsanas is found in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 24. 36. There Lord Sankarsana is said to have a two-fold role in creation: integration and disintegration. Srila Prabhupada explains that the integrative force is seen as so-called gravitation, which holds the stuff of the world together. At the time of devastation, the same Sankarsana releases the disintegrative force in the form of annihilating fire from His mouths.

Perhaps some readers found this sojourn into the complexities of the *catur-vyuh*s and Their influence on consciousness and creation to be brain-taxing. But there is an important lesson in transcendental psychology to be learned from it.

In order to get release from the false ego, one has to worship Sankarsana. Sankarsana is also worshiped through Lord Siva; the snakes which cover the body of Lord Siva are representations of Sankarsana, and Lord Siva is always absorbed in meditation upon Sankarsana. One who is actually a worshiper of Lord Siva as a devotee of Sankarsana can be released from false, material ego. If one wants to get free from mental disturbances, one has to worship Aniruddha. For this purpose, worship of the moon planet is also recommended in the Vedic literature. Similarly, to be fixed in one's intelligence one has to worship Pradyumna, who is reached through the worship of Brahma. These matters are explained in Vedic literature. [*Bhag.* 3. 26. 21p]

The science of God analyzes the constitutional position of God and His diverse energies. Material nature is called *prakṛti*, or the energy of the Lord in His different *purusa* incarnations (expansions) as described in the *Satvata-tantra*:

*visnos tu trini rupani  
purusakhyany atho viduh  
ekam tu mahatah srastr  
dvitiyam tv anda-samsthitam  
trtiyam sarva-bhuta-stham  
tani jnatva vimucyate*

"For material creation, Lord Kṛṣṇa's plenary expansion assumes three Visnus. The first one, Maha-Visnu, creates the total material energy, known as the *mahat-tattva*. The second, Garbhodakasayi Visnu, enters into all the universes to create diversities in each of them. The third, Kṣirodakasayi Visnu, is diffused as the all-pervading Supersoul in all the universes and is known as Paramatma. He is present even within the atoms. Anyone who knows these three Visnus can be liberated from material entanglement." [*B. g.* 7. 4p]

Coming soon:

### **Part Three: Vedic Depth Psychology.**

*Timisoara, Romania  
24 June, 2003*

#### **Essay Two:**

#### **A Vedic Schema of the Mind and its Processes**

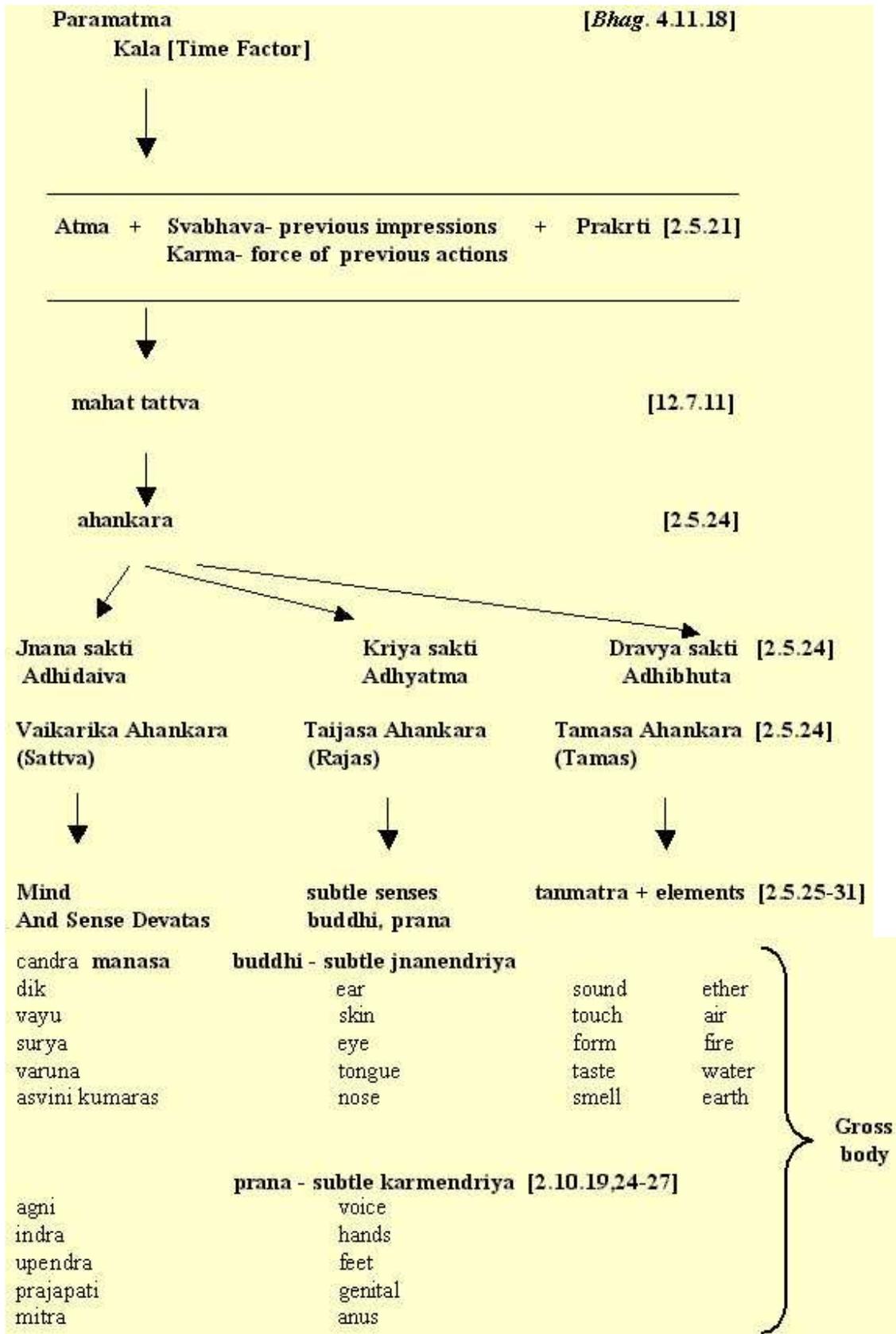
#### **Part Three: Vedic Depth Psychology**

Geeta Lal Sahai, in an article entitled "The Mysterious Unconscious" (which begins on page 108 of *World Famous Strange Mysteries* published by Pustak Mahal, Delhi, June 2001), gives this succinct introduction to Depth Psychology. The exponents of Depth Psychology have compared our mind to the tip of an iceberg floating on the surface of water. A large part of the iceberg is under the water level

and only a small portion of it is visible to the naked eye. The portion of the iceberg which is visible to us is just 1/8 of the entire body of ice. Hence 7/8 part thereof is submerged and cannot be seen.

Depth psychology was pioneered by C. G. Jung (1875-1961). Early in his career Jung was Sigmund Freud's foremost disciple, but he broke with his teacher to establish his own school. In 1912 he published *The Psychology of the Unconscious*, still a groundwork for the depth psychologists of today. Jung was considerably influenced by the picture of the mind that the sage Patanjali gives in the *Yoga-sutras*. Patanjali, in turn, derived his schema from the Vedas. The Western version of depth psychology is typically eclectic. It can be characterized as a New Age discipline—almost a contradiction in terms, since New Age ideas are not known for adhering to disciplined thinking. Today's depth psychologists freely bring mythology, drug experiences, ESP, shamanism and sheer fantasy to their work of probing into the hidden inner region of mental structures and processes. The germ of depth psychology is Vedic knowledge, and Vedic knowledge is not merely a working hypothesis. The image of an iceberg—one-eighth visible above the watery surface, seven-eighths hidden below—is a useful entry into our understanding of the Vedic description of the mind. What is hidden is not fluid and amorphous, something we can give shape to by our speculations. The hidden mind is formed of the very real and powerful energies of the Supreme Lord. Since this essay is intended to present only a schema, and since the elements of Vedic depth psychology will be developed in later essays, I shall present here a simple outline of the structure of the mind as it is described in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and traditional Vaisnava Vedanta. The outline is presented in two parts. The first is *vyasti*-oriented. It shows the structure of the subtle body as it applies to a single human being. It shows "your" mind. The second part of the outline is *samasti*-oriented. It shows the mind's relation to the universe. My thanks go to HH Bhanu Maharaja for the first diagram, which he visualized after careful study of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The scriptural references in parentheses are my own addition to Maharaja's expert work. The second diagram I drew up from the work of Gitartha Vibhusana Siromani C. M. Padmabhachar, a Vaisnava and scholar of the Madhva Sampradaya. He nicely summarized Madhva's Vedanta philosophy of the mind's hidden relation to the universe in *Life and Teachings of Sri Madhvachariar*, published by the author in 1909 and republished by his grandson in 1983.

### **The Subtle Conditioned State of the Individual Soul:**



*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2. 10. 16 makes clear that the individual soul is conditioned in exact accordance with the cosmic powers and dimensions of the universal form of the Lord. Thus, for example, there is a trans-dimensional hyperlink\* between the human eye, the god of the sun who is the eye of the universal form, the power of sight, and visible form. [*Bhag.* 2. 10. 21] Thus the Vedas term the human body *ksudra-brahmanda*, "small universe." The chart below outlines in a general way the relationship of an individual's subtle body to the universe as a whole.

Seven Worlds	Predominant Element	Kosa	Body
Satya-loka	Akasa	Anandamaya	Karana-deha
Tapa-loka	Vayu	Anandamaya	Karana-deha
Jana-loka	Vayu	Anandamaya	Karana-deha
Mahar-loka	Agni	Prana-/Mano-/Vijnanamaya	Linga-sarira
Svarga-loka	Agni	Prana-/Mano-/Vijnanamaya	Linga-sarira
Bhuvar-loka	Apa	Prana-/Mano-/Vijnanamaya	Linga-sarira
Bhur-loka	Bhumi	Anna-/Prana-/Mano-/Vijnanamaya	Sthula-/Linga-sarira

The seven *talas* (planes) of the *bila-svarga* (underworld heaven of the demons) are within Bhur-loka; thus we possess in our psyche a hyperlink to the *asura-loka* as well as to the *deva-loka* (Bhuvar, Svar and Mahar) and the *muni-loka* (Jana, Tapa and Satya). Our ten senses are hyperlinked to ten demigods. Our minds are hyperlinked to the moon. We are subtly linked to the total Universal Form. We can activate these links by mystic *yoga*. "Even on earth there are some *yogis* who can take their bath early in the morning in four places at once — Jagannatha Puri, Ramesvara, Hardwar and Dvaraka," explains Srila Prabhupada in *Life Comes from Life*. "One *yogi* friend used to visit my father in Calcutta. The *yogi* told him that when he (the *yogi*) would simply sit down and touch his *guru*, he would travel from Calcutta to Dvaraka in two minutes. That is yogic power." Vedic depth psychology reveals that nobody is really alone. We are intimately connected to the Lord and to a host of powerful macrocosmic personalities. Their influence is at play in our microcosmic consciousness. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* narratives of the conflict between the demigods and demons that ranges across vast regions of the universe also pertain to our individual inner conflicts. It is not a question of symbolism and metaphor. The forces that stand behind the phenomena of external nature are behind our internal nature as well.

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\* Hyperlink is computer language for an active address or an active string of text. A hyperlink appears within normal text but stands out because 1) usually its typeface is differently colored, and 2) when you point your cursor at it, the cursor changes to the icon of a hand. When you click on a hyperlink your computer follows it to a new location. For example, you arrived at this page you are reading right now by clicking hyperlinks.

*Timisoara, Romania*  
*25 June, 2003*

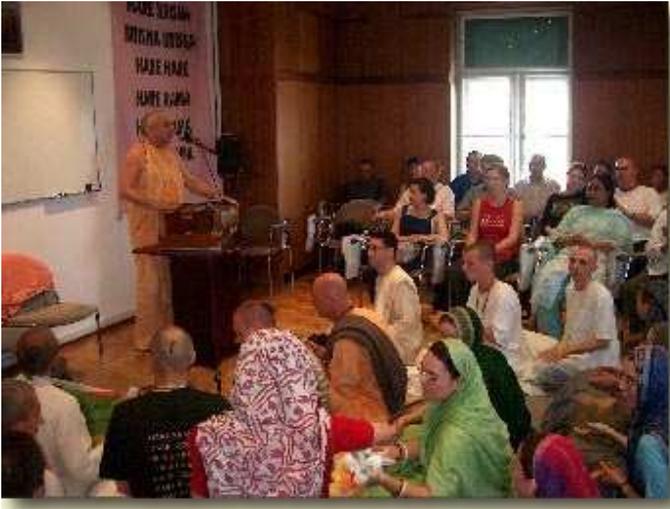
Since leaving Budapest, my travels to Szeged and then to Timisoara, combined with my work on two more parts of the Transcendental Psychology series, put a delay on uploads of real-time journal reports. Today I'm catching up on all that got left behind in the rush from there to here. *In omnibus requiem quaesivi et nusquam inveni nisi in angulo cum libro Srila Prabhupada!* That's Latin...I'm in Romania now, where the language is so alike the tongue of this country's ancient Roman colonizers that an Italian devotee who visited here in the early '90's remarked in mild shock, "Romanian is closer to Latin than Italian is!"



*A view from the street of the ISKCON center in Szeged, Hungary. Compare this to the photo below of ISKCON Timisoara in Romania. Two different countries with two different languages. but the mix of modes of nature is quite similar. We are in the Balkans now.*



*Class at ISKCON Szeged*



*At a public preaching program in Szeged. I spoke on the Vedic science of mantra.*



*A view from the street of ISKCON Timisoara. Enter through the metal gate on the right, and you come into a nice plot of garden land with rose bushes, grape vines, and a big walnut tree. There are two buildings on the land: the temple which you see here, and a bungalow housing a sannyasi room and a brahmacari asrama. If there was such a thing as a "most peaceful temple" award, ISKCON Timisoara would be a candidate to win the prize.*

*O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,  
Some boundless contiguity of shade;  
Where rumor of oppression and deceit,  
Of unsuccessful or successful war,  
Might never reach me more.*



*I spoke on Vedic psychology at a public program on 21 June. Many Rumanians show interest in yoga and Indian concepts of mind. The noted Rumanian-born scholar of comparative religions, Mircea Eliade, was a pioneer investigator of the concepts of psychology taught by ancient Indian philosophers. He became world-renowned as a professor at the University of Chicago. Every half-way educated Rumanian knows about Eliade and takes pride in his importance in modern academia. No doubt that in Srila Prabhupada's estimation Eliade would rate as a "nonsense rascal mental speculator." But nonetheless he opened a door in Rumanian consciousness to Indian spirituality; no small accomplishment, since Rumanians tend to be provincial in their thinking. Rumania is very rural and still largely a country of herdsmen. Who are the men and who are the sheep is often a hard question to answer. Now you know why it is so peaceful.*

*Belgrade, Yugoslavia  
26 June, 2003*

At 15:00 today Murari Krsna Prabhu drove Vidyagati and I south down to Romania's southern border. We crossed into Yugoslavia without incident. I haven't visited this country for a minimum of ten years. Back when Premier Jozef Broz Tito was still in his body, Yugoslavia was a pleasant drive-through from Timisoara to Sofia. I used to stop off in the Belgrade temple for a day or two. Then Premier Tito had an appointment with the Yamadutas, and Yugoslavia veered into political instability. Regions of long-simmering discontent like Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia declared their independence. A civil war broke out in various places; the fighting was nastiest in Bosnia. Overland transit through Yugoslavia was impossible. To get to Sofia I had to drive 5 hours from Timisoara to the Danube town of Calafat, where I would cross the river by ferry to Vidin in Bulgaria. From there it's another 5 hours drive to Sofia. I need a whole day of rest after that. Anyway, even after the war in Bosnia simmered down, it was still very difficult for Americans to get a visa for Yugoslavia. I remember trying at the Yugoslavian embassy in Rome. The officials there rudely

dismissed us. "You want visa to Yugoslavia, apply in your own country." Then there was another war over the Kosovo region of Yugoslavia. NATO got involved. American planes dropped bombs on military positions. The Yugos shot down an F-117 and danced on the wreckage. Hope they enjoyed themselves for that little while, because they lost. The government changed. Now the country isn't called Yugoslavia any more, it's *Serbia and Montenegro*. Wartime Serbian Premier Milosovic was charged with crimes against humanity.

*Sic semper transit gloria*. Today at the border the Yugos were quite humble when they saw my American passport.

So what. In my mind I often compare being an American and a Krishna devotee to being a Christian citizen of Rome 2000 years ago. Like St. Paul of Tarsus. Not that I compare myself as a person to Paul; my point is, even though he belonged to a weird cult that worshiped a carpenter, he was respected in the provinces of the empire because he had a Roman "passport." I belong to a weird cult that worships a cowherd boy. I get respect in places like Yugoslavia because of the blue and gold US passport I carry. But poor St. Paul: when he arrived in Italy from his preaching tour in other parts of the Mediterranean world, he was crucified. Crucified upside down.

America is crazier than a banyan tree full of bats, owls and monkeys. Individually there are a lot of nice people there, but the collective *karma* of that country gets more grotesque by the minute. Returning to America one day, I may also be imprisoned or worse for my religion. It's not beyond reason at all. Nazi Germany persecuted and annihilated millions of Jews. As a result of that, now people look upon the Germans as potential butchers. This past May I had a discussion with some devotees in the Netherlands on that country's Day of Memorium, which marks the last day of Nazi occupation of that country. So, you know, these are devotees who know that people are not their bodies; but still they were musing that "These Germans can't be trusted. They'll do it again if they get the chance. Everybody in Holland knows it." But a hundred years ago Germany had a completely different reputation in the world. It was seen as a land of thinkers, poets, musicians, and scientists. The typical caricature of a German that one might see on, for example, a London theater stage was an absent-minded professor. At the same time it was the British who were the perveyors of *force majeure* throughout the world. The Boer War, which the British waged against Dutch settlers in South Africa, was the controversial Vietnam War of that period of history. The difference was that the British won it. *Sic semper transit gloria*. Anyway, the nation of absent-minded professors is now the nation of untrustworthy Hunnish hordes; the only reason the Wehrmacht isn't camped in your back yard right now is because the Germans are scared of being H-bombed back into the stone age. At least that's what a lot of Germany's present-day neighbors believe in their heart of hearts. So why won't the same thing happen to America? *Sic semper transit gloria*. The American Fuehrer will be called Ghetto Whomper B-Cool. He'll wear a baseball cap and talk street rap. He'll call the devotees "tilok-haids" and put them to work building an Egyptian-style sphinx featuring his own face. The sphinx will be constructed in the middle of the top-secret restricted zone of the Nevada desert called Area 51. (It's a real place that exists right now.)

But maybe not. Lord Krsna is in charge of whatever happens. He is always in charge, but especially in these last almost 40 years of ISKCON's existence. Srila Prabhupada appreciated America's firm opposition to atheistic communism. Now communism is hardly more than a memory. America had a lot to do with that.

The new enemy since September 11, 2001 is Islam. Oh, sure, *officially* the enemy is terrorism which (let's say it together) "doesn't represent the true Islamic religion." But the other day I was reading some columns by Ann Coulter on the Internet. Who is Ann Coulter? She is a wild one. A good-looking young blonde lawyer, Ann does political commentary on the Internet and in the print and broadcast media. She's published several best-selling books too. In her political stance she is somewhere to the right of Attila the Hun. Annie really seems to enjoy herself being a sex symbol for President Bush's war against terrorism. In her view, the USA should invade Islamic nations of the world and convert them to Christianity.

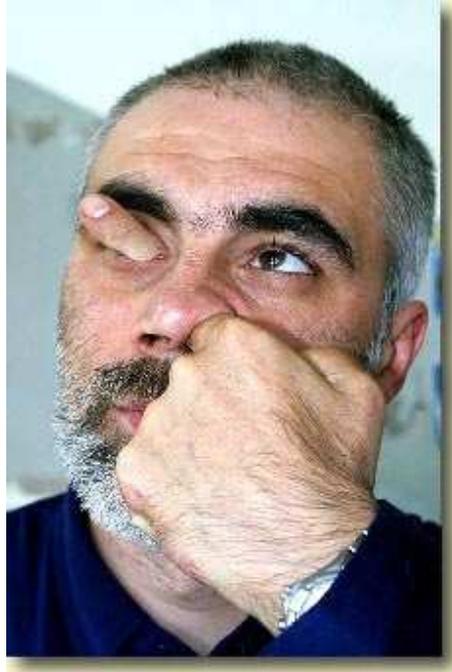
[[www.fantasticforum.com/archive\\_2/911/14sep01\\_coulter.pdf](http://www.fantasticforum.com/archive_2/911/14sep01_coulter.pdf)] Maybe *she'll* be the American Fuehrer(in). Oh, she'd be perfect. And what about that Air Force Captain Kim "K.C." Campbell, a blonde California girl, dropping bombs on Baghdad from her jet plane? Her plane got all shot up but she flew it to her home base and became an instant media heroine. Reporters asked her what "K.C." stands for. "Killer Chick," she smiled. [[www.palletmastersworkshop.com/campbell.html](http://www.palletmastersworkshop.com/campbell.html)] Anyway: until recently it's been hard to imagine how Krishna consciousness could ever spread to the conservative Muslim countries of the Middle East. These places needed to be shaken up first. It seems Krsna has empowered America to do that. Shyamasundra Prabhu, speaking in the *Srila Prabhupada Memories* video series, recalls a discussion between Srila Prabhupada and the historian Sir Arthur Toynbee. Toynbee predicted the demise of Soviet communism. He said the Soviet Union was like Sparta of ancient Greece, and the USA was like Athens. Sparta was a warrior state but had no culture. After a brief period of military glory it dried up and became historically irrelevant. European civilization is still based on Athenian values. And Toynbee pointed out that cosmopolitan Athens became the entry point in Europe for Eastern religious ideas. Even Buddhism came to Athens. Buddhist influence is evident in the Gnostic Christian sect founded by Mani. Known as the Manicheans, the teachings of this sect were the background of the later Bogomil and Cathar movements. So it could very well be that America could be in Krishna's plan to become the Athens of a new world civilization. Hmm. Maybe.

Anyway, here I am sitting on the 3rd floor of an apartment building on Milana Uzelca Street in Belgrade, having all these geopolitical-historical-spiritual thoughts. There's no ISKCON temple here any more. But there are devotees here, very nice devotees, and they continue to preach and distribute books in this city.

Which goes to show that there is an "invisible ISKCON." Or even a better name, the "Invisible Indivisible ISKCON" (I.I.I.). It doesn't depend on temples, on properties, on tentacles of management. It exists as a pure expression of spiritual faith and enthusiasm. Even if in the year 2101 the personality of Kali says, "All Your Base Are Belong To Us" (i.e. all ISKCON temples and properties, the bases of Krsna consciousness in the world, are under Kali's control), the I.I.I. will continue. Want to know more?

Go to: [www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~pyang/base/allyourbase.swf](http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~pyang/base/allyourbase.swf)

Today I received a brief e-mail from my old friend Jayatirtha Caran Prabhu of New Zealand. Attached to the e-mail was a .jpg photofile. JCTP said the photo showed a new mudra that has revolutionized his puja. "Very interesting," I thought to myself. I downloaded the attached file and this is what was made manifest before my eyes:



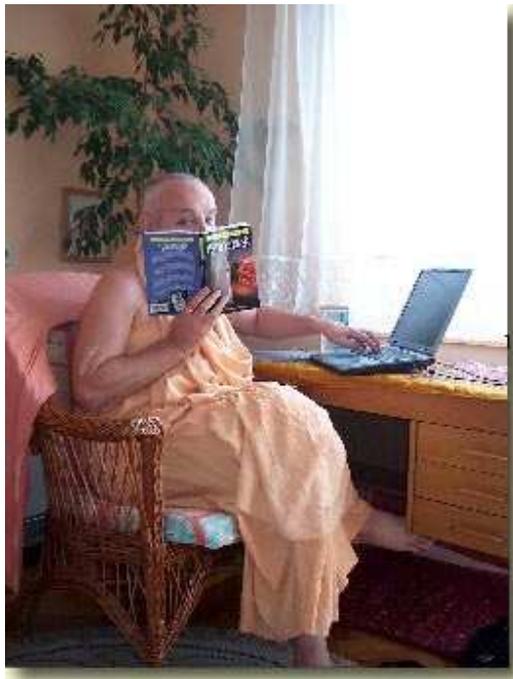
There is a foolish corner even in the brain of the sage.  
--Aristotle

*Belgrade, Yugoslavia  
27 June, 2003*

A Godbrother, who will remain nameless, writes:  
America is the only hope for the world. America has the inherent potential for doing good for the whole world, if it will just follow its original principle, which is God consciousness. America was originally founded by the Pilgrims, who started a religious commune. America began as a cult. Please take the time to learn about our President's policies at [www.bushcartoon.com/bushisms.html](http://www.bushcartoon.com/bushisms.html)  
Learn more about Area 51 at [www.ufomind.com/area51/](http://www.ufomind.com/area51/)  
Yes. Well then, Hare Krsna, prabhujī, and hoo- hoo- ray for the USA. I'm not in America now, I'm in Belgrade. Have a look at the apartment I'm staying in.



*The altar to Nila Sudarsana. When I am staying only briefly at a place, 3 days or less, I do not unpack the shaligrams and Giriraja shila. I worship Them by worshipping Nila Sudarsana; this worship is through a yajna performed with mudra and mantra*



*Yes, I am working on Part Four of Essay Two of Transcendental Psychology!  
"Psychoanalysts spend enormous energy studying the question of assessment and diagnosis. On the other hand, they spend thousands of hours in their practice*

*studiously ignoring the same."*



*Here is Dhanurdhara Prabhu, Belgrade devotee, blissfully cooking a big lunch in the smallest kitchen in ISKCON. It's the size of a closet. Sometimes he cooks for 100 persons in it.*

The Belgrade devotees are so blissfully progressive! "Progressive," in the New Improved Dictionary of Transcendence, means "to accept everything as an impetus to advance in Krsna consciousness." The Belgrade devotees used to have a temple; now they have none; there used to be many devotees here; now there are few. Are they defeated? No! A progressive devotee's knows there is a supreme sanctioning power over everything that happens in life, and that power is Krsna; therefore nothing takes place without His sanction. Krsna is all-good. Whether you truly accept Krsna to be all-good, that, you see, is *the* major test of faith. Lord Krsna *is* all-good. His only plan for this world is to reclaim the conditioned souls and bring them back to Godhead. Therefore whatever happens in our lives is good for us. Everything we face in life is meant to help us return to Godhead. Do you accept it?

Of course you say you do. But...you know and I know very well that this consciousness is not always easy to maintain. This consciousness is what makes a progressive devotee. On the other side, a regressive devotee is entrapped by pessimism.

Everything has two sides, black side and bright side. We are interested with the bright side. Black side we can point out, but anyone who is sincere, he'll take the bright side. *Sajjano gunam icchanti dosam icchanti pamarah*. There are *guna* and *dosa*, fault and good qualities. So those who are *sajjana*, they take the good qualities, give up the bad qualities. Then there, gradually things will come out. But if

we accept God, "God is all-good," then all good qualities automatically manifest. *Yasyasti bhaktir bhagavaty akincana sarvair gunais tatra samasate surah*. All good qualities manifest. If you remain with the fire, you become warm. The quality is acquired. If you remain in the sunshine, you become warm. Because sun is warm. So you acquire the quality. So if we remain always with Krsna, then we acquire the qualities of Krsna. So God is all-good. Therefore I become good, by association with God. (Srla Prabhupada, London, 12 July 1973)

A great devotee must be a progressive devotee. That is what makes him great. Some sort of falldown in devotional service is certain. We see that misfortune and humiliation make their appearance in the lives of even the greatest devotees. The Pandavas were cheated of their kingdom and were forced to live in exile for 12 years and incognito for 1 year. Even Lord Ramachandra was exiled to the forest for 14 years. So that we may return to Him, Krsna makes us losers.

It is said by the Lord: *yasyaham anugrhnami harisye tad-dhanam sanaih*. The Lord told Yudhisthira Maharaja that His special favor is shown to His devotee when He takes away all the devotee's material opulences. (*Bhag.* 4.22.36p)

In the same way, Lord Krsna seems even to act against His own interests. He wiped out His own family, the Yadu dynasty. Why? Because He wanted them to come back to Him. His devotee Maharaja Pariksit, whose presence on earth was holding back the Kali-*yuga*, was cursed to die in 7 days. If Krsna is all-good, why did He allow the world to be engulfed in sinfulness? But Pariksit became the hero of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. He died a glorious death in spite of being cursed by an agent of Kali. We are all under Kali's curse right now. If we follow Pariksit, our death will similarly be glorious. That is the advantage of this age. For a little hearing and chanting, one succeeds so much.

Consider this fact: success is measured by failure. In order to have great success, there must be great failure. Look at the course of Srla Prabhupada's own life. Krsna glorifies His devotees and exhibits their superexcellent qualities by setting them against the background of adversity and ordeal.

The question remains, and only you can answer it for yourself: do you believe it?

If you are cynical (*Wenn Du ein Zyniker bist*), then leave this website immediately and go to: [www.i-cynic.com/](http://www.i-cynic.com/)

*Belgrade, Yugoslavia*

28 June, 2003 In this age, everyone is at best a *sudra*. *Sudra* means laborer. Yes, a ditch-digger is a laborer no doubt. But a medical doctor is also a laborer. He is just a mechanic who works on the body, like an auto mechanic working on a car. And for that labor, he gets paid. A ditch-digger is called a common laborer, whereas a doctor is an educated, qualified, specialized laborer. But both are *sudras*. So if a *sudra* requires education and qualification to be accepted in his special field, then what to speak of a *brahmana*? It often happens that I have to stop and ask myself whether we Western devotees have a real grasp on what it means to be a *brahmana*. For example, I so often get questions from devotees about "the proper technique" how something in devotional service should be done, or about "the mechanism" that is behind some principle of our philosophy. Of course there is a technical and mechanical aspect to practical Krsna consciousness, to brahminical engagements. But just mastering technique and mechanism does not make one a *brahmana*. Such mastery may make one a very good *sudra*. *Samo damas tapah*

*saucam ksantir arjavam eva ca*, says Lord Krsna to Arjuna about the essential qualifications of a *brahmana*. "He must be peaceful, self-controlled, clean, truthful, austere, learned, wise, and renounced. " (B. g. 18. 42) Peaceful means he is not agitated by so-called "needs. " Everyone has needs in this body, but the *brahmana* is not agitated by them. He does not permit himself to be forced to go to work for others in order to satisfy bodily needs. He remains steady in his brahminical duty and depends on Krsna. He doesn't get a job in the factory, thinking, "It's OK, I'm a *brahmana* and my father is a *brahmana*," as he tightens bolts on machinery with a greasy wrench. Again, a *sudra* may not be so grossly engaged as that factory wrench-monkey. He may instead be engaged in tightening muscular tissue in a patient's body, or even tightening up his students' understanding of physics or chemistry in the university. But the relative refinement of one's labor is not what makes a difference between a *brahmana* and a *sudra*. Self-controlled means that the *brahmana* is free of lust, anger and greed; thus he does not engage in meat-eating, illicit sex, gambling or intoxication. *Tapah*: a *brahmana* is inclined to austerity. Given a choice between filling up his belly and thus succumbing to self-satisfied complacency and dullheadedness, or eating less but thus remaining alert, the *brahmana* will prefer to eat less. He is clean inside and outside--clean in his thoughts, clean in his habits. He always tells the truth because his mind is absorbed in the Absolute Truth:

*brahmajnana iti brahmana*. A *brahmana* must be a *pandita*, learned. He lives by his brahminical knowledge, just as a *ksatriya* lives by his martial skills and a *vaisya* lives by his business acumen. He is not

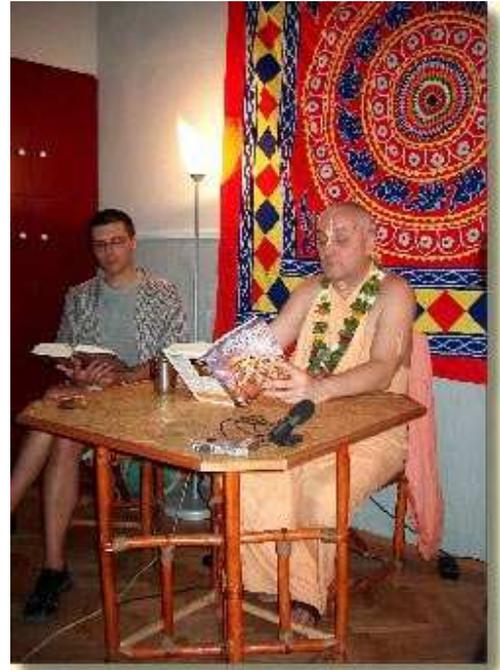
only learned but wise, a *vijnani*, which means he has realization. His knowledge is not merely parroted facts and figures. *Ksantih*, he is tolerant. Parasara Muni began burning all the *asuras* in his fire of sacrifice because a demon had devoured his father. But when Pulastya Muni requested he forgive the demons, Parasara did so immediately. Pulastya Muni thus acknowledged Parasara Muni's greatness as a *brahmana* and blessed him with the ability to speak nicely from the Vedic scriptures.

*Arjava*, a *brahmana* does not cheat. He is *astika*, he adheres to the Vedic *dharma*.

Endowed with these qualities, such a *brahmana* does *brahma-karma*, his *brahminical* duty, as an expression of his very nature. He does not do his *karma* as a "job. " It is his nature to be fully independent from matter and fully dependent upon Krsna. "In other words, a pure *brahmana* voluntarily accepts a life of poverty and lives in complete dependence on the mercy of the Lord. Not very many years ago, a *brahmana* in Krsnanagara, near Navadvipa, was offered some help from the local Zamindar, Vraja Krsnacandra. The *brahmana* refused to accept the help. He said that since he was very happy in his householder life, taking rice given by his disciples and cooking vegetables of tamarind leaves, there was no question of taking help from the Zamindar. " (*Bhag.* 6. 7. 37p)



*Blissful Belgrade devotees gathered for kirtana and class in a pizza restaurant operated by someone friendly to the movement.*



*Speak-a on da Gita at da Pious Pizzeria.*

*Belgrade, Yugoslavia  
29 June, 2003*

## **Essay Two:**

### **A Vedic Schema of the Mind and its Processes**

#### **Part Four:**

#### **An Overview of the Psychology of *Bhakti-yoga***

In this concluding part of Essay Two, we shall consider a summary of the system of psychology that the great Vaishnava *acarya* Sri Ramanuja presents in the Visistadvaita Vedanta philosophy. All the elements of the spirit soul's conditioned consciousness as reviewed in the previous parts of this essay are nicely accounted for in Ramanujacarya's explanation of *bhakti-yoga*. Srila Prabhupada gives his appreciation of this in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 10. 11.

Therefore Sri Ramanuja Svami, in his book *Vedanta-tattva-sara*, has described that this merging of the soul means that after separating himself from the material body made of eight elements--earth, water, fire, air, ether, false ego, mind and intelligence--the individual soul engages himself in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His eternal form. . . The material cause of the material elements absorbs the material body, and the spiritual soul assumes its original position.

While writing this last part of Essay Two, I referred to Chapter Nine, "Visistadvaita", of *Indian Psychology* by Raghunatha Safaya (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi,

1975). Mr. Safaya, whose book covers the doctrines of mind taught by eleven ancient Indian schools of philosophy, gathered his material from original Sanskrit sources. For the "Visistadvaita" chapter he studied the *Sri Bhasya* of Ramanujacarya, *Atmasiddhi* by Yamunacarya, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *Visnu Purana* and six other great Vaisnava texts. On page 248 he summarizes a number of theories about consciousness, including the Mayavada of Sankaracarya, Buddhism, and Western absolute idealism. Safaya's conclusion: "Ramanuja holds the most commonsense view. He considers consciousness as an attribute of the Conscious, a reality and not an abstraction. " On page 260 he writes, "While Advaita Vedanta twists the Upanisads' psychology in the direction of Mayavada (which is against the spirit of the Upanisads), Vaisnava Vedanta faithfully carries the Upanisad and Brahma Sutra philosophy and psychology further in the spirit of the Upanisads. " He concludes on page 261, "Ramanuja's Visistadvaita represents all three schools (*visistadvaita*, *dvaita* and *bhedabheda*) of Vaisnava Vedanta as far as psychological principles are concerned. " The foundation of the psychology of devotional service is *bhakti*, the mood of pure devotion. *Bhakti-yoga* is the cultivation of this mood. From a psychological point of view it is a cultivation of emotions. Emotions form the "glue" of the mind's attachment. We have seen in Part Two of this essay that liberation or bondage is decided by the quality of attachment. *Bhakti-yoga* cultivates the mind's attachment to Krsna. In the language of psychology, emotional life is called the affective side of the mind (the word affective means a mental state of aroused emotions, like the state of affection of one person for another). Psychology recognizes that the mind also has a cognitive (thinking) side and a conative (active) side. Of these three *vikaras* (transformations) of the mind--thinking, feeling, and willing--Ramanujacarya determines the affective or feeling aspect to be paramount. "Cognition and conation are subservient. " (Safaya, pg. 259). For Sankaracarya, all states of mind are psychotic because the subject (the thinker, feeler and willer) is hallucinating the objects of his thought, which are not real at all. Ramanuja rejects this Mayavadi standpoint. Individual subject and object have their microcosmic realities within the Lord's macrocosmic form. The Lord is the great and original *jnata* (knower), *bhokta* (experiencer or enjoyer) and *karta* (doer). The *jiva* is a *prakara* (category) of Brahman (the spiritual substance); he too is *jnata*, *bhokta* and *karta*. Hence his thinking, feeling and willing are not without substance. In its cognitive or thinking function, the mind observes (*anubhava*) and remembers (*smrti*). Observation is two-fold. The mind observes by *pratyaksa*, direct perception, and by *anumana*, inference. Inferential observation is done by *tarka* or logic. For example, if I hear a friend's voice through my closed door, I know logically that he is in the hallway outside my room. Thus I "see him in my mind's eye. " Cognition has three bases: subject, object, and the subject-object relation. In other words, that which we call "thinking" is always involved with these three. As already noted, *pratyaksa* and *anumana* are levels of cognition. There is yet a third and highest level, *divya-pratyaksa* or divine perception. "The means of attaining divine perception are divine grace which is invoked by acts of daily worship and meditation bearing the character of devotion. " (Safaya, pg. 261) The mind's conative (willing) side, Ramanuja teaches, is based on free will. Free will is an attribute of the Supreme Lord that the *jiva* shares to a minute degree. Actions in accordance with the Lord's will are liberating; actions in defiance of the Lord's will are subject to judgement under the law of *karma*. Above all is the affective side of the mind. Ramanujacarya teaches that all the truly healthy emotions culminate in love. *Bhakti-yoga* redirects the *jiva's* love from material things to the Supreme Lord. Thus the *jiva* attains the highest happiness. Because the affective side of the mind holds sway over the cognitive and conative sides, the purifying influence of *bhakti* upon the affective side is most important. But *bhakti-yoga* takes command of all mental functions. It is not "just" an

affair of the emotions. *Bhakti-yoga* instills in the affective side of the mind the longing for the Supreme Lord and nothing else. In pursuance of this, other ideal emotional states are brought forth: *kalyana* or a well-wishing attitude toward other living entities; *daya*, compassion; *ahimsa*, nonviolence; and *anavasada*, joyfulness. To the cognitive side *bhakti-yoga* brings *viveka* (right discrimination) and *arjavam* (integrity). To the conative side it brings right action (*kriya*), spiritual practice (*abhyasa*), and welfare work (*dana*). To all sides of the mind's activities *bhakti-yoga* brings *prapatti*, complete surrender to the Lord. That is the overview of the psychology of *bhakti-yoga*. In addition we can shortly consider Ramanujacarya's insight into consciousness and its conditioning under the modes of material nature. Let us begin by understanding just what the word *visistadvaita* means. *Advaita*, of course, means "nondual." Mayavadi philosophy claims the term *advaita* for itself. When *advaita* is combined with *visesana* (qualifying agent), we get *visistadvaita*, which means "qualified nondualism." It is important to understand that the starting point of this philosophy is not a material *visesana* like the *tri-guna prakrti*. *Visistadvaita* does not merely say that the nondual Absolute has taken on the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; if that were the case, then there would hardly be a difference between the philosophy of Ramanuja and the philosophy of Sankaracarya. Ramanuja teaches that the original *visesana* is consciousness, which is not the immutable Absolute that Sankaracarya thinks it is. Consciousness is a *quality* of the Absolute Godhead, and also a quality of the individual soul. Another way to explain the distinction is to say that for Sankara, consciousness is the subject; for Ramanuja, it is the function of the subject. Hence consciousness is not static. It is dynamic. Consciousness is *aprthaksiddharma*--it cannot be separated from its subject. In this way the subject and its consciousness are nondual (*advaita*). But because consciousness is also an active attribute of the subject, it qualifies the subject. For example, a *jiva* can be exalted by his consciousness or he can be degraded by it. Degredation of consciousness brings the *jiva* under the control of the three modes of material nature. During *jagrata* or the waking state (i. e. the *sattvic* state), the consciousness of the *jiva* is granted by material nature room of movement on the physical plane. Consciousness flows along the subtle channel of the mind through the senses to the sense objects. In *svapna* or dream (i. e. the *rajasic* state), the mental link to the sense objects is shut down. In this condition the mind is active, but it is engaged with the *smrti* or memory of sense objects. Memory throws up images without coherence or coordination. There is a reality to all dreams, in that the elements of any dream are real experiences held in storage by the memory; but dreaming distorts and confuses that reality. About *susupti* (deep dreamless sleep, the *tamasic* state), Sankaracarya argues that the Self becomes the witness of primeval *avidya*. By this act of witnessing *avidya* the *ahamkara* dissolves. For Sankara, *susupti* is the threshold of pure consciousness, in that the Self is freed from material perceptions and conceptions. Ramanuja holds that it is incorrect to speak of the soul being the witness to anything in the *susupti* state. There is literally nothing (no-thing) to be seen in *susupti*. Suppose one dark night a crime is committed stealthily and silently on an unlit city street. The police investigate and learn that a man was waiting for a ride near the scene of the crime. When they interview him, the man informs them he saw and heard nothing. If this is the case, can we refer to this man as "the witness?" No. Yet he was present in the vicinity of the crime when it happened. Similarly Ramanuja acknowledges the presence of the subject (the *jivatma*) in *susupti*, but he does not acknowledge that the attribute of the subject, consciousness, is active at this time. We ought not to say, "In *susupti*, consciousness is pure," like Sankaracarya says. After all, when we come out of deep sleep we return to the wakeful engagements of trying to satisfy our material desires.

Rather we may say, "Consciousness is disengaged while in *susupti*." It does not operate between subject, object and the relation of subject and object which are the three bases of cognition. Now, we need to carefully consider what Ramanujacarya is describing here and not misunderstand him. Consciousness is inactive during *susupti*, yet consciousness is never separate from the subject. Thus when the soul returns to the waking state he remembers that he was asleep. Moreover, he remembers that his deep sleep was a pleasant experience. Thus he says, "I slept well." On this point Ramanuja and Sankaracarya agree: the *jiva* experiences a kind of happiness in *susupti*. The experience of pleasure in deep sleep demonstrates that the affective side of consciousness does not shut down even when the cognitive and conative sides are disengaged. The plain conclusion is that the affective side is superior. *Jnana-yoga*, which focuses on cognition, and *karma-yoga*, which focuses on conation, cannot keep pace with *bhakti-yoga*, which focuses on affective consciousness as well as fully engaging the cognitive and conative sides. From the above information, we get insight into the *karana-deha*, the finest material embodiment of the spirit soul. Those *jivas* who dwell in the *muni-loka*, whose only embodiment is the *karana-deha*, are disengaged from physical and mental activities. They exist in a state of trance. But that does not mean that the *karana-deha* is pure like the *siddha-deha*, the transcendental body that is manifest in the spiritual world for loving service to the Lord. Material desires are spread like seeds throughout the *karana-deha*. For the seeds to sprout and grow, the *linga-* and *sthula-sariras* are needed. During creation, Lord Brahma brings forth the seeds of the *jivas* and their *karmic* desires from his own causal body and sows them within the regions of the universe where the *linga-* and *sthula-sariras* are active. In those regions the *jivas* are able to act out their desires subtly and/or grossly. In the Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka, contact with gross sense objects, whether by means of mind or by senses, does not take place. In our own individual embodiment as human beings, desires are released from the *karana-deha* to take subtle shape in the mind and to be acted upon in the gross body. Because the residents of the three uppermost regions of the universe are sealed off from lower strata of consciousness by their *karana-deha* embodiment, they always experience the happiness called *anandamaya*. On this platform they may merge their bodies into primal nescience and then ascend to higher levels. Ramanujacarya speaks of two levels of consciousness beyond the causal state of embodiment. These are *yogi-pratyaksa* and *nirupadhika-jnana*. The first is the mystical perception of accomplished *yogis*. The second is the *turiya* state proper. Regarding the second, *upadhi* means designation (i. e. the subtle and gross body). *Nirupadhi* is the negation of those designations. *Jnana* means knowledge. In the *turiya* state the soul attains transcendental knowledge unrestricted by the material coverings of consciousness. This is the state of clear *ksetrajna* explained in Part Two above by a quotation from Srila Prabhupada. As Safaya writes on page 253 of his book, "Through this the individual perceives the entire reality [of the Universal Form in the *mahat-tattva*], as Arjuna perceived when the divine eye was granted to him by Krsna." In conclusion, Ramanuja uses the word *manas* (mind) to cover the whole subtle body. *Manas* reveals to the soul the inner condition of pleasure and pain and the outer realm of sense perception. As a whole, the function of *manas* is threefold: *adyavasaya* or decision, *abhimana* or self-love, and *cinta* or reflection. The first is the specific function of the intelligence, the second of the false ego, and the last of the mind proper. End of Essay 2--more essays on the way! Want to know more about Visistadvaita? Go to: [www.hinduweb.org/home/dharma\\_and\\_philosophy/vvh/vvhperson.html](http://www.hinduweb.org/home/dharma_and_philosophy/vvh/vvhperson.html) This hyperlink brings you to an article written by a Western, university-educated follower of Visistadvaita. He compares the conception of the self taught by Ramanuja to that taught in the Aristotelian philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. Modern Western notions

of the self find their beginning in Thomist philosophy. This article is a scholarly piece of writing, not the easiest to digest. At this site you can find a number of other interesting pieces about the doctrine of Sripad Ramanujacarya.

Belgrade, Yugoslavia  
30 June, 2003

How Much Time Have You Got in That  
Body?

Go to: [www.deathclock.com/](http://www.deathclock.com/)

### **Reality Actual and Virtual**

The original *actual* Reality, in all its unlimited richness, is Bhagavan Sri Krsna. He is the immeasurable reservoir of beauty, wealth, strength, knowledge, fame and renunciation. Though He has an unchanging form, it is limitless in its qualities. That is the amazing nature of spiritual form as opposed to material form, which defines a thing by limiting it to a fixed shape, a fixed location, a fixed list of qualities. *Maya* is the original virtual reality (i. e. simulated reality). From the dictionary there is a nice single word for virtual reality: verisimilitude. A snapshot of a person looks exactly like him in many ways, but obviously it is not him. Similarly, *maya* resembles original reality in many ways. It is an expert enough verisimilitude to fool us if we want to be fooled. But just as a photograph is a two-dimensional image of a person who exists in three dimensions, so *maya's* replication of Krsna's opulences is within the lower dimension of material consciousness. We all feel attraction to the qualities of beauty, wealth, strength and so on that are evident in *maya's* realm. To us, who are very weak and tiny, *maya's* raw, primeval display of opulence and power appears unlimited. How can entities so insignificant as ourselves lord it over the unlimited? Therefore *maya*, the energy that accomodates our materialistic inclinations, also displays herself in forms that we can apparently seize and take control of. One definition of *maya* is "measurable." Things within our human power of manipulation have their definite size, shape, weight, position in time and space and so on. That which we can measure, is limited. That which is limited, we get bored with. There's the rub. And so people become attracted to newer and newer manifestations of *maya*, artificial *maya* created by human beings. Artificial *maya*--like the world inside a computer game--seems more exciting than "real" *maya*. It is full of unexpected surprises. Another thing we find thrilling is that we can change the shape of that *maya* at will. For more about computer-simulated reality, go to: <http://digitalism.8m.com/> The original *maya* is usually not nearly so thrilling. If it is thrilling, it's often because of killing (war and catastrophe), which is no fun if it happens to you and me. The original *maya* is much harder to manipulate. For example, if you want to change the landscape of the place you live, you are faced with the prospect of many long hours of hard work. The spiritual world, consisting of pure consciousness, is ever-fresh with transcendental enjoyments. But these enjoyments are meant for Krsna's pleasure. The spiritual world is instantly manipulatable by the Lord. Why did Lord Balarama become so angry at the Yamuna River? Because He called her to come to Him but she neglected His order, considering Him intoxicated. After He threatened to divide her into so many rivulets with His plow, she immediately arrived to fall at His lotus feet in surrender. Then He bathed in her. In the material world, if a river changed its course at the beck and call of some powerful man, we would call it a miracle. This is what virtual reality aims at: the creation of a miraculous world for man, not God, to enjoy. But look. The sun, a gigantic ball of super-intense energy, moves across the sky every day. Is that not miraculous? A fly walks on the ceiling. Is that not miraculous? A cow eats grass and

produces milk. A tree grows out of the ground and bears apples, pears or bananas. Can man with his modern technology manufacture a tree out of chemicals that will do that? Technological man is proud of his big metal airplanes, but can he manufacture an airplane the size of a mosquito? Technological man is proud that he harnessed atomic power, but can he dispell the dangers that come with atomic power? Atomic power plants are no longer wanted because of the risk of radioactive contamination. Technological man knows no foolproof way to safeguard against this danger. The sun has been pouring down its tremendous energy upon the whole earth for millions of years, free of charge and free of problems. Is that not miraculous? Of course it is. Then why is man so foolish as to ignore the miracle of Krsna's *acintya-sakti* all around him? Why does he retreat into a computerized world of flickering electronic images? It's because he can manipulate that world with little clicks of his mouse. It's because there, within the CGE (Computer Graphic Effects) universe, he can imagine himself to be God. For more about that world, go to: [www.smartuniverse.com/reach.html](http://www.smartuniverse.com/reach.html) But how will mere flickering computer images make a person happy? That is just an escape into an even deeper illusion than the "original" *maya*. Thus we have a new kind of addiction: computer addiction, Internet addiction. It is an up to date, very technologically sophisticated form of idiocy. Want to know more? Go to: [www-csag.ucsd.edu/individual/pakin/idiot/chapter1.html](http://www-csag.ucsd.edu/individual/pakin/idiot/chapter1.html)

*ISKCON Skopje, Macedonia*  
*1 July, 2003*

The kings who ruled during Vedic times were great *rsis*. Now our great political leaders are peanut farmers, movie actors, playboys and cowboys. If the king is good the people will likewise be good. If he is a rogue, then that is what the people will become, by following him. Politics is always dirty business. It means intrigue, it means compromise, it means state-sanctioned violence, it means arrogance, it means favoritism, it means steamrolling the rights of the individual for the interests of the state. . . these and many more unpleasantries are found even in Vedic history, what to speak of Kali-*yuga* history. Politics is like cooking in that if you want to fry up a delicious *sabji*, you have to take out a knife and start cutting; similarly if you want to have a nice government, some peoples' interests will have to be sacrificed. Consider how Queen Kunti and the Pandavas escaped the trap that Duryodhana laid for them at Varanavata. He housed them in a palace built from highly combustible materials. His plan was to have that palace set afire while the Pandavas were sleeping. But Vidura kept them informed of Duryodhana's intrigue. On the night the fire was set, a feast was first held in the palace. Intoxicants were served. A low-class woman and her five sons had been allowed into the palace for the party; they got drunk and were permitted to stay overnight in a single room. The Pandavas escaped the fire through a tunnel an ally had secretly constructed. They deliberately let the low-class woman and her sons be burned alive in their sleep, knowing that Duryodhana would be fooled by the six charred bodies into thinking that his plot was successful in ridding the world of Queen Kunti and her five sons. Wasn't that unfair to the low-class woman and her sons? But that is what politics is all about. The road to a strong and virtuous government passes through calculated actions of unfairness, cruelty, oppression and war. Even in Vedic times, rare was the king who did not have to at some point or other resort to such policies. But the great thing was that such kings deeply pondered their actions beforehand. They sought the advice of wise *brahmanas*. They were not whimsical. They knew the difference between right and wrong. Everything they did was carefully considered in the light of the Vedic

scriptures. The scriptures acknowledge that for the sake of the village, an individual sometimes has to be sacrificed. And for the sake of the town, a village might have to be sacrificed. For the sake of the city, a town might have to go. That's politics. A political science professor I met in the Netherlands gave me this definition of politics: "The management of human affairs in an imperfect world. " So how much worse off we are when ignorant meat-eaters, woman-hunters, drunkards and gamblers take the post of leadership. Politics alone is bad enough, but mix in unqualified leaders and you have a recipe for chaos. In the Kali-*yuga* patriotism is another ingredient that is purposefully added to blind the people to the mess they are in. Patriotism, or nationalism, was unknown in Vedic times. Even in Europe during the Middle Ages it was unknown. There was only Christendom, the realm of Christian belief that stretched from Greece up to Scandinavia. The different peoples of Europe were there, they spoke their different languages, but they did not think "I am a Frenchman," "I am German," "I am English. " They thought "I'm a Christian and I live under the rule of my Christian king. " In Vedic times people similarly identified with Vedic *dharma* and their local king, not with some artificial border drawn on a map. Nationalism is dog-ism. Dogs mark their territories with urine and defend these boundaries with snarls, barks and finally bites. Dogs are crazed; approach their "property" and they go wild, barking like hounds from hell. Nationalism makes a dog out of a human being. He sees his flag waving in the breeze, he hears the national hymn, and he thinks "I am so *proud* to be an American," or Russian or Indian or Iraqi or whatever. That heavy dose of *dehatmavada* (body-ism) stupifies them. "I am an American and my President is George Bush. That's all I need to know. Rise for the flag salute. " Want to know more? Go to: <http://www.georgewgirls.com/> and to: [www.geocities.com/derpanzerkampf/hitlerdance/](http://www.geocities.com/derpanzerkampf/hitlerdance/)

*ISKCON Skopje, Macedonia*  
*2 July, 2003*

In the first half of the 1800's, Charles Dawin (1809-1882) conducted a scientific investigation of the plants and animals on the Galapagos Islands off the coast of South America. He noted that species that had migrated from the mainland had physically changed over generations to better adapt to the special environment of the islands. This observation formed the germ of his theory of evolution. "Science consists in grouping facts so that general laws or conclusions may be drawn from them," was Darwin's own account of his method. Yes, this is what goes by the name science. The same definition was used by Henri Poincare (1854-1912); but he gave it a little twist to show that it is unintelligent to surrender one's faith to anything and everything that claims to be science.

Science is facts; just as houses are made of stones, so is science made of facts; but a pile of stones is not a house and a collection of facts is not necessarily science. The point here is that it is possible to make anything out of a pile of facts. Scientists build theories out of facts, but such a theory may still not be science--going by the definition that science is supposed to trace out the cause from effects (the facts). If the facts are assembled to obscure rather than to reveal the cause, that assembly is not scientific. The facts may seem to demonstrate that creatures living in a new environment adapt to that environment over generations. But was it reasonable for Darwin to build his theory of evolution from such facts? When the atmosphere in British cities became sooty due to the smoke of the factories of the Industrial

Revolution (which was taking place when Darwin was born), it was noted that white-winged moths developed a natural sooty coloring on their wings. Formerly when they alighted upon a pale surface like the side of a whitewashed house, their white color blended with the background. This was a protection against enemies. After the landscape became spotty with the soot from factory chimneys, the moths' coloring gradually changed so that they fit into the new look of things. When some of these sooty-colored moths were removed from the sooty environment, after some generations their coloring reverted to white again. Fine, but this is not a demonstration of an evolutionary process that gradually reconfigures these moths as a higher form of life. We cannot reasonably conclude from the fact that these moths seemed to adapt in a limited manner to a new environment, that it is logical to suppose that if we keep a tribe of monkeys in a king's palace and let them breed for a thousand years there, that they will produce a king fit to sit on the throne. In the Vrndavana area one observes many old royal palaces that have been homes to monkeys for many generations. But these monkeys remain as ignorant and mischievous as the monkeys that live in the trees. What is a good Vaisnava explanation for the morphology of adaptation? Krsna is the intelligence behind material design. Krsna helps his parts and parcels fulfill their material desires. He adjusts the design of their physical embodiment so that they can better cope with a new environment. He is so amazing in all that He does!

\* \* \* \* \*

There is a big window in this room that opens to a nice balcony. The balcony looks out upon a mountain covered by forest. On top of the mountain is a huge cross that is lit up at night. For the so-called orthodox Christian the cross is the symbol of Christ's self-sacrifice for our sake: "He died that we may live." Srila Prabhupada did not like this at all. Once when he once visited a Christian institution, he was given a room to stay in. After he had been in the room for a short while he called for his servant and ordered him to remove a crucifix hanging on the wall. He remarked how offensive it was, a "deity" that glorified the cruel murder of the spiritual master. Often Srila Prabhupada criticized the Christians for their doctrine of "salvation by the blood of Jesus." They think that because Jesus died for us we don't have to do anything except believe in him. In fact many Christians argue that to make a serious attempt to be good is an offense against Christ's mercy. One should live a "normal" (means: sinful) life and just have faith in Jesus. Wear the cross around your neck and everything will be all right, no matter what you do. Not long ago I read somewhere that many of the women who perform in dirty movies insist to their directors that they be allowed to wear just one thing during the filming: a crucifix! Not everyone saying unto me 'Lord! Lord!' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father Who is in heaven. [Matthew 7:21]

The Gnostic Christians taught that Jesus came to teach *gnosis* (the Greek word for *jnana*, transcendental knowledge). The Gnostics are not considered "bona fide" by so-called orthodox Christians. In fact a Gnostic sect called the Cathars was a great embarrassment for the Christian heirarchy of Europe because the Cathar *perfecti* (priests) were more respected by the people for their pure lifestyle. The celibacy of the Catholic priests was laughable when compared to that of the *perfecti*. The *perfecti* were moreover strict vegetarians and teetotalers. They taught that the soul is a spiritual spark that reincarnated until it achieved *gnosis*; then it entered the spiritual world. Gnostics did not accept that Christ was really crucified. Nor did they accept that a Christian would be delivered from the material world for only "believing" in Jesus while continuing a life of sense gratification. For the Gnostics the cross was a symbol of the path of liberation. The vertical beam of the cross was the

way up from matter to spirit, and the horizontal beam was the border between the material and spiritual worlds.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thinking of Christians brought to my mind the moralists. Christians serve as a good example of mundane religionists; mundane religionists are moralists. Why is moralism something different from Vaisnavism?

But big moralist, they cannot understand. They'll see, "Why the father has spoken lie to his son. He's not a good father. " They'll mistake. Father is always friend. Father cannot be enemy. But for the benefit of the rascal child sometimes he has to say like that. That "If you take the medicine I'll give you cake. " So those who are mundane moralist, they cannot understand this thing, because they are mundane platform. The another example is that Yudhishthira Maharaja. He was asked by Krsna that "You speak lie to Dronacarya that 'Your son is dead. "' Yudhishthira Maharaja refused. For this he had to see hell. He was more moralist than Krsna. For this moral activity he had to visit hell.

Often people who profess moralism, who harshly criticize devotees for moral "lapses" like telling lies while distributing books, are themselves complete hypocrits. But there are moralists who are sincere about being good. Where is their fault? It is found in their taking comfort in material existence. That is why they remain mundane, despite their honesty. What does it mean to take comfort in material existence? It means they take comfort in associating with the opposite sex. Oh, it may all be nice and legal, only with wife or husband. But. . .

It is therefore said in the sastras, *yan maithunadi-grhamedhi-sukham hi tuccham*: materialism is based on sex, whether licit or illicit. [*Bhag.* 5. 14. 22p]  
The moralist feels secure at home in the presence of his bodily attachments in the form of wife and children. His moral vision emanates from his warm nest. He thinks "goodness" ultimately translates into nice family life. Religion and God are appendages of family happiness. The moralist/mundane religionist gets inspired by family sentiment to do good deeds and religious activities. The adorable innocent children, oh, they need to go to church or temple to stay so sweet and lovable. And wifey looks so pretty when her head is bowed in prayer. That input of *sattva-guna* just makes everything at home so much more tender and cuddly and emotional! This is *maya*. "What! How can you say that! This is. . . this is *religious human life!* This is. . . this is *dharma!* We're honest *grhastas!* We don't make a false show of renunciation just to collect money! We live by the sweat of our brow and we fulfill *all* our responsibilities. We're not enjoyers! We do our duty and keep God at the center as we do it!" It is the gross bodily conception that you keep at the center. That is the inspiration for your duty, piety and morality. Your goodness is rooted in warm, moist, pulsating flesh, blood, fat, and stool. "Now that's *enough!* I've never heard anything so hurtful in all my life! You guys, you induce people with the false hope that they can just throw off the burden of their responsibilities and walk away. You take their money and possessions and you promise them that the Lord will pay them back with spiritual strength so that they can be renounced for the rest of their lives. But sooner or later they wake up out of that dream you put them in. They realize that renunciation is achieved only after a full life of pious *grhasta* life. This is *Bhagavata* philosophy, for crying out loud. Look! Look at this verse:"

*nettham pumsam viragah syat  
tvaya kevalina mrsa  
manyase yady upasamam  
sneha-pasa-nikrntanam*

If you think that simply awakening the sense of renunciation will detach one from the material world, I must say that unless full knowledge is awakened, simply changing dresses as you have done cannot possibly bring detachment.

*nanubhuya na janati  
puman visaya-tiksnatam  
nirvidyate svayam tasman  
na tatha bhinna-dhih paraih*

Material enjoyment is indeed the cause of all unhappiness, but one cannot give it up unless one has personally experienced how much suffering it is. Therefore one should be allowed to remain in so-called material enjoyment while simultaneously advancing in knowledge to experience the misery of this false material happiness. Then, without help from others, one will find material enjoyment detestful. Those whose minds are changed by others do not become as renounced as those who have personal experience. [*Bhag.* 6. 5. 40, 41]

"See? See? This is the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* speaking!" Actually that is Prajapati Daksa speaking in the pages of *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Unfortunately he is not speaking *Bhagavata* philosophy here; he is criticizing the great sage-devotee Narada Muni. He is arguing that Narada Muni's giving *sannyasa* to his sons will not help them advance. In fact, Narada's preaching is the real *Bhagavata* point of view. The exchange I wrote above, between the moralist and the devotee, is exaggerated for dramatic effect; but in fact I did have this conversation (in a more basic way) with a *grhasta* Godbrother in 1977 in Geneva. He actually picked up the Sixth Canto and read aloud Prajapati Daksa's words to me. He seriously thought that these two verses represent the philosophy taught by Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, the Internet address I'm giving you next is something of a joke. But it suggests an idea that, if executed seriously, could be of great use to devotees. When will some Vaisnava computer graphics whiz create a Deity worship program so that devotees may do a full *puja* on their computers? The software could be written for a range of Deities: Radha-Krsna, Gaura-Nitai, Jagannatha-Subhadra-Baladeva, Laksmi-Nrsimha, like that. Bathing, dressing, naivedya offering, arati, could be done by clicking and dragging, like in this little demo program (it is really too simple, and also too stupid): [www.snapjax.com/buddha.htm](http://www.snapjax.com/buddha.htm)

*ISKCON Skopje, Macedonia  
3 July, 2003*

The beginning of civilization is the cultivation of food. Human beings are different from animals in that they know how to combine natural elements--sunlight, water, air, earth, and fruit-, vegetable-, nut-, and sugar-bearing seeds to produce food. Human beings know how to protect cows and non-violently take their milk for the production of so many wonderful dairy products. Animals do not know how to produce food. They either eat fresh grass and plants right off the ground or they eat other animals. "Uncivilized" means wild, without culture, without knowledge, and without scriptures. Lack of civilization has become fashionable in modern times. Young people like to dress slovenly in raggedy old blue jeans. Blue jeans were invented in America in the 1800s to be worn by uncultured farm-*sudras* who had to shovel manure all day onto the cotton fields. It used to be shameful to be seen wearing blue jeans; it meant you were low-class. But people today glory in being low-class. Modern youth like to be "free"--which means to be ignorant of their cultural heritage and to have no religion or philosophy. Young people throw away

their God-given human intelligence into artificial technology like computers, cell telephones, automobiles, and a host of other gadgets. The diet of such neo-barbarians is "fast food. " Just grab something and gobble it down while you are doing something else, like driving a car, talking on the phone, or skateboarding. Especially it means a diet of hamburgers, hot dogs, roast beef sandwiches, and french fries cooked in animal grease. Eat and run. No care about where the food comes from. There is even a web site for "Sinkies," people who snatch food out of their refrigerator and gobble it down over the kitchen sink. The crumbs fall into the sink; after eating you wash your hands in the sink and the crumbs go down the drain. Sinkies don't have the self-control to even sit down at a table. This is animalism. Think about how much care devotees put into preparing, offering, and honoring prasadam. Ideally the raw produce and milk should also have been cultivated by devotees. That's what is nice about the Czech Yatra. All of the grains baked into bread products by the Nitai Bakery were grown on the Czech farm. Not only grown, but milled into flour there, on one of the only three stone mills in the whole country. Vegetarianism represents a more developed state of culture than meat-eating, which is just "kill it and grill it" barbarism. Vegetarians have to take more care in cultivating and preparing their food. Devotees have the highest standard of civilization, because we take more care than anyone about diet. That is a fact. Vegans and macrobiotics don't prepare food for God. They just eat for themselves. Eating for yourself is already a step closer to "eat and run" animalism. Though vegans and macrobiotics are proud to be vegetarians, they are not as civilized as devotees. Eat and run. Run to build skyscrapers, which are like huge concrete wasps' nests. Hotels, night clubs, cinemas, telephones, automobiles, and airplanes--this is not civilization. Especially when the airplanes take off to drop bombs on other skyscrapers, night clubs, hotels, and cinemas. Eat and run. Run to pass stool. In a city of five million people, five million pounds of stool are passed every day. Where does it all go? Cats dig a little hole in the ground, but human beings have bigger brains, so we have pipes encased in the walls of our big skyscrapers to carry the stools down from the toilet bowls into the vast network of sewage canals beneath the city. You can pass stool nicely down a technologically-perfected toilet hole even as you ride in a bus or a train. Even while you fly your stealth bomber to drop bombs on Iraq you can pass stool very comfortably. Modern "culture" is simple a very sophisticated arrangement for gobbling down huge amounts of sinful foodstuffs and passing huge amounts of stool. See what the vegetarian diet for the last days of Kali-*yuga* will be like:  
[www.mtd.com/tasty/vegie.html](http://www.mtd.com/tasty/vegie.html)

*Sofia, Bulgaria*  
*4 July, 2003*

### **Essay Three**

#### **Further Considerations of Material Personality**

In Essay One of the Transcendental Psychology series, I wrote

It is only to be expected that any process of clarification will be more difficult in the beginning. But step by step, as we become more familiar with the issues, the subject matter gets easier to grasp. This is especially true of Vedic psychology, which starts

with principles (harder to grasp) and progresses to practical behavior (easier to grasp).

I begin the transition from principles to practical behavior in today's essay. I must hasten to add that today you'll still be reading about principles. But in previous essays we considered principles that apply equally to everyone. Now we shall look at principles that vary from person to person. These are the ingredients of conditioned individuality. Everyone has a mind; what could be more universal? Everyone's mind moves through the phases of thinking, feeling, and willing. But when we examine the subjects that each of us thinks about, feels, and actuates, we arrive at individuality. I pointed out in the introductory essay that it's here, the point when the movements of an individual's mind are considered, that psychology becomes complex.

And why so complex? Why does the study of the mind's movements (the study we know by the word psychology) become so mysterious and convoluted? That is because the mind moves *according to our desires*. Hence, it is our desires--meaning, in our present state, our material attraction--that complicates our mental processes. In part four of Essay Two I wrote:

Material desires are spread like seeds throughout the *karana-deha*. For the seeds to sprout and grow, the *linga-* and *sthula-sariras* are needed. . . In our own individual embodiment as human beings, desires are released from the *karana-deha* to take subtle shape in the mind and then to be acted upon in the gross body.

### **Vasana**

The appearance of material desire in the mind is called *vasana*, as we see from a remark Srila Prabhupada made in a *Bhagavad-gita* lecture on 29 July 1973 in London:

Similarly, if one desires that: "I shall become a devotee of Lord Krsna," that is natural desire. But when I desire to lord it over the material nature and forget my service to Krsna, that is called *vasana*. That is material desire, *abhilasa*. So we have to give up these material desires. Then it is *bhakti*.

We have a full account of *vasana* from a verse spoken by Jada Bharata (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 11. 5):

*sa vasanatma visayoparakto  
guna-pravaho vikrtah sodasatma-  
bibhrat prthan-namabhi rupa-bhedam  
antar-bahistvam ca purais tanot*

Because the mind is absorbed in desires [*vasanas*] for pious and impious activities, it is naturally subjected to the transformations of lust and anger. In this way, it becomes attracted to material sense enjoyment. In other words, the mind is conducted by the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. There are eleven senses and five material elements, and out of these sixteen items, the mind is the chief. Therefore the mind brings about birth in different types of bodies among demigods, human beings, animals and birds. When the mind is situated in a higher or lower position, it accepts a higher or lower material body.

This verse outlines a series of psychological phenomena that culminates in the soul taking another birth. Let us take a few moments now to analyze this series.

1. The material mind is *guna-pravaha*, conducted by the three modes of material nature. Each individual's mind is subject to a unique combination of the three modes.
2. The effect of the modes upon the mind is understood by the mind's constant agitation and restlessness. While consoling his mother as she grieved over the death of Hiranyaksa, Hiranyakasipu nicely summed up this effect in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 2. 24. He told her that the soul is always *avikalah puman*, changeless; but when the mind is agitated by the *gunas*, the soul is bewildered and sees itself undergoing material transformations. In the verse quoted above, Jada Bharata uses the word *vikrtah* to indicate the transformations of mind that are induced by *guna-pravaha*.
3. Restlessness of mind is the fertile soil by which the seeds of desire embedded within the *karana-deha* develop into ideas of sense gratification that blossom in the *linga-sarira*. In the *Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary* the word *vasana* is translated as "infusing" (this is one definition among several given). The word infuse means "to put into or introduce as if by pouring." Hence the *vasanas* are waves of desire that pour out of the subconsciousness into the restless conscious mind.
4. The mind is the chief of the sixteen material coverings of consciousness (the others are the five gross elements, the five *jnanendriyas*, and the five *karmendriyas*). The desires of the mind are served by the fifteen other coverings.
5. When the senses engage in satisfying the mind's desires, *karma* is generated, and the wheel of *samsara* is turned. Thus the soul takes on body after body according to the mind's condition under the modes: good, mediocre, or bad.

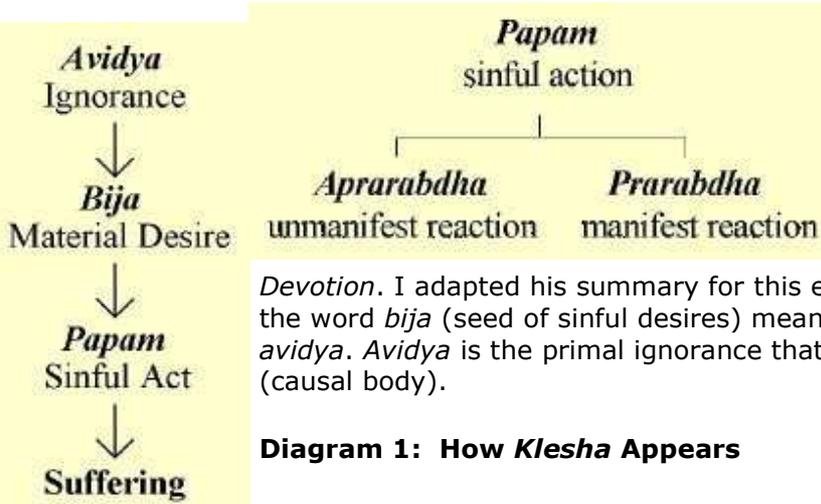
Another gloss on *vasanas* and their effects is found in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 15. 24.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura writes as follows in his commentary: *arthena vyaghra-sarpadina vinaiva drsyamanah svapnadi-bhange sati na drsyante tad evam daradayo 'vastava-vastu-bhutih svapnadayo 'vastu-bhutas ca sarve manobhava mano-vasana janyatvan manobhava*. At night one dreams of tigers and snakes, and while dreaming he actually sees them, but as soon as the dream is broken they no longer exist. Similarly, the material world is a creation of our mental concoctions. We have come to this material world to enjoy material resources, and by mental concoction we discover many, many objects of enjoyment because our minds are absorbed in material things. This is why we receive various bodies. According to our mental concoctions we work in various ways, desiring various achievements, and by nature and the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*karmana-daiva-netrena*) we get the advantages we desire. Thus we become more and more involved with material concoctions. This is the reason for our suffering in the material world. By one kind of activity we create another, and they are all products of our mental concoctions.

In a *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class (7. 6. 9) given in Vrndavana on 11 December 1975, Srila Prabhupada explained how a devotee deals with *vasana*.

*Vasana*. Therefore we have to become *vasana*-less. Without any *vasana* means without any material desires. *Vasana* cannot. . . it is therefore not actually to make it null and void, but to make it purified. That is the aim of human life. To purify our desires. That purification is possible by Krsna consciousness. *Sarva padi vinirmuktan tat paratvena nirmalam*. If you simply desire how to serve Krsna then that is really desirelessness.

In *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* Srila Rupa Gosvami has given an in-depth explanation of how sinful desires arise in the mind, what reactions such desires foment, and how



devotional service rids us of both the desires and their reactions. His Holiness Dhanurdhara Maharaja nicely summarized and clarified Rupa Gosvami's explanation in his groundbreaking book *Waves of Devotion*. I adapted his summary for this essay. The word *vasana* is not used, but the word *bija* (seed of sinful desires) means the same thing. *Bija* arises from *avidya*. *Avidya* is the primal ignorance that encases the soul as the *karana-deha* (causal body).

**Diagram 1: How Klesha Appears**

*Klesha* refers to distress, and the causes of distress.

Distress has three causes: (1) *papam* — sins, (2) *bija* — material desires, and (3) *avidya* — ignorance, the root cause.

Srila Rupa Gosvami explains that devotional service is the best means of obtaining relief from distress, because it is the only process that can counteract all three causes.

### Diagram 2: Two Reactions to *Papam* (Sins)

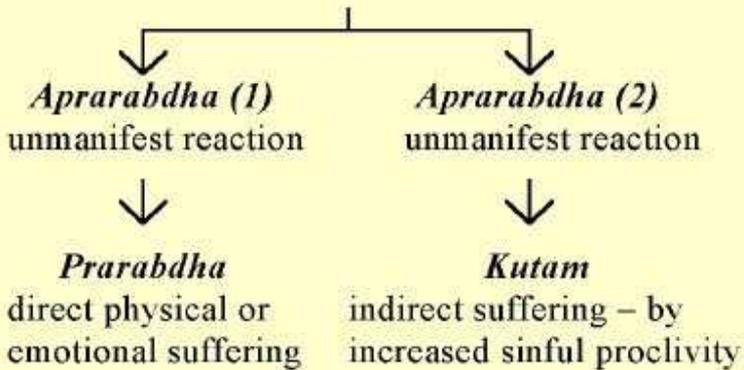
Sinful actions (*papam*) produce two reactions: (1) *prarabdha* — manifest, and (2) *aprarabdha* — unmanifest. Srila Prabhupada describes, “. . . for some of our sinful activities we are awaiting distress in the future, and for others, which are mature, we are suffering at the present moment (NOD pg 4). ”

### Manifest Sinful Reactions (*Prarabdha-Papam*)

A disease caught early is curable, but is far more difficult to counteract if allowed to become chronic. Similarly, sinful reactions are more difficult to counteract once they become manifest. Devotional service, however, can remove even manifest sinful reactions and the suffering they bring.

Devahuti explains that by practicing devotional service even someone born in the lowest family of dog-eaters becomes qualified to perform the highest brahmiical sacrifices. The behavior of those born into degraded families disqualifies them from

**Papam**  
sinful action



performing Vedic sacrifices. Devahuti points out that even slight engagement in devotional service can counteract the disqualifications incurred by a low birth.

One's birth is a tangible result of *karma* — a manifest reaction (*prarabdha-papam*). Thus Devahūti's statement is *sastric* evidence that devotional service can counteract *prarabdha-papam*.

**Unmanifest Sinful Reactions  
(Aprarabdha-Papam)**

Devotional service is like a blazing fire, able to consume limitless amounts of unmanifest sinful reactions. Srila Prabhupada says, “. . . as the blazing fire can burn any amount of fuel to ashes, so devotional service to the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can burn up all the fuel of sinful activities (NOD pg 5). ”

**How Unmanifest Reactions Cause Suffering.**

Previously, we said that sinful activity causes two types of reaction: manifest and unmanifest. We will further clarify this statement.

**Diagram 3: Furtherance of the Two Reactions to Papam (Sins)**

A sinful action generates two types of unmanifest reactions. One type creates direct physical or emotional suffering. The other type creates indirect suffering by increasing one's sinful proclivities.

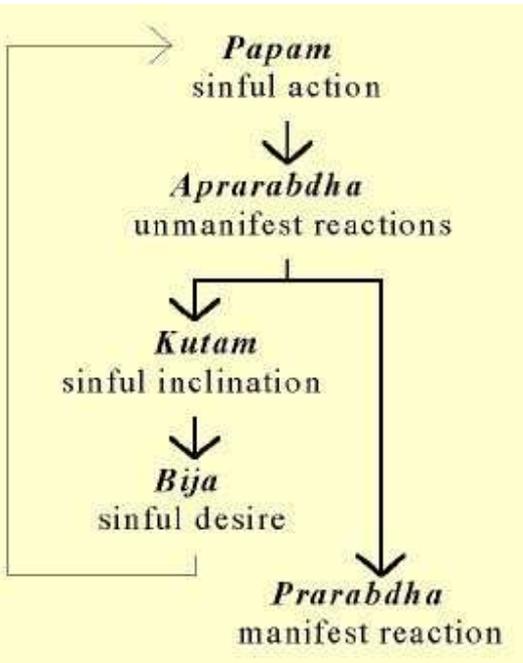
For example, if one engages in illicit sex he receives two types of reactions. One type creates some direct physical or emotional suffering. The other type creates indirect suffering by exacerbating his proclivity for sex; thereby increasing sexual desires, impelling future illicit sex, and entangling him in a *karmic* cycle of suffering.

When sinful desires increase, sinful activities increase. When sinful activities increase, sinful desires increase — it is a self-perpetuating cycle. The more one tries to satisfy his desires, the stronger they become.

To break this cycle of bondage one must tolerate sinful desires and not endeavor to fulfil them. Not being reinforced by unmanifest reactions, they will gradually dissipate and leave the heart forever. <sup>1</sup>

**Evolution of Unmanifest Sin**

The cycle of unmanifest reaction goes through four stages, as explained in *Padma Purana*:



1. *Aprarabdha* (unmanifest reaction) — In this stage the reaction is completely unmanifest and has no perceptible effect.
2. *Kutam* (sinful proclivity) — In this stage the reaction evolves into a psychological disposition towards sin.
3. *Bija* (sinful desire) — In this stage the sinful proclivity evolves into a specific desire to commit a particular sinful action.
4. *Prarabdha* (manifest sinful reaction) — In this stage the sinful desire causes one to commit a sinful action and suffer the concomitant reaction.

The following illustration may help clarify the subtle distinctions between these four stages:

#### Diagram 4: The Four Stages of Bondage

As a result of some sinful act, a man is destined to become a thief and suffer punishment. However, this reaction is not immediately felt — it is stored for a future birth (*this is the stage of aprarabdha*). In his next life, the reaction begins to manifest as an almost unnoticed proclivity towards dishonesty and cheating (*this is the stage of kuta*). This proclivity gradually intensifies and eventually manifests an explicit desire to steal (*this is the stage of bija*). Finally, this desire causes the man to commit theft and undergo the consequential suffering (*this is the stage of prarabdha*).

Devotional service eradicates all four stages of sinful reaction in chronological order — first *aprarabdha*, next *kuta*, then *bija*, and finally *prarabdha*. (See NOD page 6. )

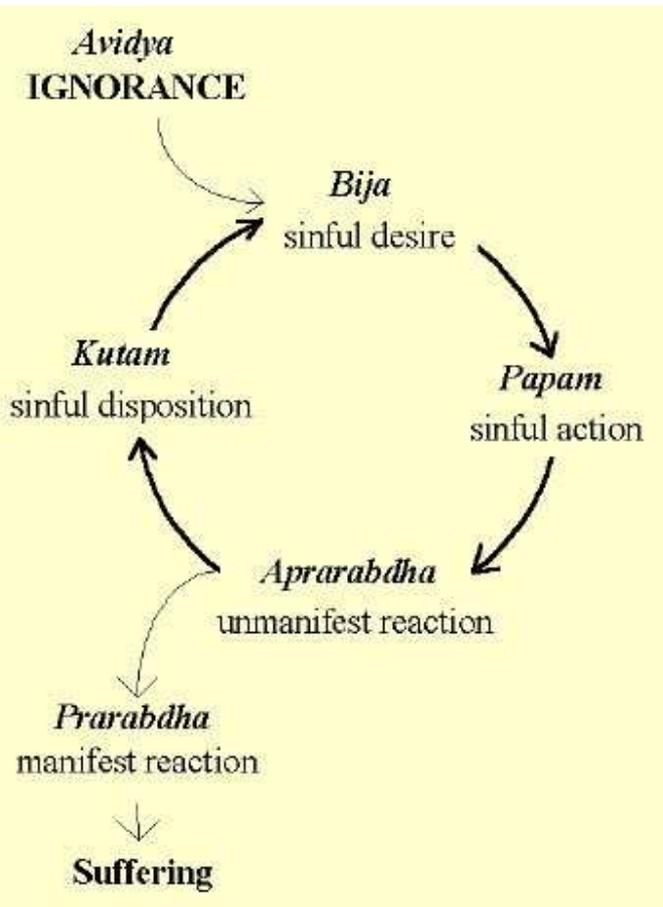
#### **Bija— Desire**

Srila Rupa Gosvami described the first cause of suffering (*papam*) in all its subheadings. Now he describes the second cause of suffering: *bija* — sinful desire.

He quotes the Visnuduttas (SB 6. 2. 17), who explain that many processes can neutralize the reactions of sinful activities, but only devotional service can uproot sinful *desire* — which is the cause of sinful activity.

Srila Prabhupada elaborates by citing Ajamila. In spite of his strict performance of brahminical duties, sinful desires remained in Ajāmila's heart and caused him to succumb to sinful life. Later, the simple devotional service of chanting "Narayana" uprooted all his calamities, although he was in the midst of sinful activities. (See NOD page 6. )

Vedic rituals like charity and austerity can neutralize sinful reactions, but they cannot neutralize sinful desire. Srila Prabhupāda gives two illustrations: (1) a person may be cured of venereal disease by some painful medical treatment, but because sex desire remains in his heart he again implicates himself in suffering; (2) an elephant may carefully bathe in a lake, but upon returning to the land immediately covers himself again with dirt. (See NOD page 7. )



Devotional service can uproot even sinful desire, and is therefore the best method for attaining relief from suffering.

**Diagram 5: The Appearance of Desire From Ignorance and Its Reactions**

The root cause of suffering is *avidya* — ignorance of one's true identity as Krsna's eternal servant. In ignorance, one acts as an enjoyer and suffers the concomitant reactions. Srila Prabhupāda says, "As long as one is ignorant about his identity, he is sure to act wrongly and thereby become entangled in material contamination (NOD pg 8). "

Uprooting ignorance is the best way to uproot suffering. Only devotional service can uproot all ignorance. Srila Rūpa Gosvami authenticates this by quoting *Padma Purana* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (Fourth Canto).

Srila Prabhupada's summarizes the quotation from *Padma Purana*, "Pure devotional service in Krsna consciousness is the highest enlightenment, and when such enlightenment is there, it is just like a blazing forest fire, killing all the inauspicious snakes of desire (NOD pg 8). " In this quotation, Srila Prabhupada expresses the Sanskrit word *avidyam* as "desire. " One usually translates *avidyam* as *ignorance*. Accordingly, Srila Prabhupāda clarifies, "Similarly, the blazing fire of Krsna consciousness is so strong that the snakes of ignorance are immediately killed (NOD pg 8). "

Devotional service eradicates sinful reactions, nullifies sinful desires, counteracts material proclivities, and — most importantly — uproots ignorance. Therefore it is the only efficient and effective way to achieve permanent relief from all suffering. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 25. 8 we find the phrase *anadi-kala-karma-vasana-grathitam avidyamamayam hrdaya-granthim*. *Anadi-kala* means "from time immemorial," *karma-vasana* means "the desire for fruitive activities", and *grathitam* means "tied tightly. " *Avidyamamayam* means "consisting of the illusory energy. " *Hrdaya-granthim* means "the knot within the heart. " There are many verses in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* about the severing of the hard knot within the heart as the final stroke of liberation for the soul; among them 1. 2. 21 and 11. 20. 30 are oft-cited. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 25. 8 it is made clear that this hard knot is the beginningless susceptibility of conditioned consciousness to the influx of *vasana*. This verse further makes clear that hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, and constant remembrance of Him, is the only process by which consciousness can be purified so that *vasana* can no longer penetrate.

About this state of purified mind, Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 29. 69:

In *Brahma-samhita* 5. 54, it is said *karmani nirdahati kintu ca bhakti bhajam*. When a person is fully absorbed in Krsna consciousness, his stockpile of material desires is

minimized. Indeed, the desires no longer fructify in the form of gross bodies. Instead, the stockpile of desires becomes visible on the mental platform by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

No living entity is free from the cycle of birth and death unless he takes to Krsna consciousness; therefore in this verse it is clearly stated (*sattvaika-nisthe*) that when one is fully absorbed in Krsna consciousness, in one stroke he is freed of past and future mental desires. Then, by the grace of the Supreme Lord, everything becomes simultaneously manifest within the mind. In this regard, Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura cites the example of mother Yasoda's seeing the whole cosmic manifestation within the mouth of Lord Krsna. By the grace of Lord Krsna, Mother Yasoda saw all the universes and planets within the mouth of Krsna. Similarly, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, a Krsna conscious person can see all his dormant desires at one time and finish all his future transmigrations. This facility is especially given to the devotee to make his path clear for returning home, back to Godhead.

In this purport Srila Prabhupada explains that a pure devotee is released from the reaction of stockpiled material desires through dreams.

Why we see things not experienced in this life is explained herein. That which we see is the future expression of a gross body or is already stocked in our mental stockpile. Because a Krsna conscious person does not have to accept a future gross body, his recorded desires are fulfilled in a dream. We therefore sometimes find things in a dream never experienced in our present life.

*Kalisantarana Upanisad* 7 declares:

*iti sodasa kalasya jivasyavarana vinasam  
tatha prakasate parabrahma megha paye  
ravi rasmi mandali veti*

In this way the Mahamantra of sixteen names is the destroyer of the covering of the *jivatma* which is composed of sixteen parts. It is then only that Parambrahma Lord Sri Krsna shines before the *jiva* like the rays of the sun after the cloudy covering of the sky is removed.

In the first part of the Hare Krsna Mahamantra, the holy names (Hare and Krsna) are uttered eight times. In the second part, the holy names (Hare and Rama) are uttered eight times. Thus there are sixteen names in the Mahamantra. The sixteen layers that cover the soul have already been explained; the *vasana*-infected mind is the chief of these sixteen. Chanting the sixteen holy names rids consciousness of all these coverings. When consciousness is pure, it is illuminated by the rays of Lord Krsna's personal form.

But even after chanting for a long time we may find ourselves still troubled by *vasana*. The reason is offenses (*aparadha*). The following verse from *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya* 8. 26 shows that even after a devotee has accepted initiation from a bona fide spiritual master, indeed even after he has entered the *sannyasa* order, he again falls victim to *vasana* if he commits Vaisnava-*aparadha*.

*ei ye sri-madhavendra sri-pada upeksha karila  
sei aparadhe inhara vasana, janmila*

Ramacandra Puri was thus denounced by Madhavendra Puri. Due to his offense, gradually material desire appeared within him.

### **Samskaras** (Impressions)

It is very important in dealing with our individual psychology that we understand *samskaras*, which means "mental impressions." Almost every time this word appears in Srila Prabhupada's books, lectures, letters and conversations, "Vedic reformatory performance" is meant. For example, the Vedic marriage ceremony is called *vivaha-samskara*. *Samskara* in this usage also has its psychological sense, but it is reformatory. The ceremony impresses the minds of the couple getting married that the vow they are taking is one of the most important in their whole lives; they must preserve this solemn vow in years to come, in both good times and bad, etc. It is sometimes said that when the newly married couple circles the sacrificial fire seven times together, this creates an impression in their minds that will last for seven lifetimes.

Sinful events and associations also deeply impress our minds for years and even lifetimes together. Such sinful *samskaras* are closely associated with *vasana* (sinful desires) and *kuta* (sinful inclination). Srila Prabhupada indicated this sense of *samskara* in a conversation of 11 September, 1972, in Arlington, Texas.

Well, *samskara* you can change in a second. *Samskara* may be powerful. (indistinct) Krsna assures you, *aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksayisyami*. He will give you protection. *Samskara* means you did some sinful activities and you are suffering. But He gives you protection. *Sarva-papebhyo*. Then what is the meaning of *samskara*? You can change your *samskara* immediately by surrendering to Krsna. Why you are so much concerned with *samskara*? He says, *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam. . . , aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksa. . .* The *samskara* as effects of sinful activities, that is troublesome. So He gives you protection. *Ma sucah*, "Don't worry." Why don't you take this? You don't want to change your *samskara*, and who can help you? That is a different thing. You don't want to change. Otherwise Krsna is ready to give you all help. How their *samskara* is changed? From the very beginning of their life they are addicted to these principles: illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication, gambling. How they have changed? They don't touch it. How it has become possible? The guest Srila Prabhupada addressed here replied that he believed Prabhupada's disciples had been great *yogis* in their past lives. By saying this he was suggesting that they had powerful *samskaras* embedded in their minds that brought them to Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet; conversely, one who had no such *samskaras* would not be able to take shelter of the pure devotee. But Srila Prabhupada asked this guest why he was also not such a *yogi*. He replied that he didn't know. Srila Prabhupada said, "Because you don't surrender. That is the fact. If you surrender, you become also a great *yogi*." Even after one takes to devotional service, he or she may be haunted by long-lasting impressions of sinful life-events and sinful associations. Many years ago a Godbrother confided to me his own difficulty with such *samskaras*. The some names of great personalities in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* reminded him of dirty words that he used to hear and chant in his *karmi* life. He felt himself condemned. These names should remind him of Krsna's pure devotees; instead they reminded him of profanity. This is a good example of what a *samskara* does to the

mind. "While in the subtle body," Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 29. 78, "we create many plans to enjoy sense gratification. These plans are recorded in the spool of one's mind as *bija*, the root of fruitive activities. " Even everyday events are permanently recorded. When you were a small child, there was a day when you ate an orange for the first time. That experience impressed your mind, and that impression is always there beneath your conscious awareness. That experience--of the distinctive color, shape, smell, texture and taste of an orange--can at any time be replayed in your consciousness. A friend tells you he is going to the fruit shop and will bring you back an orange. The full experience of "orange-enjoyment" floods your mind. This is *samskara*. The mind is laden with *samskaras* from all our previous births, whether as a demigod, a demon, an animal, bird, insect, plant or fish. But only certain *samskaras* that are appropriate to this life have conscious and subconscious influence upon us now. The more an original experience provoked emotions, the stronger the influence of the lingering *samskara*. *Samskaras* are under the control of Paramatma (*mattah smrtir jnanam apohanam ca*). Those *samskaras* that He allows to influence this life constitute our *prarabdha-karma* (the result of our past activities which is in force right now).

### **A Look at Basic Conditioned Personality Types**

Srila Prabhupada had this to say about *prarabdha-karma*:

If you infect some disease, you have to suffer. You cannot escape. You infect today somehow or other. Not today, not tomorrow, but some day it will come out. . . Then you suffer, *prarabdha*. This is called *prarabdha-karma*, infection. You are under the complete subjugation of nature. *Prakrteh kriyamanani gunaih karmani sarvasah*. These *gunaih*. The *prakrti* is forcing you to work because you have infected a kind of *guna*. [Lecture in Calcutta, 27 September 1974]

This explanation brilliantly brings in the notion of disease. We perform a sinful act (this means any deed that registers as *karma*, good or bad), but the reaction is not immediate. The doing of the sinful act is the entry point of a *karmic* infection contracted from the soul's association with the modes of nature. Like the physical symptoms of an infectious disease (fever, sore throat, etc. ), the *prarabdha* reaction manifests after some time of incubation.

Ayurveda is the Vedic medical science. Being Vedic, it views the physical body itself as a disease of the soul. The body comes into being out of the *tri-guna*, the three modes of nature. In Ayurveda, the only healthy condition is the pure mode of goodness, which is the position of liberation. Thus Srila Prabhupada's comparing the body to an infection is most apt. One of the studies within Ayurveda is body typology. Using it as our reference, we shall now look the basic "models" of the human body that are produced by the modes of material nature. Ayurvedic typology also accounts for basic psychological types. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 26. 32 teaches that the *panca-mahabhutas* (five gross elements) come into being from sound, which vibrates when egoism in ignorance is agitated by the sex energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Ayurveda teaches that against the background of primordial ignorance, the three modes of nature are stimulated by the sex energy vibrating between *purusa* and *prakrti*. The evolution of the *mahabhutas*--from ether to air to fire to water to earth--is the effect of the progress of these modes from goodness to ignorance. From *sattva-guna*, ether appears. As *sattva* transforms into *rajo-guna*, air appears. Fire appears from *rajo-guna*. As *rajo-guna* transforms into *tamo-guna*, water appears. Earth appears from *tamo-guna*. In Ayurveda, the human constitution is defined by three *dosas*. Each is a combinations of two of the five elements. From

ether and air come *vata-dosa*; fire and water combine to form *pitta-dosa*; water and earth together give rise to *kapha-dosa*. *Vata* is dry, cold, light, mobile, subtle, hard, rough, changeable and clear. It is identified with *prana*, the bodily life-force. As such, *vata* governs all movement and is the support of the other two *dosas*. The subtle body functions in ether; since *vata* is partially ethereal, mental functions are associated with it. In terms of Western physiology, the brain and nervous system exhibit a good deal of equivalence to *vata*. *Pitta* is hot, light, fluid, subtle, unpleasant-smelling, soft and clear. It generates heat, governs the body temperature, and directs chemical reactions. The Western concept of metabolism--the physical and chemical processes in the body that generate energy and maintain life--resembles *pitta*. *Kapha* is cold, wet, heavy, slow, dull, static, smooth, dense and cloudy. It maintains substance, weight and coherence in the body. The Western equivalents are the skeletal structure and the tissues that contribute to the mass of the body. All three *dosas* are concentrated together in the most critical life-support systems of the body, especially the heart. The usual translation of *kapha*, *pitta* and *vata* is "mucus, bile and air." That terminology is simply medical. My interest in the *dosas* is their affect on conditioned personality. Thus I am presenting the *dosas* as features of the three modes of material nature. It is clear from the above that for there to be life in the body, all three *dosas* must be functional. But as they are usually not balanced, an individual will be typed according to the *dosa* that is more prominent. Since my essays are about psychology, I will not discuss the physical characteristics of the *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* types, except to say that there is a remarkable correspondence to the three somatotypes conceived by the American psychologist William Shelton. The *vata* type like Shelton's ectomorph (thin and nervous), the *pitta* type is like the mesomorph (average build, physically active), and the *kapha* type is like the endomorph (heavyset and phlegmatic). Ayurveda derives seven physiologies from the basic three. The seven are the sum of two groups of three types, plus a unique type. There are human beings who unequivocally represent one *dosa*. That is one group of three--pure *kapha* type, pure *pitta* type, and pure *vata* type. Then there are human beings who exhibit the nature of two *dosas*. They form the second group of three: *vata-pitta*, *vata-kapha* and *kapha-pitta*. The unique type is the rare person whose *dosas* are perfectly balanced. These are seven types of bodies. Since a person's behavior is influenced by his or her physical qualities, there must also be psychological overtones to the seven body types. Behavior reflects not only the nature of our physical activities but also the nature of our mentalities. The state of the *dosas* means the state of our health, and everyone knows the the mood of the mind is affected by health. Even what a person dreams about at night is linked to his or her *dosas*. Going beyond body typology, Ayurveda takes into account different psychological types. There are three types of mentality, each representing a mode of nature. And each is subdivided. The subdivisions are personality types modeled on superior beings, i. e. demigods, demons and other superhuman species. *Caraka-samhita*, the root Ayurvedic text, gives seven *sattvic* mentalities: the *brahmana* type, the *rsi* type, the Indra type, the Yama type, the Kuvera type, the Varuna type, and the Gandharva type. There are six *rajasic* types and three *tamasic* types. Thus in total there are seven body types and sixteen types of mind. Another sophisticated system of Vedic personality typology is seen in *jyotisa* (astrology). In view of the principle of *vyasti-samasti*, it is logical that indications in the greater universe will inform us about our own minds. C. G. Jung wrote: In cases of difficult psychological diagnosis I usually get a horoscope in order to have a further point of view from an entirely different angle. I must say that I have often found that the astrological data elucidates certain points which I otherwise would have been unable to understand. From such experiences I formed the opinion that astrology is of particular interest to the psychologist, since it contains a sort of

psychological experience which we call "projected"--this means that we find the psychological facts as it were in the constellations. I admit that this is a very curious fact which throws a particular light on the structure of the human mind. Both Vedic (sidereal) and Western (tropical) astrology arrive at an understanding of a person's nature by way of three basic factors: birth sign, house and planet. Birth sign and house are calculated from the twelve divisions of the Zodiac, which is the pathway along which the sun, moon and planets move through the heavens. The divisions are themselves the houses. In Vedic astrology, the position of the moon in the Zodiac at the time of birth determines the sign. Also at the moment of birth, the sun, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu are positioned in different houses. Various indications are calculated from the positions of the sun and the planets that take into consideration the powers of these heavenly bodies and the relationships between them. Like in Ayurveda, the complexities of typology-calculation in astrology come down to the interaction of the three modes of material nature. The twelve houses are divided into four elemental categories: earth, water, fire and air. Earth stands for *tamo-guna*, water stands for *tamo-rajo-guna*, fire stands for *rajo-guna* and air stands for *rajo-sattva-guna*. Taurus (Visabha), Virgo (Kanya) and Capricorn (Makara) are earth signs. Cancer (Karka), Scorpio (Vrscika), and Pisces (Matsya) are water signs. Aries (Mesa), Leo (Simha) and Sagittarius (Dhanus) are fire signs. Aquarius (Kumbha), Gemini (Mithuna) and Libra (Tula) are air signs. Each of the three signs that belong to one element appear to characterize a *guna*. For example, if the air signs Aquarius, Gemini and Libra are counted as *rajo-sattva*, Aquarius leans more to *tamo-guna*, Gemini to *rajo-guna* and Libra to *sattva-guna*. The planets, too, are indicators of the *gunas*. Maharsi Parasara Muni, a great Vedic sage, composed the *Brihad Parasara Hora Sastra*. In Chapter 3, verse 22, he writes:

*jiva suryandavah sattvam  
budha sukrau rajastatha  
surya putre dharaputrau  
tamah praktikau dvija*

O brahmana, the luminaries (the sun and the moon) and Jupiter are *sattvic* planets, Venus and Mercury are *rajasic*, while Mars and Saturn are *tamasic*. Rahu and Ketu are not mentioned in this verse; but *jyotisa* assigns Rahu to *rajo-guna* and Ketu to *tamo-guna*.

*ramo'vatarah suryasya candrasya yadunayakah  
nrsimho bhumi putrasya buddha somasutasya ca  
vamano vibhudhejyasya bhargavo bhargavasya ca  
kurmo bhaskaraputrasya saimhike yasya sukrah  
ketormihnavatarasca ye canye te 'pi khetajah  
paratmamso'dhiko yesu te sarve khecara bhidhah*

Lord Rama manifests as the sun, Lord Krishna as the moon. Lord Nrisimhadeva manifests as Mars. Buddha manifests as Mercury, Vamana as Jupiter, Parasurama as Venus, Kurma as Saturn, Varaha as Rahu and Mina (Matsya) as Ketu. Living entities possessed with a degree of *paramatmamsa* are called heavenly or divine beings. The term *paramatmamsa* is clarified in 2. 2:

The four *avatars* Rama, Krsna, Narasimha and Varaha are the Supreme Soul in His fullest manifestation.

Thus *jivas* who are invested with the qualities of these four forms of the Lord appear in this world as *devas*, *rsis* and great *sadhus*. In 2. 3-4, Parasara Muni declares: Janardana or Visnu has incarnated as the *navagrahas* (nine planets) to bestow on the living entities the results of their *karmas* or actions. He assumed the auspicious

form of *grahas* to destroy the strength of the demons, to sustain the strength of the *devas* and to establish *dharma*.

The planets are persons. Each has his identifying characteristics. The sun (Surya) is royal, masculine, disciplined, authoritative, strong and original. The moon (Chandra) is royal, feminine, attractive, everchanging and delicate. Jupiter (Guru) is spiritual, counseling, friendly, self-centered and disciplined. Rahu is rebellious, impulsive, short-tempered and secretive. Mercury (Budha) is princely, entertaining, wily, intelligent and sensitive. Venus (Sukra) is romantic, slow, sensual, sweet-spoken, diplomatic and manipulative. Ketu is mystical, dreamlike, intuitive and inventive. Saturn (Sani) is wise, malefic, servile, laborious, struggling and suffering. Mars (Angaraka) is warlike, strong, rustic, perfectionist, doubting, fighting, alienating and discriminating. There is also a connection between the planets and the *dosas* of Ayurveda. The sun is *pitta*-nature, the moon is *kapha*, Jupiter is *kapha*, Rahu is *vata*, Mercury is *vata*, Venus is *kapha*, Ketu is *kapha*, Saturn is *vata* and Mars is *pitta*. Besides Ayurveda and *jyotisa*, there are a number of other Vedic typological systems: *varnasrama-dharma*, of course, but also *natya-sastra* (containing Bharata Muni's analysis of emotional types), *kama-sastra* (the Vedic science of sexuality), and others. All of these can be understood and explained through *tri-guna- prakrti*.

### **Surrender, *marga* and *guna***

The typologies mentioned above pertain to *prarabdha-karma*. In Srila Prabhupada's view, one may belong to any typology but that in itself is not an obstacle to spiritual life as long as one surrenders completely to Krsna. Surrender is an exercise of choice (free will), which is the individual prerogative of the *jiva*. *Sastra* readily admits that even after having accepted the path of *bhakti* the *jiva* may not surrender completely in just one step. In fact he cannot surrender completely if he is not endowed with transcendental knowledge of Krsna's supreme position. In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 1. 4-5, Srila Prabhupada explains:

In *Bhagavad-gita* (10. 8), the Lord says, *aham sarvasya prabhavo*: "I am the origin of everything. " *Mattah sarvam pravartate*: "whatever exists in the creation emanates from Me. " *Iti matva bhajante mam budha bhava-saman-vitah*: "When one fully understands that I create everything by My omnipotence, one becomes firmly situated in devotional service and fully surrenders at My lotus feet. " Unfortunately, the unintelligent cannot immediately understand Krsna's supremacy. Nonetheless, if they associate with devotees and read authorized books, they may gradually come to the proper understanding, although this may take many, many births.

There are four typologies within the category of neophyte devotees, or those who, while on the path of *bhakti*, have not fully surrendered. Srila Prabhupada nicely summarized the four in *Nectar of Devotion* Chapter Three.

These four types of devotees have been described in the Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gita*, and they have all been accepted as pious. Without becoming pious, no one can come to devotional service. It is explained in *Bhagavad-gita* that only one who has continually executed pious activities and whose sinful reactions in life have completely stopped can take to Krsna consciousness. Others cannot. The neophyte devotees are classified into four groups--the distressed, those in need of money, the inquisitive and the wise--according to their gradations of pious activities.

A related way of knowing who a fully-surrendered devotee is is indicated by Srila Rupa Gosvami in *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindu* 1. 1. 11, where he writes *jnana-karmady-anavrtam*. *Anavrtam*, according to a definition given by Srila Prabhupada in a *Gita* class on 10 December 1972, means "not touched. " Thus a pure devotee is not touched by the *margas* (Vedic paths) of *jnana* and *karma*. It follows that a neophyte devotee is still in touch with these paths. *Jnana* and *karma* are indeed paths of piety,

and piety is required in order for one to take to devotional service. However, when one fully surrenders to Kṛṣṇa, he leaves behind *jñāna* and *karma*. Speaking to a reporter on 24 July 1973 in London, Śrīla Prabhupada explained that a soul suffering from lingering addiction to fruitive work or to mental speculation will follow the paths of *karma-misra-bhakti* and *jñāna-misra-bhakti*. In his purport to *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* 10. 10. 20-22, Śrīla Prabhupada states about these paths: By *karma-misra-bhakti* one is elevated to the celestial kingdom, by *jñāna-misra-bhakti* one is able to merge in the Brahman effulgence, and by *yoga-misra-bhakti* one is able to realize the omnipotency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But pure *bhakti* does not depend on *karma*, *jñāna* or *yoga*, for it simply consists of loving affairs.

The summary of all this is found in the purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 7. 17:

On the whole, when the distressed, the inquisitive, the seekers of knowledge, and those who are in need of money are free from all material desires, and when they fully understand that material remuneration has nothing to do with spiritual improvement, they become pure devotees. As long as such a purified stage is not attained, devotees in transcendental service to the Lord are tainted with fruitive activities, the search for mundane knowledge, etc. So one has to transcend all this before one can come to the stage of pure devotional service.

Two classes of neophyte devotees (those who suffer from material distress and those who feel in need of money) are clearly in touch with *karma*. It can be further observed that those devotees who are work-oriented, who relate to others in a formalistic, perfunctory manner, who seek solutions to problems through mechanistic adjustments, display leanings to the *karma-marga*. Two classes of neophyte devotees (those who are inquisitive, and those who are dedicated to a philosophical grasp of the Absolute Truth) are *jñāna*-oriented. Furthermore, devotees who prefer the cognitive mind over the conative and affective mind, who maintain distance from others, and who seek solutions to problems from the remove of hands-off analysis, display leanings to *jñāna-marga*. *Misra-bhakti*, devotional service in touch with *karma* and *jñāna*, is conducted under the modes of material nature. Devotees under the modes exhibit typical behavior patterns that are described in *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* Canto 3 Chapter Twenty-nine. Śrīla Prabhupada gives this summary in his purport to verse 10 of that chapter.

Devotional service in the modes of ignorance, passion and goodness can be divided into eighty-one categories. There are different devotional activities, such as hearing, chanting, remembering, worshiping, offering prayer, rendering service and surrendering everything, and each of them can be divided into three qualitative categories. There is hearing in the mode of passion, in the mode of ignorance and in the mode of goodness. Similarly, there is chanting in the mode of ignorance, passion and goodness, etc. Three multiplied by nine equals twenty-seven, and when again multiplied by three it becomes eighty-one. One has to transcend all such mixed materialistic devotional service in order to reach the standard of pure devotional service, as explained in the next verses.

In *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* Canto 3 Chapter Thirty-two, Lord Kapiladeva outlines a progressive path for such *misra-bhaktas*. The path is in terms of *asrama-dharma*. Śrīla Prabhupada summarizes this path in his purport to *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* 3. 32. 34-36.

There are four orders of the social system: *brahmacārya*, *grhastha*, *vanaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. For the *grhasthas*, or householders, performance of sacrifices, distribution of charity, and action according to prescribed duties are especially recommended. Similarly, austerity, study of Vedic literature, and philosophical research are meant for the *vanaprasthas*, or retired persons. Study of the Vedic literature from the bona fide spiritual master is meant for the *brahmacāri*, or student. *Atmendriya jaya*,

control of the mind and taming of the senses, is meant for persons in the renounced order of life. All these different activities are prescribed for different persons so that they may be elevated to the platform of self-realization and from there to Krsna consciousness, devotional service.

It would be sheer concoction to attempt to match each of the four orders to each of the four classes of neophyte devotees. What should be understood is that as a devotee progresses through the four orders he engages in prescribed duties that gradually purify his consciousness of distress, need of money, inquisitive speculation and attachment to pondering philosophical problems. These duties constitute the *vyavahara* stage of Krsna consciousness that Narada Muni recommends in his *bhakti-sutras*:

*na tad-siddhau loka-vyavaharo heyah kintu phala-tyagas*

Even after devotional service has been achieved one should not abandon his responsibilities in this world, but rather should surrender the results of work. And while still trying to reach the stage of pure devotion one certainly must continue executing prescribed duties.

This essay closes with this summary purport from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 32. 37. The process of *bhakti-yoga*, devotional service, is the main river flowing down towards the sea of the Absolute Truth, and all other processes mentioned are just like tributaries. Lord Kapila is summarizing the importance of the process of devotional service. *Bhakti-yoga*, as described before, is divided into four divisions, three in the material modes of nature and one in transcendence, which is untinged by the modes of material nature. Devotional service mixed with the modes of material nature is a means for material existence, whereas devotional service without desires for fruitive result and without attempts for empirical philosophical research is pure, transcendental devotional service.

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1. Krsna explains this principle in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (7. 28):

*yesham tv anta-gatam papam  
jananam punya-karmanam  
te dvandva-moha-nirmukta  
bhajante mam drdha-vratah*

To make significant advancement one must engage in Krsna consciousness with unwavering determination. This is difficult when one's stock of unmanifested reactions continuously generates sinful desires that distract one from *bhakti*. But by acting piously (controlling the senses) one avoids sinful activity, and thus does not increase his sinful proclivities. This gradually exhausts one's stock of sins, and one can engage in devotional service without distraction (*drdha-vrata*).

*Sofia, Bulgaria  
5 July 2003*

**Rathayatra in Sofia**





*Sofia, Bulgaria  
6 July 2003*

Srila Prabhupada said people think that when their body dies, their selves will cease to exist. They live in fear of eternal annihilation. This is their justification for vicious and destructive behavior in the name of personal pleasure. They think, "Before we die, let us enjoy as much as possible. We only live once. What does it matter what we do, as long as we get as much sense gratification as we can?" A friend of mine in Mayapur keeps a big library at home. One of the books on his shelves is about Berlin in the last days of the Second World War. It's an account pieced together from historical records. So in the spring of 1945 when Berlin, the vainglorious capital of Hitler's so-called Thousand-Year Reich, had been reduced to a bombed-out disaster area surrounded by the Soviet Army, many of the citizens became crazy for last-minute sense gratification. There was a park near the Berlin Zoological Gardens. It is still there today, right in front of the train station called the Zoo Station. Imagine this (it's true, according to the book): it's March of 1945, and an average-looking, average-aged man is walking through the park. Probably he would be a soldier with

a little bit of free time; most men by that time were soldiers, even the old men. So he is walking along the footpath. From behind a tree a young woman steps out. She takes the man's arm. "Please," she begs him. "Let's go in the bushes and have sex." She is not a prostitute. She does not want money. She is young, she has not been with a man yet, and she thinks everyone in Berlin will be dead within a few days or weeks, including her. So before she dies, she wants to experience sex. According to the book, many instances of this sort of thing were recorded in the last days of the war. This is due to a totally materialistic, atheistic outlook. These people believe death is an endless void. "If I have just a few days left," they think, "let me enjoy any way I can." Thus atheism blesses human beings with the point of view of animals. When female dogs and cats are in heat, they approach the male dogs and cats in the same way as these Berlin women did. Animals' hearts are vacant of ideals; they are simply driven by the demands of their senses, and they will try to satisfy their senses anytime, anywhere. Srila Prabhupada told of goats herded in line for slaughter. The goat in front is having its head cut off. Just behind it, two goats are having sex. Nowadays, although there is no world war, it is nonetheless not uncommon, due to the poor moral standards of people today, for women to approach men, even strange men, the same way the women of catastrophic Berlin did. The *brahmacaris* who distribute books face this kind of thing. Sometimes women brazenly ask the devotee if he will accept "something else" other than money for a book. In the early 1970s, when I was going door-to-door in the student village of the Florida State University at Tallahassee, a college girl coyly told me she would very much like a book, but unfortunately she had no money, so would I instead take something else in payment? She was a typical modern young person--she looked intelligent, she was well-dressed, she lived in a well-furnished apartment. Just normal. But it's not normal or intelligent for a woman to behave like this. It is sick, sad, desperate and self-destructive. A normal woman is blessed by the Lord in the heart with the gift of shyness. But that's just the point: feminine shyness comes from God, and when people become Godless, then feminine shyness is chucked out the window. This is when women become worse than prostitutes. Prostitutes are not shy, of course, but at least they have a business ethic: "If you wanna play, boy, you gotta pay, boy." So because peoples' ethical standards are below even those of the prostitutes, now there is AIDS. There's so little morality in the world today that Krsna sent the AIDS virus to check people's lusty behavior. When people's lust is held in check by their inner moral ideals, they can be called human beings. When their lust is held in check only by the forces of nature, they are animals.

*Sofia, Bulgaria*  
7 July 2003

*Skanda Purana* informs us that the sacred site upon which the city of Mathura would develop was established more than 2 million years ago, when Dhruva Maharaja performed austerities there. Later, in the Treta Yuga, the area was covered by a dense forest. A demon named Madhu used to live in this forest. He named the forest after himself--Madhuban. His son Lavana inherited Madhuban upon Madhu's death. Lavana challenged the then emperor of Bharata Varsa, who was none other than Lord Ramacandra. Lord Rama sent His youngest brother Satrugna to fight with Lavana. Satrugna dispatched the demon, chopped down all the trees, and established a city called Madhu Puri. This was one million years ago. Many, many years passed about which we have no record. We do know that somehow or other,

Madhu Puri became known as Mathura. *Math* means "to churn," and connotes a place flowing with milk. Five thousand years ago a sinful descendant of the Bhoja line ruled his kingdom from Mathura. His name was Kamsa, son of Maharaja Ugrasena. Old King Ugrasena was extremely pious, the opposite of Kamsa, who was a big demon. The Bhojas were a lineage within the Yadu dynasty, a great family of Vaisnava *ksatriyas*. The materialistic Kamsa feared that because his father was a devotee, he would not hand the crown to his evil-minded son. In his previous birth Kamsa was the *asura* Kalanemi; his hatred of Visnu and Vaisnavas carried over into his next life. He learned about his previous birth from Narada Muni, who informed him that as Kalanemi he had been killed by Visnu Himself. Furthermore, at the time of the marriage of his sister Devaki to Vasudeva, Kamsa heard a prophecy from the sky that Visnu would appear again as his devotee-sister's eighth child. Kamsa would be killed by this child. So, provoked by fear and loathing for the Lord and His devotees, he usurped the throne and imprisoned his father, his sister, and his brother-in-law. Despite cruel Kamsa's murderous measures to thwart the prophecy, Krsna took His birth in Mathura, was removed by his father Vasudeva to Nandagram on the night of His birth, and enjoyed pastimes in Vrndavana for sixteen years. Then Krsna re-entered Mathura City and rid the world of Kamsa, killing him with His fist and dragging his body around a wrestling arena. Krsna Himself became King of Mathura. He defended it seventeen times against another demon, King Jarasandha, who was an ally of Kamsa. Finally Krsna moved His family, the Yadu dynasty, to the sea fort of Dvaraka on the coast of the present-day Indian state of Gujerat. Vajranabha Maharaja was Lord Krsna's great-grandson. As ruler of Mathura he built a magnificent temple on the site of Sri Krsna's appearance. Much later, in 326 BC, Mathura was reached by Greek envoys of the empire of Alexander the Great. Nearly two centuries later the Indo-Grecian kingdom of Bactria tried to conquer Mathura at least twice. During this time the city was one of the most important centers of Buddhism in India. Still, Krsna-bhakti remained Mathura's heart then as does now.

More centuries passed; Buddhism gradually declined while devotion to Krsna flourished. A king named Vikramaditya built a temple upon the ruins of the ancient one constructed by Vajrnanabha. Called the Keshava Deva Mandira, this temple was so massive it took two hundred years to complete.

In 1018 AD Mathura was attacked by invading Muslim hordes. The tremendous Keshava Deva Mandira at Krsna's appearance site was destroyed on the order of their leader, Mahmud of Ghazni. In place of the temple a mosque was put up. The mosque still stands to this day. In recent times a Krsna Janmabhumi Mandira has been constructed next to the mosque. Near this temple is a replica of the jailhouse in which Lord Krsna appeared before Vasudeva and Devaki. Some even say this is the real site of Krsna's birth, not the land on which the mosque stands. The Hindus of Mathura were sorely taxed and tormented by the Muslim occupation, but they remained steadfast in their devotion to Krsna. Centuries later there was a rectification of sorts when the Muslim emperor Akbar visited Nidhuban and met the Gosvamis. He had a divine experience and subsequently gave out a royal decree that declared Vrndaban and Mathura to be sacred places. However, this period of Muslim tolerance was short-lived. Three generations later Emperor Aurangzeb sat on the Mughal throne at Delhi. He unleashed terrible persecutions upon Mathura and its environs. But as is the way of history, the Mughal Empire soon came to a close after the British arrived in India. In 1832 the British made Mathura the capital of a district of their empire. Approximately one hundred years later at Radha Kund, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura ordered Srila Prabhupada, "If you ever get money, print books. " Thus the seed of a transcendental world-wide empire, with

Mathura and Vrndavana at the center, was planted. That empire is growing and will rule for an age of 10 000 years.

*Sofia, Bulgaria*  
*10 July, 2003*

### **A Darsana of the Divine Couple**

(derived from *Laksmi Tantra*, a Vaisnava Pancaratra Scripture)

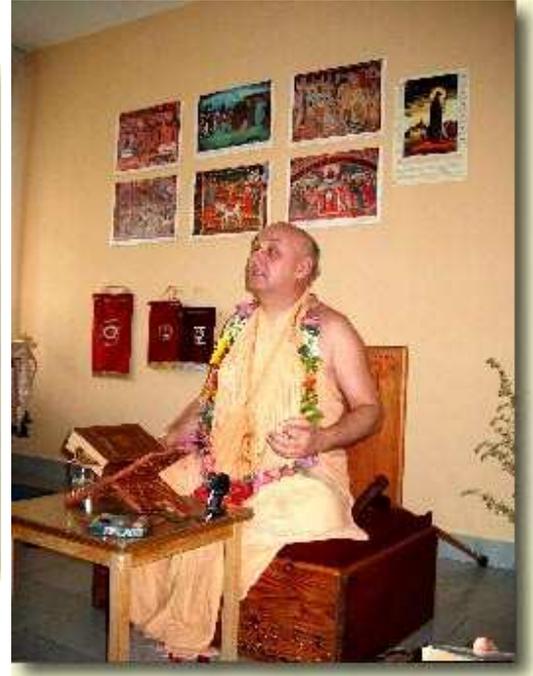
There is a cosmic turtle as black as a *saligrama-sila*. The turtle is time and the source of time. On the back of the turtle is a serpent of a thousand heads as black as a *saligram* stone. This serpent is everything in time and the source of everything in time. Above the serpent is the lovely goddess of the sacred earth. Above her is the navel of the universe filled with milk.

From out of this frothy white lake grows a lotus of a thousand petals that blooms with white teeth set perfectly in a lovely smiling face surrounded by a cloud of black bees. In the center of the lotus are two bejeweled thrones. Supporting these thrones with their powerful bodies are four fair-colored persons of great energy, each with the face of a lion. Opposite each one of them is one of four mighty persons of a color like a red flower. They also hold up the thrones. On each of the four corners forming a square around the two thrones borne by the eight persons is one of four beings with humanlike bodies and the heads of horses. On each of the four corners of a second square that together with the first formed an octagon around the thrones is one of four beings that combines the features of man and bull.

Above the lotus with the smiling face is a primordial sun millions of times brighter than the sun in Earth's sky, and above that sun is a primordial moon millions of times brighter than the moon in Earth's sky. Above the moon, millions of times brighter than any fire seen in our world, is the blazing orb of the fire god. In the sky above the sun, moon and fire flies a huge, fierce and valiant creature that combined aspects of man and bird.

A male person who is as black as the *saligrama* stone and is the attractor of all hearts sits upon one bejeweled throne in the lotus. On the throne to the left of that person sits a golden female person who is likewise the attractor of all hearts. This couple is worshiped by the host of powerful persons arrayed around Their thrones.

### **Public Program in Sofia**



*Timisoara, Romania  
11 July, 2003*

The material struggle is compared to carrying a heavy load on your head. Seeking relief, you shift the load over to your right shoulder. After a while you carry it in your arms. Then you lift it back up onto your head. And from there you switch it over to your left shoulder. Moving it around like this permits you to maintain a tolerance of having to carry the load. But it doesn't make the load any lighter. There's really no relief to be had in shifting it around, although that's what we think.

Materialistic human life is just 50 or 75 years of shifting the load around between education, economic development, family life, sexual release, politics, health care, and so on. That we have different "loading zones" in life helps us drag on, but until we set the load down there is no relief. Setting the load down means ridding ourselves of the false conceptions of "I am the doer," "controller," "owner," "enjoyer."

It amazes me sometimes, the questions devotees ask in classes. For example: "Practically speaking, we *have* to control things, even in our lives as devotees. In that case how do we stay free of the conception of being the controller?" All such a question means to me is that the material conception of life runs very, very deep. News flash: WE ARE A SERVANTS, NOT CONTROLLERS. By Krsna's grace we are loaned the facility of this body and so on, so that we can render service to Him even though we are not associating with Him in the spiritual world. But how does having access to borrowed facilities for service make you a controller?

Someone explained it this way: "Well, when I'm driving the temple car in devotional service, then I am controlling the car. " I remember a car crash I witnessed when I

was 15 years old. I was walking out of my high school to take my lunch break when I saw a car driving down the street suddenly veer off the road and smash into a tree. It turned out the driver "lost control" because he had a heart attack right there in the driver's seat. So what kind of control is that? At any second anyone may have a heart attack, a brain embolism, a loss of eyesight or muscular coordination. It can happen--and it *does* happen to people every day--because from moment to moment we human beings are under control. And that means we are servants, not masters.

Thus the secret of relief from the burden of material life is to accept our actual position without desperately clutching somewhere in the back of our minds to the illusion of "I'm in control here. "

That controlling attitude is not something one throws off in a second by a mere decision of mind. It takes purification, and that takes practice. You see, as neophyte devotees our reflex position is "I'm in charge here. " What do I mean by reflex position? Suppose a bug settles down on your arm and starts boring into your flesh. Your reflex is to strike back instantly and kill it. All right, it can be argued that this bug *should* be killed because it is an aggressor. But that's something to consider with a calm mind. A question like that is better to discuss with an authority. So the point here is that our reflexes are way ahead of the cognitive mind. Reflexes are visceral, not intellectual. They activate directly from the false ego. Someone criticizes us; our reflex is to instantly hit back with criticisms of our own, not to pause and reflect on his words to see if there is any truth in what he said about us.

Thus it is not a matter of deciding one fine day, "I'm giving up the conception of being the controller. From now on I'm a servant of Krsna. " It is nice to think that way; yes, we *should* think that way. . . but still, what is our reflex position? When we are provoked by the modes of nature, what is our attitude? If it is to cling to this body, to slap down any threat to our sense of being in charge of this body, then we are still neophytes.

*Timisoara, Romania*  
*15 July, 2003*

## **Transcendental Psychology**

### **Essay Four**

#### **The Modes of Modernity**

These essays have focused on subjects that are traditionally illuminated by Vedantic knowledge. And in this essay too I intend to keep that brilliant searchlight of timeless wisdom ablaze; but now we must turn its beam away from classical formulas of explanation and shine it into the dark corners of the modern modes of thinking, feeling and willing. We're all to some extent or other conditioned by modernity. Most of us are very deeply conditioned by it. I will show in this essay that if we do not identify and eradicate this conditioning in our own psychology, it will have a deleterious effect on our spiritual lives.

I was greatly helped in my writing of this essay by an article published in the magazine *Humanitas*, vol. X no. 2, 1997 (copyright held by the National Humanities Institute, Washington D. C. USA). The author is Professor Claes G. Ryn of the Catholic University of America. The title is "Imaginative Origins of Modernity: Life as a Daydream and Nightmare".

Modernity is far removed from the context of traditional Indian culture. In *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila* 7. 119p, Srila Prabhupada writes:

It is the statement of Carvaka Muni that one should beg, borrow or steal money to purchase ghee and enjoy life (*rnam krtva ghrtam pibet*). Thus even the greatest atheist of India recommends that one eat ghee, not meat. No one could conceive of human beings' eating meat like tigers and dogs, but men have become so degraded that they are just like animals and can no longer claim to have a human civilization.

Carvaka Muni was an atheist-materialist of ancient India. Although he was at odds with much of Vedic philosophy, his advice to people was that they should fully enjoy their senses *within the context of Vedic culture*. He did not concoct a "new" culture (which is what modernity is all about) out of his own mind, a culture of vicious bestiality.

### **Modernity as Manic-Depression**

Aretaeus of Cappadocia, a physician of the second century A. D. , described the condition that we now know as manic-depressive disorder. Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), a German psychiatrist, gave a modern definition of manic-depression that is still valid today.

Basic to manic-depressive disorder are conflicting moods of high elation and low despondency. The patient may swing between the two moods, or he may be beset with both moods simultaneously. One mood may be more prominent than the other. When the moods are extreme, the condition is called bipolar disorder; when less extreme, it is called cyclothymia.

It is not difficult to predict how manic-depressive disorder would be analyzed from the Vedic perspective. Mania is defined in the dictionary as "an excessively intense enthusiasm, interest or desire. " That is clearly *rajo-guna*. Depression is defined as "the condition of feeling sad or despondent; a reduction in activity or force; a reduction in physiological vigor or activity. " That is clearly *tamo-guna*.

When the Scindia steamer *Jaladuta* docked in Boston Harbor on September 18, 1965, Srila Prabhupada wrote *Boro Krpa Koile Krsna (Markine Bhagavata Dharma)*. In verse 3 of this poem is the line

*rajas tamo gune era sabai acchanna*

All of the people here are covered over by the modes of passion and ignorance.

Professor Ryn remarks about the modern type of personality:

On the one hand, modern man uses his imagination to an unparalleled extent to evade the hard and painful task of moral responsibility up close: He always dreams of happiness on entirely different, far easier terms, of a life that can satisfy all of his pent-up desires. As long as he indulges this imagination he is intoxicated, inspired. But just as often the dark side of life seems to him to be all there is, and he despairs of happiness. Bitterness and pessimism torture him.

The coming together of these two moods is not paradoxical or puzzling. On the contrary, they are inseparable. They are two sides of one and the same modern personality. That personality moves, for fully intelligible reasons, between elation and dark depression. The person is up, or he is down, rarely in-between, and the swings tend to get more violent.

Ryn observes that mankind today has on one side a grossly inflated idea of his position in the world. On the other side he is cast down into deep despair when the position he imagines for himself is not given due respect by the world. Modern man is therefore, Ryn concludes, manic-depressive.

The manic-depressive temperament under scrutiny is self-generated, which is not to deny that it sometimes blurs into what is commonly called mental illness. To see how this temperament is formed, it is helpful to ask: who is the cynic, that person who sneers at life and suspects all others of having the most foul of motives? Who is he but the disillusioned, repeatedly disappointed dreamer, a person who bears other human beings and life in general a deep grudge for defeating his cherished longings? The artificial exhilaration created by the romantic imagination must inevitably bring on grim resentment.

### **Depression: A World-Wide Mental Health Problem**

Thirty years ago (8 January 1973) the news magazine *Newsweek* featured a cover story on depression. It was proclaimed America's number one mental illness and an epidemic that too often ends in suicide. Depression is now recognized as the number one mental illness in the world.

But there is a difference between depression and manic-depression, isn't there? The depressive is down in the dumps. The manic-depressive sometimes exhibits a side of himself that is wildly exhilarated. Manic-depression is considerably less a world health problem than depression. Is it really accurate for Professor Ryn to characterize modernity as a condition of manic-depression? Why not just say modernity is depression?

Ryn admits he uses the term manic-depressive "in protest against the kind of psychologism that tends to reduce the individual to a product of forces he cannot control"; as we shall see, excusing one's personal weaknesses as being really the strengths of outside forces that one can't possibly control is a key symptom of the modernity that Professor Ryn is, in a sense, ridiculing with the name manic-depression.

Even if, for the sake of statistical accuracy, we were to go with straight depression as the representative mental disorder for modern times, we would still benefit from Professor Ryn's analysis. It is said in some psychiatric circles that depression has two

phases: overt and covert. Overt depression, of course, exhibits all the expected symptoms of melancholia. But covert depression is depression in disguise. It is how a person imagines himself, and what he does, *to systematically hide his depressed condition even from himself*. Often the mask he puts over his depression is a silent dutifulness, a compulsion to work hard, an emotional toughness, a disconnection from the world, and/or a dependency upon alcohol or other intoxicants. Depression may even be masked by a strong urge to succeed, to surpass others, to please an authority figure, or by a starry-eyed hope in a better future world, or by extreme idealism, or by religious enthusiasm--all of which have overtones of mania. Later in this essay I will have more to say about the ties that bind covert depression and manic-depression. For right now let us just agree that there is enough similarity to warrant Professor Ryn a listen. Covert depression, like mania, is symptomatic of the mode of passion.

A question may be raised at this point: are these urges--the urge to succeed and so on--always coverups for depression? The simple answer is no. The more complete answer is that there are many ways to become mired in addiction to a fantasy self ("the enjoyer") instead of moving forward to heal the real self ("the servant"). Therefore, dear reader, please note that later in this essay we will be discussing addiction as the one single thread that links together all the many ways that people blind themselves to their depressed state of consciousness. Religion--even "Krsna consciousness"--can be addictive in this sense if we use it to evade having to come to grips with our individual spiritual disease, which is our particular taste for sense gratification. Then again, Srila Prabhupada recommended that we become addicted to Krsna. Thus there is addiction to illusion and addiction to reality.

### **Modern Values and Low Self-Esteem**

Most psychologists and psychiatrists tell us that depression (which, to repeat, appears as overt depression, covert depression and manic-depression) is a disorder of self-esteem. Healthy self-esteem is a kind of self-realization, for it presupposes that in back of one's gifts and limitations there is a core self of constant value, a value that is neither better nor worse than the core selves of other human beings. Self-esteem is said to be picked up in childhood from the "unconditional positive regard" of parents for their offspring. In other words, when parents show their children that the core of their love is constant even when the children perform poorly, the children internalize that parental regard. It becomes the seed of their own self-esteem. But when children perceive that the love of their parents hinges on whether, for example, they do well at school or not, they develop issues of low self-esteem at an early age. Even children who were valued by their parents may have problems with low self-esteem as they become exposed to the society beyond the family circle. Modern society does not at all reinforce a person's inherent self-worth. It gauges the value of the individual on a scale of external trappings: wealth, beauty, status, fame. A person who discards his sense of inner self-worth to pursue the standards of value set by modern society is a person afflicted by covert depression. He *is* depressed, but he does not see it because he is too busy chasing false goals. It is to be expected that at some point his depression will become overt. This is when all the life runs out of his strenuous endeavors to be something he is not.

### **The Premodern Personality**

Before he goes into dissecting the personality of modern man, Professor Ryn tells us about the premodern type of personality. In this there are two subdivisions, Christian and classical (the second consists of persons who gravitate to the values of ancient Greece and Rome). The premodern type is still with us today, at least in part. In fact any individual will be a mixture of types, premodern and modern.

The old classical and Christian outlook is deeply rooted; it has not entirely disappeared even today. Neither can we point to particular individuals in the modern world whose personalities are entirely clear-cut embodiments of the new moral-imaginative momentum. All human beings contain both old and new. Much neurosis in contemporary society is intrinsic to the cultural dynamic under investigation, but additional anxiety and confusion are due to individuals' harboring not only that dynamic but other strains of personality with which it is incompatible.

In significant ways, the premodern European described by Professor Ryn resembles the Aryan, the member of classical Vedic culture. His world-view is religious. He is aware of mankind's fallen state. Premodern man believes he can be elevated by moral-intellectual effort, or by divine grace, but he accepts that some limitation will always remain. Mankind is not God. Premodern man therefore holds self-criticism to be a virtue. Suffering is not unexpected by him, nor does he resent it as undeserved. Well-being and happiness are not taken for granted but are reasons to give thanks to God. Premodern man is acutely aware of his own weaknesses because he measures himself by high moral standards that lead away from conception of the self as an enjoyer. The ethics of Aristotle and Cicero are ascetic; Christ's Sermon on the Mount is otherworldly. Premodern man accepts that his moral shortcomings are his own; he, and he alone, is responsible for improving his character. Problems in life are seen as the consequence of moral failure. To solve problems he should strain his utmost to better his character; and even if he makes some progress, plenty of imperfections will remain, requiring yet more effort. Christian society was knitted together by the perception that one's neighbors' problems are one's own.

Contrasting modern man with premodern man, Professor Ryn writes:

His demeanor is very different from that of premodern man. Far from discounting the opportunities of a worldly existence, this person entertains great expectations. Francis Bacon was only one of the first to believe in endless progress. He thought that, with the disappearance of old superstitions and a full application of the methods of experimental science, a vastly improved human existence would be possible. The Enlightenment extended these expectations. The hope for a new and better world was not necessarily based on faith in science and reason. The most fundamental longing, discernible behind scientism itself, was for a basic transformation of human existence, for a great liberation, expansion and deepening, making life infinitely more satisfying. Rousseau is but an early and prominent example of one who believed that classical and Christian civilization was based on a profound misconception and who also believed that the resulting oppression can be ended and that mankind can achieve a new, superior existence.

A key difference between premodern and modern attitudes is seen in the notion of the rights of man.

Modern man does not regard a good life as an undeserved gift. He is more likely to see it as an entitlement. Human beings, so it is asserted, have rights. The "natural

rights of man" proclaimed by such theorists as Locke and Rousseau have been made more elaborate and specific in our own century by the United Nations. For taking the trouble to be born, human beings have rights to food, housing, health care, etc. There has been no announcement of corresponding duties.

From within the pillared halls of the grand temple of Natural Human Rights, a fierce white marble goddess holding a bronze sword on high beckons mankind to lay their chains at her feet, that she may chop them asunder. Her name is Social Issues.

Although demanding his rights, modern man places no particular demands on his own person. He is not inclined to see anything wrong with self. In the words of that reassuring slogan, "I'm OK, and you're OK," Rousseau proclaimed the goodness of man already in the eighteenth century, dismissing the doctrine of original sin as an affront to human nature. What is to blame for life's deep and numerous disappointments is not some flaw or perversity within man or nature but oppressive, distorting social institutions and conventions. The remedy, Rousseau argues, is for humanity to cast off the chains that harness its goodness.

### **The World is Not Enough**

Unfortunately, life in the material world remains essentially the same for the moderns as it was for the premoderns.

We come here to a great problem facing modern man. With all his rights and expectations, modern man must still live in the existing, historical world, and that world stubbornly remains the kind of place it has always tended to be: a mixture of ups and downs and full of imperfections. The difficulty for modern man, given his high hopes, is that he will experience the disappointments of a typical human life, suffer his share of unfairness, economic pressures and illness. People close to him will die. Society will display greed, intolerance, ruthlessness, and crime. There may be wars or other painful social disruptions. Much of life will be merely boring.

As he comes to understand that the material world around him does not care about his so-called importance as a child born of a New Age, modern man is greatly let down. Wrote the poet Stephen Crane (1871- 1900), "A man said to the universe: 'Sir, I exist!' 'However,' replied the universe, 'That fact has not created in me a sense of obligation. '"

Having been led to expect a satisfying life, happiness even, modern man looks in vain for the world to deliver on the promise. His daily life is often painted in rather drab colors or grays, sometimes in black. Since his actual existence falls far short of his hopes, he begins to feel mistreated, cheated of his due. He soon nurses a grudge against life. He starts to suspect, and is encouraged by ideologues to believe, that he is being deprived of his entitlement. Each new disappointment intensifies a feeling of betrayal. The time comes when society--indeed, all of human existence--appears to him unjust and oppressive, as if manipulated by sinister forces. Rousseau gives early and paradigmatic expression to the modern feeling of disappointment and defeat. Toward the end of his life he writes, "I was created to live, and I am dying without having lived. " He bemoans having to give back to his maker a host of "frustrated good intentions. "

## Rousseau and the Dream of a World Remade

Swiss-French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was the founding father of Romanticism. Romanticism was a reaction to the so-called Enlightenment Project, which was a French school of rationalism in the 1600's and 1700's. Rationalism means any doctrine that teaches the supremacy of the human intellect over all other considerations. The French *philosophes* of the Enlightenment--Diderot, d'Alembert, La Mettrie, Condillac, Helvetius, d'Holbach, Turgot and Condorcet, among others--propagated "the rational society" as an ideal. But there was a limit to people's appetite for science, abstraction, and impersonal reason. Creeping dissatisfaction with sterile intellectualism burst out as a revolt: the Romantic movement. The Romantics rediscovered art, mystery, and irrationality. And they rediscovered emotions. In fact, they elevated emotion to a position it had never before held in the history of thought.

Rousseau paid much lip service to the emotion-soaked virtues of compassion, friendliness and loving kindness, but his own character was undisciplined and shockingly deficient in truthfulness, purity and honesty. Other philosophers of his time, who were sympathetic at first to his message, soon soured as they came to know the dark side of Rousseau's personality. Hume and Voltaire dismissed Rousseau as a monster. Diderot called him "deceitful, vain as Satan, ungrateful, cruel, hypocritical and full of malice. " A woman with whom Rousseau was intimate summed him up as "an interesting madman. "

About Rousseau, Paul Johnson writes in *Intellectuals* (1988), Chapter One: "He was the prototype of that characteristic figure of the modern age, the Angry Young Man. " Plus, Rousseau was the first to combine all the salient characteristics of the modern Promethean: the assertion of his right to reject the existing order in its entirety; confidence in his capacity to refashion it from the bottom in accordance with principles of his own devising; belief that this could be achieved by the political process; and, not least, recognition of the huge part instinct, intuition and impulse play in human conduct. Rousseau's fascination with his own imagination is clear from the following excerpts of a letter he wrote at age fifty-five:

I love to dream, but freely allowing my mind to wander without enslaving myself to any subject. . . this idle and contemplative life. . . becomes to me daily more delicious; to wander alone endlessly and ceaselessly among the trees and rocks about my dwelling, to muse or rather to be as irresponsible as I please. . . finally to give myself up unconstrainedly to my fantasies. . . that, sir, is for me the supreme enjoyment. . .

"If we wish to understand the kind of outlook that began to replace classical and Christian civilization in the West," writes Professor Ryn, "we do well to study Rousseau. "

He is convinced that he has seen more deeply into human nature than has any previous observer and that he has discovered the secret of happiness. But the world as it is is unfriendly to that truth and to him personally as the messenger. Especially in his later autobiographical writings, Rousseau expresses his deep hurt at being wronged by life in general and at having been "cast out" from society--this despite his being, by his own account, "the most sociable and loving of men. " He has not

been treated as he thinks befits a person of his deep insight and benevolence but feels himself the victim of cruel persecution. He takes to a paranoid extreme a dissatisfaction with life that was to become chronic in the modern world.

Rousseau became a prophet of unrequited daydreaming, of idle longings never to be fulfilled by appropriate work. He did not see a need to work, as he was convinced that *what he longed for, he deserved*.

Starting a powerful trend in Western culture, Rousseau attributes greater significance to life lived in the imagination than to the world of action. "I abstain from acting," Rousseau writes. He gets to taste real life in his pastoral reveries. Modern man's flight from the concrete practical responsibilities of the here and now, specifically, from the duty of making the best of self and caring for family and neighbor, assumes different forms depending on the personality of the dreamer. What is common and constant is the longing for glorious fulfillment, and the theme that some fundamental change is necessary for happiness to become possible: "Life would be so much better, if only. . . ." "If only I could get a fresh start, real life would finally begin. "

Rousseau admitted no obligation to society, and demanded every obligation of society to him. Similarly, he admitted no obligation to history. To put it in the language of today, "History is just 'his story'." So-called facts of the past are less important than the possibilities of the future. The "truth" of such facts ties us to authorities, social systems and cultural traditions that we need to break free of in order to realize our dreams. We have every right to discard historical facts and truths as yesterday's baggage.

Rousseau's notion of a new society is based on an imagined human past when life was truly "natural." That past bears little resemblance to what is known of human history. Significantly, the author of the immensely influential *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* tells his readers in one of the opening paragraphs that his "investigations" into the past "should not be taken for historical truths, but only for hypothetical and conditional reasonings." As if to concede that mankind's actual past does not support his assumptions about human nature, he writes, "Let us therefore begin by putting aside all the facts, for they have no bearing on the question." Rousseau's readers are invited to change their view of man and society in the light of his imaginative construction of the past, one that is unencumbered by demands for historical accuracy. Uncomfortable facts of human experience must not be allowed to interfere with beguiling possibilities.

He freely fashioned an account of the world around him from out of his own inner frustrations, and was convinced he had every right to impose his personal point of view everywhere.

Rousseau's deep alienation from existing society permeates all his writing. Already in the First Discourse he attacks the "vile and deceitful uniformity" that condemns man to "perpetual constraint." Everywhere society suppresses naturalness. "Without ceasing, politeness makes demands, propriety gives orders; without ceasing, common customs are followed, never one's own lights." Such comments are indistinguishable from Rousseau's ubiquitous autobiographical theme, in the words of *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*: "I have never been truly fitted for social life, where there is nothing but irksome duty and obligation." Happiness is possible only if the individual can be free of restraint. He writes of a short period of happiness in

his youth: "I was perfectly free, or better than free because I was subject only to my own affections and did only what I wanted to do. " He remembers with joy "when I was myself, completely myself, unmixed and unimpeded, and when I can genuinely claim to have lived. " Since being "unmixed" and free of all restraint is out of the question in the world of action known to man, Rousseau has constructed the sharpest possible contrast between happiness and what now exists.

Rousseau's ideal society is that of the Noble Savage, the pre-civilized man of his own imagination.

The new society about which Rousseau dreams will not receive its cohesion from difficult and protracted moral struggle and self-discipline on the part of citizens. That notion belongs to an ancient but wholly mistaken conception of human nature. The political order that Rousseau envisions will flow spontaneously from man's true nature once society has been cleansed of traditional structures and refounded on the basis of equality. Liberated, "unimpeded" nature will then shape society, as once it formed the happy but primitive state of nature. It will give the people a common purpose, a "general will. " True popular rule is incompatible with constitutionalism. As the spontaneous force of nature, the general will can manifest itself only in uninhibited freedom.

### **Modernity as Daydream and Nightmare**

"An interesting madman. " After reading about Rousseau and his ideas, it is amazing that such a deranged personality could have the impact he did. But indeed the infantile dualism of fantasy and frustration he gave voice to nearly three centuries ago crops up again and again in our modern world. Ryn's portrayal of Soviet communism in the light of Rousseau's legacy is most instructive.

In our own century communism has inspired its followers with the dream of a classless and stateless society in which human beings will finally develop the full range of their potential in perfect freedom. The drudgery of boring, mechanical, routinized work will be overcome. But that wonderful future stands in sharp contrast to a darkly depressing present: ever worsening exploitation, greed, cruel competition, misery and alienation. So abominable is capitalist society that revolution is inevitable. In Marxism the conspirators against liberation are the owners of the means of production, the bourgeoisie. Needless to say, realizing the dream will necessitate suffering. Something so great cannot be born without birth pangs. The communists turn ruthlessly against opponents. "If you want to make an omelette, you have to break some eggs," says Lenin. The paranoia that forms an integral part of the manic-depressive dynamic leads to the discovery of enemies not just among the capitalists. Stalin comes to see enemies of the people everywhere, even within the Communist Party. Never-resting vigilance against counterrevolution sends millions to the Gulag. As is typical of the manic-depressive ideological movements, the inspiring vision is all benevolent concern for the downtrodden, but the actual practice is almost unbelievable inhumanity.

Arthur Koestler, writing in *The God that Failed* about his own engagement with communism during the 1930's, compares it to addiction.

The addiction to the Soviet myth is as tenacious and difficult to cure as any other addiction. After the Lost Weekend in Utopia the temptation is strong to have just one last drop, even if watered down and sold under a different label.

Koestler calls the different labels "Peace, Democracy, Progress or what you will. " The vocabulary of persons who worship the avenging goddess of Social Issues is replete with words and phrases that hark back to the glory days of revolutionary communism: "empowerment" and "disempowerment", "chauvinism", "politically correct", and so on. (I've chosen those four terms deliberately; I have personally heard them used by ISKCON devotees, some of whom sit on the GBC. ) A person who speaks in such terms is not necessarily a communist; he or she is probably just parroting what Professor Ryn calls "boosterish affirmations of human 'rights'". But this sort of talk does not come to grips with the real cause of suffering.

Western man has not learnt much from this large body of evidence, not even from the great man-made disasters of this century, including two world wars and the extermination of millions of human beings--disasters which can be shown to be substantially related to the moral-imaginative disposition under discussion. To head off such catastrophes in the future Western man resorts to boosterish affirmations of human "rights" and campaigns of "never again," while the deeper causes of the inhumanity and suffering are left largely unexplored and unattended. This failure to face uncomfortable facts bespeaks a stubborn willfulness and is striking proof of moral-imaginative escapism within the Western world. Our society remains strongly attracted to that temperament. Many continue to attribute moral superiority to people with ambitious and allegedly beautiful visions for remaking human existence.

What does Ryn mean by "moral-imaginative"? The following sentences selected from his article bring out his intention.

What most deeply shapes typically modern man and guides even his more strictly philosophical efforts is a new way of imagining the world.

Examining the imaginative basis of theoretical formulations is always important to discerning their meaning.

Of special interest in the present context is that personal character gives human beings particular intuitive predilections. The transformation of the imagination that will be examined here is intimately connected with a transformation of the moral life, so that we may refer to the dynamic in question as moral-imaginative.

### ***Kalpana***

In other words, the modern moral-imaginative tendency looks for moral values, or personal character, in the realm of imagination. You'll recall that premodern man understood that a moral process was going on at the back of his life: because there are moral failings in his past, at present he has problems. For example, one who honestly understands the law of *karma* will perceive the difficulties he is having at

present as *prarabdha*, the full-blown result of his past sinful acts. "Man is the architect of his own destiny," Srila Prabhupada often said.

For European premodern man, human actions are measured by an objective moral standard taught in scripture and by wise men of old. Similarly, a follower of Vedic culture knows that sinful acts are deviations from the moral standard taught by *sastra*, *sadhu* and *guru*. The cure for the reactions of sinful acts (*prarabdha-karma*) is to strictly follow *sastra*, *sadhu* and *guru*. *Sastra-caksusa*, the eye of *sastra*, gives us the intellectual vision to analyze problems and find solutions. When the cognitive mind operates according to that vision the result is *viveka*, discrimination. Sripad Ramanujacarya states that *viveka* is one of the great blessings of *bhakti-yoga* upon the cognitive mind. But modern man is inclined to be guided by imagination.

So far in this series on psychology, imagination is a function of the mind we have only slightly touched upon. In Essay Two, part two, *manaso-vrtti* (the eleven material engagements of the mind) were explained. One of these is *abhimana-vrtti*, which is false identification (*ahamkara*) and misconception (Srila Prabhupada translates *abhimana* as "misconceptions" in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 1. 15). An example of misconception is Mayavadi philosophy, which Srila Prabhupada repeatedly argues is rooted in the false ego conception, not in the pure spiritual conception. *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya* 6. 134 states that to interpret *sastra* in the Mayavadi manner is *gauna-vrtti*. We may take this *vrtti* (mental function) to be a feature of *abhimana-vrtti*. Similarly, *C. c. Madhya* 6. 134 uses the term *gaunartha kalpana* for the misconceptions of Mayavada. The word *kalpana* means "imagination." *Kalpana* is an acceptable method of knowledge for the Mayavadis, the philosophers of *maya*.

*Sadakanam hitarthaya brahmano rupo-kalpanah*. The Mayavadi philosophers, they say that *kalpana*, "You just imagine any form." [Lecture on *Bhagavad-gita*, Bombay, 9 April 1974]

As a function of *abhimana-vrtti* (the engagement of the mind in false ego) Mayavadis imagine themselves to be God and concoct imaginary meanings for the scriptures. At least traditional Indian Mayavada is restrained by *sattvic* discipline, but Western speculators, being extremely sinful, furiously expand *nirvisesa* and *sunyavadi* ideology in all manner of harmful ways.

Modern daydreamers inspired by Rousseau flee away from premodern man's humble admission that his problems are caused by his own moral failings. They flee toward a fantasy in which they themselves are new gods, pure and sinless. As gods, they have a moral right to remake the world as they like. But their daydream is threatened by a nightmarish conspiracy of anti-imaginative traditionists who want to force upon the world the archaic superstition that morality is defined by the one Supreme Godhead, and not by so many gods newly hatched from the egg of speculation.

At its core, the modern moral-imaginative dynamic is a rebellion against whatever interferes with our favorite desires. It is an expression of a great self-indulgence. We do not want to rein in our desires, and the imagination helps us to justify living as we would like to live. The imagination assists us in disparaging and avoiding the nagging, onerous moral conscience that calls our desires into question.

The modern moral-imaginative philosophy, like the Mayavada philosophy of India, aspires to 1) negate the realities of the human condition in the material world and to 2) propel any ordinary man to the position of God.

Besides moral conscience, the fundamental obstacle to realizing our fondest dreams is historically existing reality itself. The modern dynamic is a willful evasion of that obstacle. It tries to undo the real terms of human existence, including the need to accept our primary duties as human beings. A chief responsibility of the individual is not to inflict too much of his own conceit and arbitrariness on others. The longing for liberation here discussed is a desire for unlimited self-indulgence. Under the guise of pretty phrases about a better world, many are trying to throw off outer as well as inner checks. Some barely bother to deceive themselves regarding their innermost motives but advance their noble-sounding schemes in a blatant, cynical pursuit of power. At the extreme, the visionary wants the entire world to cater to his desires.

### **A Closer Look at Self-Esteem**

We now return to our examination of the root cause of the different strains of depression (manic-depression, overt depression and covert depression). The phrase "low self-esteem" is in very wide use these days. Pick up any book about depression and you are almost certain to find low self-esteem cited as a main cause if not the main cause.

In this essay I want to touch on two components of real self-esteem. By component I mean simply, "If you want genuine self-esteem, you need these two ingredients in your life. " They are not the *only* components, but they are essential. One is knowledge of the self as spirit soul. Now, this component is quite openly recognized in many of the present-day books on depression. A German Catholic monk named Anselm Gruen is the author of *Building Self-Esteem* (Crossroad, 2000); in Chapter One he writes that people need to get in touch with "the spiritual you," which he defines as "a self that can survive all external wounds and destruction because it comes from the hand of God. "

In the Bhagavat Dharma Discourses given in New Vrindaban, September 1972, Srila Prabhupada said:

*Bhagavata-dharma* means that we have to transcend both the gross and subtle body; come to the spiritual body. It is very scientific. And, as soon as we come to the spiritual body, *mukta sanga*, being freed from the gross and subtle body, we come to our real body, spiritual body, then actually we feel happiness and independence. So this process of Krsna consciousness is the highest benediction for the human society because it is trying to bring the human being to the platform of spiritual body. Transcending the gross and subtle material body.

The next component is likewise widely acknowledged--people need worthwhile life-goals, long-term and short-term. In *How to Win Over Depression*, Tim LaHaye writes:

Human beings are clearly goal-driven creatures; without goals we cease to struggle. That is the way our minds were created. But whenever we let a project become our primary goal, we inevitably experience a letdown after its attainment. For that

reason we need to maintain long-range, as well as short-range, goals, frequently reassessing and modifying them. Extremely goal-conscious people are rarely depressed.

One self-pitying woman used to wail, "I have nothing to look forward to." Obviously she was spending too much time thinking about herself. A world so filled with moodily, problem-laden people documents the fact that too many individuals lack worthwhile goals.

In his discourses in New Vrindaban, Srila Prabhupada explained how *bhagavat-dharma* combines both components of self-esteem (realization of self as spirit soul, and occupational duties) for the satisfaction of Krsna.

The point is that if we want a successful life, peace of mind and satisfaction, we should concern ourselves with how to advance in devotional service to the Lord. This striving is actually the life of *dharma*. However, if one executes his duties but does not become Krsna conscious, then all his striving is in vain. "Duties (*dharma*) executed by men, regardless of occupation, are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Supreme Lord." [*Bhag.* 1. 2. 8]

In Laguna Beach on 26 July, 1975, Srila Prabhupada spoke thus about the mentality of the hippies.

In America the boys are rich man's son, and therefore so many boys are not working. They have got easy income, and they are not working. And because there is no proper work, they are becoming hippies. They are manufacturing independence. "Idle brain is a devil's workshop." This human psychology is the same everywhere.

Rousseau is often styled as an archetype of hippiedom. His father was a watchmaker who wooed and married a higher-class woman. The son imbibed from his father pretensions of aristocracy. As an adult, Rousseau often lived off of admiring *femmes du monde* who supported him in return for his sexual favors. Thus for much of his life he had "no proper work," and could devote himself to his favorite activity: dreaming. In spiritual matters, he professed a relationship with God in nature, and disdained the moral directives of both Christianity and civil law. Out of "the devil's workshop" of his idle imagination, Rousseau manufactured a philosophy of personal independence. His indolent self-absorption, his "arrogance of the self-taught," and his outrage at the unwillingness of others to fall in as much love with his ideas as he had, are flags of Rousseau's low self-esteem.

From Anselm Gruen's book we learn that some of the key indicators of low self-esteem are: an artificial grandiosity that is just a vain attempt to cover up inner feelings of inferiority; arrogance; and chronic dissatisfaction expressed as a drone of whining about the unfairness of life. The psychiatrist Terence Real, writing in *I Don't Want to Talk About It* (Fireside 1998), states that men often "medicate" themselves against depression by a raging illusion of inordinate power. "The grandiose entitlement to lash out at another human being rights their floundering sense of self-worth--and they strike." The imagination is obviously very much at work in these desperate compensations for low self-esteem. These compensations were very much evident in the life of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Loss of self-esteem means nothing other than the process of "conditioning" as explained in Essay Two. One is conditioned who forms a sense of identity that is less than pure spirit soul, and who devotes himself to life-values that are less than pure Krsna consciousness. He hopes this imaginary new self-image will yield greater fulfillment of self. But he is just cheating himself. He is letting himself down by lowering his sights from spirit to matter.

### **Imagination Addiction**

As I mentioned earlier in this essay, there are so many addictions that one may accept in trying to fill a heart made empty by lack of Krsna consciousness. The "Rousseau type" of addiction to a political remaking of the world is just one. The many addictions that covert depressives resort to are classified by some psychiatrists under two headings: *merging* and *elevating*.

In Chapter Three of *I Don't Want to Talk About It*, Terence Real defines these two kinds of addiction thusly. In merging,

the usual boundaries around the self are relaxed or even dissolved, causing feelings of boundlessness and abundance. In psychoanalysis this experience is called "oceanic bliss." The relaxation of self-boundaries lies at the core of intoxication with drugs like alcohol, morphine, and heroin. Various forms of bingeing--eating, spending, sex--can provide this same sense of expansion. Such ecstasy can also be achieved in love addiction, where the love object is felt to be godlike and thus fusion with that person brings rapture.

In elevation,

the man's sense of power becomes inflated, so that he feels supremely gifted, special, even godlike.

You'll recall that I mentioned earlier a bond of similarity between the covert depressive and the manic-depressive. Real explains that similarity thus.

The purest form of this type of intoxication is mania. The *elevating* intoxication in covert depression differs from mania primarily in that mania requires no external object to trigger the grandiose defense against shame. While the covertly depressed man must consume something or do something to shift the state of his self-esteem, a man with manic-depressive illness flips back and forth between grandiosity in the manic phase and shame in the depressed phase at the seeming whim of the disease. Manic-depression is otherwise simply a more extreme version of elevation in covert depression, in that both rely on the rush of inflated self-esteem to ward off depression.

As examples of elevating addiction, Real lists gambling, sex addiction, child molestation, wife battering and political torture. Restated, the difference between merging and elevating is that the first entails a fusion, a oneness with the object of addiction, and the second entails addiction to lording over, controlling, and exploiting.

It is quite remarkable that these two overarching categories of addiction show such congruence with the mentalities of *karmis* and *jnanis*. *Karmis* want elevation, *jnanis* want to merge. Don't forget, though, that *karma* and *jnana* are Vedic paths of piety, whereas the modern addictions to elevation and merging are sinful.

Accepting Professor Ryn's argument that modernity is manic-depressive, we ought to look at the problem of addiction, which plays a big role in depressive behavior.

From the "Stanton Peele Addiction Web Site" on the Internet:

. . . we need no longer think of addiction exclusively in terms of drugs. We are concerned with the larger question of why some people seek to close off their experience through a comforting, but artificial and self-consuming relationship with something external to themselves. In itself, the choice of object is irrelevant to this universal process of becoming dependent. Anything that people use to release their consciousness can be addictively misused.

Our analysis of addiction starts with the addict's low opinion of himself and his lack of genuine involvement in life, and examines how this malaise progresses into the deepening spiral which is at the center of the psychology of addiction. The person who becomes an addict has not learned to accomplish things he can regard as worthwhile, or even simply to enjoy life. Feeling incapable of engaging himself in an activity that he finds meaningful, he naturally turns away from any opportunities to do so. His lack of self-respect causes this pessimism. A result, too, of the addict's low self-esteem is his belief that he cannot stand alone, that he must have outside support to survive. Thus his life assumes the shape of a series of dependencies, whether approved (such as family, school, or work) or disapproved (such as drugs, prisons, or mental institutions).

There is a paradoxical cost extracted, however, as fee for this relief from consciousness. In turning away from his world to the addictive object, which he values increasingly for its safe, predictable effects, the addict ceases to cope with that world. As he becomes more involved with the drug or other addictive experience, he becomes progressively less able to deal with the anxieties and uncertainties that drove him to it in the first place. He realizes this, and his having resorted to escape and intoxication only exacerbates his self-doubt. When a person does something in response to his anxiety that he doesn't respect (like getting drunk or overeating), his disgust with himself causes his anxiety to increase. As a result, and now also faced by a bleaker objective situation, he is even more needful of the reassurance the addictive experience offers him. This is the cycle of addiction. Eventually, the addict depends totally on the addiction for his gratifications in life, and nothing else can interest him. He has given up hope of managing his existence; forgetfulness is the one aim he is capable of pursuing wholeheartedly.

This explanation of addiction is very helpful. But I think it does not put its finger on the core problem. It argues that addiction is excessive dependence upon something in the external world. From all we have seen from Srila Prabhupada's books in this series of essays, we must conclude that addiction begins within the mind. In short, before the mind connects to anything outside, addiction is a spiritually unhealthy dependence upon the imagination, or mental speculation.

"These living entities," Krsna says, "They are My part and parcels. But foolish rascals, they're creating concoction, mental speculation, to become happy. " *Manah sasthanindriyani*. And according to their mentality they are getting a different type of body, *indriyani*. . . . So *indriyani*. *Manah sasthanindriyani*. First of all with subtle mind we create a different type of *indriya*. If we live like dogs and hogs, then that mentality will give me similar senses, the body of a dog and hog. And we change our taste according to dog and hog. Similarly, we can change our taste according to the body of demigods. But the subject matter of tasting or enjoyment is the same. Eating, sleeping, sex and defense. [*Bhagavad-gita* lecture, 20 June 1976 in Toronto]

We manufacture plans by our mental concoction. That should be given up. *Yada prajahati kaman sarvan*. All kinds of mental concoction, mental speculation, should be given up. That is the science. That is the beginning of our spiritual life, that "I shall not use my mind for my activities. I shall wait for the direction from the higher authority, supreme consciousness. Then I shall act. " [*Bhagavad-gita* lecture, 27 April 1966 in New York]

In the early days in New York, Srila Prabhupada used to sometimes quote a line from Shakespeare:

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet, are of imagination all compact.

*New Vraja Dhama ISKCON Farm, Hungary*  
17 July 2003

Below, some photos of my return trip through Rumania and Hungary. Today Vidyagati and I leave the Hungarian ISKCON farm for Bratislava in Slovakia. Tomorrow we'll arrive in Lutotin, Czech Republic. There is a preaching center in that town; plus a week-long ISKCON Nama Hatta festival is being held in a tourist camp nearby. I'll give a daily seminar there.

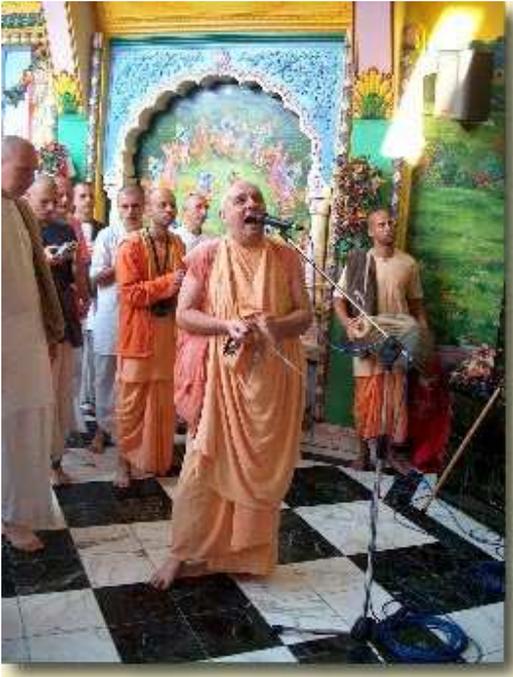
While I was in Timisoara the second time for just three days, my disciples Murari Krsna and Sri Caitanya Prabhus reinstalled Windows Millenium on my Fujitsu-Siemens laptop. The whole process, including a second installation of several Windows programs due to my computer crashing after the first installation (the crash was my fault), took more than two days. During this hectic time I finished an essay about the modes of modernity. Unfortunately it was hastily edited. Today I sent in some further editing corrections. By tomorrow you should be able to read the final version of that essay at In2-MeC.



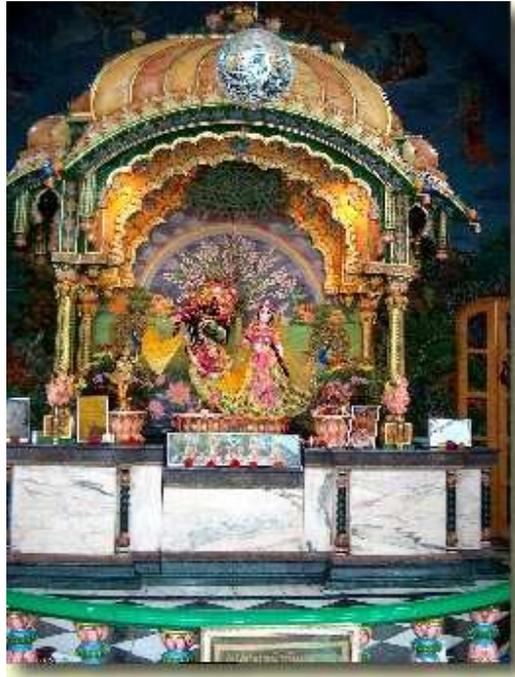
*On the ferry 'cross the Danube between Bulgaria and Romania. Paramajyoti Prabhu holds the umbrella. I am busy with Bhakta Fuji.*



*Public program in Timisoara.*

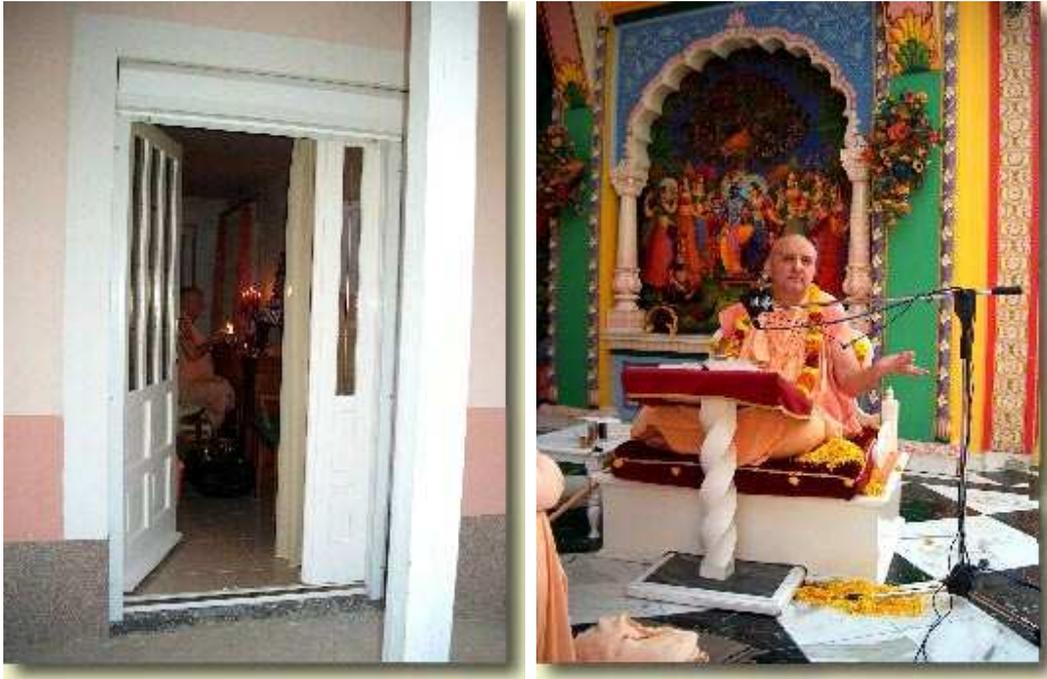


*Kirtan at New Vraja dhama, a tribute to...*



*...Their Divine Lordships Sri Sri Radhasyamasundara Deva, Sri Govardhana Lal and Sri Goura Nataraja.*





*Lutotin Preaching Center, Czech Republic  
18 July 2003*

Last night we stayed in the Bratislava preaching center. Vidyagati and I pretty much had the whole place to ourselves since most of the devotees were away. That night I dreamed of lions. Usually I remember very little of my dreams. But last night the weather changed from clear skies to heavy rain. Such sudden shifts of weather make me ill, and when I am ill, only then my dreams are more vivid. Anyway, there were lions in my dream...not that they did anything, they were just there. The "science" of omens has a dream of lions indicating future greatness and victory over enemies.

I have no enemies outside myself. I am a soldier standing guard over my heart: not against evil forces from without, but from within. If evil forces occupy my heart it is only because I allowed them to. I have a duty given me by the Lord to assist Him in watching over my heart, and if I do not do that duty well, it means my purpose as a soldier is not surrendered to Him. If I am not surrendered to Him, then I surely aid the cause of the enemy. Thus I become my own enemy. I become a secret agent for *maya* in the garden of my own heart.

*mali hana kare sei bija aropana >sravana-kirtana-jale karaye secana*

When a person receives the seed of devotional service, he should take care of it by becoming a gardener and sowing the seed in his heart. If he waters the seed gradually by the process of *sravana* and *kirtana* [hearing and chanting], the seed will begin to sprout. [*Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya* 19.152]

The Lord gives the fertile soil. He gives plants that bear fruits, flowers, grains and vegetables. He gives the sunshine and rain by which plant life is nourished. A nice

garden is impossible without these gifts of God. But the Lord ordains that a man must offer his own special contribution so that a garden can grow. That contribution is his work.

The same is true in spiritual life, which means the cultivation of the garden of the heart. Without Krsna's mercy there can be no spiritual life; but we cannot simply say, "So now that I've surrendered to Him, let Krsna do everything. I'll wear *tilak* and neckbeads and hang a beadbag around my neck to show I'm a devotee, but why should I work hard? That's not spiritual life, that's material life."

The agriculturist works early and late if he is serious about getting a rich harvest. He has to be on guard every step of the way, making sure the crops are well-tended and protected from weeds, disease, insects, animals and birds. The agriculturist labors hard and is ever alert to do whatever is necessary, but in the end, the harvest depends upon God.

And so it is in the garden of the heart.

If we are lazy, neglectful gardeners, what can we expect the earth to yield? When I was a small boy I used to often play in a very large untended field next to a motel owned by a family that was friends to my family. In the warm months of the spring and summer, nice berry bushes used to grow here and there in that field. But mostly it was a tangle of high grass, scrubby trees, tall weeds, thorn bushes, thistles, and stinging nettles that would give me awful itches when I brushed against them. That wild field is like the wild heart. Some good may be there by God's grace, like those berry bushes that I used to pick clean. In the main, though, a wild field is thick with useless, entangling growth. The good is more than offset by the bad. That's what we get if we let the garden of the heart grow "free."

Modern people have turned away from the agricultural life. They find the city much more exciting. Plus you don't have to break your back under the hot sun. City dwellers like day jobs with fixed hours in shops and offices. Easy indoor work, good pay, and when your working day is done, lots of fun. Who needs to grow food when you have supermarkets, restaurants and snack bars everywhere?

Modern people have the same attitude about spiritual life. "Why bother praying to God? We have everything we need right here in the city." Yes, but remember that even before you lived in New York, London, Paris or in whatever city you like to call home, at the time you were in your mother's womb, a city of nine gates grew up all around you. Yes, in this life your present body is the first city you lived in. And you will live in it the rest of your life no matter where you go in the world. You are prisoner to the body. And like the ancient cities of Troy, Luxor, Hampi (Vijayanagara), Carthage and so many others, one day that body will lie in ruins. Then where will you be?

Another thing is that the city is a jungle. The year I was born Hollywood released what is now considered a classic *film noir* called *The Asphalt Jungle*. It depicted the urban underworld as a murky Hades of criminal anti-heros, crooked cops and shady lawyers, good-time girls, and the desperate poor who without a second thought risk their wretched lives to make a fast dollar. But never mind that. Even the "overworld"--the world of so-called respectable, law-abiding citydwellers--is a jungle,

full of false friendships, cheating, malicious gossip, dirty deals in politics and business, secret sins and, amidst all the glitter, lonely despair.

There is another dream I had, years ago, that I still remember. I found myself in a strange city at night. It was a bleak place; the buildings were old, covered with grime and in need of repair. The city of my dream looked like certain parts of Calcutta; or Rangoon in Burma which I once visited in the 1980s; or Bucharest in Rumania. I was wandering through this strange city all alone. No one else was on the streets. Emotions surged up inside of me, especially fear and anger. Suddenly I heard sweet laughter from across the street. I turned to look. I saw some boys there, and then they were not there. I woke up realizing that those boys were Sri Krsna and His friends. In my dream I was lost in the City of the Dead, Maya-devi's own capital, in which the soul scuttles about like a rat to "enjoy" by chewing on old bones and imagining himself the owner and enjoyer of everything. But Krsna appeared there for a moment to mercifully laugh at my foolishness. The City of the Dead is not my home.

God Himself is a *vaisya* who lives in Sri Vrndavan, a transcendental pastoral village. It's true that sometimes He appears to go elsewhere--to Mathura, Dvaraka, Kuruksetra--thus seeming to abandon His home, family and friends. In truth He simply hides Himself in the cores of the hearts of His fellow Vrndavanites. There, in His *bhava-rupa* He churns the nectarean ocean of their love for Him, and His love for Them. In truth He never sets foot outside of Vrndavan.

*ore, vrndavaner nanda dulal  
rakhal raja re  
kadhaliyar sure sure  
vamsi baja re*

O dear one who belongs to Vrndavan! O darling son of Nanda Maharaj! O prince of the cowherd boys, kindly play again on Your flute so we may hear the melodies dear to all Your friends.

*ore, gopal tor bihone  
phute na phul vrndavane  
abhisarer ei madhuvan  
emni saja re*

O Gopal, since You've left Vrndavan, the flowers have lost their desire to bloom. Still we decorate the moonlit groves of Madhuvan, hoping You will return for Your amorous rendezvous.

*sridam sudam bhai balaram  
dakche ai kanai  
chorai dhenu bajai venu  
ai re o bhai ai*

Sridam, Sudam and Your brother Balaram are calling, "O Kanai! Please come back!" While tending the calves and playing on their flutes they entreat, "O brother! Please come home!"

*ma yasoda dakche tore  
nani chura ai na, ore  
boyche radhar prema jamuna  
hrdoy maha re*

Mother Yasoda is crying out, "O Gopal! You are my life and soul! Please come home, O butter thief!" Within the heart of Sri Radha, divine love for You flows like the Yamuna River.

The Vrajavasis anxiously await the return of Krsna to the lovely fields, groves and gardens of sacred Vrndavan. Similarly, the gardener of the heart looks forward only to the day when he harvests eternal association of the Lord. In this mood he works, and continues to work, even if it takes millions of births to realize the fruit of his toil.

*mama mana mandire raha nisi-din  
krsna murari sri krsna murari*

Please abide in the temple of my heart both day and night, O Krsna Murari, O Sri Krsna Murari!

*Lutotin Preaching Center, Czech Republic  
20 July 2003*

### **Charming Confidential Talks Between Balarama and Lord Krsna from Visnu Purana**

Baladeva to Sri Krsna:

*kim idam devadevesa bhavo 'yam manusas tvaya  
vyajyate 'tyantam atmanam kim anantam na vetsi yat*

What is this, O supreme God of gods? You are going too far in manifesting human-ness. Do You not know that You are eternal? [VP 5. 7. 35]

Krsna to Sri Balarama:

*kim ayam manusyo bhavo vyaktam evalambyate  
sarvatman sarvaguhyanam guhyaguhyatmana tvaya*

Why have you taken up this apparent human condition? You are the Universal Self. Your true identity is the most secret of all secrets. [VP 5. 9. 23]

*Lutotin Preaching Center, Czech Republic  
21 July 2003*

**Posted on Yahoo! News, July 19**

**Science - Reuters**

**120 or 180 Yrs Old? Experts Debate Limit of Aging**

**Sat Jul 19, 4:44 PM ET**

By Adam Tanner

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - Fancy living another 100 years or more? Some experts said on Saturday that scientific advances will one day enable humans to last decades beyond what is now seen as the natural limit of the human life span.

"I think we are knocking at the door of immortality," said Michael Zey, a Montclair State University business professor and author of two books on the future. "I think by 2075 we will see it and that's a conservative estimate. "

Zey spoke on the sidelines of the annual conference of the World Future Society, a group that ponders how the future will look across many different aspects of society.

In a presentation at the meeting in San Francisco, Donald Louria, a professor at New Jersey Medical School in Newark said advances in manipulating cells and genes as well as nanotechnology make it likely humans will live in the future beyond what has been possible in the past.

"What was science fiction a decade ago is no longer science fiction," he said.

### **500 YEARS?**

"There is a dramatic and intensive push so that people can live from 120 to 180 years," he said. "Some have suggested that there is no limit and that people could live to 200 or 300 or 500 years. "

Outside the conference, many scientists who specialize in aging are skeptical of such claims and say the human body is just not designed to last past about 120 years. Even with healthier lifestyles and less disease, they say failure of the brain and other organs will eventually condemn all humans.

"These people spout off as though a large part of the population is going to be able to do something like this. It's just way beyond reality," said Thomas Perls, who leads the New England Centenarian Study, the largest such analysis of the oldest of the old. "It's just pure science fiction. " "We are fast approaching what our bodies are capable of achieving," he said in a telephone interview. "To get even the average person to be 100 or to get them to 180 is like trying to get a space shuttle to Pluto. "

### **STAMPING OUT DISABILITIES**

Any dramatic extension of the human life span would depend on altering the onset of disabilities that accompany the aging process by changing one's genetic make up, said Harvey Cohen, director of the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development at Duke University Medical Center.

"It's certainly unlikely any time in the near future," he said in an interview. "Sure there is a possibility but there is no data currently available to suggest ways that would happen. "

Scientists also differ on what kind of life the super aged might live.

"It remains to be seen if you pass the threshold of say 120, you know; could you be healthy enough to have good quality of life?" said Leonard Poon, director of the University of Georgia Gerontology Center. "Currently people who could get to that point are not in good health at all. "

Poon, who leads a study of more than 150 centenarians in Georgia, cited the case of Jeanne Louise Calment of France, the oldest person on record who died at age 122 in 1997.

"At 122 she was fairly debilitated. I visited her when she was 119 in France and at that time she was pretty much blind and having very much difficulty hearing," he said.

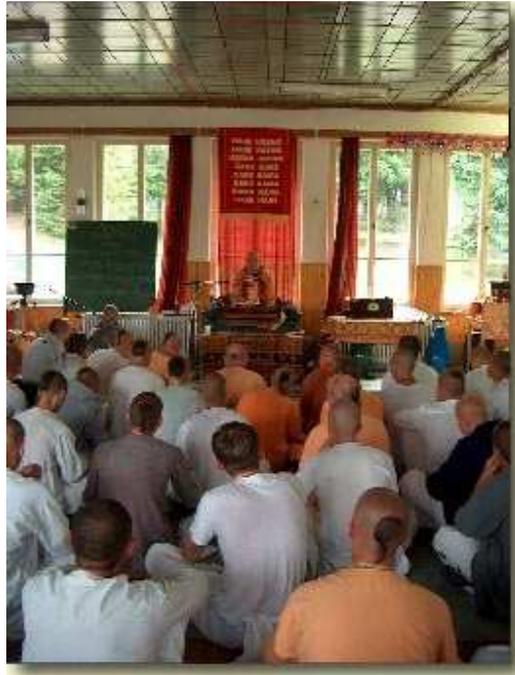
*ISKCON Czech Republic "Summer Camp Festival" at Protivanov  
23 July 2003*



*The garden of the Lutotin preaching center*



*Sunday feast program at Lutotin*



*Srila Prabhupada Vyasa-puja kirtana at the Protivanov summer camp festival*      *Srimad-Bhagavatam class, Protivanov*

*Prague, Czech Republic  
30 July, 2003*

I've not written to my journal for a week. Here's why. As you'll recall from the previous entry, I went from the Lutotin preaching center to a nearby tourist camp to participate in the summer festival of the Czech *yatra*. Several hundred devotees gathered there. HH Danavira Maharaja was also present.

Exactly one week ago, on the evening of July 23, the camp grounds were visited by a severe electrical storm. Not only torrents of rain came down but also big hailstones fell that shattered the glass of some devotees' automobile windows. And there was lightning. I can't say if it was due to a bolt from the sky or something a bit less spectacular, but during the storm an electrical surge caused a bright flash and a loud pop at the outlet where I'd plugged in my Fujitsu-Siemens computer. In a split-second the motherboard was toast. Bhakta Fuji was killed dead as a doornail. The next day the computer was inspected by a service technician. He ruled that the repair would cost the price of a new computer. Not worth it.

I almost did buy a new computer. But my disciple Omkaranatha das Brahmachari informed me that two weeks before he'd purchased a brand-new Compaq notebook. He'd gotten the laksmi from his parents, and as he bought it he had a thought in the back of his mind of presenting the computer to me. But before you say, "Krsna's mercy!", it turned out that this brand-new computer had problems of its own. I could not get it to work with my external hard drives, on which all of my data and programs are backed up. So I gave the Compaq to Vidyagati Prabhu in exchange for his trusty Dell Latitude.

But to set up the Dell to function as my Fujitsu-Siemens had functioned was a grand adventure. Vidya's Czech-language Windows 2000 operating system had to be replaced with my English-language Windows Millenium. Twice we had to go back to the beginning and start the installation process over. It was not until today that am able to say that the work is done; and in truth it is not completely done, though what remains are just some minor details.

In the meantime, Vidyagati's new Compaq turned out to be less than a blessing for him. Today, after days of trying to get it to run the programs he had used on the Dell, the Compaq went into service. Can you believe it? A brand-new computer! When Omkaranath gave it to us it was still packed in its carton.

When I tried to get it to work with my external hard drives, I got a taste of Windows XP, which replaces the 9x Windows series (Windows 95, 98, 2000, Millenium). I was not impressed. I'm sticking to Millenium. Not that Millenium is a great program. But at least it does the simple things I require an operating system to do, like recognize a removable hard disk and assign it drive letter E:\.

Now let me tell you about the "witch" I visited this past Sunday. Actually she is an elderly homeopathic healer name Ekatarina. She is not a "witch" in the sense of practicing black magic or even the mild Wiccan religion. But her appearance and her lifestyle is such that 300 years ago she would have been in danger of being accused of witchcraft.

Ekatarina lives in the hills west of Prague, in an old, broken-down farm compound that is protected by a big wall. Her house is fronted by a glassed-in sun porch that is a jungle of potted plants that are spread all about the floor and hung from the rafters. She is a friendly, soft-spoken woman who is self-taught in homeopathy. She has a reputation of being very good at prescribing natural cures. Devotees have been visiting her since 1996.

I sat with her for an hour, answering her questions about my health, my experiences in life, my childhood. After the interview she told me she would send me the medicine--good for 6 months--the next day in the care of another devotee. And so the next day my disciple Vasuman das brought it: one small white pill. I took it. I do notice an effect. Whether it will really last 6 months, that I shall have to see.

Anyway, it was a very interesting experience. The ride to Ekatarina's place was along country roads that wound through a hilly landscape that seemed strangely familiar to me. It was as if I had seen this region before in a dream.

*Prague, Czech Republic  
31 July, 2003*

Vidyagati and I are leaving here today for Poland to join Indradyumna Maharaja's road show. After that we'll visit some temples (New Santipur Farm, ISKCON Wroclaw, ISKCON Warsaw). The next In2-MeC entry may be delayed for a few days; it depends upon availability of an Internet link. Hare Krsna!

"Polish Woodstock" Festival, Zary, Poland  
1 August 2003

This is being written on the afternoon of 31 July. I just arrived at the "Polish Woodstock" camp in a village called Zary, somewhere close to Wroclaw in south Poland. Vidyagati and I are housed in a room within a school building rented by the devotees. I've not had a chance yet to see the festival set-up. I've dated this entry 1 August in the hope that tomorrow I'll be able to send it off. I don't know if making a connection to the Internet is possible at this place.

We drove here from Prague, leaving at about 9:00 AM, arriving at 2:30 PM. As I write I find myself tired. In a few minutes I shall begin a quick *mudra-mantra puja* for my *silas* .

*Puja* done. It is now 10 minutes past 4:00 PM in the afternoon. Shortly Vidyagati will serve *prasadam* .

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As we drove here I reflected on some Internet writings I had a glance at a couple of days ago, while I was setting up this Dell computer. There are websites dedicated to the ventilation of ill feelings by a section of what I suppose may be called "the greater ISKCON/Gaudiya Vaisnava community." While testing the Dial-up Networking function of the Dell, I bumped into a couple of these sites. One was a lengthy diatribe--I don't know what else to call it--against a decision reached by the GBC a couple of years ago. Another was a highly creative presentation of the theory that Srila Prabhupada was poisoned by a coterie of his senior disciples.

Reading such things, I try to put myself into the "head space" of the authors. What sort of mentality would I have to take on that I could write something like this? The word I reach for first is "crazy." But that is unkind. So I remember Rousseau. The people who knew him said he was crazy. But there was a method to his madness--the modern method of manic-depressive political thought. Similarly the conspiracy theorists build up lofty skyscrapers of radical idealism while digging deep pits of hopeless, paranoid disappointment and frustration. All the while they think they are being realistic and objective. This is why I want to reach for the word "crazy".

The way these authors of theories of conspiracy write about Srila Prabhupada, you'd think he was a spiritual Ernesto "Che" Guevara. If you don't follow the comparison, then let me spend a few sentences explaining that Che Guevara was a charismatic revolutionary who helped Fidel Castro come to power in Cuba in 1959. But he had little patience with the sort of "ordinary politics" that go into making a post-revolutionary government. Guevara was an agitator, and a very popular one at that; thus Castro was happy to see him leave Cuba to start a revolution in Bolivia. There he was betrayed to the authorities and summarily executed. Some suggest that his fellow revolutionaries (perhaps even Castro) betrayed him. So anyway, the conspiracy theorists in "the greater ISKCON/Gaudiya Vaisnava community" style Srila Prabhupada similarly: as a revolutionary so radical that those of his disciples who wanted to run ISKCON's government were afraid of him. So they conspired to

do away with him by poisoning him and/or by replacing the legacy of his transcendental leadership with a mundane system of their own invention.

Like Rousseau when he argued his version of the rise of enslaving civilization, the conspiracy theorists don't much care whether history supports their picture of things. Their fire is fueled less by factual evidence and more by the dogged conviction that *no one who holds a position of authority in ISKCON can ever be trusted*. It follows from this conviction that the official history of ISKCON is really a deliberate cover-up of years and years of underhanded malevolence. If you can accept that much--that there is a mound of dirt hidden under the bed of ISKCON's management--then the conspiracy theorists want you to know that you have to just take one more small step to arrive at their most negative and pessimistic outlook. If ISKCON's leaders are rascals anyway, then why give them *any* benefit of the doubt? Believe the worst--it's liberating!

And if you believe the worst, then you must believe that ISKCON's present-day preaching successes are just cheating. After all, the leaders are rascals. So what they do--their leading of the preaching-- must also be rascaldom. But what preaching successes are the conspiracy theorists having? Oh, pardon me. I have to get into their heads and see things the way they do. They think they are having success when they cause harm to ISKCON. Good news to them is when they come to know of new problems facing ISKCON. How very positive.

That's the mindset I pick up when I read their writings.

And then, in my mind's ear, I hear their arguments that I just don't understand. Stock phrases billow from their mouths like the ash-clouds of their burned-out faith: "Things have to change..."; "We've had enough of it..."; "It's time to do something..."; "You don't know what we've been through..."; "You're just an escapist..."; "You'd better get over to our side before it's too late..."

Is anything really being said by these people other than, "Our minds are very disturbed"? If the mind is disturbed, one should behave like an adult, stop blaming others, and seek purification by following the real Srila Prabhupada, not one manufactured in the imagination.

Fanatics. Fanatics with their backs in a corner. Thirty-two years ago I joined ISKCON to get away from just this sort of people. Their expressions have a robotic look, as if their finer sentiments are blotted out by their obsessions. Their facial skin-tone is either too pale or too dark. In either case it lacks the glow of a devotee blessed with purity and inspiration. Their eyes glint weirdly, as if in each one there lives a demon, one of self-love and the other of self-loathing. The hearts of folks such as these cannot be reached by reasonable personal interaction. They are too full of their own jabber.

I watched a Godbrother of mine, Harikesa dasa, slowly turn into one of these automatons of dogmatic irrationality. In a way he is in a class of his own. Like the conspiracy theorists, he portrays Srila Prabhupada as an extremist. But he does that in an unflattering way. He presents himself as a victim of his spiritual master's extremism. Now he declares, "I have no room in my heart for Srila Prabhupada."

The conspiracy theorists, on the other hand, revel in Srila Prabhupada's supposed extremism. That is their justification for throwing all rationality and civility to the winds: "Gotta be *heavy* like Prabhupada! Gotta *attack* them GBC demons!"

Ironically, Harikesa used to be called "Heavykesh" because he was a leader of the extremists. But he grew sick of it. Instead of admitting that he had misunderstood Srila Prabhupada, he rejected his spiritual master, denouncing him as a Hitlerian dictator. Now he's a New Age Mr. Mellow who has been known to preach that women are more spiritually advanced than men and Chinese philosophy is superior to Vedic philosophy.

I am not saying he holds to these doctrines right now. When I knew him in the 1980's, his mind would latch on to some speculation like "the Third World War will start on June 22, 1982," or "before I die I will ride in a flying saucer" or "overdosing on Vitamin E is the answer to all health problems." Such notions would become his Absolute Truth for a period of 2 to 6 weeks. Then he'd throw away an old speculation to snatch up a new one. Once I asked him why he periodically embraced some wild idea as gospel truth. The question seemed to shock him, as if he hadn't noticed the pattern. Putting his head in his hands, he stared off into space. "Someday I'll explain it to you," he murmured wistfully. (I mention this because recently I got news that he declared he "loves" Srila Prabhupada. That just means his head was in a certain place at the time those words sprang from his mouth. At other times his head will be elsewhere; thus he will say opposite things.)

Swing, pendulum, swing, between self-love and self-loathing. (Oh yeah, he was into pendulums too...I remember when he used one to match up marriages of his disciples...)

By surrendering totally to his mind Harikesa gradually lost the magnificent abilities Lord Krsna endowed him with. The people who've seen him lately tell me he is a walking self-mockery. Still a fanatic, but now a fanatic for non-fanaticism. The conspiracy theorists are cut from the same cloth. They rage on and on, exhorting you to hear and believe their nightmarish tales splashed in lurid tones of neon red and green. Fanatics. A fanatic is one who knows all things except his own ignorance.

Now, I certainly do know that there is real dirt under ISKCON's bed that hasn't been brought into the light of every devotee's knowledge. But just because a conspiracy theorist's argument starts with a valid fact--that there is dirt under ISKCON's bed--does not mean that the logic that he constructs after that fact is valid. Spring water comes up from out of the earth in a pure state, but when it flows down to the ocean it becomes undrinkable. Similarly, when a fact comes to light it gleams with the purity of simple truth; but when it is seized by a loudmouth blinded by his own anger--or by a crafty schemer who wishes only to advance his own agenda--the purity of that fact is lost, being mixed with flaming invective and deceptive propaganda.

I certainly do know that there are serious devotees--particularly those who serve in the field of ISKCON communications--who believe that it is necessary that all hidden facts of the dark side of ISKCON's history be brought to the light. They feel that airing all the old stories proves that we are honest. Personally, I think to define honesty in this way is risking foolishness. It's like the fable of the honest but foolish man who let a person fleeing from a gang of robbers and murderers hide in his

house. But when the gang came to his door asking if the victim was inside, he said yes so has not to tell a lie. He spared himself the sin of telling a lie but became party to a murder.

I think most people don't know how to handle such dirt when it comes to the light. It's hard for them to understand that *dirt is to be expected in ISKCON*. It is a society dedicated to cleansing the world's people of Kali's ills. When you scrub a dirty place, you yourself get dirty too, at least for a while. Plus, the dirt we have to clean just keeps coming...it's a filthy world we have set out to clean. But people naturally want to see the end result--cleaniness--in an organization dedicated to cleaning. That's a reasonable expectation! Thus it is unreasonable to advertise the dirt. People lose hope. And when they lose hope, then the interest in cleaning stops. *Then* the dirt gets thicker and thicker with no possibility of removal.

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Between 6 and 7 this evening I preached at ISKCON's Reincarnation Booth at this Woodstock Festival. The festival is a 3-day open-air rock concert that will attract a 100 thousand people. From the looks of them, most are drunk.

ISKCON has a big area all to itself. Many tents are set up for *prasadam* service, book sales, preaching, face-painting, paraphernalia sales. The devotees have a large stage all to their own. There is even a big Rathayatra cart that is constantly being pulled around the concert grounds.

Tomorrow I have more preaching to do at the Reincarnation Tent and several other venues.

I am told an Internet connection will be possible tomorrow. Hopefully, then, this entry will be posted. Hare Krsna!

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It is 4:00 AM on August 1st. I am chanting *japa*. Vidyagati went to see the festival at 8:30 PM yesterday but still has not returned. He was with Rocana das, a disciple of mine from Wroclaw. I suppose they took rest in whatever room Rocana is staying. After I finish my rounds I shall take a shower and do *puja* . The devotees have no morning program, because the Woodstock preaching goes into the early hours of the morning. Forget that. I am sticking to the schedule I've been given by the festival organizers: some preaching during the daylight hours in various tents. Late-night missionary work among drunken, incoherent youth does not appeal to me.

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I finished my rounds and took a shower at 5:30. The school was totally silent, not a soul was to be seen. I guess all the devotees stayed up late. Later, as the *tilak* dries on my body, I sit before the computer and add to this journal entry. Vidyagati walks in at 6:30. He slept elsewhere. Now he's gone to take a shower. I am going to start my morning *puja* .

8:30 and *puja* is done. I've seen a few devotees around. At 11:00 AM I have to be at a festival tent to begin my day's schedule of preaching.

*"Polish Woodstock" Festival, Zary, Poland  
2 August 2003*

Heaps of His Holinesses here: Indradyumna Maharaja of course, but also Jayapataka Maharaja, Bhakti Brnga Govinda Maharaja, Sacinandana Maharaja, Kavicandra Maharaja, Rtadhvaja Maharaja, Bhakti Vijnana Maharaja, Kadamba Kanana Maharaja; plus Dina Bandhu Prabhu from Vrndavana, Dharmatma Prabhu from Alachua USA, Mother Urmila from New Goloka (North Carolina) USA, and other famous names too numerous for me to remember right now.

The devotees are working so hard late into the night to put on an excellent KC festival. Boy, are the Polish kids insane! All right, a few seem serious...I've gotten a couple nice questions from here and there. But most of these thousands upon thousands of young folks are staggeringly drunk and stutteringly incoherent. This crazy generation of Poles, the first of its kind to be seen in this country, is the fruit of modern education.

Poland is a Catholic country. The kids go to science class and learn that life appeared hundreds of millions of years ago as a protoplasmic blob in a primordial chemical soup. That blob gradually evolved into many species of sea life. One day a primitive lungfish crawled ashore and decided it liked the land. Its decedents mutated into all varieties of animal species. *Homo sapiens* was the capper.

Then the kids go to religion class. They learn that in the beginning God said let there be light and there was light. Within seven days He breathed life into a lump of clay to create Adam, the first man. While Adam slept God took a rib from his side and made the first woman, Eve. In the same religion class they learn that the Pope has given his blessing to Darwin's theory of evolution. The Holy See sees no contradiction between God creating mankind from a lump of clay a week after the beginning of time, and apes taking hundreds of thousands of years to mutate into human beings.



Yajna for the *saligram-silas* at the school in Zary, Poland.



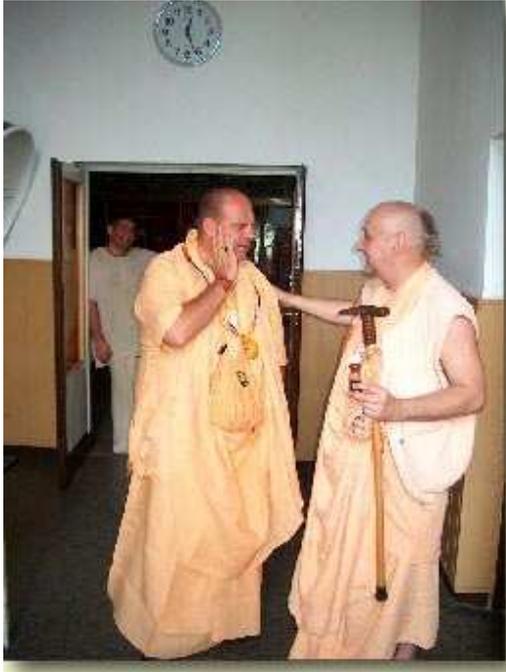
Outside the Zary school with HH Kavicandra Maharaja.

The kids come out of school as twenty-first century schizoid men and woman: one half of their brains hosting atheistic evolutionary theory, the other half host to a seven-day creation of the world by God. No wonder they go beserk and try to forget everything in a haze of alcohol and marijuana.

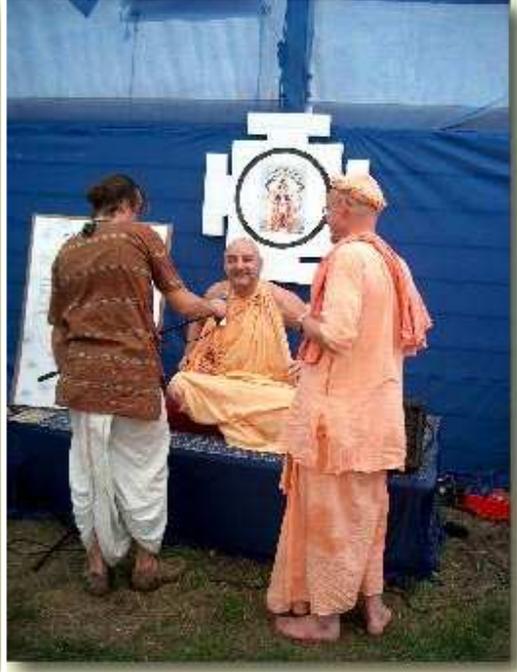
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Saints are the sinners who keep trying. And that's why I argue, as I did yesterday, that a society like ISKCON is sure to retain some of the dirt that it is dedicated to clean up. I wonder why this is so hard to understand. Actually this question fascinates me. The mentality of persons who feel that ISKCON must be squeaky-clean in all respects--and if it is not, someone must be punished--I find quite remarkable, in a pathological sense.

To me, people who think like that are not merely naive. They are ill. What else can you say about persons who live with their eyes shut to simple facts of life?



With HH Jayapataka Maharaja.



With HH Kadamba-kanana Maharaja.

For example: name the place in any city where the world's most dangerous diseases are sure to be found. Is this a hard question? Don't you know what a hospital is?

What kind of person would insist that for a hospital to be "bona fide," it should be absolutely free of any trace of disease? That's a person who doesn't know a damn thing about the treatment of illness.

What kind of person would insist that for him or her to have faith in ISKCON, it should be absolutely free of any trace of sin and human failings? That's a person who doesn't know a damn thing about preaching, about rectification of the fallen souls, nor about Srila Prabhupada.

Watching the *Srila Prabhupada Memories* video series, we find again and again that Srila Prabhupada was very magnanimous in his treatment of his disciples' failings. He was not lax. Failings had to be corrected. But correction administered by Srila Prabhupada was never draconian.

The word draconian comes from a historical figure named Draco, who lived in Athens in the 7th century BC. He devised a legal system that was highly unpopular. Oh, it was very unbiased. But it was also very severe. Thus draconian means exceedingly harsh.

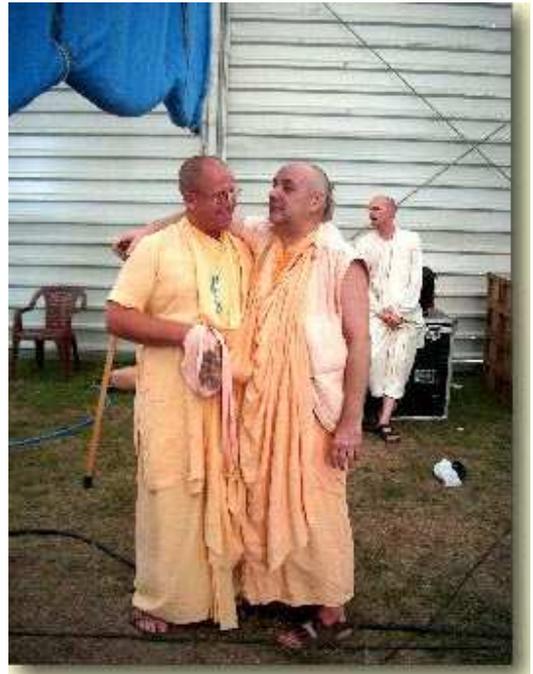
Those who reach for draconian legalisms are desperate fellows. They have "lost the touch" of how imperfect but basically sincere persons can be rectified of their errors. To my way of thinking, the more leadership turns to severe legal measures to control

devotees, the less that leadership has taken to heart the mood and method of Srila Prabhupada.

Now, one can argue that Srila Prabhupada is unique. We oughtn't imitate him. He could guide by rule of love, but now in his absence we must have justice. I remember when I was elected chairman of the GBC, a Godbrother came to me to plead, "We must have justice!" I didn't trust his motives; and sure enough, a few years later he joined sides with a party of *rtviks* who sued the GBC in the Calcutta courts.



Kirtana in the "meditation tent"



With HH BB Govinda Maharaja.

While I am suspicious of persons who loudly sing "All you need is justice" (to the tune of the Beatle's *All You Need is Love*), I am certainly not an advocate of injustice. But look here: that person who is *only* just, has a mechanical and impersonal heart. A computer could be programmed to administer justice according to unbiased mathematical principles. Is this goodness? What kind of mentality demands that human beings should live under such a system? In its impersonality, it is just cruelty. And in fact it is stupidity.

I agree that Srila Prabhupada was unique. I agree that we can't do everything the way he did. But I believe it is a *non sequitur* that ISKCON must be tightly wrapped in legal codes. (*Non sequitur* is a term of logic meaning "it does not follow".) One thing Srila Prabhupada did that he himself said we shouldn't do is that he accepted a large number of disciples, many of whom were not qualified. This was his great mercy. This was his preaching vision. But he also warned it was a risk. If we continue to imitate Srila Prabhupada in this way, then we risk having a large class of "devotees" difficult to train. How to control such people? Stifle their freedom of movement under heavy lawbooks, that's how.

But does this make for a transcendental society? I don't think so. Heavy laws are needed to control people who can't control themselves. The foundational qualification of a Vaisnava is that he or she is *dhira* , self-controlled.

There is a very important instruction from Srila Prabhupada that, after all these years, ISKCON is still faltering to implement successfully. This instruction is found in a letter to Karandhara Prabhu dated 72-12-22.

There is some symptom of missing the point. The point is to be engaged in doing something for Krishna, never mind what is that job, but being so engaged in doing something very much satisfying to the devotee that he remains always enthusiastic. He will automatically follow the regulative principles because they are part of his occupational duty--by applying them practically as his occupational duty, he realises the happy result of regulative principles...our leaders shall be careful not to kill the spirit of enthusiastic service, which is individual and spontaneous and voluntary. They should try always to generate some atmosphere of fresh challenge to the devotees, so that they will agree enthusiastically to rise and meet it. That is the art of management: to draw out spontaneous loving spirit of sacrificing some energy for Krishna. But where are so many expert managers?

By this definition, the expert managers are not those who envision ISKCON as a sterile, squeaky-clean society of nicely programmed automatons. When I was young my mother used to buy me painting sets. The canvases came with numbered sections printed on them. The tubes of oil paint were numbered according to color. The method was called "painting by numbers"--in the sections numbered "2", I would brush on paint from tube number 2. In this way a landscape, or a bowl of fruit. or whatever the design of the painting was, would manifest. "Painting by numbers" is not art. Similarly, "serving Krsna by numbers" is not the spontaneous, voluntary devotional service that Srila Prabhupada instructed in the letter quoted above.

But because it is very predictable, it seems the safest way to go for a certain type of mind. This is the mind that values form over essence. That's a good definition of materialism: "the value of form over essence."

Essence is spiritual. We all are of that essence. Good spiritual management brings forth that essence. Maya will endeavor to smother that budding essence of the soul's true identity, but we should know that as long as the spiritual identity continues to grow, all setbacks are only temporary. The best solution for falldown is to increase spiritual engagement. The mundane legalist looks to suppression as the answer to human failings. The transcendentalist looks to liberation as the answer. But don't forget: in *Gita* 7.3 Lord Krsna states that not everyone is ready to take up the path of liberation.

*New Santipur Farm, Poland  
3 August 2003*

*Acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva*: Simultaneously, inconceivably oneness and difference.

*Yukta-vairagya*: Renunciation of material things by engaging them in Krsna's service.

These two principles are the zenith of spiritual intelligence, and they make ISKCON possible. Therefore ISKCON is meant for the most intelligent class of man.

The philosophy of *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva* (simultaneously one and different) cannot be understood by one who is fully under the influence of the external energy. (C. c. *Madhya* 25. 119p)

Becoming detached from material things does not mean becoming inert altogether, as men with a poor fund of knowledge think. . . Similarly, detachment from material forms does not mean nullifying the positive form. The *bhakti* cult is meant for realization of the positive form. When the positive form is realized, the negative forms are automatically eliminated. Therefore, with the development of the *bhakti* cult, with the application of positive service to the positive form, one naturally becomes detached from inferior things, and he becomes attached to superior things. (*Bhag.* 1. 2. 7p)

In considerations of oneness/difference and attachment/renunciation, Sri Krsna is the balance. Often devotees ask, "How do we find the balance between. . . ?" The answer is that Krsna is that balance. One who is sheltered at His lotus feet attains the healthy balance between extremes.

Yesterday I wrote about extremism. There are persons who occupy themselves with what can be called "the hive mentality. " It's extreme collectivism. Communism, well-known as an extremist political doctrine, is born from just that sort of mind-set. The hive mentality anticipates a "perfect" society in which all parts work together with mechanical precision. Accordingly, the societies of bees and ants are "perfect. " The hive mentality is so obsessed with mechanical social perfection that it actually believes people can be "made" perfect by force of law and fear of punishment.

On the other side are the extremist individualists. It doesn't take much thought to understand the hopelessness of their position. No man is an island. In this body we will always be, to one degree or another, dependent upon others.

Srila Prabhupada commented on both these extremes--collective, mechanical non-independence versus complete individual independence--in a morning walk conversation on 3 June 1976 in Los Angeles.

Ramesvara: His argument is that "I should never be allowed to misuse my independence. "

Hari-sauri: There's no question of independence then.

Ramesvara: Yes.

Prabhupada: That is not independence. Independence means you can use properly or improperly.

Ramesvara: He cannot understand that.

Prabhupada: He wants to become a machine.

Ramesvara: Yes, he'd rather be a machine and be in Krsna's service.

Prabhupada: No, no, machine we are, but still there is independence. That means you are not absolutely independently, relatively. The state, you say we are American--independent. But that does not mean you can do whatever you like. As soon as you misuse, you are arrested, punished. Even the president is not independent. As soon as he misused his power, drag him, "Come out. " What to speak of you.

No matter which form it takes--absolute individualism or absolute collectivism--extremism is a poor show of intelligence. "We want social justice! We want social reform! We want a society so perfect that a bee or an ant could have full faith in it! Rah! Rah! Rah!" Not very smart. "Freedom! Freedom! We reject any control over our lives! Pharaoh, let our people go! Rah! Rah! Rah!" Not very smart.

It's amusing that some are annoyed by me calling such extreme positions into question. The logic of their annoyance is: "Don't you know that when you apply sacred *tilak* to the cause of. . . (check one:)

- individualism
- collectivism
- social issues
- women's rights
- political correctness

(or as Arthur Koestler said, "what you will")

. . . that it is transformed into a *Vaisnava concern* ?"

Well, I must say that "Vaisnava concerns" like these do not display much Vaisnava intelligence. Remember, a correct understanding of *acintya-bheda-abheda tattva* and *yukta-vairagya* is indicative of a devotee's intelligence. A devotee's intelligence is geared to compute "Krsna" as the answer to all questions.

Krsna is the balance between extremes. Krsna is the success of our endeavors. Krsna is achieved by love, not by the politics of mind-numbing committee meetings, monotonous Internet discussions, dry, interminable position papers, or bombastic proclamation-declarations.

At the Polish Woodstock hundreds of devotees from around the world came together to preach cooperatively in the Village of Peace (ISKCON's compound on the festival grounds). In the year-long development of this Polish Woodstock preaching effort, committees met, ideas were exchanged over the Internet, papers and declarations were published. But it wasn't the politics that made the preaching successful. It was the devotees' love for Sri Krsna, Srila Prabhupada, each another, and the fallen conditioned souls, that made it successful.

That's what we should go "rah rah rah" about. Or rather, "Rama Rama Rama!"

*New Santipur Farm, Poland*  
*5 August 2003*

There are things about me that I suppose will never change. For example, here's a passage from Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* that could be a radio signal to the world around me from the innermost core of my mind.

I prefer to be alone, so that no one troubles me. For they all come back to the same thing, how badly it goes and how well it goes; one thinks it is this way, another that; and yet they are always absorbed in the things that go to make up their existence. Formerly I lived in just the same way myself, but now I feel no contact here.

They talk too much for me. They have worries, aims, desires, that I cannot comprehend. I often sit with one of them and try to explain to him that this is really the only thing: to sit quietly, like this. They understand, of course, they agree, they may even feel it so too, but only with words, only with words, yes, that is it--they feel it, but always only with half of themselves. the rest of their being is taken up with other things, they are so divided in themselves that none feels it with his whole essence; I cannot even say myself exactly what I mean.

In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4.24.21 Srila Prabhupada writes:

In the *Caitanya-caritamrta* (*Madhya* 19.149) it is stated: *krsna-bhakta--niskama, ataeva santa*. A devotee of Lord Krsna is always peaceful because he has no desire, whereas the *yogis*, *karmis* and *jnanis* have so many desires to fulfill. One may argue that the devotees have desires, for they wish to go home, back to Godhead, but such a desire does not agitate the mind. Although he wishes to go back to Godhead, a devotee is satisfied in any condition of life. Consequently, the word *mahan-manah* is used in this verse to indicate that the reservoir of water was as calm and quiet as the mind of a great devotee.

What Srila Prabhupada describes here seems to me to be so rarely seen, even among the association of ISKCON devotees. Many ISKCONians admit themselves to be restless. All right, restless for "good reasons." I have been intimately acquainted for nearly two decades with the movement's management circle. The minds of many of our managers are restless out of concern for ISKCON's protection and progress. That's *yukta-vairagya*, as I discussed yesterday. But as we see from the above purport, a great devotee's mind is supposed to be calm and quiet. We may not be great devotees, but shouldn't our minds gravitate to the peaceful contemplation of the sublime truth of Krsna consciousness? We may not be fixed in that state but at least it should be our aspiration; at least we should have some taste for it. Unfortunately, as I have seen through the years, many in managerial positions believe such calmness of mind is a luxury that they cannot afford. "Too many problems."

Problems that dull the mind's comprehension of the finer points of Krsna conscious philosophy, thus turning one's preaching into repetition of stock phrases. Problems that crowd into the mind even during *japa* and the other indispensable features of one's personal *sadhana*. Problems that sap one of his energy for spiritual life, leaving him only with that energy's shadow, the *rajo-guna*. The shadow-energy keeps one engaged with the problems, but at the expense of engagement in pure devotional

service. And from out of the mode of passion arises the justification of, "No matter--grappling with problems, that *is* my devotional service!"

Uh-huh. That is your devotional service. How many times I've heard that. And how many times I've seen where that philosophy ends: right out the door, back into the material world.

And thus too often I find myself experiencing in ISKCON what Remarque describes in the passage I cited above. Sometimes it's very depressing. Lately I see more clearly I need not be depressed. However, I don't think the sense that "Formerly I lived in just the same way myself, but now I feel no contact here" will go away at any time soon. I have my introverted *kapha* nature, which I don't expect will change as long as I have this body. And ISKCON has its nature. That's not going to change very soon either.

Therefore one should try to cultivate an inner satisfaction that does not depend upon external circumstances. That is exactly the point about the mind of a great devotee. It is always calm within itself, no matter what is going on around it. It's too bad that this state of mind seems to be incomprehensible to many in the Society. But so what? I'm not a collectivist. I'm one with ISKCON, but I'm different from it too. That is our philosophy, isn't it?

Plus, I should admit that my view of things is not altogether objective. The impressions a person gets of the world around him are not in a small way fashioned by his own way of seeing that world. This is "In2-MeC", a personal diary, not "E=MC<sup>2</sup>", a scientific notebook. Hopefully the things I write here have at least *some* value for *some* readers; but please don't fall into the error of thinking I'm presuming a God's-eye omniscience for all people everywhere. If something in these writings is useful for you personally, then give it mind. If not, let it pass.

\* \* \* \* \*

I'm beginning to think, after having taken her little white pill one week ago, that Ekatarina the Czech medicine woman has heap strong power. Her treatment very definitely has a long-term effect. But for now, just take note of this remark. It is still way to early for me to elaborate. More time has to go by. I need to meditate more on the changes taking place within me.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some email has come in regarding my writings over the last several days about fanatics of the "greater ISKCON/Gaudiya Vaisnava community" who make public, via the Interent, their mental disorders. The mail is all positive (relief!).

Wacky diatribes are the down side of religion on the Web. Extremist Christians depict the Catholic Church much like extremists in the "greater ISKCON/Gaudiya Vaisnava community" depict ISKCON and the GBC. See

[www.jesus-is-lord.com/anti1.htm](http://www.jesus-is-lord.com/anti1.htm)

and

[www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/2594/](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/2594/)

\* \* \* \* \*

Here in Poland, devotees get excited every few years about predictions of a coming world war, or the destruction of the world in some other way. The latest stir was about a "Planet X" that was going to collide with the Earth in the year 2002. Maybe in other parts of the ISKCON world devotees get similarly excited. Here's an ice-cold shower for your red-hot end-of-the-world prophecies:

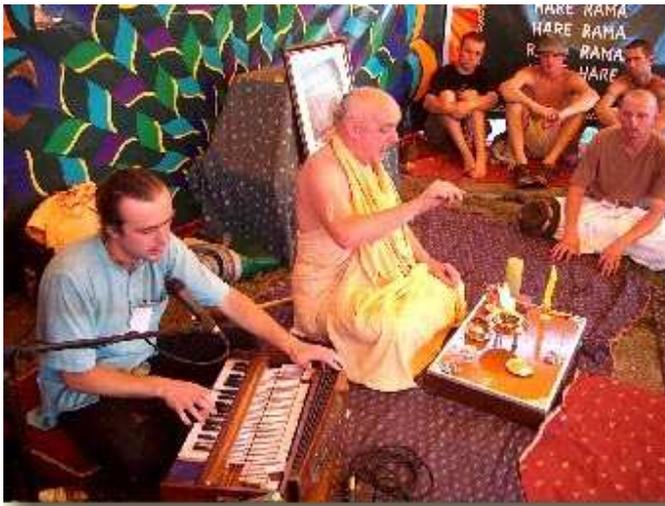
[www.abhota.info](http://www.abhota.info)

\* \* \* \* \*

I'm throwing in this hyperlink simply because I know that there are devotees who will *really go for this stuff* (wow!):

[www.universe-people.com](http://www.universe-people.com)

\* \* \* \* \*



Here's a few photos from the "Polish Woodstock" festival. On my last day in the meditation tent I did a *nama-yajna* while my disciple Rocana dasa sang an excellent Vrndavana-style *kirtana* while accompanying himself on harmonium. My Godbrother HG Dina Bandhu Prabhu sat in to listen and watch. When we started, the sky was bright and sunny. When the *yajna* was over, as you can see in the photo with the Rath cart in the distance, the sky was cloudy and yes, a little rain did come down...but fortunately not

enough to spoil the festival!





*Sri Sri Panca-tattva Bhagavan, the Five Lords of New Santipura*

*The temple farmhouse at New Santipura*

Like old Santipura at the time of Sri Advaita Acarya, New Santipura is a place where Vaisnavas of low birth are given shelter by the Supreme Lord Himself.

While Haridasa Thakura was staying under the care of Advaita Acarya, he was afraid of the behavior of society in Santipura, Navadvipa, which was full of exceedingly aristocratic *brahmanas*, *ksatriyas* and *vaisyas*. Haridasa Thakura was born in a Mohammedan family and was later recognized as a great Vaisnava, but nevertheless the *brahmanas* were very critical of him. Thus Haridasa Thakura was afraid that Advaita Acarya would be put into some difficulty because of His familiarity with Haridasa Thakura. Sri Advaita Acarya treated Haridasa Thakura as a most elevated Vaisnava, but others, like Ramacandra Khan, were envious of Haridasa Thakura. Of course, we have to follow in the footsteps of Advaita Acarya, not caring for people like Ramacandra Khan. At present, many Vaisnavas are coming to our Krsna consciousness movement from among the Europeans and Americans, and although a man like Ramacandra Khan is always envious of such Vaisnavas, one should follow in the footsteps of Sri Advaita Acarya by treating all of them as Vaisnavas. Although they are not as exalted as Haridasa Thakura, such Americans and Europeans, having accepted the principles of Vaisnava philosophy and behavior, should never be excluded from Vaisnava society. (C.c. *Antya* 3.220p)

\* \* \* \* \*

At the end of the entry for August 5 I provided you with a hyperlink to a mysterious Internet button that apparently has no function whatsoever; yet in spite of its uselessness, it has become quite the object of fascination for many Web surfers.

Now here again is an Internet button. Unlike yesterday's, this one does have a function. Try pressing it. I hope the result doesn't alarm you. Go to: [www.turnofftheinternet.com](http://www.turnofftheinternet.com)

New Santipura Farm, Poland  
7 August 2003



Sriman Vidyagati Prabhu has been travelling with me now for a couple of years, during those periods I am in Europe. He is truly a great soul. Not only is he expert in all the things he does for me--all the personal services (*prasadam* preparation, laundry, packing, etc.), making travel arrangements, taking and processing photographs and video recordings, overseeing my tape ministry, assisting me in my daily *puja*, translating my lectures into Czech--he is an ocean of tolerance. Who else but the most tolerant of saintly persons could stand by such a

*His Grace Sriman Vidyagati dasa Brahmachari* eccentric as myself, keeping a cheerful mood and a ready service attitude? All glories to Vidyagati Prabhu!

Dear reader, you too can appear here in In2-MeC! Why not? Just send us a .jpg photofile of yourself along with a few words about who you are and what you are doing. It would be nice if you say something about In1-MeC also! Upload the photo and text to the In2-MeC e-mail address.

If you don't have a digital camera that takes .jpg photofiles, then you may try one thing I've heard about. (I have to admit I've not tried it myself...been too busy!) I understand that some Swedish Internet geniuses have devised a way to take digital photos using just your own computer monitor. That's right, a camera is not required! At least that's what I've been told. Go to this address and check it out yourself:

[www.hb4u.com/photo/](http://www.hb4u.com/photo/)

\* \* \* \* \*

The weather here in New Santipura has been stunning. The colors of the day are absolutely gorgeous. The sunshine is golden, the sky is deep blue and unspotted by any cloud, the grass and trees are sparkingly green. A crystal-clear brook flows through the bottom of the valley, some meters down the hillside upon which the New Santipura temple is situated. The air is clean and sweet with the scent of the forest and fields all around. How wonderful is Lord Krsna's artistry!

*nadyo 'sya nadyo 'tha tanu-ruhani  
mahi-ruha visva-tanor nrpendra*

*ananta-viryah svasitam matarisva  
gatih vayah karma guna-pravahah*

O King, the rivers are the veins of the gigantic body, the trees are the hairs of His body, and the omnipotent air is His breath. The passing ages are His movements, and His activities are the reactions of the three modes of material nature.

This world at times can appear so beautiful, yet at every instant it is pervaded with countless souls who suffer immensely from their own ignorance. Little sparks blown here and there by the insistent demands that Nature puts upon them. Little sparks that think these demands imposed by nature are their own rightful necessities. Nature orders them, "Suffer hunger!" They think, "Yes, I must eat! It is my *right* to eat, even if I must eat *you!*"

As Nature drives them onward with the whip of desire, she changes her appearance from beautiful to horrible. Still the little sparks strive to satisfy their desires under any condition. We must strive to satisfy Krsna under any condition! That is liberation. To satisfy Krsna, we need only glorify His holy name. So easy and yet so hard. So hard because we keep insisting that all that we do--even devotional service to the Lord--should be done *our* way. But "our" way means *maya's* way. *Maya's* way means keeping our "self" at the center. (That "self-at-the-center" is illusion; Sri Krsna is really at the center, at all times, in all places, under all circumstances. The real self is His servant.)

\* \* \* \* \*

A singular illustration of the above paragraph keeps coming to my mind: those disciples of Srila Prabhupada, my Godbrothers, who insisted--and still insist--on being "*guru*" even when it became obvious that this is nothing more than self-centeredness. A few days ago I wrote about Harikesa Prabhu. He is just one example; but he is the one I knew best. To this very day he has disciples who keep an altar with Deities and his picture as spiritual master. But *only* his picture--no picture of Srila Prabhupada or the rest of the *guru-parampara*. Such disciples were his downfall. Or rather, that he *imagined* he had many such disciples who were ready to follow him anywhere, *that* was his downfall. As it turned out, when he revealed his mind to his disciples--that he rejected Srila Prabhupada and declared himself as having "love" of Krsna without Prabhupada, in fact Srila Prabhupada had robbed Harikesa of his "love", and by rejecting Srila Prabhupada Harikesa was reclaiming that "love"--most of them rejected him. But a few remained, and that was enough to preserve the illusion.

Once somebody asked Srila Prabhupada if he was the *guru* of Allen Ginsberg. His Divine Grace humbly replied, "I am nobody's *guru*." Another time he was asked if he is an authority on self-realization.

"Yes," he answered. Then: "Of course, I do not know whether I am an authority, but my spiritual master has authorized me to do this. I..I.." here Srila Prabhupada hesitated momentarily, seeming almost embarrassed. "I don't think of myself as an authority. I am just trying to serve the order of my spiritual master, that's all. But being an authority is not very difficult. Simply, if you try to understand *Bhagavad-gita* as Arjuna understood it, you will become self-realized. It is not a very difficult

job. Unfortunately, people apply their own scholastic ideas in different ways, and so murder the whole process."

When I was small I saw a Walt Disney cartoon feature called *Fantasia*. I don't remember much about it except that it was full of magical special effects. Mickey Mouse was the apprentice of a great sorcerer, and he was eager to acquire his master's powers as quickly as he could. But although he could cast magical spells, he could not control them. Thus he became the victim of the powers that he sought to control.

Srila Prabhupada used to often speak of "Krsna's magic." A bona fide spiritual master uses Krsna's magic in His service. It is a pernicious temptation to use that magic in one's own service. The idea that "I am *guru*," "I am authority", is highly addictive. It is not only indulged in by the would-be *guru*, but his followers back him up in his delusion.

In fact I was told that another big ISKCON *guru* of former times (one who is now a *guru* under his own flag outside of ISKCON) lamented that he had fallen into bad habits because "I'm all backed up." Meaning that he had disciples behind him no matter what he did, even if he broke the state law. What a trap!

\* \* \* \* \*

This is *maya's* business, to set traps for the wayward little soul. There is no law above her that says, "Thou shalt set only traps that take the shape of gross materialistic sense gratification. Thou shalt set no traps that appear to be spiritual." Speaking to Uddhava in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11.28.29, Lord Krsna explains that such "spiritual" traps are actually for the ultimate good:

*kuyogino ye vihitantarayair  
manusya-bhutais tridasopasrstaih  
te praktanabhyasa-balena bhuyo  
yunjanti yogam na tu karma-tantram*

Sometimes the progress of imperfect transcendentalists is checked by attachment to family members, disciples or others, who are sent by envious demigods for that purpose. But on the strength of their accumulated advancement, such imperfect transcendentalists will resume their practice of *yoga* in the next life. They will never again be trapped in the network of fruitive work.

\* \* \* \* \*

For the past month I've been thinking deeply about these issues. In some previous entry here at In2-MeC I stated that I am "thinking" about accepting disciples again after Gaura Purnima 2004. Well, thinking is just thinking. Doing is another thing.

Here's what it comes down to: when I think about giving out first initiations again, my heart sinks.

I've already initiated nearly 200 disciples. Many of these initiations were just mechanical functions of the ISKCON institution: a *bhakta* or *bhaktin* has been in the

temple for the prescribed period, the temple president has recommended the candidate to me, I give beads and a name. And then later on, so that there can be another *brahmana* to put on the temple schedule for cooking and Deity worship, I give second initiation.

In such an institutional set-up, it is very, very difficult (at least for me) to restrict initiation to some blessed "chosen few." If you initiate one, then others think, "why not me too?" The Society is geared to "making" devotees. ISKCON spiritual masters are there to initiate these devotees on behalf of the Society. *Gurus* are actually discouraged from thinking that the devotees they initiate are "their" disciples. In this way, I find I have given initiation to many disciples whom I don't actually feel that close to. Of course, there are disciples to whom I really do feel close. But in this institution it is not easy to keep it that way. At least that is the way I see it.

As a transcendentalist, I am imperfect. From the time I was elected chairman of the GBC in 1996 until 2002, I suffered terribly from overt depression. It is the nature of the *kapha* body I have to sink into depression; moreover, on the maternal side of my family are many relations who suffer depression. This is an illness that is inherited, and I have definitely inherited it. And because for years I did not deal with this depression, it made me pay a spiritual penalty. Finally, in years 2001 and -2, I took Ayurvedic treatment, which was helpful. I resigned from the GBC in 2003 and that *definitely* helped. Plus, over the past year I've been on a radically *sattvic* diet of raw fruits, vegetables, nuts and pure milk products. Recently I've come under the care of a Czech homeopathic doctor. Her treatment, though it seems very unusual, is really very promising. At present I really feel I have entered a bright new period of my life.

The *sannyasa asrama* is the right *asrama* for me. To be happy in it, I simply need to preach. But to preach effectively, I need to be happy. To be happy, I need to be free. I am realizing that my "responsibilities" as a "leader" in the ISKCON institution are like a weight around my neck. In my heart I know that I have to put this weight down. I've consulted with several Godbrothers about this, and they see this the same way I do. One prominent GBC Godbrother admitted that he is resigning from the GBC for the same reason I did: to simply survive in Krsna consciousness. Another *sannyasi* Godbrother, who himself is a *guru*, confided to me that in his opinion real *sannyasi* life is to travel, preach and enliven devotees without any option of accepting disciples. A few days ago I wrote to another Godbrother staying that I feel the need to halt all pretense of being a leader within ISKCON and just preach as a "private disciple" of my spiritual master. He was very enlivened. He wrote back to tell me he personally felt the same way about himself, and strongly encouraged me to go this path.

This last Godbrother had some interesting remarks to make on the state of ISKCON today. Yes, it really does seem in key ways to be a different Society from the one we disciples of Srila Prabhupada fondly remember. Speaking for myself, the jury has not yet returned a verdict on what aspects of ISKCON today are "better" or "worse" than the ISKCON of yesterday. Because of my personal penchant for philosophizing, I am sceptical of claims that progress is being made. We are still in the material world, after all. To think that conditions in the material world are getting better is to court complacent self-delusion, in my opinion.

In fact this may have contributed to my depression: in recent years I've observed devotees on and around the GBC import fashionable ideas from the *karmi* world into

the managerial brain of ISKCON, and I've noted how, by a process of self-mesmerization, these devotees convince themselves that "now we are making progress." Well, first of all I don't know that I really believe in the concept of progress. Change, yes. Things in the material world certainly do change. But at the same time, advancement in one area of activity always seems to bring with it degradation in some other area. Thus "progress" is really a trade-off: cars get you where you want to go faster than horses, but at the cost of air pollution, destruction of nature, and much higher loss of life in traffic accidents. That's a general philosophical observation. If I were to get specific and talk about what I've seen during the years I sat on the GBC Body, I would have to say that the GBC's time is mostly taken up with correcting the mistakes of the past, not with instituting pristine, brand-new "proactive" policies for the future. And as I have observed, in trying to correct the mistakes of the past the GBC has made mistakes that right now need correcting. Thus pep talks about progress tend to leave me feeling deflated.

Anyway, the bottom line is that I do not want to be in a position where I have to grapple with all these issues. I want to be free, because I want to be happy, because I want to preach effectively in the service of my spiritual master. So...as I was saying a few paragraphs before, when I think that in the year 2004 I may begin giving first initiations again, my heart sinks. By doing that I am binding myself to an institutional role that clouded with uncertainties. There are Societal uncertainties. There are my own uncertainties of health and consequent spiritual strength. In the midst of that, there is just one certainty: that if I start initiating again, I won't be free. And so it follows: if I won't be free, I won't be happy. If I'm not happy, I won't preach nicely. If I can't preach nicely, then what is the use?

What I know that I want to do is to study deeply over a period of years; and to preach on the fruit of my study. Bas.

So what I am looking at now is to not resume giving first initiations at any predictable time. In the year 2004 I do want to finish giving second initiations to the first-initiated disciples who are qualified, with the blessings of the GBC Godbrothers who are overseeing the areas where these candidates for second initiation are serving.

I've already written personal letters to several aspirants for first initiation, advising them to seek *diksa* elsewhere. It's hard to do, especially when they reply, as a couple have, that they will simply wait until I do take up initiating again (10 years? 15 years? Maybe never!). It's not a realistic hope, and I tell them that, but I also am not going to hammer a faith that is so hard to find in this *Kali*-yuga. All I can say is, you may dedicate your faith to me, but that does not oblige me to give you initiation.

I am perfectly willing to be your *siksa guru*, if you so desire. In the present scheme of things, that loads little or no institutional responsibility upon my back.

Those who find themselves directly affected by what I've written here may write me a personal e-mail, or may wait to speak with me face-to-face if I am coming to your locale soon.

*ISKCON Wroclaw, Poland*  
*9 August 2003*

Now we are in the ISKCON temple on the outskirts of Wroclaw, Poland. On Monday I drive from here in the general direction of Warsaw, but with some stops on the way. I think we are visiting Indradyumna Maharaja once again. On 18 August I fly from Warsaw to Helsinki.

I received a couple letters about the previous In2-MeC (7 August). One expressed some concern about the reasons I've given for deciding not to initiate more disciples for an indefinite period. The focus of the concern was my allusion to a need I have to be free from having to deal with problems within ISKCON. I've stated that to initiate means to initiate on behalf of the Society, but I find having to represent the Society as an initiating *guru* to be troublesome because there are unresolved institutional issues that I do not care to be part of. So the question is, what are younger devotees to think about their own roles in the ISKCON institution when they read such a statement from me?

Over and above everything else, the fact remains that in 1971 I gave my life to ISKCON. And I continue to give my life to it. But to give a life to the institution of my spiritual master, I have to have a life to give. In other words, I have to survive. Srila Prabhupada states in a purport to the *Bhagavatam* narrative about the fight between the elephant Gajendra and the crocodile, that a devotee should resort to a position in which he finds the most strength in his fight against *maya*.

It has become clear to me over the last two-three years that my strong position is as a *sannyasi* who is free of managerial responsibilities, and free of entanglement in institutional issues. I am already a spiritual master and for those disciples who remain loyal I shall continue to be. Even for newcomers to ISKCON I can act as an instructing spiritual master (*siksa-guru*). But GBC duties I can no longer accept. And to initiate new disciples is a role in ISKCON that has a lot of affinity with GBC duties, in that it is a high-profile position that exposes one to the same winds that buffet GBC members.

This decision is not whimsical. As I indicated in the entry of August 7, I am in communication with several Godbrothers about these points. I've been mentioning Harikesa in some recent entries; he was not interested in the opinion of his Godbrothers when he made his decision to leave ISKCON altogether. He simply followed his own mind. The Godbrothers that I consult agree that the bottom line is that one must survive in Krsna consciousness. As one Godbrother told me, "Your first duty is to Srila Prabhupada, not to your disciples." Of course I am not giving up my duty to my disciples as long as they do not give up their duty to me. But after giving initiation to nearly 200 disciples, I have enough. Taking on more will put my first duty to Srila Prabhupada in danger.

My Godbrothers recognize I have a problem with depression. Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja, for example, has much to say about that. Depression is a serious world health problem. In my case, it has affected my spiritual life. Now it is under control. But I still get depressed even by very little reverses in my life. To counteract this depressive *kapha* nature I have to assume the stance that gives me the most strength. And that is: 1) I must be happy, which means 2) I must be free of stressful conditions. Then I can go on as a *sannyasi*, and travel and preach.

Regarding the question of what younger devotees are to think about my keeping myself out of certain ISKCON entanglements, I think the answer is pretty obvious. I've been a member of ISKCON for 32 years. In that time I distributed books on the street, I was a head temple cook, I was a temple commander, I was a *pujari* for installed Radha-Krsna Deities, I was assistant to HH Visnujana Maharaja, I was on the BBT Library Party, I was temple president in Schoss Rettershof ISKCON temple in Germany, I was regional secretary for ISKCON Germany, I was on the GBC for more than 10 years, I am a *sannyasi* and an ISKCON *guru*. I have had my fiftieth birthday over two years ago. At this time of my life, according to the Vedic system, I should be winding down societal and institutional responsibilities and just focusing on the essential items of spiritual life. I strongly feel I must enrich my taste for hearing, chanting, studying and preaching. Managerial matters are a drag on my consciousness. Accepting new disciples is, in terms of the ISKCON institution, very much a managerial role. It also involves preaching of course, but that I can do anyway without accepting disciples! Really, what is "extra" about accepting disciples over and above preaching is management! Now I have to put management behind me. At my age, according to *sastra*, that is indeed *my duty*. If a younger devotee in a managerial position thinks, "Oh, Suhotra Swami is giving up management, let me do the same," is that valid? To him I would say, first you do the things in this institution that I have done for as long as I have done them, then you can give up those institutional responsibilities.

*ISKCON Wroclaw, Poland*  
*10 August 2003*

**Anger begins with folly, and ends with repentance.**

These are the words of Pythagoras (B. C. 582-507), who is the first ancient Greek known to have used the word *philosophos* (philosopher). He taught a mathematical-numerological doctrine that bears some resemblance to the Sankhya philosophy of India. Pythagoras believed in the eternal soul and in reincarnation and recommended a vegetarian diet to his followers.

Anger begins with folly. Folly, or foolishness, is the mode of ignorance.

*manur uvaca*  
*alam vatsatiroseña*  
*tamo-dvarena papmana*

Manu says (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 11. 7) that excessive anger (*atiroseña*) is the sinful doorway to ignorance (*tamo-dvarena papmana*). Anger is also said to be produced of passion as it degrades into ignorance (*kama esa krodha esa rajo-guna-samudbhavah*). In his purport to *Bhagavad-gita* 3. 37 Srila Prabhupada writes,

Wrath is the manifestation of the mode of ignorance; these modes exhibit themselves as wrath and other corollaries. If, therefore, the mode of passion, instead of being degraded into the mode of ignorance, is elevated to the mode of goodness by the prescribed method of living and acting, then one can be saved from the degradation of wrath by spiritual attachment.

Upon arriving here at Wroclaw temple this past Friday evening, I gave a *Bhagavad-gita* class. I touched on the subject of anger, explaining that it is *tamasic*. This was not the main focus of the class, just one among several points. My talk was short, from 19:30 to 20:00, because we'd just spent two hours in a cramped car getting here from New Santipur. At the close I told the assembled devotees I'd allow "a few minutes" for questions.

Several hands went up. After two or three questions that I answered briefly, an initiated devotee, who's been in the ISKCON Wroclaw community for many years, asked in a rambling manner why I'd said anger is symptomatic of the mode of ignorance. He made some point about anger in the mode of goodness.

I replied that yes, a person in transcendental goodness may exhibit a kind of anger that is pure, beyond the tinge of passion and ignorance. Hanuman is the example of that. But the class I'd just given was on *B. g. 5. 23*, containing the phrase *kama-krodhodbhavam vegam*, which is about the impulses of lust and wrath. This *krodha* is clearly the anger that arises from the lower modes, since Lord Krsna states here that the person who is happy among men, who is rightly situated in consciousness, is free of such *kama* and *krodha*.

However, more loudly than before, this Prabhu pressed on with some murky argument about Srila Prabhupada's anger. I pointed out that he was veering into nonsense, as I'd just explained that although there *is* a transcendental kind of anger, tonight's verse was not in that context. At this he got angry and started to interrupt me in a voice that was almost shouting.

As I'd already told those present that I intended to keep the questions and answer period short, I just said, "OK, I quit here. " Even as this Prabhu continued to argue, I got up and offered my obeisances to the Srila Prabhupada *murti* and exited the temple room. Later I was told that after I left he sat by himself in silence for a while, shaking with fury. The devotee who described this to me said, "He's living proof of your point that anger comes from the mode of ignorance. "

Pythagoras said that anger ends in repentance. Well, I don't know if this Prabhu is repentant because I've not seen him since that class. I do wish this confrontation had not happened. Perhaps my using the word "nonsense" brought forth his anger. Perhaps I should have framed my words more carefully.

But at the end of the day, the issue at hand here is context. Not only the context of the word *krodha* in *B. g. 5. 23*. There is the context of my being a disciple of Srila Prabhupada. I am trained to use words like "nonsense" when I hear an argument that displays all the intelligence of a telephone dial tone. There is the context of this Prabhu being a disciple of one of my Godbrothers. Why is he getting hot and bothered about a point that is clearly spelled out in Srila Prabhupada's books? Why is he pressing on me an absurd argument about "anger in the mode of goodness"? Why is he angry with me for replying as my spiritual master--the Founder-*acarya* of ISKCON--would reply?

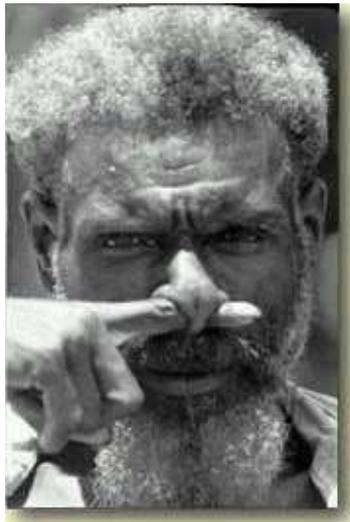
You can see more clearly, I hope, why I don't care to play the role of an "ISKCON leader" any more. Nowadays ISKCON leaders are supposed to be expert in "negotiation", "conflict resolution", and other diplomatic skills. Nowadays ISKCON leaders are supposed to practice "empathetic listening", silently permitting our

Prabhu to publicly unburden himself of his telephone dial tone of a brainwave. No matter how inane his argument may be, nowadays ISKCON leaders have to keep a respectful and attentive look on their faces. Nowadays ISKCON leaders are supposed to banish words and phrases like "nonsense", "rascal", and "poor fund of knowledge" from their vocabularies. Using them means to imitate Srila Prabhupada, not follow him.

I am sorry that this Prabhu got so upset. But I am sure I am not the *cause* of his anger. I may have said something to *bring forth* the anger that he has long been nurturing in his breast for reasons best known to him alone. Moreover, I doubt that it is a service to him, or to the assembled devotees, or to Srila Prabhupada and the Deities, to turn the *Gita* class over to him so that he can give vent to his pent-up private obsessions, like a geyser blowing hot steam into the sky. Maybe he should join a martial arts club and work out his aggressions against a training bag. After all, from the things I heard him say, his mental agitation is hardly worth complimenting as "philosophy." As Srila Prabhupada would say, it is "simply foolosophy." Ah! But there I go again. . .

See? That's why I can't be an ISKCON leader.

\* \* \* \* \*



Here is a new *mudra* photo sent to me by that *arch-brahmana* from the land called Downunder, His Grace Jayatirtha-caran Prabhu. He tells me this is the *ah-choo mudra*. Enjoy!

*ISKCON Wroclaw, Poland  
11 August 2003*



*Here's the warm-hearted devoted family that does the Internet TV broadcasts of my lectures: Bhakta Ananta-sesa, Bhaktin Claudia and their little daughter. They reside in Den Haag, the Netherlands. Three big haribols for their nice service:*

*Haribol!*

*HARIBOL!!!*

*H A R I B O L ! ! ! ! ! !*

*\* \* \* \* \**

*There is another nice family picture I would like to publish here--that of Vrndaranyapriya Prabhu and his wife Ananda-laksmi devi-dasi. They live in Antwerp, Belgium, a bit south of Ananta-sesa and family. Vrndaranyapriya goes online every day to see if I've published a new In2-MeC entry. I like to call him Vrndo. So dear Vrndo, now that you are reading this, please upload a .jpeg photofile of you and your good wife to my yahoo.com email address.*

*It is important, Prabhuji. There is a bad rumor going around the Internet about the country you live in. The rumor is that Belgium does not exist!*

*Go to*

*<http://zapatopi.net/belgium.html>*

*and see for yourself what they are saying!*

*People are getting worried that you and your wife are in some twilight zone of existence/nonexistence. You have to ease their minds. Please send a photo right away!*

*ISKCON Wroclaw, Poland*  
*12 August 2003*

This is dated 12th August, but actually I am writing this on the 11th afternoon.

I was supposed to leave Wroclaw at 10:00 AM on 11th August. But I was stuck down with some strange illness. It seems like heat stroke. There *is* a heat wave here in Central Europe, but heat stroke? I've only gotten that in India, and then only when I was a long time outside under the hot sun. These past days in Wroclaw I've been inside.

In any case, I was practically unconscious the whole day, from 7:00 AM until about 4:00 PM. Such rich dreams I had! I discussed Krsna's pastimes with HH Tamal Krsna Gosvami. He remarked that the Universal Form is "a riot of archetypes," and I started laughing. There was an inauguration of a grand temple complex in my dreams also...seemed like it was in Vrndavana. A huge place, still in construction, many devotees attending. I was asked to read over the microphone during the *prasadam* service.

I suppose I am better now, though I am not sure. I still feel weak and woozy. I won't be surprised if I go back to sleep shortly.

Otherwise, I am in a very good mood all the time, even when sick. It's amazing. I cannot help but trace this new spirit of inner peace and contented detachment to my visit to Ekatarina, the Czech medicine-woman. Let me state clearly: I know that this consciousness is due to Krsna alone. I don't think that Ekatarina "created" this consciousness within me. But I also know that this consciousness is always there, because Krsna is always there in the heart. I believe that Ekatarina's mystery-medicine has "moved" something out of the way that was covering this consciousness. Something that is both subtle and biophysical at the same time.

I suppose I will feel well enough to be able to travel tomorrow, the 12th of August. And if I do travel, it will be a long journey, seven hours by car. So therefore this entry, which was actually written on the afternoon of the 11th, will appear in In2-MeC on the 12th since I will very likely not be able to write anything on that day.

*Baltic Seacoast, Poland*  
*13 August 2003*

I am writing this on 12 August in Wroclaw, an hour before we are supposed to leave here. We will go to the northern coast of Poland, on the Baltic Sea, to join HH Indradyumna Maharaja's summer tour program. Today is Lord Balarama's appearance day. By the time you read this, it will be the next day (13 August), but as I understand that on that day Indradyumna Maharaja will celebrate Lord Balarama's appearance, so I shall say something about Lord Balarama here and now.

Lord Balarama killed a number of great demons in Vrndavana, just as Lord Krsna did. All these demons who invaded Vraja-dhama represent impediments on the path of pure devotional service. The ones that Baladeva killed specifically personify the impediments that a devotee has to eradicate by his own endeavors under the

direction of the spiritual master. Lord Balarama is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but He is also a Vaisnava because He is utterly devoted to His transcendental younger brother, Sri Krsna. As such He is the original *guru* of all devotees. He shows by His demon-killing pastimes just what obstacles the devotees have to overcome in order to achieve pure *bhakti*.

Dhenukasura was a gigantic ass; an ass carries heavy loads. Similarly, when the spirit soul is enwrapped in ignorance of its eternal identity, he is, according to *Bhagavad-gita* 3. 27, *ahamkara-vimudhatma* or ass-like in his bewilderment. Thus the soul is burdened with misconceptions about spiritual life. Such misconceptions pertain to the holy name of the Lord and to the object of the spirit soul's worship. For example, the *vimudhatma* living entity hopes that the holy name will "bless" him with social position, wealth and power, which are simply heavy loads. Similarly he thinks that any entity that seems to offer such "blessings" is worthy of his worship and service.

Pralambhasura represents lust, the contaminated desire for association with the opposite sex. Profit, adoration and distinction are subtle manifestation of this lust, and they appear in the mind as greed for money and possessions, ambition for attention and honor, and sensuality.

The name Balarama indicates the Lord's mood of enjoying the exhibition of spiritual strength. This mood appears in the mind of the devotee as enthusiasm to cast out all contaminations in the spirit of intense humility. When the mind of the devotee becomes host to this mood, the blights of Dhenukasura- and Pralambhasura-consciousness are instantly destroyed.

*HH Indradyumna Maharaja's Summer Tour, north coast of Poland  
14 August 2003*

This is dated 14th August, but I am beginning this entry on the 13th afternoon.

We are staying at a rented school building. I've been at this same school in previous years' visits to HH Indradyumna Maharaja's summer tour on the north coast of Poland. This morning, when we talked briefly, he told me that this is the only school in the whole area that continues to avail itself to the devotees' use. The other schools stopped renting to the devotees because of pressure from the Catholic Church. Now Maharaja has put in a bid for the purchase of a piece of land here, nearly 100 hectares square. The deal has not gone through yet but he is confident it will. He intends to use this land as the permanent base for the tour, and as a farm that will offer devotional engagement to the people who become interested in Krsna consciousness as a result of their contact with the tour.

Maharaja explained that he and Sri Prahlada Prabhu are committing themselves more to preaching in Poland than ever before. This is because another "Math"--i.e. a spiritual organization composed largely of devotees who've left ISKCON to follow a Gaudiya Math *sannyasi*--has declared Poland a target for its missionary work, which means it will mainly target ISKCON devotees, enticing them to leave ISKCON and join them. This Math has in recent years made Berlin its strongest center. This past

summer they held a Rathayatra in Berlin on the same day the ISKCON devotees held theirs.

I am happy Indradyumna Maharaja is meeting this challenge seriously. He is an incredibly pure and dynamic preacher. Lord Krsna will surely shower His mercy upon his efforts.

At the same time I am glad I am not on the GBC any more. Otherwise I would be in the thick of this situation, as I was in 1995 and '96 when the inside-ISKCON followers of this Gaudiya Math *sannyasi* first came to the GBC Body's attention. In 1996 I was the chairman of the GBC, and apart from the Srila Prabhupada Centennial celebrations, this was the leading issue of that year. For me, this was the starting point of the depression that in 1999 became unbearable.

A couple months ago a *bhakta* wrote to the In2-MeC email address, wanting me to explain why the GBC forbids ISKCON devotees to mix with the members of that Math. I did not answer. It's not the purpose of this Web site to be a cyberspace broadcasting station of official ISKCON policy. I've resigned from the GBC and no longer care to put energy into arguments about managerial issues. In2-MeC is not formally affiliated with ISKCON or the GBC and represents simply my own personal views.

One of the reasons why I will not involve myself with managerial issues is that experience has shown me again and again that a good number of ISKCON's own devotees are quite naive. I don't see much reasoning behind such a question--"Why does the GBC forbid ISKCON devotees to mix with the members of that Math"--other than naivete. The questioner seems to assume that each of the different offshoots of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's original Gaudiya Math has a totally open door policy toward the other offshoot Maths, and that only ISKCON keeps its doors shut. This is not true at all. Two different Gaudiya organizations will not have a close brotherly policy toward one another. One will not permit the other's preachers to unconditionally give classes in its temples or to recruit devotees from its congregation. It is considered a breach of Vaisnava etiquette for preachers of one Math to use another Math's facilities for its own mission purposes.

Srila Prabhupada noted how naive his Western disciples were about such things, so he personally laid down strict limitations on ISKCON's relationships with other Maths.

I can understand this cunning P\_\_\_\_\_ dasa has taken advantage of your simplicity. So any one of my godbrothers cannot help me in this way of book writing because they are unfortunate in the matter of preaching work. They are simply trying to infiltrate our society to do something harmful by this attempt. So please do not have any correspondence with this P\_\_\_\_\_ or any of my godbrothers, so-called. And do not do anything without consulting me. You can inform this instruction to everyone and send back to me the sheets of corrections sent to you by P\_\_\_\_\_. I was very much anxious to know how P\_\_\_\_\_ entered in our camp. Now the matter is clear. Be careful for further dealings with such men. [To Karuna Sindhu dasa, Nov. 9, 1975]  
Regarding the Gaudiya Matha books being circulated there, who is distributing? Who is sending these books? The Gaudiya Matha does not sell our books, why we should sell their books. Who has introduced these books? Let me know. These books should not at all be circulated in our Society. B\_\_\_\_\_ V\_\_\_\_\_ T\_\_\_\_\_ is very much antagonistic to our Society that he has no clear conception of devotional service. He is

contaminated. Anyway, who has introduced these books? You say that you would read only one book if that was all that I had written, so you teach others to do like that. [To Sukadeva dasa, Nov. 14, 1973]

That ISKCON's members are naive is well-known to other Maths. Therefore even now some continue to try to recruit followers from ISKCON.

"Wise men have more to learn of fools than fools of wise men."

A subtle statement. One thing that needs pointing out is that by quoting this, I am not indicating that among ISKCON devotees are some who deserve to be labeled fools. Compared to the rest of the population of the world, every devotee is the wisest of souls. But under certain circumstances, some ISKCON devotees have been known to behave a little foolishly. Particularly when they come into the association of those wiser than they.

You may ask, what more can a wise man learn from a fool than a fool can learn of a wise man? The main message of the aphorism "Wise men have more to learn of fools than fools of wise men" is that a wise man learns of the foibles of human nature by observing foolish people. But in the process, a wise man can also learn of his own darker nature. Since fools are by definition slow to take up knowledge, a wise man who is not so patient and benevolent towards the foolish can teach himself how to manipulate them, thus getting service from them without having to really teach them anything.

This has happened in ISKCON too. In my opinion, when a *guru* like Harikesa falls down and most of his disciples also leave ISKCON, then there couldn't have been much real teaching and learning going on in this relationship. The *guru*-disciple "package" must have been held together by something else than the exchange of true knowledge. Otherwise, why did the majority of disciples leave their positions of service to Krsna?

But a wise man need not learn only wrong things by associating with persons less intelligent than himself. Srila Prabhupada said even a dog has something valuable to teach a man. What is that? Faithfulness. This very Gaudiya Math *sannyasi* to whom a number of ISKCON devotees have gone once said that he learned *guru-nistha* (implicit faith in *guru*) from one of Srila Prabhupada's prominent disciples.

In any case, this "ISKCON-vs.-Gaudiya Math" controversy is not a subject I care to spend a lot of time on. To those who remain loyal to him, Srila Prabhupada gives everything. That much is clear. And it is clear to me that he wanted to spare his followers the confusion that accompanies controversy. Somehow or other, in matters concerning the relationship of ISKCON devotees to the Gaudiya Math, controversy inevitably raises its ugly head. Yes, for some the answer to the controversy is to leave ISKCON. Their reasoning may not entirely be without substance. It's true that ISKCONians have shown themselves to be less than wise at times; unfortunately I do not find that those who leave to join the Gaudiya Math (or who go off to form new institutions) become appreciably wiser.

What to do? Personally, I've turned my face away from the controversy. Speaking of wisdom versus foolishness, there are things a wise man should be a fool about--which means there are things that are not worth investing brain energy in. I'm too foolish

to understand, what to speak of try to heal, all the reasons why devotees grow dissatisfied with their life in ISKCON and thus seek shelter elsewhere. Not that I am wise, but it seems wiser to endeavor with renewed strength to serve my Guru Maharaja than to speculate "Maybe go here, maybe go there." What I know for sure is, Srila Prabhupada was the only disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura who risked everything to pull me out of hell. When common people are rescued from danger they are usually dazed and speechless afterwards. Similarly when I reflect upon Srila Prabhupada's mercy, I am overwhelmed and stunned. Too overwhelmed and stunned to give much thought to the idea of going to Gaudiya institutions other than ISKCON.

It is the plight of modern man to be uprooted from the traditional shelters of ancient *varnasrama* society. He is restless and uncertain, always anxious how to improve his situation. He is easily captivated by shining promises of deliverance from the ills of today's world; and he is just as easily disappointed when he realizes that deliverance comes at a price higher than he was prepared to pay. I am convinced that modernity is a disorder of the mind. The controversy between ISKCON and other Maths is, as I see it, a manifestation of this mental disorder. I had occasion some years ago in Italy to discuss the controversy threadbare with some persons who look to *sadhus* outside of ISKCON for answers. This experience left me convinced that there is a psychological dimension to the problem.

The personality of Kali exploits this mind disorder of modernity for his own mission of infecting the world with quarrel. I think Indradyumna Maharaja has the best answer. Never mind all the arguments, just stand and fight Kali by preaching harder!

\* \* \* \* \*

Now it is 3:15 AM on August 14. Yesterday at the questions and answers tent I did a *yajna* while Rocan did *bhajan*. A crowd of mostly respectful people formed to watch. There were some quite nice questions. Also a few silly ones.

\* \* \* \* \*

I began *puja* a little before 5:00 AM and finished a little after 6:30. So sweet, this daily worship. It's from this *seva* to the *silas* that I get a glimpse, just a small insight, into what "taking shelter" means. Especially when I am afflicted by thoughts of my own disqualifications, as I have been for the past couple of days. Here I am, writing of fools and wise men, but my own foolishness ought to win a prize. Still the Lord has availed Himself to me so that I may render Him some service.

One disqualification I have is lack of energy. "Those who are not enthusiastic, lazy, lethargic," Srila Prabhupada states, "cannot advance in spiritual life. Simply sleeping, they cannot make. One must be very, very enthusiastic, positive." I'm often so very tired. A few days ago I mentioned here in my journal that I thought I'd gotten heat stroke. I was woozy and had no physical energy. I laid down at 7:00 AM and slept until 4:00 in the afternoon.

I woke up today feeling similarly. It's not due to lack of rest; I went to bed last night before 9:00 PM and slept soundly. Now I feel slightly ill and so very tired. This could be an affect of depression. But I am not suffering from depression as I was several

years ago. When I visit Ekatarina again in October I will get some treatment for this energy-depleted condition.

I found enough energy to give the class this morning. Preaching helps me deal with this vegetative condition I'm suffering from. Krsna supplies energy to the preacher. Still, I need to pursue a general cure for this condition. It's like the needle on my body's gasoline indicator is at best just a millimeter above E (for empty).

\* \* \* \* \*

Photos! Yes, we do have photos today. The first three are from my recent stay in ISKCON Wroclaw. You see the temple from outside, the beautiful Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai Deities, and a class I gave there. The next three are from my current stay at the school Indradyumna Maharaja rented. You see me speaking about the 10 offenses at an initiation Maharaja gave the first morning of my arrival there. The last photo is taken in the questions-and-answers tent.







*HH Indradyumna Maharaja's Summer Tour, north coast of Poland  
15 August 2003*



*Here are Vrndaranya-priya dasa and his good wife  
Ananda-laksmi devi-dasi, standing before their home  
altar in Antwerp, Belgium. It's true--Belgium does  
exist!*

Today Vidyagati, Rocana and I leave the Baltic coast for the city of Lodz, where we will visit the devotees of a preaching center. Tomorrow we continue to Warsaw. On the 18th I fly from Warsaw to Helsinki.

*Lodz Preaching Center, Poland  
16 August 2003*

I envision chanting *japa* to be like the spider's work of spinning a web. It is consciousness-expansion, for that is what a spider accomplishes. Apparently a spider's eyesight is very poor. When it sits in the middle of its web, it "sees" by feeling the slightest disturbance of the fine network of strands. Hence its consciousness expands to include every point along the length and breadth of the web.

In modern communications technology, we have satellite dishes. My friend in Tarunpur, Murari Gupta Prabhu, has a satellite dish on the roof of his house. It is a webwork of silver metal, like a radar antenna. Now, it so happens that Murari's set-up doesn't work! But if it did work properly, he would be able to receive television signals that originate from the farthest corners of the earth globe.

Chanting *japa* weaves a fine web that catches two type of signals. One type is the impulses of the material energy. If we are chanting nicely, then our consciousness becomes so fine that it can detect the approach of *maya* before she can get close enough to do us harm. A person who doesn't chant is "upset" by the impulses of *maya* when they enter his thoughts. Upset means he is dislodged from his position of self-composure. *Maya* enters his thoughts and he is unable to avoid giving attention to her. His consciousness becomes tuned to *maya's* broadcasting wavelength, and he subtly enjoys her message. At this instant he is consenting to her invasion of his mind. This is how one progresses in thought from thinking to feeling and then to willing. At the willing stage, the conditioned soul surrenders to *maya's* direction.

The chanter is able to detect *maya's* signals at a much greater distance. Thus he is able to prepare himself to resist her, by the strength of the holy name. In modern communications technology there is what is known as "jamming" a foreign signal, i. e. drowning it out by a more powerful impulse so that the foreign signal cannot be received. The chanter does this by taking full shelter of the holy name. He detects *maya* at a much farther range than ordinary thought and by absorbing himself deeper and deeper in the chanting he makes it impossible for the message of *maya's* signal to be received in his consciousness, where it may damage his spiritual standing.

From *Gita-mala* by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura:

*hari he!  
maya-baddha jataksana, thake to' jiber mana,  
jara-majhe kore bicarana paravyoma jnana-moy,  
tahe taba sthiti hoy, mana nahi pay dasarana*

Oh my dear Lord Hari! So long as the minds of the jivas are conditioned by *maya*, they simply wander about and loiter within the world of dead matter. However, You are permanently situated in the spiritual skies of Vaikuntha and Goloka, which the material mind has no capacity for perceiving at all.

*bhakti-krpa-khargaghate, jara-bandha cheda ta'te,  
jay mana praktir par tomar sundara rupa,  
here' taba aparupa, jara-bastu koroye dhikkar*

By the causeless mercy of the sharp sword of pure devotional service, all bondage to matter is severed, and the mind can then travel far beyond the dull material energy. Then, upon beholding Your wonderfully beautiful form, one has no other choice but to condemn all inferior things which are simply made of matter.

The other type of signal that the web of the holy name catches is the divine impulses emanating from the spiritual world. A devotee must patiently spin the web of *hari-nama* every day and, at the advanced stage, his mind will become host to the most

wonderful transcendental impressions. From *Gita-mala* by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura:

*swananda-sukhada, kunja manohara,  
tahate kutir sobhe basiya tathay, gabo krsna nama,  
kabe krsna-dasya hobhe*

My small cottage is shining beautifully within that most enchanting garden called *Svananda-sukhada-kunja*. Living there, I will sing Krsna's holy name, and I will greedily hanker for that time when I will get the service of Him and His associates.

*emon samoy muralir gan, pasibe e dasi-kane  
ananda matibo, sakala bhulibo,  
sri-krsna-vamsir gane*

At this time, while thinking like this, the songs of a transcendental flute will suddenly enter this maidservant's ear. Becoming madly excited by such a sound, I will forget everything and will only listen spellbound to those wonderful songs of Sri Krsna's flute.

As Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura reveals, it is essential to obtain the merciful shelter of pure devotees so that by chanting, this transformation from material consciousness to Krsna consciousness may take place.

*tathapi ananya-bhakta, tomare dekhite sakta,  
sada dekhe svarupa tomar e bhaktibinoda dina,  
ananya-bhajana hina, bhakta-pada-renu-matra sar*

Despite this covering screen of *maya's* illusions, my dear Lord, Your pure unalloyed devotees have the power to see You. Indeed, wherever they turn their eyes, they see Your original personal form there. However, this Bhaktivinoda is very fallen and is completely bereft of unalloyed devotional worship. But he has one hope. . . he has considered the dust of Your devotees' feet to be the sole essence of his life.

*ISKCON Warsaw, Poland  
17 August 2003*

More photos. The first is of the *nama-yajna* done by Rocana and me at the Lodz preaching center. All the rest are from ISKCON Warsaw. Haribol!





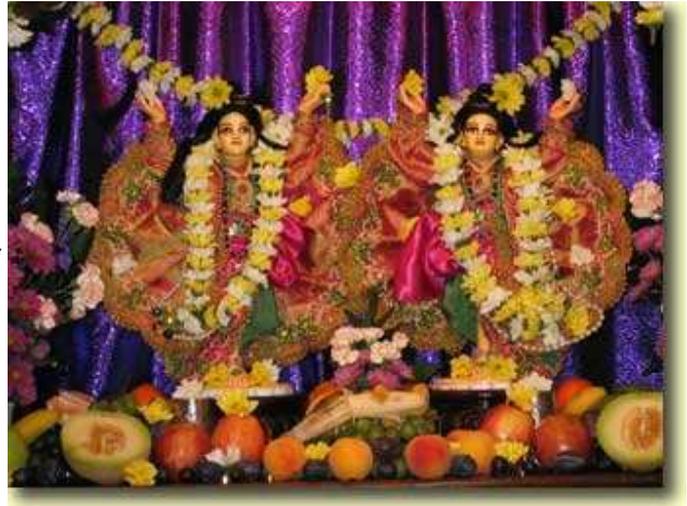
*ISKCON Helsinki, Finland  
22 August 2003*

**Blissful Scenes from Sri Krsna Janmastami  
and Srila Prabhupada Avirbhava Mahotsava  
in Helsinki, Finland**



*The altar in Helsinki temple*

*Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai*



*Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna Utsava Murtis*



*Nama-sankirtana on Janmastami day*





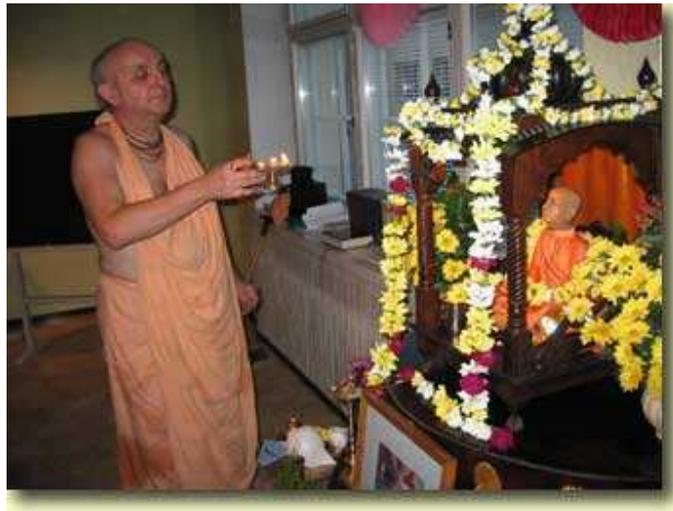
*I bathe Lord Sri Krsna*



*The Indian Ambassador to Finland bathes the Lord*



*I read my Vyasa-puja offering to Srila Prabhupada*



On Sunday, 24 August, I fly to Odessa in the Ukraine where I am to take part in a festival until the end of the month of August. It is highly unlikely that you'll see postings here during that time. Telecom in Odessa is very slow. Also I would appreciate it very much if those of you who are reading this would not send me any e-mails between 24-31 August. Downloading and uploading e-mail in Odessa requires a twenty-minute drive to and from the Internet cafe. Most probably I will not bother going on Internet at all for that period.

*ISKCON Helsinki, Finland  
2 September, 2003*

I'm back in Helsinki from Odessa. Arrived last night, late. Today, Tuesday afternoon, I fly out of here for Stockholm. Friday I fly from there to Oslo. Middle of next week, I'm back in Helsinki. I will try to post entries to In2-MeC during my travels but please don't expect to see a new posting here every day.

The Odessa ISKCON festival was truly a transcendental Hare Krsna Explosion. One thousand three hundred devotees attended. Present were Niranjana Maharaja, Indradyumna Maharaja, B. B. Govinda Maharaja, Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja, A. C. Bhaktivaibhava Maharaja, Devamrta Maharaja, Purnacandra Prabhu, Trai Dasa Prabhu, Gurugouranga Prabhu (whom I've not seen for something like 15 years). The festival lasted 6 days; each day I gave an hour-and-a-half seminar on Transcendental Psychology to an audience of 500 devotees, which was very much appreciated.

Hopefully within a couple of days some . jpeg photofiles of the Odessa festival will be emailed to Bhakta Jani here in Helsinki, who will post them to In2-MeC.

Tomorrow is Radhastami. I would like to write something special for Srimati Radharani. Unfortunately I am too rushed. So in honor of Her I am simply publishing Her thousand names. Jaya Srimati Radharani!

*New Brahmakund, Stockholm, Sweden  
3 September 2003*

### **The Nectar of Srimati Radharani's Holy Name**

*radhety evam ca samsiddha ra-karo dana-vacaka  
dha nirvanam ca tad-datri tena radha prakirtita*

The holy name of Radha is fully accomplished in perfection as follows. 'Ra' indicates *dana*, bestowal of a gift, and the syllable 'dha' indicates *nirvana*, liberation. Thus She mercifully bestows liberation into the eternal kingdom of painlessness called 'Radha. '

*'ra' sabdoccaranad eva sphito bhavati madhavah  
'dha' sabdoccarata pascad dhavatyeva sa-sambhramah*

Simply by vibrating the sound 'ra', Sri Krsna's ecstatic jubilation fully blooms; simply by hearing the sound 'dha' He chases after the vibrator with great awe and reverence.

*ra sabdam kurvatas trasto dadami bhaktim uttamam  
'dha' sabdam kurvatah pascad yami sravana lobhatah*

Sri Krsna proclaims: "The moment I hear the sound 'ra' from anyone's lips I grant My supreme *prema-bhakti*. But the next moment when I hear the sound 'dha' I completely lose Myself and become intoxicated in *Radha-nama*. Because of My great

longing to hear the name of My Beloved, I run after the devotees who chant *Radha-nama*.

### Concerning Some of the Dearest Servants of Sri Radha

The *gopis* who are called *parama-prestha sakhis* are the foremost, dearest and most beloved friends of Sri Radha. They are the *asta-sakhis* (eight main *gopis*): Lalita, Visakha, Citra, Campakalata, Tungavidya, Indulekha, Rangadevi and Sudevi.

#### Sudevi

Sudevi's father is Rangasara Gopa and her mother is Karuna Gopi. Her husband's name is Bhairava. She has a *padma-kinjalka* complexion, which means her features are the color of a lotus-filament, light yellowish-red. She wears bright red cloth the color of *java-kusuma* (the hibiscus flower). Sudevi's *kunja* or grove is to the northwest of Sri Radha-kunda. It is called Vasanta-sukhada. Its color is bright green. Her main service to the Divine Couple is to serve water (*jala-seva*). Sudevi is seven days younger than Srimati Radharani. Her mood is called *kalantarita*, like that of a heroine who suffers after sending away her beloved because of a quarrel. Her temperament is *vama-prakhara*, contrary and hot. Sudevi's maidservant is Manjulali-manjari. She has eight girlfriends. Their names are Kaveri, Caru-kabari, Sukesi, Manju-kesika, Hara-hira, Hara-kanthi, Hara-valli, and Manohara.

Sudevi's twin sister is Rangadevi, thus these two of the *asta-sakhis* are often mistaken for one another. Of the twins, Sudevi is a half-day younger. She usually remains by Srimati Radharani's side to tie Her braids, paint Her eyes, and massage Her body. Sudevi is a swift runner. She is expert in training pairs of male and female parrots to talk and do tricks. She also trains roosters to do tricks. She knows how to navigate rivers in boats. Of all the *asta-sakhis* Sudevi is very expert in explaining omens. She has vast knowledge of birdcalls. She knows which lotuses bloom at midnight. She is expert in starting and maintaining nice fires. She knows everything about precious oils and how to use them in massage. She leads the host of *gopis* in making leaf spittoons for the Divine Couple. She is expert in playing music on bells. She directs the decoration of couches and sitting places for the Divine Couple. The network of clever *gopi* spies who move among rival *gopis* to learn their secrets is coordinated by Sudevi. She leads the other *gopis* in their worship of the *vana-devis* (forest goddesses). The bumblebees and various exotic birds of the forest are under Sudevi's protection.

In *Gaura-lila*, *gopi* Sudevi appears as Ananta Acarya, though some say as Vasudeva Ghosa. She is described as *sarvanu-jivana-gunojjvala-bhakti-daksam*, "one who is expert in performing splendid devotional service with all her life and soul."

(to be continued. . .)

*New Brahmakund, Stockholm, Sweden  
4 September 2003*

### Concerning Some of the Dearest Servants of Sri Radha

(continued from yesterday)

### Rangadevi

Since she is Sudevi's twin sister, older by a half-day, Rangadevi-*sakhi* has the same father (Rangasara Gopa) and mother (Karuna Gopi). Her age in relation to Srimati Radharani is likewise the same. The name of Rangadevi's husband is Vakresana. Her complexion is identical to her sister's, *padma-kinjalka*, light yellowish-red like a lotus-filament. Rangadevi dresses the same as Sudevi too, in cloth that is bright red like *java-kusuma* (the hibiscus flower). Her *kunja* or grove is to the southwest of Sri Radha-kunda. It is called Rangadevi-sukhada. Its color is blackish (*syama*). Her main service to the Divine Couple is to apply sandalwood paste (*candana-seva*). Rangadevi's mood is called *utkanthita*, like that of a heroine who waits anxiously for her beloved to arrive, who glances repeatedly down the path in search of him. Her temperament is *vama-madhya*, moderately contrary. Rangadevi's maidservant is Kausturi-manjari. She has eight girlfriends. Their names are Kalakanthi, Sasi-kala, Kamala, Prema-manjari, Madhavi, Madhura, Kamalati, and Kandarpa-sundari. These *gopis* control the lions and deer of the forest.

The firm religious nature of her father is very evident in Rangadevi. She is an ocean of enchanting feminine gestures, poses, and glances. She enjoys joking with Sri Radha in the presence of Lord Krsna. An expert in diplomacy, Rangadevi is also an excellent logician. She knows a *mantra* that attracts Krsna. The *gopis* who prepare cosmetics, perfumes and incense are headed by Rangadevi. Like her sister she is skilled in starting fires in the winter. In the summer she takes charge of waving fans for the Divine Couple. Rangadevi is described as *campaka-latadhi-gunam*, meaning that she shares many of the qualities of another member of the *asta-sakhis*, namely Campakalata. Some say Rangadevi is Govindananda Ghosa in *Gaura-lila*, others say she is Gadadhara Bhatta.

### Campakalata

Her mother is Vatika and her father is Arama. Campakalata is married to Candraksa. Her skin is the color of the *campaka* flower, yellow-white. She wears cloth that is brown like the wing of a sparrow (*cataka*), or blue like the wing of a bluebird. To the south of Sri Radhakunda is Campakalata's grove called Kama-lata (Cupid's vine), which is *tapta-jambunada*, the color of molten gold. She serves the Divine Couple in two ways, *camara-calanam*, waving the *camara*, and *ratna-mala-dana*, offering Them jewelled necklaces. She is one day younger than Srimati Radharani. Her mood is *vasaka-sajja*, that of a heroine who decorates herself and waits for her beloved to arrive. Like Rangadevi, Campakalata's temperament is *vama-madhya*. Her favorite musical instrument is the *sarangi*. Her maidservant is Guna-manjari. She has eight friends: Kurangaksi, Suracita, Mandali, Mani-mandana, Candhika, Candra-lati, Kandukaksi, and Sumandira.

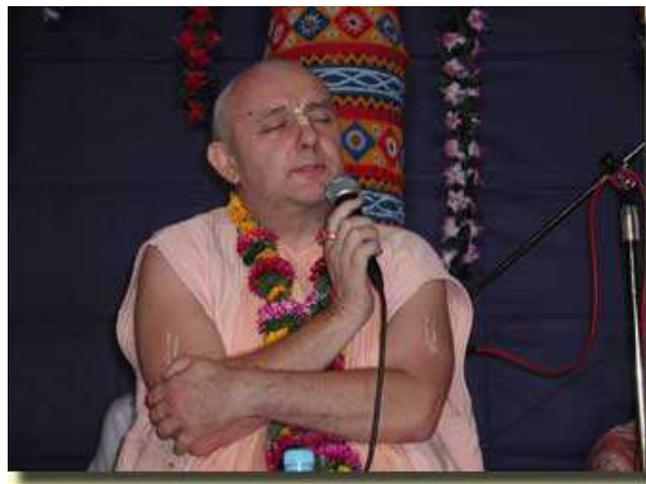
Her father knows many arts, and Campakalata is skilled in all of them. She is very good at gambling and dice. Rival *gopis* are scared to come near her because she weaves a web of tricky words that thwarts them from their purpose. Campakalata knows how to search out wonderful fruits, roots and flowers in the forest, and she is the protectress of the trees that bear such gifts. She is an excellent potter. A walking gourmet cookbook, she is knowledgeable in six kinds of fine cookery. Her nickname is *misti-hasta* (Sweethands) because Campakalata is so good in making sweets

enjoyed by the Divine Couple. There is a kitchen in her grove that is famous all throughout Vraja-*dhama*. Very secretive, she acts as a courier of messages and is never detected by opponents. Sivananda Sena is her identity in Gaura-*lila*. Some say she is Raghava Goswami (he too is an expert cook). About Campakalata it is said, *sarvam gunams tulayitum dadhatim visakham*: "her good qualities are comparable in all ways to Viskakha's."

(to be continued...)

*ISKCON, Helsinki, Finland*  
*4 September 2003*

### **Pictures from Odessa festival 2003**



Oslo, Norway  
7 September 2003

### Concerning Some of the Dearest Servants of Sri Radha

(continued from 4 September)

#### Sri Visakha-sakhi

Of the *asta-sakhis*, Visakha is foremost along with Lalita. Her mother is Sudaksina, her father is Pavana, and her husband is Vahika. Her complexion is *vidyut*, like lightning. She wears *taravali* cloth, which is patterned like clusters of stars. Her grove is situated to the northeast of Sri Radha Kunda. It is *megha* or raincloud-like. All things therein are colored red, green, yellow and black. This grove is named Visakhananda. The service Visakha-devi renders is *vastralankara* or arranging for the clothing and ornamentation of the Divine Couple. She is exactly the same age as Srimati Radharani. Her mood is called *svadhina bhartṛka*, which means like a heroine who dominates her beloved, taming him according to her own whims. Her temperament is *adhika-madhya*, moderately exalted. She loves to play the *mrdanga*. Her favorite tune is *raga saranga*. Her maidservant is Vilasa-manjari. Her eight girlfriends are Madhavi, Malati, Candra-rekha, Kunjari, Harini, Capala, Surabhi, Subhana.

Visakha-devi's father is a scholar, thus "like father, like daughter"-- she is very learned. She is a wise counselor and a diplomat in loving affairs. She is expert at joking. She arranges for the Divine Couple to meet in different ways so that They may taste different mellows. Visakha skillfully paints flower and leaf designs on Their bodies, and makes crowns for Them out of flower garlands, and embroiders Their cloth. She is the most expert messenger among the *asta-sakhis*. Visakha supervises the *sakhis* and *dasis* who produce and care for clothing; plus she directs the maidservants of Vrndadevi in their care of the flowers, vines and trees of Vrndavana.

Although it appears that Visakha is second in importance to Lalita, she is truly Srimati Radharani's dearest girlfriend. She and Radharani are so alike they are almost twins. Visakha's other form is the Yamuna River. Whenever Lord Kṛṣṇa sees Visakha He immediately thinks of Sri Radha; whenever Sri Radha sees the *syama* (dark blue) waters of the Yamuna River She immediately thinks of Kṛṣṇa.

Sri Visakha-sakhi appears as Sri Ramananda Raya in *Gaura-lila*. It is said of her, *sri radhike tava carita-gunanurupam*, that her qualities and characteristics are very similar to Srimati Radharani's.

#### Sri Lalita-sakhi

Her mother is Saradi, her father is Visoka, and her husband is Bhairava. She has the complexion of *garocana*, a type of yellow pigment. She wears cloth that is *sikhi-piccha*, like peacock feathers. Her *kunja* (grove) is called Lalitananda and is to the north of Radha Kunda. It is *radid*, colored like lightning. Its features are studded with rubies. Her special *seva* is *tambula*, supplying betel nuts to the Divine Couple. She is

eternally 14 years, 8 months and 27 days old--which means that Lalita is 27 days older than Srimati Radharani. Her birthday is celebrated on *Sravana Sukla Ekadasi*. Her mood is *khandita*, like that of a jealous heroine who chastises her beloved. Her temperament is *vama-prakhara*, contrary and hot. Lalita loves playing *vina* and her favorite tune is *raga bhairava-kalingada*. Her chief assistant is Rupa-manjari. Lalita's eight closest girlfriends are Ratna-prabha, Rati-kala, Subhadra, Bhadra-rekhika, Sumukhi, Dhanistha, Kala-hamsi and Kalapini.

Lalita is the leader of the *asta-sakhis*. Like her father, she is extremely magnanimous. She instigates the pastimes of the Divine Couple. As clever and mischievous as Krsna may be in His approach to Srimati Radharani, Lalita is more clever and obliges Him to behave nicely to Sri Radha. What Lord Krsna suggests, Lalita opposes. She frequently becomes furious with Him and speaks outrageously insolent retorts. She affectionately teaches Srimati Radharani the ways of jealous anger, considering Her too docile for Her own good. Lalita is brilliant in composing and understanding riddles. She fashions amazing creations with flowers--awnings, dancing arenas, umbrellas, couches and bowers. Lalita is a conjuror, expert in magic tricks and juggling. In Gaura-lila she is Svarupa Damodara Gosvami. About Lalita it is said *radhe tava priya-sakhim ca gurum sakhinam*, "Oh Radhe! Your dear companion Lalita is the *guru* of all the *gopis*."

### **About Srimati Radharani Herself**

Srimati Radharani is eternally 14 years, 2 months and 15 days old. Her complexion is like molten gold. She dresses in raincloud-blue cloth for Herself plus ruby-red cloth that Lord Krsna likes. Her father is King Vrsabhanu, Her mother is Kirtida. Her older brother is Sridhama, a great friend of Lord Krsna. Her younger sister is Ananga-manjari. Radharani's so-called husband is Abhimanyu. Her father-in-law is Vrka-gopa, Her mother-in-law is Jatila, Her sister-in-law is Kutila, and Her brother-in-law is Durmada.

She has five kinds of girlfriends: *sakhis* (general girlfriends), *nitya-sakhis* (eternal girlfriends), *prana-sakhis* (dear-as-life girlfriends), *priya-sakhis* (very dear girlfriends), and *parama-prestha-sakhis* (supremely beloved girlfriends--these are the *asta-sakhis*). There are also *gopis* who are Her *suhrd* (well-wishers) and *dasis* (personal servants); She has girlfriends from among the Pulinda forest tribe as well as a most respected *brahmani* friend, Gargi. Srimati Radharani's younger maidservants are called *manjaris*; they are lead by Her sister Ananga-manjari and include the *manjaris* Rupa and Rati. Radha's rivals for Sri Krsna's attention are called *prati-paksa-varga gopis*; Candravali is their leader.

Radharani's favorite pets are the cows Sunaca, Yamuna, Sahcia and many others; the calf Tunggi; the monkey Kakkhati; the doe Rangini; the *cakori* bird Caru-candrika; the swan Tundikeri; the peahen Tundika; the parrots Suksma-dhi and Subha.

The singlemost worshipable thing in Srimati Radharani's life (besides Lord Krsna, of course) is Surya, the sun. She worships the sun-god every day that he may grant Her Lord Krsna's association.

Her private lake is Radha Kund. There is a large *kadamba* tree on the bank; the platform at the base of this tree is the site of Her confidential talks. Her private

garden is Kandarpa-kuhai (betel-leaf of Cupid). She plays a *vina* called Madhu-mati. She loves the dances known as *calikya* and *rudra-vallaki*.

### **Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti's**

#### ***Sri Radhika-dhyanamrta***

#### **The Nectar of Meditation on Sri Radhika**

(For the sake of confidentiality, not all of Srila Cakravartipada's stanzas are revealed here)

*tadic-campaka-svarna-kasmira-bhasah  
sva-kantya bhramsam dandayitrya vilasah  
sva-rupasya tasyas tu kasyas tu varnyah  
subodha-dravo nama-varno 'pi karnyah*

Her bodily splendor, which chastises lightning, *campaka* flowers, gold, and *kunkuma*, should be described. The nectar of Her name should be heard.

*praphullali-puspa-prabha-dyotitanam  
lasac-candrika-prota-meghopamanam  
kacanam sa-caturya-bandheyam eni-  
drsah sac-camary-agrima bhati veni*

Expertly tied, with a beautiful flower blossom at its end, and the glory of its *ali* flowers making it seem like a dark monsoon cloud embroidered with glittering moonlight, doe-eyed Radha's braided hair shines with great splendor.

*mahanargha-cudamanih kama-lekha-  
pluta rajate caru-simanta-rekha  
udu-dyoti-muktaika-panktim vahanti  
kim asyendu-saudhaika-dharocchalanti*

She wears a priceless crest-jewel. She bears the mark of Kamadeva. A line gracefully marks the part in Her hair. Her pearl necklace is splendid as a line of stars. Is this a flood of nectar flowing from the moon of Her face?

*navendupame patrapasya-prabhale  
su-lilalakali-vrte caru-bhale  
madenantara citritam citrakam tat  
vibhaty acyutatrapta-netraika-sampat*

Her beautiful forehead is like a crescent moon and is decorated with graceful curly locks of hair, colorful designs, and wonderful pictures drawn in musk. The wealth of Her eyes leaves Krsna always unsatiated.

*ati-syamala vijya-kandarpa-capu-  
prabha-jisnutam bhru-dvayi kucitapa  
mukhambhoja-madhvika-panad abhistad  
acestali-panktih kim esa nivista*

She is very beautiful. Her curved eyebrows defeat Kamadeva's unstrung bow. Is this a line of bumblebees motionless from having drunk the nectar they desired from these lotus eyes?

*sapharyau iva prestha-lavanya-vanye-  
psite rajatas te drsau hanta dhanye  
lasat-kajjalakte tayoh syama-pakse  
kvacid vindate kanta-tambula-laksma*

Her beautiful, glistening, mascara-anointed eyes are like two saphari fishes shining with the desire to sport in the ocean of Her beloved's handsomeness. She finds the betel-mark of Her beloved.

*tadit-kandali murdhni naksatra-yukta  
sthiradhah sudha-budbuda-dvandva-sakta  
yadi syat sarojantare tam ca bhasa  
mrgaksyas tiraskurvati bhati nasa*

If a stationary flash of lightning were decorated with stars, two bubbles of nectar placed beneath it, and the whole thing placed within a lotus flower, it would be defeated by doe-eyed Radha's splendid nose.

*kapolaksi-bimbadhara-sri-visaktam  
bhaven mauktikam pina-nilati-raktam  
smitodyat-putodirna-madhurya-vrstir  
lasaty acyuta-svanta-tarsaika-srstih*

Her cheeks, eyes, and *bimba*-fruit lips are beautiful. She wears a pearl beautiful with a large sapphire. The rain of sweetness from Her smile makes Krsna's heart thirst.

*lasat-kundale kundali-bhuya manye  
sthite kama-pasayudhe hanta dhanye  
sruti ratna-cakri-salakacitagre  
drsau karsatah sri-harer ye samagre*

I think Her glistening jewel hoop-earrings are Kamadeva's nooses to catch Krsna's eyes.

*ati-svaccham antahstha-tambula-raga-  
cchatodgari-sobhambudhau kim lalaga  
kapola-dvayam lola-tatanka-ratna-  
dyumac-cumbitam preyaso yatra yatnah*

Did Her beloved touch the ocean of beauty flowing from a red betelnut spot on Her glorious cheeks kissed by the splendor of Her swinging jewel earrings?

*sphutad-bandhujiva-prabha-hari-danta-  
chadad-dvandvam abhati tasya yad-antah  
smita-jyotsnaya ksalitam ya sa-trsnam  
cakori-karoty anv-aham hanta krsnam*

Her splendid lips eclipse the glory of the blossoming *bandhujiva* flowers. With the moonlight of Her smile day by day She transforms thirsty Krsna into a *cakora* bird.

*na sa vindate pakim arunya-bhaji-  
cchavir yat-tulam dadimi-bija-rajih  
katham varnyatam yatu iyam danta-panktir  
mukundadhare paurusam ya vyanakti*

How can the teeth that show their power on Mukunda's lips be described? The splendid red pomegranate seeds are certainly not their equal.

*mukhambhoja-madhurya-dhara vahanti  
yad-antah kiyan nimnatam prapayanti  
kim esapi kasturika-bindu-bhrt tam  
harim kim dadhanam vibhaty asya-vrttam*

How deep is the ocean of sweetness at Her lotus face? Is She decorated with dots of musk? What does Her face do in Krsna's presence?

*sa kanthas tadit-kambu-saubhagya-hari  
tri-rekhah pika-stavya-sausvarya-dhari  
srajam malikam malikam mauktikanam  
dadhaty eva yah preyasa gumphitanam*

Her neck marked with three lines eclipses the beauty of lightning and the conchshell. The music it sings is praised by the cuckoos. It wears necklaces of pearls and garlands of jasminme flowers strung by Her beloved.

*mradimna sirisasya saubhagya-saram  
ksipantya vahantya bhujabhoga-bharam  
tula-sunya-saundarya-simam dadhatya  
nija-preyase 'jasra-saukhyam dadatyah*

Moving Her graceful arms soft as a *sirisa* flower and situated in the unparalleled pinnacle of beauty, She gives eternal happiness to Her beloved.

*sritayah sva-kanta-svatam kamra-gatryah  
sriyah sri-vilasan bhram kharvayantyah  
gatamsa-dvayi saubhagaikantakantam  
yada paninotkramayet salakantam*

As She rests Her beautiful limbs on Her beloved, She dwarfs the beautiful pastimes of the goddess of fortune. When with Her hand She pushes back Her hair, Her shoulders attain the pinnacle of beauty.

*tadid-vama-bhrt-kankananaddha-sima  
ghana-dyota-cudavali sastra-sima  
cakasti prakostha-dvaye ya svananti  
smarajau sukhabdhau sakhih plavayanti*

Tinkling on Her wrists kankana bracelets with the unlimited splendor of lightning and *cuda* bracelets with the unlimited power of a host of weapons and splendid as monsoon clouds, She plunges Her *gopi* friends in the amorous-gesture ocean of happiness.

*tad bhati raktotpala-dvandva-socis-  
tiraskari pani-dvayam yatra rocih  
subhankavaleh saubhagam yad vyanakti  
priyantar hrdis sthapanam yasya saktih*

Her hands, the splendor of which eclipses the glory of two red lotuses, and which are beautiful with auspicious marks, have the power to rest on Her beloved's chest.

*nakha-jyotisa bhanti tah pani-sakhah  
karoty urmikalankrta ya visakha  
samajya krsnangulibhir vilasas  
tadasam yada rajate hanta rasah*

When the *rasa*-dance pastime is gloriously manifest, Her beautiful fingers, shining with the splendor of Her fingernails and decorated with *urmika* rings, join with the fingers of Krsna.

Her silk sari is like a cottage that houses Her amorous pastimes with Her beloved. Over Her colorful sari She places a very beautiful shawl splendid as a blue lotus.

*jayaty anghri-pankeruha-dvandvam istam  
dalagre nakhendu-vrajenapi hrstam  
kvanan-nupuram hamsakarava-bhaktam  
harim rajayaty eva laksa-rasaktam*

All glories to Her worshipable lotus feet splendid with a host of toenail moons. Decorated with tinkling *nupura* and *hamsaka* anklets, and anointed with red lacquer, they delight Lord Hari.

*darambhoja-tatanka-valli-rathadyair  
maha-laksanair bhavya-vrndabhivadyaih  
yutam tat talam mardavarunya-sali  
smrtam yad bhaved acyutabhista-pali*

The soles of Her feet bear the auspicious marks of conchshell, lotus, earring, vine, and chariot. They are soft and red, they are worshiped with eloquent prayers, and they fulfill the desires of Lord Krsna. One should meditate on them in this way.

*sa jagarti tasyah parivara-cetas-  
tate 'nuksanam ramya-lila-sametah  
athapy asta-yamikya-musyah saparya  
yatha-kalam acaryate tena varya*

He who keeps a vigil for eight nights, remaining awake and at every moment meditating on the divine couple's transcendental pastimes, at the proper time will attain the object of his worship.

Oslo, Norway  
8 September 2003

Besides the *asta-sakhis*, goddess Vrnda-devi renders outstanding service to the loving affairs of the Divine Couple. In the following nine verses, Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura gives insight into the special role played by Sri Vrnda-devi in *madhurya-lila*.

### **SRI SRI VRNDADEVYASTAKAM**

**By Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura**

*1. gangeya campeya tadid vininda roci-pravaha snapitatma vrnde  
bandhuka randhu-dyuti divya vaso vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"O Vrnde, whose very self is showered with the current of beauty, which defeats the golden splendour of the Campaka-flower or lightning bolts, we offer our obeisances unto Your lotus feet. "

*2. bimbadaroditvara manda-hasya nasagra mukt-dyuti dipitasye  
vicitra ratnabharana sriyadhya vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"O Vrnde, whose lips and face are shining red like Bimba-fruits, that smile slightly, and nose pearl that sparks brightly and who beauty is enriched with wonderful jeweled ornaments, we offer our obeisances unto Your lotus feet. "

*3. samasta vaikuntha siromanau sir krsnasya vrndavana dhanya dhamni  
dattadhikare vrsabhanu putrya vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"O Vrnde, who was bestowed the care of Sri Krsna's opulent abode Sri Vrndavana, the crest jewel of all Vaikunthas, by the daughter of King Vrsabhanu, we offer our obeisances unto Your lotus feet. "

*4. tvad ajnaya pallava-puspa-bhrnga mrgadibhir madhava keli-kunjah  
madhavadibhir bhanti vibhusyamana vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"O Vrnde, on whose order Madhava's play gardens are being adorned with leaves, flowers, bees, deer and dripping honey, we offer our obeisances unto Your lotus feet. "

*5. tvadiya dutyena nikunja-yunor atyutkayo keli-vilasa-siddhih  
tvat saubhagam kena nirucyatam tat vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"O Vrnde, through your canvassing Radha and Krsna, Who are eager to play in the nikunja, have Their desires fulfilled. Who can describe your good fortune? We offer our obeisances unto your lotus feet. "

*6. rasabhilaso vasatis ca vrndavane tvad isanghri-saroja-seva  
labhya ca pumsam krpaya tavaiva vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"Only by your grace can one attain the desired service of the lotus feet of your mistress during the rasa festival in Her abode, Vrndavana. O Vrnde, we offer our obeisances unto your lotus feet. "

*7. tvam kirtyase satvata-tantra vidbhir lilabhidhana kila krsna saktih  
tavaiva murtim tulasi nr-loke vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"O Vrnde, the knowers of Satvatra-tantra, describe you as Krsna's own partial potency. But in the human world you appear only as Tulasi-devi. We offer our obeisances unto your lotus feet. "

*8. bhaktya-vihina aparadha-laksaih ksiptas ca kamadi-taranga-madhye  
krpamayi tvam saranam prapanna vrnde namas te caranaravindam*

"Because of hundreds of thousands of offenses, devoid of devotion, we were thrown amidst the waves of lust and other urges. O merciful one, we take shelter of you! Vrnde! We offer our obeisances unto your lotus feet. "

*9. vrndastakam yah srnu yat payed va vrndavana misa padabja bhrngah  
sa prapya vrndavana nitya-vasam tat-prema-sevam labhate krtarthah*

"Anyone who, like a honey bee at the lotus feet of the Lord of Vrndavana, hears or recites this astakam, attains eternal residence in Vrndavana, and becomes blessed with Krsna's loving service. "

*Oslo, Norway  
9 September 2003*

Having learnt a little about Srimati Radharani and Her associates, we may now hear a nectarean pastime that She and Her parama-prestha sakhis shared with the Lord in Vrndavana. Later in Dvaraka Krsna narrated it to His beloved wife Satyabhama. Kindly note that Satyabhama-devi is none other than Sri Radha in the form of Sri Krsna's second queen in Dvaraka-lila.

### **MUKTA CARITA (The Pearl Story)**

**By Srila Raghunatha dasa Goswami**

Obeisances to the son of Gopendra Nanda, Who enchants the world with His lila, whose complexion is like a blooming blue lotus and who is as beautiful as millions of Cupids.

Obeisances to the Divine Couple, Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, who are immersed in the ocean of playful buying and selling of pearls, and Who are eager to defeat each other.

I worship that full moon that rose from the womb of Mother Saci to distribute the nectar of His own loving devotional service on earth.

I bow down to my spiritual master, who gave me the holy name, the son of Mother Saci, Svarupa Damodara, Srila Rupa Goswami and his older brother, Srila Sanatana Goswami, the great abode of Mathura and the pastures of Vraja, Radhakunda, Govardhana Hill, and the hope of attaining Radhika and Madhava, by his grace.

The ocean of Vrndavana is filled with waves of the nectarean pastimes of Lord Hari. I bow down to the most blissful devotees who dwell there.

One day, after having heard something about this, Satyabhama eagerly asked Krsna: "From where have these sweet vines, from whose pearls my bangles were made, come from, O Lord?" Krsna, remembering the story, became slightly afflicted within, but joyful without and said: "There was a time when pearls grew on vines! Now they are kept in oysters. "

Satyabhama became curious after hearing this and repeatedly encouraged Krsna to tell her more. Krsna then said: "One day in the month of Kartikka there was a Dipavali festival in Gokula, near Govardhana. Everyone there was busily engaged in preparing all the paraphernalia for this. The cowherdsmen were especially absorbed in decorating their cows and pets and the gopis were decorating themselves in their dressingrooms with different ornaments.

"Srimati Radharani was decorating Herself with Her sakhis with the best pearls in a pavilion by the bank of Malyahari kunda (near Radhakunda). I eagerly went there when I heard this from my pet parrot, who is justly named Vicaksana (clever), to beg some pearls from them, as I was eager to decorate My cows Hamsi and Harini with them.

"But they were very clever and just looked at Me with disdain from the corners of their lotus-blue eyes, like sages with half-closed eyes. When I saw this I told them: 'O you mountains of pride, coming forth from attaining the valuable touchstone of youthful beauty! Will you not even lend an ear to the request of your dear friend?' Hearing this, the lively Lalita, smiling at her friends, said with feigned anger : 'O upstart! Why are You wasting Your time asking for pearls that are fit only for great queens?'

"Hearing this, I curiously replied: 'O, if you don't give Me some pearls for decorating the four horns of my two most dear cows, then their decoration cannot be completed. Where else will I get pearls?'

"Lalita replied: 'O Krsna, there is not even one pearl good enough for Your cows!' Hearing this I said: 'O, most talkative Lalita! Just wait, you miser! I will get pearls from My mother Vrajesvari and plant them in a field! Then I will have more pearls than you!'

"When I went to My mother with this request, she said: 'Silly boy, pearls don't grow in fields. ' But I assured her: 'You will see. Within three days My pearl vine will sprout!' So she gave Me some pearls and I planted them in a field by the Jalaharana-ghata with three friends helping Me to fence the place off. Then for the sake of avenging Myself for their refusal to give Me pearls I had one friend go to them to ask for milk to water the pearl seeds, but they said: 'How can you grow pearls in a field and nourish them with milk? We only give milk to our cows. We are not obliged to grow pearl vines with milk to decorate Krsna's cows!'

"Then I took milk from our own goshalla - lots of it - and sprinkled my pearls with it every day. Then on the fourth day the vines came out. I was in ecstasy and I pulled at My mother's dress to show her the sprouting pearl plants. She was amazed and thought to herself: 'What is this?' She went back home and told all the cowherds, who, after hearing about it, all came there to see. They thought the area was just full of thorns, so they climbed a nearby Kadamba tree to look over the fence.

"They were amazed when they saw the beautiful vines, full of honeybees intoxicated by the wonderful fragrance. The gopis were also amazed to see the beautiful flowers growing from the vines. Eight types of pearls had grown on My vines, and they were all most charming.

"When the gopis saw all this they became greedy for pearls and consulted their counsellor: 'O friend, now Krsna will surely not give us any pearls. Why don't we plough a field twice as big as Krsna's and grow our own pearls there?' Hearing this, Lalita said: 'O gopis, are you afflicted with disturbed lifefairs? Everyone in Vrndavana knows that Krsna knows a lot of amazing mantras through which He was able to do things like lift Govardhana Hill. What is so wonderful for him to grow a pearl vine? That very delicate blue lotus that grew from the pond of the womb of Mother YaSoda must have some special power to do these things. '

"Then Tungavidya said: 'Why don't we ask Nandimukhi, the pupil of Mother Purnamasi, if she is also initiated in such mantras. ' All the gopis said: 'Well spoken Tungavidya!' and they went to Nandimukhi to tell her of their plan. 'Let the desire tree of our playful eagerness grow!' they said.

"Remembering how I grew My pearl tree, Nandimukhi said: 'O sakhis, it was not by mantra that Mukunda could grow a pearl tree in clay soil. ' The gopis asked: 'Then how could He do it then?' Nandimukhi replied: 'Because He has natural powers like that. What is the wonder that Krsna can grow a pearl tree in an abode where the trees are made of coral, have sapphire leaves and buds of diamonds and pearls, and fruits of rubies, and other trees are golden? I'm sure that if you girls plant pearls and sprinkle on them even tastier fresh butter, you will grow even bigger pearl trees. '

"Drinking Nandinukhi's sweet words with the cups of their ears, the gopis praised her and embraced her with great satisfaction. Then they happily returned home, took all the pearls they could find, planted them in a scarcely protected field and started sprinkling them three times a day with the best milk, butter and ghee. Hearing of their activities, Candravali and her group became greedy and envious, and they also planted many pearls, using all the pearls they could find in their homes and on their bodies. Then, after a few days, all the gopis were devastated in their pride when they found that thorny twigs had sprouted from their pearl seeds, and they became afraid that I would ridicule them.

"One day the adults found that all their pearls and milk products had disappeared from their homes, having ben used by their daughters for growing pearl trees, so they enquired from them. The older gopis said: 'O old ones! Our girls have used them all for planting pearl trees. If they sprout we will gain great wealth, just like Krsna did when He grew pearls in His field. They were suitable for great queens!'

"When Visakha inspected the sprouts on the gopi's fields she said: 'O sakhis, I do not think that these sprouts are quite the same as Krsna's. We have protected our fields

from the eyes of Krsna's friends, so I wonder what could have happened. ' When I heard from My friends that only thorns sprouted from the gopi's fields, I went there, just for fun and said, slightly smiling: 'O, I have heard that you have grown so many nice pearls. Since I am you best friend, will you give Me the first fruits of your harvest?'

"The gopis replied: 'If we had really planted pearls, then why isn't the whole of Vraja filled with pearl trees now?' proudly denying their humiliation. I said: 'Why are you giving up the vaisya duties of charity and taking to miserliness?' Then I lavishly decorated all my cows, calves, oxen, bullocks, goats and even all the monkeys with pearl ornaments. The gopis, being afraid of their parents' anger over having lost all their wealth of pearls wondered what to do. They told each other: 'It's all Nandimukhi's fault. The traitor has joined Krsna's side. '

"So they went there and severely chastised her, but Nandimukhi said: ' I swear to you, on all my penances that I did not deceive you. It is rather all your own fault!' The gopis said: 'Why?' Nandimukhi said: 'Because you made such a noise about planting these pearls that Krsna's friends have heard of it. Did you keep any guard around your fields?' The girls admitted they had not.

"Nandimukhi angrily said: 'These clever boys must have heard what you planted. Then that great deceiver, Krsna, must have bribed them with sweet rice, especially the greedy ones like Madhumangala, who is easily bribed in such ways. Then they must have crept into your fields, taken all your pearls and planted seeds of thorny plants instead. Then they threw all the pearls into the Yamuna. I know this for sure!'

"Not satisfied with her explanation the girls all said: 'O you greatest of cheaters, Nandimukhi. O crooked godsister of that clown Madhumangala. You're just a Kali-yuga ascetic! Just wait!' Coming back home again they considered once more what to do. Srimati Radharani said: 'Nandimukhi may have deceived us or not, but I'm very afraid of My parents. We can only pacify their anger if we can show them some pearls. We must make some deal with Krsna. '

"The clever Candramukhi then took some gold as a price to pay Krsna for some pearls, and said: 'I will take Kancanalata with me and we will somehow buy some pearls from Krsna. ' Taking the gold, they came to Krsna's pearl garden. When they saw Me sitting there with Subala, they told him: 'O Subala, we have heard that you have grown fresh pearls. Take this gold in exchange for some of the most exquisite among them. '

"Then I said: 'Once I came to you girls for pearls and you did not give Me any. You did not even give Me a milk-cup to sprinkle My pearl field. I would rather toss all My pearls into the Yamuna. You may even offer Me all your domestic belongings in exchange for them, but I will not give you even one pearl of Mine!'

"Then Kancalata and Candramukhi said: 'How can we be saved from our parents' anger now? It is too far to go to Mathura for pearls now. O Subala, please mediate for us. Tell us what price we must pay. ' Hearing this I said: 'Well, I am very soft-hearted. I'm not so hard-hearted like you girls. I suppose I must let you buy some. But how will we determine an appropriate price?'

"Subala, taking the role of mediator, said: 'So, my friend, how much do you want for them? I replied: 'Look, Subala, these girls were sent by Radha and the others. They do not know that this gold is not sufficient for My pearls. Therefore, how can I negotiate a suitable price with them? Even though there are many cintamani-stones in the golden basket-like breasts of Candramukhi, it is not sufficient. Even the Kaustubha gem which dwells on the chest of the Lord of Vaikuntha cannot be one billionth part of the price of just one of My pearls!'

"Hearing this, Kancalata looked at Me angrily and, frowning, said: 'O brainless Candramukhi, I should not have come with you to see this villain! I still came here on your request to get some pearls, but now I'm leaving. ' Candramukhi replied: 'Kancalata, you are speaking the truth. I'm also going. How can I ascertain a price for these pearls alone. '

"When I saw them both leaving I said: 'Subala, in this way we cannot ascertain a price for these pearls. ' Subala appealed to Candramukhi: 'O sakhi, my friend will only discuss the price when all the gopis are here, like Radha and Lalita. They can come and take the desired amount of pearls. I will mediate. ' Thus Candramukhi and Kancalata returned to Radha and told Her with feigned anger all that had transpired.

"Then Srimati Radharani, Lalita and all the sakhis came to the pearl garden, where Candramukhi told Subala: 'Friend Subala, here we are. Let us in a friendly spirit ascertain a suitable price. ' Then Subala called me and explained everything. I came and asked: 'Why has Radha not come personally. Tungavidya replied: 'O Prince of Gokula, She is lovingly engaged in household duties by Jatila, unable to leave home. '

"Then Madhumangala secretly told Me that Radha was hiding close by, hearing everything we have said. So I told Tungavidya: 'Doesn't She want any pearls then?' Tungavidya said: 'We will take Her share of the pearls. ' I replied: 'Visakha is just like Radha, and Radha is just like Visakha. Then Visakha can pay for Radha also. But, anyone who does not come personally to get her pearls must pay four times the normal amount. This is my firm decision!' Then I told Subala: 'Bring the pearl box here and show them our pearls. You can take the smallest pearl out and give it to Visakha for Srimati Radharani. If she cannot pay then the same will go for her as for Radha (four times the regular amount). As long as Radha does not come I will keep Visakha locked up in the prison house of the Madhavi kunj. '

"Then Madhumangala said: 'Dear friend, even if You obstruct them, the other men's wives are always able to escape. ' I replied: 'I know that, but don't worry, I know it is very improper to destroy the good name of housewives, but the scriptures also say: sva karyam uddharet prajnah, kurvann api vigarhitam - wise men sometimes perform wicked acts, but in the process they always elevate themselves. And in the Samhitas it is said: ahare vyavahare ca lajjam api parityajet - while eating or doing business one should not feel ashamed. I will stay at the Madhavi kunj, remaining awake the whole night guarding my prisoners. '

"Hearing this Subala smiled and said: 'O dear Purusottama, how long must Visakha remain in anxiety?' I replied: 'As long as Radha has not personally come here to pay for Her pearls. ' Then Madhumangala said: 'Friend, Srimati Radharani is more expert than any other gopi, especially when it comes to running away, as You noticed when You tried to tax Her for carrying ghee over Govardhana Hill. You became bewildered

by Her then and became overwhelmed by dizziness. I'm very worried the same thing will happen here. '

"Then I smiled and told Madhumangala in front of everyone: 'Friend, you are uselessly worrying. I won't become dizzy. And even if I do, then I will use Her left lotusstem-like arm as a pillow for My head, lie on Her chest using My yellow cloth as a pillow. I will enjoy Myself having a loving discussion with Her about the price of pearls and in this way We will quickly pass through the night. Otherwise, I will enjoy with Her in My dream, keeping Her bound firmly on the dense darkness of My chest, as in a prison, holding Her hips tight with My hard, sapphire coloured, snake-like arms!'

"Hearing this everyone laughed. But Radha looked at Me and Visakha from the corner of Her eyes and said: 'Go on, go to Candravali's kunjja and stay there,' chastising Me with a smile. Visakha looked at Me in a crooked way and said: 'O Villain, get out! Get out!' Then she hid among the sakhis. Then they all told Subala: 'Subala, give up your dirty tricks. If you still want to sell your pearls then show them to us and tell us a reasonable price, otherwise we will go home. We can also get pearls in Mathura if we want.

"Hearing this, Subala opened the pearl basket and showed them our pearls. Then he told Me: 'Dear friend, it is only by Your mercy that You wish to deal with these girls at all. All their domestic wealth and their entire wealth of cows is not a sufficient price for even one of our pearls. So, be kind and give them some pearls for just a small price, or even just for free, forgetting your miserliness. ' I replied: 'No, no, My friend. Our profession as vaisyas is to do business. Now what can I do? But to take heed of your request I will be somewhat lenient in My price to them. '

"Subala laughed and said: 'Well said my friend. Let them pick out their favourite pearls and make a pile of them, and then you decide on the price. ' I thought that was a very good idea. Subala said: 'Please sell them the pearls at the price the humbly suggest. ' I wondered what they had said to him to make him suggest that. Subala then said: 'They say they can get pearls in Mathura, but it would take them two days to get the pearls from there, and their parents are becoming more and more angry waiting for their lost pearls and ornaments to be returned. Therefore they gave up all shame and approached you here in the forest. They said that if You give them the pearls now they will pay you in a day or two, and that You should have faith in them as honest girls who are objects of Your love anyway. If you do so, Your affection for them will simply increase. '

Then I laughed and told Subala: 'O, you are of very purified intellect, but you do not understand anything of their behaviour. They are all great experts in diplomatic trickery. As soon as they have received the pearls they will take them inside the great fortresses of their husbands' homes, on the high mountains of the elders' protection, then what will we do?'

"Subala replied: 'They will not do that, my friend. And even if they do I will take them into the forest with the Arjuna trees and the blackbirds and I will embrace them and kiss them, drinking the nectar of their lips. When they tell their husbands about that I will immediately come to their husbands and frighten them so they will come out and pay us the amount they owe us. '

"Hearing this, Madhumangala angrily said: 'O Subala, you are Subala (very strong) in name only. Actually you are just like a weak woman. Even if these girls just blow on you, you become scared! So what will happen if their husbands become angry with you?. But I will go with my army led by Vijaya to NandiSvara and surround the whole place and they will be forced to come out of their houses personally and hand to me all their cows and buffalo to repay us!'

"Hearing this I became very sad and said: 'O Pranasakhe Madhumangala, all the Vrajavasis, including the Bhilas and Pulindas are dearer than the dearest to Me. These cowherdsmen are non-different from Me. It would be very improper to deal with them like that!'

"Subala then said: 'If that is the case, then why are you trying to do business with these gopis in such a way? The smṛti scriptures say that if you try to make a profit through doing business with your friends you will end up quarrelling and the relationship will be disturbed. So you should just give them some pearls in the way I have suggested. '

"Then the gopis said angrily: 'O most crooked Subala, you are just trying to cheat us as usual. You can live like a king with your pearls, but we're going home!' Then, as the gopis were leaving, Subala stopped them and humbly told Lalita: 'Sakhi Lalita! This kind of business dealing is damaging our affectionate relationship. Actually I am trying to help you by convincing Kṛṣṇa to allow you to have some pearls in this way, otherwise He wouldn't let you have any at all. So first work out a price and then you can worry about paying for them later. '

"Then the gopis turned to Me again and said: 'Friend, give up your jokes now and tell us Your price. ' I replied: 'Subala, whose price should I work out first?' He replied: 'First decide on Lalita's price. She is the chief of all these girls. ' I said: 'I will certainly work out a fair price for her, as if she should fight with Me, I would certainly be defeated. Even though I am a lion among men I would have to do whatever she says and let her have some pearls at her own price. '

"Subala smiled and said: 'O Hero of Gokula, why should you have to struggle with a weak girl like Lalita? With the lotusbud-like little finger of your left lotus hand You held up Govardhana Hill, which defeats the pride of Lord Siva's mountain, for seven days and nights. ' Madhumangala said: 'Friend, Kṛṣṇa did this in His pauganda age, but now He is sprinkled with the nectar of youth, which has caused the desire tree of Cupid to grow lakhs and lakhs of leaves on Him. '

"Subala asked: 'How is this, tell me?' Madhumangala expertly replied: 'He who defeated great demons in His youth is now being usurped by the mountain of Cupid. Now He is being cut by the sharp nail-weapons of the gopis, being defeated in Cupid's great battle with them!'

"Then I laughed and said: 'Subala, he's right! Unlike before, I am now always stunned by Srimati Radharani's eyebrows, that twang like Cupid's bow, and by Her anger and neglect. How can you call such girls abalah (weak)?' Hearing this, Lalita smiled, hiding her bliss, and said with mock anger: 'O Subala, you clown. Why don't you worship the goddess of Bhandiravana, Candravali, with Madhumangala and the cheat of Gokula, Kṛṣṇa? You truly must have worshipped her, since you have got her mercy in being expert at cheating!'

"Then Nandimukhi, who had just come from visiting Mother Purnamasi, came with a message from the saintly lady. The message said: 'O Lalita, stop your joking with Vrajendranandana. Try to be well behaved, as is recommended in the scriptures. Through all this joking you will never come to an agreement with this boy. And You, O Prince of Gokula, please accept what I am about to tell You. '

"Excited, I said: 'Nandimukhi! Please shower Me with the nectar of the saintly mother Purnamasi's order!' Nandimukhi said: 'Radha and the maidens of Vraja are the objects of Purnamasi's great affection, and she is also very attached to You. She wants You to give up Your fanaticism and settle for whatever Srimati Radharani can give You. You, being the son of the most wealthy King of Vraja, should satisfy Her with whatever You can give. Thus You shall be known as the giver of bliss to the whole of Gokula. '

"I proudly replied: 'Previous to this, I received a flower-like order from the holy mother through the hands of Subala, saying that I should settle everything with Lalita, leaving aside dealings with the other gopis. ' Everyone then smiled and looked at Lalita's angry frowning eyebrows and trembling lips. Nandimukhi smiled and said: 'O Prince of Vraja, I heard this also. Now give up Your jokes and ascertain the right price for everyone. '

"Then I said: 'So you tell me what price I should set for this girl Jyestha. ' Nandimukhi said: 'The Lord of Wealth should be first to suggest a price. ' I said: 'The moon in the stellar path of My heart is usually surrounded by the Radha and Anuradha (Lalita) stars, but now Jyestha (another star or gopi) has now come between them. I must embrace her now also. ' Radha, Visakha and Lalita feigned anger and I said: 'Nandimukhi, why are they angry while hearing about great things to be gained?'

"She replied: 'Beautiful one, they are angry because to kiss the Syama-moon from Gokula, or to touch Him, or even to see Him from a distance will destroy their chastity. '''

Hearing these pleasing stories, Satyabhama said: "O Lord, why were Lalita, Radha and Visakha angry when they heard You speaking about the stars with these names as a joke?"

Krsna replied: "Dearest, because I turned the meanings of the names around, since Anuradha means Lalita. "

Satyabhama said: "O Yadavendra. My mind cannot be satisfied after hearing these ambrosial stories. Tell me more! Tell me more!"

Krsna said: "Then I smiled and, looking at Campakalata's moonlike face, I moved My hands and said: 'Nandimukhi, I have been wondering for many days how Campakalata attained perfection. ' Nandimukhi replied: 'What did You think the reason is?' I said: 'Because a campaka vine is generally immobile, but this vine moves. Not only that, but she carries two big fruits on her. May this campaka vine scent My chest, hanging around it with her abundant fragrance. On the strength of My own perfection I will hang around her neck along with her emerald necklace as a bluish sapphire necklace, in between her breasts. '

"Subala said: 'I can see what perfection Campakalata has achieved, but what perfection do you have?' I replied: 'Friend, what can I do, even though you look for My perfection you cannot see it. ' Nandimukhi then said: 'O sweet-formed one, we are all eager to hear what kind of perfection You have achieved, and when you achieved it and how and where. ' I said: 'One day, when My family went on pilgrimage to Ambikavana near Mathura, I released My father from the grip of a python. On the mere touch of my toe this python became a beautifully decorated Vidyadhara. I held up Govardhana Hill for seven days with just the finger of one hand, and by My mere glance I revived Subala and the other cowherdboys from the poisonous bite of Kaliya. I saved you all from blazing forestfires! Who is there in Gokula who can estimate My powers?"

"Hearing this, Lalita smiled and said: 'Nandimukhi, this is all true, but since Krsna fell down from celibacy, all these perfections have been lost. It's all the fault of Govardhana Malla's wife, Candravali and her friends Padma and Saibya. They have enjoyed with Him. '

"Hearing this, I smiled and replied to her: 'tejyasam na dosaya, vahneh sarva-bhujo yatha (SB 10. 33. 29) - 'Just as the fire is never polluted by eating or consuming anything dirty, rather it become stronger from it, similarly the Lords of the universe are never contaminated by performing some worldly impious act. Therefore My perfection remains even though I'm always enjoying sweet pastimes with the girls of Vraja. Rather, My perfection shines even more brightly through it!'

"Madhumangala said: 'Lalite, He speaks the truth, otherwise how could Krsna grow pearls out of the soil?' She laughed and said: 'O friend, how is that on the strength of Krsna's mystic perfection?' He replied: 'If it were not so, then how did it happen?' She said: 'It's just because of Vrndavana's own soil. ' I replied: 'Then why could you girls only grow thorn twigs with the same seeds in the same soil?' But she contended that perhaps they had chosen some ground with bad soil.

"Then Srimati Radharani said: 'But sakhi Lalite, Visakha said also that our soil was good. ' Nandimukhi said: 'Yes Lalite, Visakha spoke the truth. ' Lalita wondered how that was, and Nandimukhi continued: 'How can pearls not grow from soil where the fancy vines of loving devotion are sprinkled with the nectar of love? In this land of Vrndavana everyone is certainly a devotee.

"Lalita smiled and said: 'Still, Visakha, then how can a debauchee attached to female association still live on such sacred soil? Tell me. ' Visakha replied: 'Even advanced yogis fall down, what to speak of the neophytes. Even liberated souls fall down when they hear the wicked flute of this womanizer, and they take birth from the wombs of earthly people, again bound up by the ropes of material existence.

"I replied: 'Visakhe, you have spoken very well. ' Subala asked Me why I thought that, and I told him: 'Even the sages in the Dandaka forest who were adept in severe austerities and who were liberated souls, took birth in Gokula after becoming attracted to Me through hearing about My cleverness, beauty and loving affairs, hearing these stories from the mouth of Narada Muni. Now they are enjoying the garland on My chest here in Vrndavana, becoming absorbed in My loving pastimes. Apart from them, many other liberated souls, becoming attracted to My inconceivable qualities, have taken birth in Vraja as birds, animals and trees and all types of mobile and immobile entities, relishing My sweet pastimes in ecstasy. '

"Subala said: 'Friend, You have described it well. ' Lalita then said, slightly smiling: 'If all the liberated souls come down to earth to take birth here, then why does such a most perfect soul as Yourself quarrel about a little wealth like this?' I replied: 'O foolish Lalite! Because you girls are so proud of the wealth of your youthful beauty, you have given up all religious principles and are wandering around here and there. But what would happen if I, the son of the virtuous King of Vraja, would give up the pious profession of vaisyas - agriculture, cow protection, trade and banking? Even if one practices one of these four professions one attains perfection in vaisya-dharma. Then, what to speak of Myself, who am practicing all four of them?'

Nandimukhi smiled and said: 'O Prince who is fixed in His profession. I can see that You are practicing agriculture, cow protection and trading, but what about banking, in which one makes profit through charging interest?' I replied: 'Nandimukhi, don't you know how we do that? I have already started making profit from the great scarcity of pearls in Vraja!'

"Visakha said, slightly smiling: 'O Subala, your friend is still praising Himself, glorifying the beauty of His religious adherence, even though His activities are quite deplorable. This is very improper. ' Subala said: 'My friend is not just out for His own profit, but also for the increased wealth of everyone. ' Nandimukhi did not believe that and demanded to know that was so. Subala replied: 'He gives everyone the restless glances from the corners of His eyes, which defeat the movements of lotuses, and millions of fresh young Cupids are defeated by His youthful beauty. His speech is like a pond full of the essence of nectar. '

"Madhumangala added: 'Subala, my friend, you have forgotten all the other items with which He increases everyone's wealth. ' Excited, Subala asked Madhumangala to remind him of those things, so Madhumangala continued: 'His capricorn-earrings, jewelled anklebells, necklaces, armlets, bracelets and rings, as well as His most beautiful and sweet loving playfulness. '

"Lalita responded: 'O revered one! Why do you fail to mention another of the ways He benefits others?' He distributes the remnants of the nectar from His lips to the chaste cowherd girls. ' Srimati Radharani said: 'Lalite! Truly, along with giving the elixir of this nectar to drink, He also distributes His two arms that defeat the pride of the round sapphire bolts of gates. His chest defeats an emerald door, and His hips defeat piles of emeralds. His face defeats the pride of the sweetness of billions of autumn moons, His lotus feet are sweeter than fresh leaves, His beautiful body is sweeter than blue lotuses and the sapphire, and with His sweet, soft speech He produces flower-scented words. His mouth also smiles very sweetly. '

"Madhumangala then spoke to Me: 'Friend, You are very bold in using sweet words out of greed to taste the sweet lips of others' wives, and You speak many words to them, but the harsh Jatila will not give You the price for these pearls. As a friend I am speaking to You for Your benefit, please don't doubt me. '

"I replied to him: 'Friend, you are speaking like this because you don't know the great price Srimati Radharani and these housewives of Vraja can pay Me. They greatly satisfy Me by giving Me the nectar of their lips. For the two ruby-red lines I make on their chests every morning with My fingernails, they repay Me fourfold in the evening! Lalita repays Me with jewel-like kisses that flow like a stream of nectar, and also with her quarrelling, and Visakha also repays Me the nectar of My lips

threefold in the evening. Campaklata and the other girls repay Me either twofold or threefold, although there is one exception. Rangamala only repays Me once when I touch her breasts. Also her friend Tulasi does not repay Me properly when I embrace her vine-like body. '

Madhumangala expressed great concern when he heard this: 'Ayi! Rangamala and Tulasi, have you no fear of religious principles? You cannot even repay my innocent friend after He gives you all these divine gifts? You are very cunning and ungrateful!''

*Helsinki, Finland  
11 September 2003*

## **PREMA-SAMPUTA**

**By Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura**

Once, in the morning, Hari came to Srimati Radharani's courtyard in the beautiful dress of a woman and sat down, shyly covering His eyes with a crimson apron. When Vrsabhanu's daughter saw Him from a distance, She said: "O Lalita! How amazing! Look! Who is that beautiful lotus-faced girl whose dress and ornaments are enchanting and who illuminates My courtyard with Her emerald lustre?"

Hearing this, Lalita and ViSakha came before the disguised Krsna and said: "O slender girl, who are You? Where are You from? Why have You come here?" But Lord Krsna did not reply.

Srimati Radharani then came to Krsna in a thoughtful mood and curiously asked Him: "Who are You? Your lustre enchants My mind. Are You a goddess? Your form is so beautiful!"

Krsna remained silent, so Radha said: "O beautiful, noble girl. Quickly satisfy our curiosity by introducing Yourself to us. Know Yourself to be our intimate friend. O girl with Your head held low, why should You be shy or afraid before us?"

Hearing that, the disguised Krsna breathed deeply. Seeing that He partly uncovered His face and remained silent, Srimati Radharani said: "O beautiful girl. I understand that You must have some heartache, otherwise You wouldn't be in such a condition. O lotus-faced girl, tell us of your problems. Trust Me completely, and I will try to remove Your distress. The burning blisters of Your heartache can only be extinguished by revealing Your mind to a friend.

"Are You now separated from Your love? Are You sorry to see some faults in him? Maybe You are afraid because You offended him in some way? Or maybe some of Your enemies have gossiped about You with Your lover? Or maybe Your husband is not so great, and for that You feel some disgust in Your mind, after which You have become attached to some other, rare man, for which You, like Me, are chastised by Your superiors with harsh words. That must be why You are so sad.

"O slender girl. Has Your co-wife, blinded with pride over her fortune, pierced Your heart with the arrows of her harsh words? No, that is not possible, for who could be

more beautiful than You? O moon-faced girl, from Mother Purnamasi I have heard the story of Mohini. Who could enchant Lord Siva other than Her? But even when he was enchanted, You were not! But now, when Lord Hari will cast His glance at You, even You will be enchanted. It will be very amusing to see You enchant each other!"

Hearing these words, the disguised Krsna covered His whole body with His veil to cover the goose pimples of ecstasy that appeared on His skin. Seeing this, Srimati Radharani said: "O sakhi! Are You suffering from something? Do You have pain in Your chest, back or head? O ViSakha, quickly get the valuable oil My father lovingly gave Me and that can cure all diseases. That oil is the very form of My father's love, so I will softly rub the body and head of this beautiful girl with it with My own hand. Then all the pain will go from Her limbs. I will remove Her pain by bathing Her in very fragrant lukewarm water which will cure Her and make Her happy. Then She will be able to speak clearly with us. "

After some time of massaging the girl, Srimati Radharani noticed that Her condition had not changed. She told Her friends: "I was dedicated to speaking sweet words and curing Her by massaging Her carefully and lovingly with oil, but still this girl just sits there, saying nothing. Then I understood She might be a pretender. Maybe She isn't in any pain. Anyway, I will try again by applying the elixir obtained from Dhanvantari. That will nourish Her.

"If I can make the lotus-like palms of the king of the kunjās touch the breasts of this girl, She will laugh, shriek and call out. What more can I say? She will make Me smile watching the increase of Her lust!"

Hearing these words, beautiful Krsna covered the smile that appeared on His lotus-like face with His veil, which He pulled over His curly locks with His delicate fingers. Srimati Radharani and Her friends were astonished. They became like cakora birds, drinking the nectar of Lord Krsna's words as He began to speak with a perfectly imitated woman's voice.

He said: "I am a goddess, and I live in the heavenly planets. I came to you because I am very sad. Listen, O fair-faced girl, I want to know something. Who else but You can help Me?"

Srimati Radharani said: "O beautiful girl. Your identity as a goddess cannot be false. I can clearly see that You are one. Who is there like You among the human beings? There is no comparison to Your enchanting lustre! You can only be compared to Yourself. O girl with a face like an autumn lotus. Are You separated from Your husband? Don't feel offended, I'm not trying to make fun of You, I'm just wondering what's wrong with You. If You love Me, then consider Me Yours and reveal Your mind to Me. "

Lord Krsna replied: "Why do you doubt that I am Your friend? Although I am a goddess, I am Yours! Believe Me when I tell You that I want to become Your maidservant, having tasted a drop of the ocean of Your love, Your form and Your qualities. Please listen to Me now. You must remove the heartache I feel, which is very intense.

"O sakhi! There is a flute sound which resounds in Vrndavana, and which enters our heavens so forcefully that the heavenly girls not only lose taste for embracing their

husbands, but they feel disgust after remembering such embraces. When that flute sound, which is like a mixture of nectar and poison, enters the ears of the demigoddesses it overwhelms them so much that their bodies look like they are on fire. Seeing this, their husbands cry out: 'Alas! What has happened?' and immediately let go of them.

"O sakhi, listen! No-one in heaven is old. Everyone is young, so who will chastise who? After hearing this flute sound everyone ends up in the same condition. No-one can mock anyone else! That sound destroys the goddesses' vows of chastity. When I heard this sound every day I thought to Myself: 'O! What makes this sound? Where does it come from?' Following the sound I came down from heaven to earth and blissfully stayed at Vamsivata for some days, seeing Your incomparable pastimes with Sri Hari and becoming acquainted with His boyfriends and girlfriends there. "

Hearing this, Srimati Radharani said in a sweet and joking voice: "O fortunate girl. You are the most intelligent girl in heaven. No-one is more clever than You, because You still bear the name Sumana (flower or good state of mind) although Your mind is cut by the sword of eagerness. "

After hearing Srimati Radharani's sweet jokes, Krsna coloured His lips with His sweet smile and said with slightly knitted eyebrows: "O Radhe! I don't know anyone who is Your equal in protecting Me from any other man seeing Me. "

Srimati Radharani replied: "Is there any need of any other man after You have enjoyed with Krsna, for Whom You have come here? Tell Me what You want to ask Me. I only joked with You because I consider You to be My girlfriend. "

Lord Krsna said: "Sakhi. Who can defeat You in joking? O Radhe, You are My friend. Although You are only a human being, all the goddesses want to purify themselves by singing Your glories and bowing down to You. I am not flattering You, so don't be shy. I'm not indifferent to You, I can never lie to You. Even Laksmi and Parvati are not equal to You in auspicious attributes! There is no girl in the three worlds or beyond them with so much love as You, and even in their minds these girls don't dare to challenge You. I have heard this in Parvati's assembly on the peak of Mount Kailash. Hearing of Your glories I wanted to see You, but then I became upset. Unfortunately My heart does not break of sorrow, because it is so hard. "

Hearing this, Srimati Radharani said: " Sakhi! Why are You upset? Tell Me quickly. " But Krsna could not reply, for His voice was choked with tears, so He remained silent as tears streamed over His face. Radha personally wiped these tears from His eyes with Her sari.

Lord Krsna remained silent for a moment and then told Srimati Radharani: "How did you develop this strong, causeless, incomparable love for this lusty boy, Krsna? How can You give Yourself so much misery by trusting such an untrustworthy boy as Him? Although He is adorned with qualities like beauty, heroism, incomparable fortune and fame, Krsna also has one fault, by which all these qualities are spoiled. That is that He does not consider someone else's love, and that He is very lusty. Therefore He is not fit to take shelter of.

"One day Krsna plays many games with You, showing You much false love, taking You like a naive girl to a secluded place at night. But then He leaves You to go off to

some other girl. Hearing Your lamentations over this, all Your girlfriends and even the vines and birds begin to cry. I have been watching all this, hiding at Vamsivata, feeling much pain over it.

"During the rasa dance, Krsna left all the gopis to show special feelings to You. But after becoming tired of playing with You in the forest after a while He suddenly left You alone again!

"I cannot forget Your loud lamentations at that time, as You fainted from misery. Through all eight stages of life until death these lamentations of Yours will remain burned into My heart.

"I am a goddess, O famous girl. I never feel any pain. But alas! Even My heart was suddenly pierced by a spear of pity after seeing You like that. There seems to be no way to take that spear out. My heart is so attached to You that it has no desire to know anything about heaven, and it is not able to remain here for even a second. My mind is spinning and is unable to stay at ease. Now, after a long time, I am revealing My feelings to You.

"I have become afraid of Krsna, because He is simply devoid of piety and shame, and He never traverses the path of compassion. As a baby He killed a woman (Putana), in his childhood a calf (Vatsasura) and in His youth a bull (Aristasura)!"

Srimati Radharani replied: "O beautiful girl. You have the same indescribable potency as Krsna. Although You are criticizing Him so much, My mind is still very attached to You. You are My friend. Don't go back to heaven, but always stay with Me in Vraja. I will open the box of my love and show all the excellent jewels in it. "

Lord Krsna said: "Alas! Still You don't trust Me. Don't just ask Me to be Your friend. I want to Your maidservant. Be pleased with Me and order Me. I swear to You on the name of Lord Visnu, be pleased with Me. I have no other shelter than You. "

Hearing this, Srimati Radharani said: "Sakhi. If you want to understand My love for Krsna then listen. Prema is so great that even the knowers of the Vedas cannot know it, nor others who claim to know it. Sakhi! One who teaches prema to an inquisitive person cannot know it, nor can their hearer know it. It's all just imitation! Prema disappears before both the discriminate and indiscriminate person, but that pure-hearted soul who is free from discrimination and who is full of sacred greed, is able to approach the throne of natural love. That is shown through the lover's activities, which are only dedicated to the happiness of the beloved.

"Just as a lion feeds himself on elephants, prema feeds itself, defeating all miseries that are as heavy as mountains and are caused by things of this world, the next world, one's own family, one's enemies or one's most beloved one. That lion of prema is proud of its bodily lustre and is fearless. He can go to sleep without worrying. What worries will the lion have when the dogs of unfavourable attachments bark? Prema shines like a lamp in the darkness.

"Because of this deceitfulness, prema appears to be fresh and intoxicating at every moment, giving joy to the three worlds like the cool moon (during union) and heat like the burning sun at the time of universal destruction during separation.

"O dear sakhi! In whom else in all the three worlds or beyond them but in Krsna, the prince of the cowherds, is this prema to be found? Only the doe-eyed gopis of Vrndavana can relish this, according to their qualifications

"Sometimes this prema, which gives Krsna unlimited bliss, appears to be lust, but sometimes lust also looks like prema to some people. Krsna, the crown jewel of clever artists, knows this, but that lust does not make Him happy. And when one gopi says: 'O my friend, I'm very much afflicted by feeling of separation. Quickly bring me to Krsna' then You should not think that is lust, because she is only interested in Krsna's happiness then.

"Krsna is an ocean of love, a mine of jewel-like qualities, and He is most attractive to the girls. For this He shows symptoms of lust like deceitfulness, naughtiness and crookedness, but this is actually prema. Can a hundred thousand girls, even with great endeavor, satisfy Krsna's desires? None of them can. So it must be their causeless love for Him that makes Him interested in them.

"Of all these gopis, Lord Krsna is most attracted to Me. That is well known in the world. That can never be false. He considers My love to be as great as Mount Meru, and the love of the other gopis to be like three or four mustard seeds. Krsna reciprocates with the love of the other gopis, and He enjoys with them accordingly. That is not wrong of Him, but if one gopi gets out of line and makes Him unhappy, then I become very sad.

"If Krsna sometimes doesn't show up at the meeting place, then I know He must have met some obstacle. Even though His mind is fixed on Me He may feel obliged sometimes to enjoy with some other gopi, being stopped on His way by her. He will not feel happy with her, but be burning in a fire of misery the whole night. For this sorrow of His I am again very sad. I will cry, thinking: 'My dress, ornaments and form are all useless!' You have all experienced that.

"Then when Krsna humbly comes to Me in the morning I will angrily tell Him: 'Go back and enjoy with that other girl. ' But that is also all for His pleasure. That is the way of love in Vraja.

"I show My own feelings by saying: 'O cheater! Why did You leave Me to go to another girl?' and Krsna shows His feelings by standing before Me with the love-signs of another girl on His body, admitting His own offense.

"Therefore I am saying, O sakhi, as long as the light of prema does not shine through the face, it will shine steadily in the abodes of both the lover's hearts. But if it is brought outside it will vanish or dim. The candle of prema can show its own abundant lustre to a realized soul as it comes out through the windows of the eyes and it illuminates the cheeks, lips, forehead and chest in a sublime way. But although this prema shines from the face of Krsna, it is never satisfied, because He cleverly covers it with a curtain of lies, so that it will look like lust.

"When one lover is angry with Him, Krsna will say: 'O dearest one, I love you the most! I cannot even dream of letting another girl in My heart!' But when that girl stays angry with Him, seeing the love-signs of another girl on Him, He will come and tell Me all this.

"Then He will describe the beauty and sweetness of My face and eyes, just to enjoy with Me, as if He is overwhelmed by lust. But He does not show His prema by saying 'You are My life' and so on.

"But when a gopi is burning in the fire of separation and the ocean of her patience is reduced to a spoonful by her eagerness to meet Him, she reveals her prema by singing verses like:

*yat te sujata-caranamburuham stanesu  
bhitah sanaih priya dadhimahi karkasesu  
tenatavim atasi tad vyathate na kim svit  
kurpadibhir bhramati dhira bhavad-ayusam nah*

"O dearly beloved! Your lotus feet are so soft that we place them gently on our breasts, fearing that Your feet will be hurt. Our life rests only in You. Our minds, therefore, are filled with anxiety that Your tender feet might be wounded by pebbles as You roam about on the forest path. " (SB 10. 31. 19)

"In this way she clearly expresses her unmotivated love for Krsna. Although the life-airs are unable to penetrate the deep darkness of this great separation, the lamp of prema shines brightly in it, because it is nourished by the oil of great affection.

"After abandoning the gopis in the rasa dance He also left Me. Listen to why He did this. The prince of Vraja is an ocean of divine love, and He considers Me to be the greatest of His lovers. I can never take offense at His behaviour.

"He seated Me on a divine throne of matchless good fortune and adorned Me with many kinds of jewel-like pastimes, wandering from one forest to another with Me, and enjoying loving pastimes with Me without remembering any other gopi. Then I thought to Myself: 'My girlfriends cannot see this great nectar-ocean of bliss. Where are they now, afflicted by separation? What shall I do?'

"If We wait here for a moment, the sakhis who are wandering here and there looking for Us will soon find Us. ' Thinking like this, I told Krsna: 'Dearest one, I cannot go any further. ' And we sat down for a moment.

"Sri Krsna, the crown jewel of clever pranksters, and the foremost relisher of transcendental mellow, knew what was on My mind and thought to Himself: 'If I wander through the forest with Srimati Radharani there will be no happiness. All the gopis will become sad, and if We both wait for them here they will find us and chastise Us for leaving them. Then all our lilas will stop for the night and the gopis will go home without dancing the rasa dance with Me. '

"Therefore He left Me, so that the gopis would put the blame on Him instead of Me, and they would love Me in all respects. He thought: 'They will be immersed in an ocean of astonishment after seeing Her matchless fever of separation from Me. Their pride of their love for Me will be diminished and they will see how Radha is billions of times better than all of them, in the mood of union and in separation.

"He thought: 'They may think that I am lusty, and that is why I left them to play with Srimati Radharani, although their love for Me is much greater than Hers. Thus

they may accuse Us. But when they are burned by the flames of separation from Me that burn Srimati Radharani, as they come closer to Her, they will realize that these flames are much higher than the insignificant fires of their love.

"He thought: 'I want them all to unite, and in this way My desire will be fulfilled. At the same time they will not be jealous when I later dance in the middle of the circle of the rasa dance, with Srimati Radharani as the central gopi. Just as one is ultimately helped by an eye-ointment that initially burns, similarly a well-meaning friend sometimes has to give pain to his friend to help him. '

"O goddess. Thinking like this, Krsna lovingly carried Me on His chest for a while and then said: 'Dearest One, just wait here for a moment. ' Then He left Me behind in a soft place.

"When Krsna saw how upset I was about this He felt very sorry, but just as He was about to return to console Me, My girlfriends came and found Me there and comforted Me in My mood of intense separation.

"Actually, Krsna didn't do anything wrong by killing the demons Aristasura, Bakasura, Aghasura, Vatsasura and the deceitful Putana, because they were killed by the power of Lord Visnu, who appeared in Him (Krsna) to protect the devotees. Krsna's transcendental feats, like killing these demons and lifting Govardhana Hill prove Garga Muni's words to Nanda Maharaja that Krsna is equal to Lord Narayana in qualities. But, O devi, Lord Narayana cannot equal Krsna in form, attributes and sweetness. That's what I understood from the words of Garga, the best of the Munis. "

Hearing these beautiful words of Srimati Radharani, Lord Hari eagerly said: "I know that You are the only vessel of the prema You have just described. O dear friend! The essence of your ambrosial talks about prema is that it makes the lover's faults look like qualities, it makes the misery the lover gives seem like the beloved taste of nectar, it makes one unable to tolerate even the slightest misery that the lover may feel, it makes one unable to give up one's body and it makes the lover seem glorious even though he may not be glorious at all. That is prema, O Radha, and You are the only shelter of that prema, just as I have heard in Parvati's assembly.

"But, O sakhi! Hari does not have that same love for You. That I can see from his activities! Therefore My heart burns when I see Your heart burning in a forest fire of misery.

"How can we believe Your explanation of why He left You in the rasa dance? We have never heard this from Him, nor from His friends. And when did they ever speak the truth?

Srimati Radharani said: "Sakhi! I know exactly and immediately what is on My lover's mind. "

Lord Krsna replied: "Radha! How could You know? Have You studied the Acyuta yoga scriptures, so that You know how to enter other people's bodies?"

Srimati Radharani said: "You are a demigoddess, so You are always eager to learn this Acyuta yoga. I am but a human being, so how can I be like You? If you think You can believe Me, I will tell You how I can know what is in My lover's mind. Otherwise, why should I waste My words?"

Lord Krsna replied: "O, My dear Radha. If You can logically convince Me, then why shouldn't I believe You? Your lover may be an ocean of qualities, but I don't believe He actually loves You.

Srimati Radharani said: "You are an expert joker. You must be joking when You call someone who does not know the mind of Her beloved a seer who is able to enter someone else's body or mind. "

Krsna said: "Radha, I am sorry that You cannot see Krsna, although You claim to know His mind. Why are You crying loudly?" Srimati Radharani said: " You speak the truth, but listen. At that time I did not have this intuitive feeling. I was just crying out of separation from Krsna. "

Krsna then said: "Gandarvike. I don't argue whether You know His mind or not, but the question is if He knows Yours. " Radha replied: "He knows My mind. Why do You ask? Listen to the secret surrounding this. I will tell You, only because You control Me with Your love. "

Krsna said: "Radhe! I ask You this boldly because I am overwhelmed with love for You. You should tell Me it exactly as I want to hear it, and don't hide anything. "

Srimati Radharani said: "We know what is in each other's minds, and We always dwell there. This is not imagination. We are actually one soul. We can never be split in two.

"We are one soul, full of deep rasa, with a golden and bluish form, like two lotus flowers, one golden and the other blue, in one lake. As a two-wicked cup full of oil destroys the darkness on both sides, We destroy the darkness of Our nearby girlfriends with Our two bodies, although We are one soul.

"O sakhi! When the wind of separation seems to blow out the lamp of our love, Our expert girlfriends carefully protect it and give it new life by arranging for Us to meet each other. O auspicious girl. Remove the darkness of Your doubts by opening the box of My heart and looking at the secret jewels of love in it. Hold them in Your heart and never show them to anyone!"

Krsna said: "I carefully considered what You told Me just now, and now My mind becomes very eager to directly test Your words. Now You are here, but where is Your lover? Is He at home or is He tending His cows in the forest? How can you make Me believe that You are one soul without allowing Me to test it? O fair-faced girl, I will firmly believe You when You can show Me that You are thinking of the same thing as Him at the same time. Is Your lover close by or far away? Quickly think of this and I will gladly believe that You are one soul with two bodies.

"I will not be faithless if by chance You cannot meet because You are withheld by Your superiors, because of some demon, or because of any other reason, though You

may be thinking of each other. Although You are locked in Your house and You cannot call Your lover, go out to meet Him or bring Him to You, still, O restless eyed girl, You must remember Him just once on My request. O Krsna-priya, we will be very happy if He would come. Now is a good opportunity, because Your superiors are not here. So fearlessly remove the misery coming from My doubts. "

Being requested like this, Maharaja Vrsabhanu's daughter said: "O sakhi, don't make fun of Me. If I cannot do what You want, My prema will be put to shame by My great pain. "

Then Srimati Radharani prayed: "O You who are praised by the demigods. O effulgent one. O My chosen Deity, the sungod. O You who gladdens the three worlds with His audience. O fulfiller of all desires. O merciful one. O Lord of the lotus flowers. O witness of all truths and falsehoods. If Gandarvika and Giridhari are one soul, then let Giridhari now appear before Me to please My girlfriends. "

Saying this, Srimati Radharani meditated on Her beloved Lord, Sri Krsna, with closed eyes, controlling Her senses like a yogini. Then Lord Krsna gave up His female disguise, winked at His loyal girlfriends and began to kiss and embrace of Srimati Radharani. Srimati Radharani's skin was studded with goose pimples of ecstasy when She saw Her lover coming in Her meditation as well externally, and She washed the mascara from Her eyes with Her ecstatic tears.

When fair-eyed Radha came back to Her senses She shyly covered Her face with Her veil, while Lalita told Krsna: "O playful one. It's most amazing that You came here in such an unseen way. This inner chamber is only accessible to housewives, and even the wind cannot enter it. Any man who can enter this chamber is the crest jewel of all bold men. Not only is this chamber hard to enter, but Srimati Radharani is also protected by Her friends like me. All the chaste women purify themselves by bathing in the pure Ganges water of Srimati Radharani's fame. You are so shameless! My friend sat down on Her asana to meditate before worshipping the Sungod after Her ritual bath, and now You have forcibly touched and contaminated Her. Aren't You afraid of the Sungod? Have You given up all social and religious etiquette? Don't You have any shame? Anyway, Madhava, You're lucky today. Jatila and Abhimanyu are not at home and we are all weak girls. O best of the womanizers, You are very lucky!"

Lord Krsna replied: "It's not my fault. I was playing in the courtyard of My barn when I suddenly remembered Srimati Radharani, and then this goddess brought Me here. "

Radha said: "Lalita! Where is this goddess now? I have to see her to believe her. "

Lalita said: "The goddess became free from distress when she saw You meeting with Krsna. Now she shines in this room, and we have all become most happy. "

Lord Krsna said: "Show Me that goddess. " But Lalita remained silent. Krsna then said: "In such a short time I have understood Your shamelessness. Has any perfected lady or goddess come here, from whom you have taken a perfect mantra with which you want to control Me and force Me into slavery? O Srimati Radharani, I also want a mantra from this goddess. Help Me to get the same mantra that You received. I very eagerly take shelter of You. Take Me to a lonely place and make Me Your disciple. "

Srimati Radharani said: "Your flute already knows that enchanting art with which You take the chaste housewives on Your lap. " Krsna replied: "But if You steal the flute, then what will be My destination? Even through My flute I cannot have My desires fulfilled. "

Lalita said: "Seeing You, this goddess shyly hides inside the house without coming out. So how can she give You this mantra? If You are eager to get it, then go inside Yourself. If she is kind upon You, You will have Your desires fulfilled. "

After hearing this, Lord Krsna entered the house and Srimati Radharani said: "Lalita, what's happening? I'm afraid. " Lalita replied: "What are You afraid of? Come, we'll all go with You and Hari to see this sakhi. "

The seeds of Krsna's words were thus planted in Radha's field-like heart and sprinkled with the nectar stream of jokes of the cloudlike sakhis, causing a stream of arguments to sprout, that bore the juicy fruit of true conclusions.

Then Lalita said: "Sakhi! That goddess has disappeared. Where has she gone? We're quickly going out to look for her. You can make Your beloved happy by giving Him this mantra Yourself. " Then she quickly left with her girlfriends.

At that time Sri Sri Radha-Krsna decorated each other with so many play jewels from Their love box, thus defeating the lustre of millions of Cupids. Even the great saints defeat Cupid by always hearing, glorifying and remembering such loving transcendental pastimes. Anyone who faithfully hears or describes this pastime of the Supreme Lord with the gopis of Vraja attains supreme devotion to Krsna, and quickly becomes free from the heart's disease of lust, becoming fixed in Krsna consciousness.

This book "Prema Samputa" was compiled by someone on the bank of Radhakunda and Syamakunda in the month of Phalguna (February-March) 1606 Saka era (1685 AD).

*ISKCON Helsinki, Finland  
13 September, 2003*

### **Like Birds, These Words**

Like birds, these words  
Racing across the sky of the heart...  
Flames of orange and blue in wings  
That drum behind blossoms of song.

Not always beautiful,  
Words can cry like lapwings of doom  
"Bewitched, bewitched"--  
The souls of men never to rest  
Trapped inside these tiny forms.

Dove, dove,  
Bird of love...  
The Word from above is  
The Devil is unable  
To guise himself so.  
Some words are ever so pure.

Like birds, these words  
We take service from  
But yet, are we not never their masters?  
What is a bird in a cage  
What is a word on a page  
But a thing ever untamed?  
Given its chance  
It flees  
Leaving you but a jot on its horizon.

Illusion's root is to presume  
The words that roost within the room  
Where the mind wiles away  
Are our own to control and enjoy.

They don't need us.  
We need them.  
"Every word a name of God."  
--*Vedanta-sutra* 2.3.15

*ISKCON Helsinki, Finland*  
*15 September, 2003*

Yesterday evening I had a look at the current issue of *Fortean Times*. This is a British monthly magazine dedicated to the investigation of the unusual. The title of the magazine indicates the dedication of the staff to the legacy of Charles Fort, an American writer who extensively researched what today would be called "paranormal phenomena. "

Anyway, in this issue for October 2003 there's an article entitled "Himmler's Crusade. " It is about an expedition of a group of Nazi SS scientists to Tibet. The SS (for *Schutzstaffel*) was the elite military organization of the Third Reich headed by Heinrich Himmler. The headquarters of the SS was Himmler's Wewelsburg Castle, which sits on a hill above the river Oder. Himmler was interested in telepathy, reincarnation, homeopathy, astronomy, Atlantis, *varnasrama-dharma* and the *Bhagavad-gita*. His castle was a kind of occult Vatican where he presided over secret "Aryan" ceremonies.

There had been an "Aryan" school of thought in Germany that went back to Friedrich Schlegel, who was one of the early European Sanskritists. He was convinced that Sanskrit was the mother-language of Europe, and that civilization had come to Europe from Central Asia, brought by an elite race called the Aryans. The word *arya* in Sanskrit means "cultured. " Schlegel found a connection between *arya* and the

German word "Ehre" (honor). The motto of the SS was *Unsere Ehre Heisst Treue* (Our Honor is Trustworthy).

In the late 1930's, Himmler sent an expedition of five SS officers with scientific qualifications to Tibet to investigate the origin of the Aryans. Why did Himmler think that Tibet was the ancient home of the Aryan race? He was probably influenced by the writings of occultist Helena Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society. Blavatsky's books are very influential among those who enjoy speculating about esoteric subjects. She claimed to be in communication with "the White Brotherhood" of ascended masters who live in Tibet at the Tashilunpo Monastery near Shigatse. Apparently the written messages of the masters would magically appear in Blavatsky's house in India. In the late 1800's the Theosophical Society was shaken up by the revelation that Madame Blavatsky wrote the messages herself and caused them to "manifest" by trickery. In any case, fifty years later Theosophy was popular in Nazi Germany; part of the reason was due to Nazi aversion to Christianity which was considered tainted by Judaism.

The expedition to Tibet was led by Ernst Schaefer, a zoologist. It reached Lhasa, Tibet's capital city, in January 1939. Its progress was carefully watched by the British government, which of course was the colonial ruler of India, Tibet's neighbor to the south. At that time the British had a diplomatic representative in Lhasa. His name was Hugh Richardson. His observations of the German expedition can be found in a file (L/P&S/12/4343) kept in the India Office of the British Library in London.

The German records of the expedition were captured by the US Army at the end of the Second World War, along with truckloads of other Nazi documents. These are kept in the National Archives at Washington D. C.

One member of the expedition, anthropologist Bruno Beger, is still alive. He is in his nineties and resides in Frankfurt am Main. While in Tibet, Beger looked for "Europid traits" (i. e. Germanic physical characteristics) among the aristocratic families of Tibet.

The expedition returned to Germany just one month before the outbreak of the Second World War. Himmler met the five SS men at the airport in Berlin. A movie was produced, *Geheimniss Tibet*, that had been filmed by cameraman Ernst Krause. The value of the expedition was in natural science; the SS officers made careful observations of remote Himalayan plant and animal life. But no evidence of people with "Nordic" or "Aryan" features were found. After the war began, Ernst Schaefer, leader of the expedition, discussed a plan with Himmler to train a guerilla army in Tibet to attack British India. It came to nothing.

In 1994 *The Mail on Sunday* a London newspaper, reported that mummies of tall, light-skinned people had been discovered in Urumchi, in the Xingjiang Province of China. But these mummies are no proof of the Aryan master race theory. It is known that in ancient times, peoples of different races traded goods along routes that passed from southern Europe through the Middle East to North India, Tibet and China. In this way Greeks, Scythians, Persians, Turks, Indians, Arabs, Chinese, Sogdians and Mongolians came into contact with one another.

The *Fortean Times* article states that there is no truth to a rumor reported in some publications that the SS expedition brought Tibetan monks to Berlin. Nor is it true

that the Red Army, invading Berlin in the last days of the Second World War, discovered hundreds of Tibetans lying dead among the ruins. That's interesting, since I have read these stories myself in different places.

*ISKCON Helsinki, Finland*  
*16 September, 2003*

Today HH Kavicandra Maharaja gave *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class here in Helsinki. He spoke on an interesting verse: 2. 9. 23. Here the Lord tells Brahma, "Penance is My heart and soul, and therefore penance and I are nondifferent. "

Maharaja commented how people today are averse to penance and austerity. The whole world civilization is geared to gratification of the senses as quickly as possible. Next to the temple in St. Louis, Missouri, USA, there is a McDonald's Restaurant. Maharaja said they guarantee to fill each customer's order within 90 seconds, otherwise the customer gets some item for free. This is what people want in Kali-yuga: to break the regulative principles with as little delay as possible.

It is so tragic that the mind shaped in this age rebels against sense-control. I remember a film from when I was a small boy called *Rebel Without A Cause*. It starred James Dean, who has in the last 20 years or so become a culture-hero. The movie was about high school students in rebellion against their parents and society. There was a scene in which James Dean and another boy raced stolen cars to the edge of a cliff. The driver who jumped from his car last, before the car flew over the edge, was the winner. The boy racing against James Dean failed to get out of his car in time and died. What a waste. The whole film was like that: kids engaged in self-destructive acts (drinking, fighting with knives) for fun. The movie was made in the 1950's, before drug use among youth was common. But no matter: these kids had their own ways of extreme sense gratification for killing themselves.

Rebel without a cause. Indeed. What is the use of rebelling against Krsna, who says He is nondifferent from devotional penance? What is the use of engaging in sense gratification in defiance of the Lord? But this is "culture" today.

*Duspurenanalena*: lust is like fire, never to be satisfied no matter how much it is fed with fuel. The Kali-yuga senses and minds are aflame with this lust. This is why Srila Prabhupada asked us to rise early each morning and chant *samsara-davanala-lida-loka*, to call for the clouds of mercy of the spiritual master to put out the fire of lust.

*ISKCON Tallinn, Estonia*  
*18 September, 2003*

Muniraja das and I took the ferry today (Thursday), crossing the Baltic Sea from Helsinki to Tallin in Estonia. The trip took an hour and a half. The boat was not crowded. We sat in the restaurant; from the ceiling on four corners of the room were suspended TV monitors that played music videos the whole way. From what I saw, the stuff was pretty banal and repetitive. Even though each video was "fresh" (not a

replay of one shown earlier), still the same themes were shown over and over: a singer driving a car; or a band performing against a city skyline; closeups of girls' faces leering and sneering into the camera; flashy computer-generated special effects. The passengers did not seem to pay much attention to this garbage. Then who keeps showing it hour after hour, and why? The music seemed to celebrate only the enslavement of modern people to urban life and technology. It was brainwashing, pure and simple.

The trip was a bit rocky; waves caused the ferry to sway from side to side as it plowed through the water. There is a stage of conditional devotional service described by Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura called *taranga-rangani* or "enjoying the waves. "

Finally, it is well-known that the very nature of bhakti is that all people become attracted to the person possessing it. And as the popular saying goes, "By the attraction of the populace one becomes wealthy. " Bhakti produces much opportunity for material gain, worship and position. These are weeds around the creeper of *bhakti*. Performing activities, or seeking ones pleasure (*ranga*) amidst these weed-like facilities, which are but small waves (*taranga*) in the ocean of *bhakti*, is called *taranga rangini*, delighting in material facilities.

That was a quotation from *Madhurya-kadambini*. *Taranga-rangani* is a type of *anisthita-bhajana-kriya*, or unsteady execution of devotional service. Other types of unsteady *bhakti* are:

False confidence (*utsaha mayi*)

Sporadic endeavour (*ghana tarala*)

Indecision (*vyudha vikalpa*)

Combat with *maya* (*visaya sangara*)

Inability to uphold vows (*niyamaksama*)

About *utsahamayi*, Srila Cakravartipada writes:

Just as a child, having just begun study of the scriptures, thinks he has immediately become a great scholar worthy of everyones praise, a person just beginning devotional service may develop the audacity to think that he has mastered everything. He is called *usaha mayi*, or filled (puffed-up) with enthusiasm.

About *ghana tarala*, he writes:

A child sometimes is diligently engaged in his studies and yet at other times, because of inability to understand the scriptures and because of lack of real taste, becomes totally negligent. In the same way, a new devotee sometimes practices the different activities of devotional service and sometimes neglects them. Being sometimes assiduous and at other times negligent, his sporadic endeavour is called *ghana tarala* (condensed-dilute, thick-thin).

See what Srila Visvanatha states about *vyudha vikalpa*:

"Shall I just spend my life happily in family life, making my wife and children Krsna conscious, and worshipping the Lord; or should I give them all up and go and sit in Vrndavana, place of meditation, and become a real success by engaging full time in hearing and chanting with no distractions? Shall I wait until the last stage, after enjoying all sorts of pleasures, when I have understood that the whole material world is simply a forest fire of affliction, or should I renounce right now? Should I regard this family life as death, a deep well concealed by grass, and give up unreliable family life while young? Or shall I wait until the death of my old parents before renouncing? If I give up family life in an unsurfeited state I will think of family life after renouncing. If I should die in that condition I will go to hell. From that type of renunciation I won't get any strength. Therefore for the time being, I will just work to keep my body alive, and later, after satisfying all my desires, I will enter Vrndavana and engage in worship of the Lord 24 hours a day. "

"Renunciation may be condemned as useless, if one depends on it to produce *bhakti*, but it is acceptable if one realizes it as being generated from *bhakti*, and dependent on *bhakti*. " Justifying renunciation in this way, and understanding that there will be no worry for food if he should become a renunciate, since it is well known that the *asramas* are full of food, he sometimes favors a life of renunciation. But at other times, using the dictum that household life is a prison only for those who are attached, he favors household life.

"Shall I engage in chanting or rather in hearing, or shall I engage in service? Let me rather engage in many angas of bhakti like Amarisa Maharaja. "

When one imagines in this way all types of options of devotional service without deciding anything, it is called *vyudha vikalpa*, or extensive indecision.

Concerning *visaya sangara*, Srila Cakravartipada writes:

*Visayavista cittanam visnvavesah suduratah varuni dig gatam vastu vrajnnaindrim kim apnuyat*--"One whose heart is lodged in materialism is far from obtaining devotion to Visnu. Can a man going east catch something which is going in the opposite direction?"

The devotee, with this understanding--that he cannot attain steadiness in serving Krsna without renunciation or detachment from material enjoyment--resolves to renounce his addictions. But though he attempts to renounce his enjoyment he ends by indulging in it, taking solace from the example of a devotee given in the Bhagavatam:

Jusamanas ca tan kaman parityago'py anisvara--"The inexperienced devotee, in spite of his attempts to give up his material desires, is unable to do so completely, and is allowed to indulge in satisfying his desires to some degree. "

This on-going battle with his previously acquired desires for sense pleasure, in which he sometimes meets with victory and sometimes with defeat, is called *visaya sangara* or war with sense pleasure.

About *niyama aksama*, the great *acarya* writes:

When the devotee will resolve: "From today I will chant such and such number of rounds of *japa* and will pay so many obeisances. And I will perform services for the devotees. I will not talk on any subject except the Lord and I will give up all association with people who talk on material matters. " Though he makes such resolutions every day, he is always unable to execute them. This is called *niyama aksama* or inability to follow rules. *Visaya sangara* is the inability to give up material activities whereas *niyama aksama* is the inability to improve his devotional activities.

Our arrival at the ISKCON Tallinn temple the after rough sea voyage was a representation of the arrival of the spirit soul into the exalted realm of pure devotional service after passing through the rough seas of *taranga-rangani*, *utsahamayī*, *ghana-tarala* and so on. We even got a nice welcoming cake and cookies for all our troubles! The devotees here are very sweet and endearing. Actually such devotees are the real wealth of ISKCON in the former Soviet states: they are innocent and unspoiled. It's not that they don't have their own version of politics, scandals, and disappointments. But somehow *bhakti* here stays ever-fresh.

It is now the next day, Friday September 19. Tattvavada Prabhu and Bhakta Jani will arrive here today by ferry from Helsinki. Early this afternoon we drive to a city called Tartu. I am to give a lecture at a university. We are to return rather late tonight to the Tallinn temple.

It has become cold, cloudy and dreary here since yesterday, which at least was half-sunny. Depressing. I am praying hard to Krsna to help me stay above the modes of nature.

*Tallink Ferry, in the middle of the Baltic Strait*  
*21 September 2003*

So here we are--myself, Tattvavada and Muniraja Prabhus, and Bhakta Jani--riding a crowded ferry back to Helsinki. It's crowded because on Sunday night the Finns who weekend in cheap Estonia have to get back to work. It seems the most popular item of luggage on board this ship is Estonian beer, which the Finns are carting back to their country by the boxful.

The dumb TV monitors are cranking out music videos, but now the sound is almost inaudible and the picture keeps freezing and breaking up. All the videos are different from those shown on the way to Estonia, but the themes are the same: city nightlife, technology, special effects and women.

Tomorrow I am in Helsinki but the next day I fly up to Lapland. I'll be doing school programs with a team of eight *brahmacaris*.

During my days in Estonia I was meditating alot on these three verses from the *Sri Stotra-ratna* of Sripad Yamunacarya.

*na dharma-nistho 'smi na catma-vedi  
na bhaktimams tvac-caranaravinde  
akincano 'nanya-gatih sharanya  
tvat-pada-mulam sharanam prapadya*

"I am not a virtuous person, fixed in the principles of religious conduct, and neither am I a great transcendentalist, awakened to spiritual knowledge. In addition to this, I have not the slightest trace of devotion for Your lotus feet. O refuge of the devotees, although I am so unqualified, please permit me to take shelter under your lotus feet, for I am now lost in this material world, I do not possess anything of value, and I have no place to turn."

*na ninditam karma tad asti loka  
sahasrasho yan na maya vyadhayi  
so'ham vipakavasare mukunda  
krandami sampraty agatis tavagre*

"In this world there is not a single abominable deed that I have not done thousands of times. Now that my sins are bearing fruit, and I have no place to turn, I come before You. I weep and cry out, 'O Mukunda'."

*aparadha-sahasra-bhajanam  
patitam bhima-bhavarnavodare  
agatim sharanagatam hare  
krpaya kevalam atmasat kuru*

"O Lord Hari, please mercifully accept this person who is a storehouse of thousands of offenses, who has fallen into the terrible ocean of repeated birth and death, who has no place to go, and who now begs shelter from You."

Well, it seems the ferry is arriving at Helsinki harbor. Time to break off this journal entry. Hare Krsna.

*Oulu, Finland  
25 September 2003*

I am living in a wooden cabin among the trees outside of the northern Finnish city of Oulu. Yesterday I gave a talk at the University of Oulu. The subject was Vedic education. I didn't focus so much on the "how" of Vedic education (I answered those kind of questions after the lecture); rather I spoke of the "why", telling the audience that Vedic education values refinement of character most of all. I cited Canakya Pandit's definition of an educated person: *matrvat para daresu*, "sees all women (except one's own wife) as mother," *para dravyesu lostravat*, "sees others' property as untouchable like garbage in the street" and *atmavat sarva bhutesu*, "empathizes with all living entities, feeling their happiness and distress as much as one feels one's own happiness and distress."

Tattvavada Prabhu was present; he remarked afterward that my talk covered all the questions that usually come after such presentation to students. Most of the students were young women. They usually ask about the position of women in Vedic culture, but I anticipated that by explaining *matrvat para daresu*. I pointed out, "This is the first point Canakya talks about: how women are to be seen in society. Establishing proper relationships between the sexes is essential to Vedic education." I went on to say, "You all have undoubtedly heard that cows are worshiped, or respected very much, in India. But do you know why? It is because a cow is one of seven kinds of mother. And women in general constitute one of these seven. In Vedic culture, mothers are worshipable. Thus every women must be respected in that way. But there is a culture that goes with this. Women should represent the qualities of the divine female principle." I explained about Radha and Krsna, the Divine Couple. At the end nobody asked any "What about women?" question.

This way of explaining things goes far beyond the limited concerns of feminists, who simply want to have as much chance as men to gratify their senses. (The she-pig wants equal time at the feeding trough as the he-pig.) When you start to say that women should be so respectable that they deserve worship, this brings their whole political mentality to a screeching halt. Respectable? *Refined? Cultured?* Whoops! They were only thinking about having equal ape-life with men.

Today I was to speak via video conferencing to a college class. I have never done this before: talk to a video camera while I watch the class in a video monitor. The class itself is in some other part of Finland for some reason. But this program has been delayed until next Wednesday, so I have nothing to report about the new experience of video conference preaching.

In all this traveling I have been doing since after Janmastami, my Saligram-sila worship has evolved into *mantra-mudra seva*. For example, here in this wooden cabin, which is the property of a sports and health retreat, I am not even supposed to burn a stick of incense. Thus there is no question of any fire *yajna*. Flowers are hard to find up here too. I am surrounded by a pine and scrub-brush forest. Probably easier to find a bear in these woods than a rose. So I just chant *mantras* for every step of the *puja* plus I show a *mudra*. I will very likely continue this. In November I go to New Zealand. I worry about the amount of my luggage. I have flown to New Zealand in years previous, and know that the airlines going there are very particular about luggage, especially about the total weight and about how much stuff you bring with you into the cabin. I shall have to reduce the Deity paraphernalia. If I stick to *mantra-mudra puja* then I need bring very little with me. Showing *mudras* for each *upacara* is very blissful: *asana, padya, acamana, madhuparka, punar-acamana, snana, vastra, abharana, gandha, dhupa, dipa, puspa, tulasi-patra, naivedya, paniyajala, punar-acamana, tambula, malya* and *sarva*--all these have their *mudras*, and *mudras* are very pleasing to the Lord.

Until I return to Helsinki, email will be difficult to do. It would be better if those who are reading this would hold off sending me any email until after 5 October. Thank you. Hare Krsna.

*Oulu, Finland*  
*26 September 2003*

On three occasions, twice in Sweden and once in Japan, I was in situations where I was able to see the American television series *X-Files*. I believe this program has run its course of popularity and is no longer being produced. *X-Files* was first broadcast in the fall of 1993 by Fox Television. By 1995 it was a worldwide sensation. It starred David Duchovny as FBI agent Fox Mulder and Gillian Anderson as his partner Dana Scully. Mulder is on assignment to investigate the FBI's so-called "X-files" which contain reports of paranormal phenomena. (The real FBI denies that it puts agents on such assignments, although the show was said in *TV Guide* magazine to be very popular with FBI agents. ) Scully is on assignment to watch Mulder. The name "Scully" is an interesting choice: a man named Frank Scully was a journalist of the 1950s who published the very first investigative book about flying saucers.

I've forgotten most of the three episodes that I saw. One was about subliminal signals sent over television that stimulated people who had been somehow trained, without conscious memory of it, to be assassins; when their killer training was "turned on" by the TV, they went out to murder people. Another episode was about an underground military complex where bodies of aliens from outer space were stored. The third was about an alien from a crashed UFO that escaped the military and was creating havoc among the people of Earth.

These *X-Files* episodes were technically well-made, but I was not impressed. None of the stories were original; the first was a recycling of the very true top secret MK-ULTRA program of the CIA from the 1950s. The second and third recycled the legendary Roswell, New Mexico, UFO crash story from the late 1940s.

What is certain about that Roswell story is, the press officer of the US Army Air Force B-29 atomic bomber base near Roswell reported a flying saucer had crashed and that it was under investigation by the military. Then the press release was withdrawn with the explanation that only a weather balloon had crashed. Decades later another story began to be told in a number of increasingly sensational books: a flying saucer had really crashed at Roswell, and tiny humanoid bodies had been found on board the wrecked machine. The weather balloon explanation was a government hoax. The bodies of the aliens were secretly flown to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base where they are kept frozen to this day under intense military security. The crash actually involved two flying saucers that suffered a mid-air collision. In one of them a little alien was found still alive. A photo was circulated showing a military officer walking with a little alien whose head was encased in a breathing apparatus. In the early 1990s a black-and-white movie turned up, printed on filmstock from the late 1940s, that showed an autopsy of an alien supposedly done by a military medical team. Even more saucer crashes were reported from other regions of the USA that were supposed to have taken place during the 1950s and '60s. All these had been covered up by the government. Then the stories bloomed into full paranoia. Area 51, a top-secret military testing ground in Nevada, is a vast laboratory where scientists are busy "back-engineering" alien spacecraft. Fully operative flying saucers are kept under guard there, as are living aliens. Not just one species of aliens, but different kinds from different planets live in a deep underground complex! The US Government permits these aliens to abduct Earth people for biological purposes necessary for the survival of these creatures, in return for unearthly technology!

Another reason why I was not impressed by the three *X-Files* episodes I saw was because as a teenager I used to watch *Outer Limits*.

Now that was a very, very, strange television show.

Imagine a normal family sitting at home in the evening, watching TV. Suddenly the screen goes black and then is rippled by sine waves, like an oscilloscope. A voice tells the family: "Do not attempt to adjust your television set. We are controlling transmission. For the next hour, sit quietly and we will control all that you see and hear. "

This was how every episode began. It was *creepy*. The general theme of *Outer Limits*, through all episodes of the series, was that Earth people are being taken over by alien intelligences. The weekly shows were often very pessimistic. Planet Earth is just a little blue marble in the sky, Earth people are weak, foolish and their own worst enemies, and space is populated by beings vastly superior to humanity. I wonder, looking back, if an unearthly intelligence was not behind this TV show itself.

One very strange truth about *Outer Limits* is that it presented fictional cases of "missing time"--meaning that some character in an episode would come under the power of an alien but would lose memory of the encounter, so that those minutes, hours or days spent with the alien would be unaccountable. The character could not explain where he was for that time. Now one might ask, "Well, what is so strange about that? We've heard a lot about these missing time UFO cases. " Yes, but not before *Outer Limits* was aired.

Three years after *Outer Limits* started suggesting this missing time phenomenon, the press began reporting "true" accounts of it, the first being the Betty and Barney Hill case. The Hills, husband named Barney and wife named Betty, reported seeing a UFO in 1966. Seeing a UFO was not so unusual by that time. Many UFOs were being reported in the mid-60s. However the Hill case took a new twist when investigators probed into Barney's missing time, which had never been reported before. A "repressed memory" was uncovered that revealed he had actually been taken on board the spacecraft and had interacted with the aliens up close. Following the Hill case, so many missing time reports with repressed memories of abductions were made that it is by now a typical feature of UFO-alien mythology. But the idea was introduced into the public imagination by a number of episodes of *Outer Limits*.

Subliminal suggestion? Brainwashing? By whom? And why?

It gets much stranger.

During the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan promoted the so-called "Star Wars" military space program in a number of speeches. During a 1984 speech for re-election, he spoke of "Star Wars" as a "protective umbrella" and as "an anti-weapon. " These exact phrases were originally spoken by an alien in an *Outer Limits* episode entitled "The Bellerophon Shield", broadcast 20 years before. In another speech, Reagan stated that warring nations on earth would quickly unite if confronted by an enemy from outer space. This became a theme of a stupid science-fiction film of the mid-1990's, *Independence Day*. But the idea was originally presented in an *Outer Limits* episode called "The Architects of Fear. " Scientists of a secret government intelligence agency surgically and genetically turn one of their own men into an alien "invader. " They give him an oversized head, bug eyes, and long arms (which is how the aliens found at Roswell were said to look like), and secretly rocket him into space

so that he would return and terrify the earth and thus *really* unite the United Nations.

Speaking of secret intelligence agencies, in the early 1960s, the National Security Agency (NSA) was unknown to the public. It was created in 1952. As the intelligence of the American intelligence agencies, the NSA breaks codes and listens in on worldwide communications. It is far more secret than the CIA. It first came to light in 1966 when it was mentioned in a book called *The Codebreakers* by James L. Kahn. Even today the NSA is so secret that it is jokingly referred to in Washington as "No Such Agency. " Though nowadays its existence can't be denied, still the US Government will not reveal what the exact purpose of this agency is. Anyway, in an episode called "The Children of Spider County," two years before Kahn's book was published, *Outer Limits* presented an agency called NSSA: the National Space Security Agency.

The forerunner of the NSA was the US Army Department of Signals Intelligence. During the early 1940s, Signals Intelligence broke the secret Japanese military signals code; thus the Americans knew in advance the Japanese would attack Pearl Harbor. (Why the Americans did nothing to oppose the attack is a whole story in itself!) In the later '40s, Signals Intelligence broke the code the Soviet Union was using to communicate with its agents. The executive producer of *Outer Limits* was Leslie Stevens. He had served in the Army Air Force during the Second World War as a captain; for three years he worked in Army Intelligence while stationed in Iceland. Steven's father was a vice-admiral in the US Navy and held an important role in a major intelligence assignment.

Bruce Rux, author of an interesting book titled *Hollywood vs. The Aliens: The Motion Picture Industry's Participation in UFO Disinformation*, writes, "*The Outer Limits* was the only show of its kind, unique in the annals of television history. It provided a weekly exploration of man's place in the universe, in varying degrees of fear and optimism, in such a way as to engage its audience's thoughts and emotions. . . Whether or not the show was connected to any official government program of dissemination or preparation on the subject of contact with visitors from beyond Earth, that was certainly the personal mission of Leslie Stevens. . . "

We know that beings from other planets take birth on Earth. Srila Prabhupada, who arrived in America nearly at the same time *Outer Limits* was on the air, said that his disciples had especially taken birth from higher planets to assist him. Is it not likely that beings from *other* planets were also taking birth for a *different* mission? Was *Outer Limits* unconsciously, or perhaps even consciously, announcing the arrival of intelligences from other worlds to this planet?

Leslie Steven said of himself that he was "into the absolute quintessence of the emerging new mythological age. " He actually *believed* in the possibility of the themes presented by *Outer Limits*. From what I've read about *The X-Files*, none of the persons who were involved in the production were "believers" in the theme of the TV series. They were just making money by exploiting an interest in the paranormal that had become big in modern imagination. . . partly as a result of the unquestionably powerful psychological impact of *Outer Limits*.

*Oulu, Finland*  
*27 September 2003*

Yesterday, Friday 26, I gave a talk on "the Vedic theory of knowledge" at a prestigious college in Oulu, one from which 3 presidents of Finland graduated. The topic of my presentation was according to the study plan being followed by the philosophy class: they are now dealing with what they call in their jargon, "TOK" (theories of knowledge). This is an English-medium school so I could speak without a translator. Actually, that's a nice thing about Finland: a number of the colleges that are considered "better" conduct all the classes in the English language.

To my surprise this lecture was to a video camera, with the students (again, all girls) appearing on a monitor. I knew I had a videoconferencing lecture on Wednesday next week but I didn't know there was one already on Friday this week. There's advantages and disadvantages. An advantage is that because the students are looking at a TV monitor instead of at a real Hare Krsna devotee, they are less shy to ask questions. You have to understand this about Finland: probably even more than the other Nordic countries where people tend to be quiet, Finns are *really* quiet and soft-spoken people. . . at least in formal situations like the classroom. So being separate from the students via videoconferencing helps break down their shyness, because they are after all addressing their questions to machinery, not a real person. The disadvantage is that I drew a diagram on the whiteboard behind me but it totally could not be seen on the TV monitor. Anyway, the diagram helped me in my presentation, so it was OK.

I started my explanation with *atma* and Paramatma. *Atma* is the pure identity, the individual soul, which has no beginning or end. It is a particle of God's own spiritual nature. Paramatma is the Lord who accompanies the soul in all of his births. Paramatma grants the soul his field of knowledge and activities; He is the inner ruler, He is the overseer, He is the permitter, and He is the ultimate source of all knowledge.

Then I told them about the subtle body and its three aspects: *ahamkara*, *buddhi* and *manas*. *Ahamkara* is worldly identity and worldly attachment. *Buddhi* covers instinct, categorical knowledge (i. e. the power to distinguish between things that may look similar to the senses, e. g. to know that a pen and a small snake belong to two different categories), abstract knowledge (language, comprehension of symbols), memory, and determination. *Manas* covers desire, emotions, common sense, acceptance or attachment and rejection or aversion.

From there I went on to the three phases of mind: cognition, affection and conation (i. e. thinking, feeling and willing). Because the theme was "TOK", I focused on cognition or knowing. I said we know in three ways: by observation (which includes contemplation of a thing by the mind), by remembrance, and by intuition. Observation is broken down into two departments: perception and inference (logic), or in Sanskrit *pratyaksa* and *anumana*. I told them that dreams are the interaction of consciousness with memory but without sense perception; sometimes intuition enters dreams and they become precognitive, or future-seeing. Then I explained that intuition is the beginning or seed of *divya-pratyaksa* or divine perception, which should be perfected through spiritual practice and Divine Grace. By divine perception one can know spiritual truths directly.

I then told them that knowledge is of two basic categories: *aroha* or exploratory and *avaroha* or revelatory. I said that all of us use both in our lives but for spiritual realization, or the perfection of *divya-pratyaksa*, we must resort to pure *avaroha* knowledge which is revealed by *guru* from without and Paramatma from within.

There were nice questions at the end. Several were about reincarnation. One was a very good one about the role of emotions in knowledge; it seems in their "TOK" studies that there is a category called "emotional knowledge", so the girl wanted to know what we have to say about that. I explained that the affective phase of the mind holds power over the cognitive and conative phases, thus all knowing or cognition is emotional. The class liked this idea (girls!).

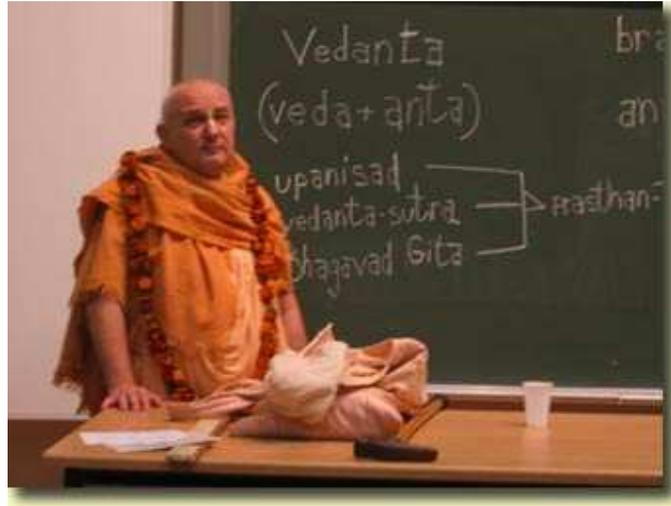
Today, Saturday, there are no school classes. I am giving the *Bhagavatam* lecture to the *brahmacharis* in our wooden cabin in the forest. Tomorrow we will have a feast which a few guests will attend; I'll give the talk. Monday and thereafter the school programs continue.

*Oulu, Finland*  
*28 September 2003*

### **Images from Estonia and Oulu**



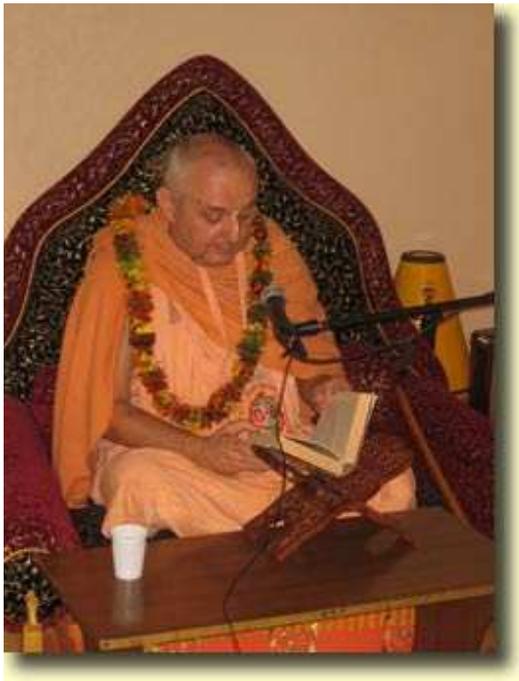
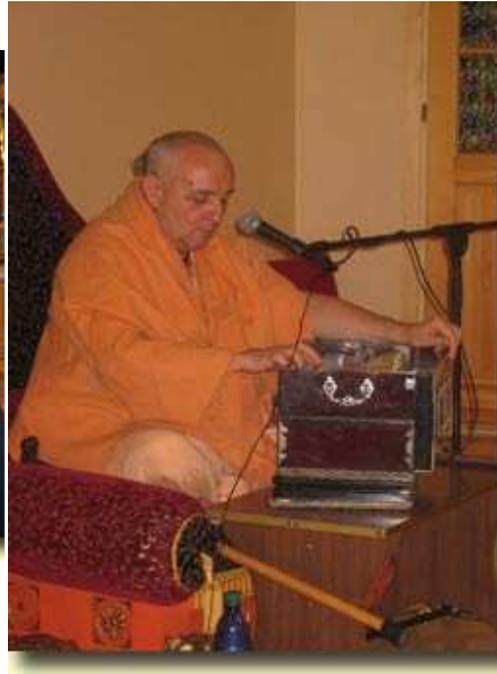
*University lecture, "What is Vedanta". in Tartu  
University, Estonia*



*Discussion after the lecture*



*Lecture in Tallinn temple, Estonia*



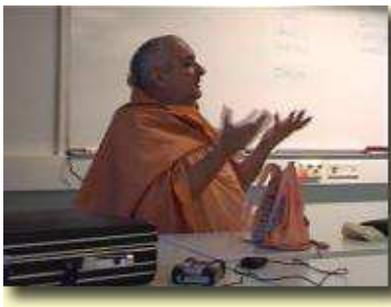


*Lecture, "Theory of Knowledge", in prestigious IB College, Oulu, Finland. Three presidents of Finland have graduated from this college.*

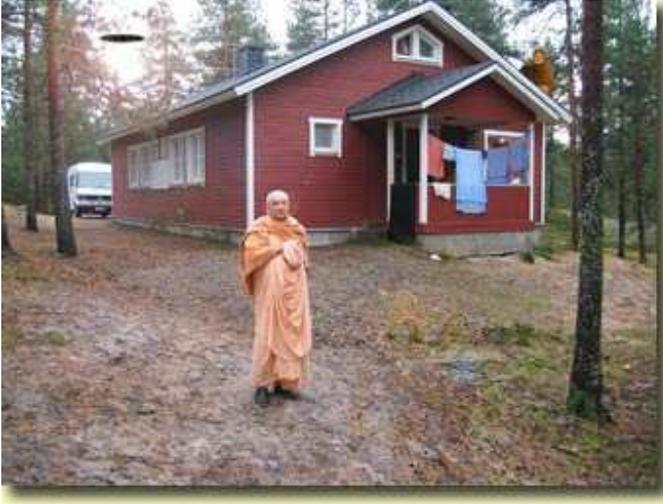


*Tattvavada prabhu has interesting story to tell about the teacher in the middle:*

*"After the lecture this old much appreciated teacher among her colleagues came running towards us and very enthusiastically told me that she had an intuition which she has to share with me. She told me that I am so lucky to have such a Spiritual Master from whom all the knowledge and empathy emanates to the disciple (me). He (Suhotra Maharaja) is such a warm-hearted person."*



*University lecture, "Vedic Education" in Oulu University, Educational department. Students becoming teachers were listening very attentively and teachers made very good questions.*



*We are staying in a wooden cottage...*



*...in the middle of the Finnish forest.*



*Luckily Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai and Sri Aniruddha salagram-sila agreed to come with us.*



*Sunday Love Feast in the cottage.*

*Rovaniemi, Finland  
29 September 2003*

This morning we departed from our cabin in the woods to an apartment in the town of Rovaniemi, about 200 kilometers from Oulu. Rovaniemi, with a population of about 35 000 people, is capital of Finland's Lappi province (Lapland). Oulu (our previous base) is close to Lapland, but does not belong to it... furthermore the people of Oulu don't appreciate being associated with the Laps, which they consider primitive. Our present location is on the Arctic circle. This means that here, in the

summer, the sun never disappears from the sky, and in the winter the sun never appears in the sky. Six months day, six months night: the time scale of the heavenly world. In a 1973 *Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture, Srila Prabhupada said:

*Udicim pravivesa*. So one who goes to the northern side, it is to be understood he never comes back. Northern side means the Arctic zone, covered with snow. So this was known in Bhagavat days. Not only in Bhagavat days, some, about a thousand years ago also, there is Kalidasa's book *Kumara-sambhava*. *Kumara-sambhava*, "The Birth of Karttikeya." So in the book the beginning is *asty uttarasyam disi himalayo nama nagadhirajah*. *Uttarasyam disi*, in the northern side, there is mountain which is covered with snow, Himalaya. *Him* means ice, *hima*. *Asty uttarasyam disi himalayo nama nagadhirajah*: "In the northern side, there is a hill or a mountain which is always covered by snow." Although at the present moment, Himalaya, there is one mountain that is also called Himalaya, Mount Everest, but I think this Arctic zone was referred. Because it is said that "touching both sides, water." *Asty uttarasyam disi himalayo nama nagadhirajah toya-nidhi avagahya*. *Toya-nidhi*. *Toya-nidhi* means oceans, both sides ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. *Avagahya*, touching. So the Arctic zone was referred in many books, Vedic literature.

The context is Maharaja Yudhisthira's ascension to the heavenly world, or Vaikuntha, in the same body by taking pilgrimage to the northern side. As Srila Prabhupada mentioned, some take that to mean a pilgrimage into the Himalaya mountains. But Srila Prabhupada takes it to mean a journey into the Arctic zone. His argument is that two oceans are said to meet in this region of ice and snow. Another argument would be that the time scale in the Arctic tangibly changes from earthly to heavenly. And by the way, snow has not fallen yet here in Rovaniemi...but I suppose when it does, there will be a lot of it! It has been getting colder and colder up here in northern Finland with each passing day.

\* \* \* \* \*

In a book I wrote, *Dimensions of Good and Evil*, I stated as follows:

*Padma Purana* (as cited by Madhvacarya in his *Brahma-sutra Bhasya* 3.1.23) states:

*narayana-prasadena samiddha-jnana-caksusa  
atyanta-dukhka-samlinan nihsesa-sukha-varjitan  
nityam eva tathabhutan vimisrams ca ganan bahun  
nirastasesa-dukhams ca nityanandaikabhaginah  
apasyat trividhan brahma saksad eva catur-mukhah*

His eyes alight with knowledge by the grace of the Supreme Lord, the four-faced Brahma saw three groups of living entities: 1) those eternally situated in utter suffering, completely deprived of happiness; 2) those who partake in eternal bliss, entirely without suffering; and 3) many classes in between.

In the political vocabulary of recent years, backward countries were said to belong to the Third World, a figurative realm lower in status than the First World of capitalist nations and Second World of socialist nations. Thousands of years ago, the term "third world" (*tritiyam sthanam*) was applied by Vedic sages to the backward class of sinful living entities fallen into the realm of *adharmā* (irreligion), where spiritual

knowledge and pious deeds are lacking. The group of living entities Brahma saw to be *atyanta-duhkha*, or completely miserable, belongs to this third world. That group is described by Baladeva Vidyabhusana as follows.

*tatasca ye vidyaya devayane pathi nadhikrta napi  
karmana pitryane tesameva ksudrajantunam damsa  
masakadi asakrdavrttinam trtiyah panthah tenasau  
loka na sampuryata iti*

Because they lack spiritual knowledge they cannot take the path of liberation (*deva-yana*). Because their *karma* is impious they cannot take the path of sacrificial elevation (*pitr-yana*). They become tiny creatures like mosquitoes and insects, and so inhabit the third world. Thus the other worlds never become full to overflowing. (from *Govinda Bhasya* 3.1.19)

The Vedic culture is designed to elevate the soul from the third world of abject suffering upward through the stages of mixed happiness and distress to the perfection of *nityananda* (eternal bliss) at last. The process begins with the regulation of the senses--particularly with respect to sexuality.

In the above quotation by Baladeva, two Vedic paths of elevation are mentioned: *pitr-yana* and *devayana*. The *pitr-yana* is the *karma-marga*, the path of fruitive activities. Here the *karmi* begins the regulation of his or her senses by *yajna* or sacrifice. The *deva-yana* is the *jnana-marga*, the path of knowledge. Here the *jnani* cultivates an understanding of the self as non-material by deep study of the Upanisads (the Vedanta scriptures).

Together the *pitr-yana* and *deva-yana* make up *gauna-dharma* or the secondary Vedic religion, the aim of which is to raise the soul to the mode of goodness. The *Kausitaki Brahmana Upanisad* 1.2-3 depicts the *pitr* and *deva* paths as being joined at the moon, which is the gateway to the pleasures of heaven. Thus the *pitr-yana* carries souls from the third world of suffering up to the lunar heaven, from where the *deva-yana* carries them further to Agniloka, Vayuloka, Adityaloka, Indraloka, Prajapatiloka and finally Brahmhaloka, the highest position in the material cosmos.

Brahma saw along the entire length of these two paths the middle group of living entities. Though they are above unrelenting suffering, they have not achieved eternal bliss. This middle group of souls are divided into many classes. *Mahabharata* 7.315.30 describes the *deva-yana* and *pitr-yana* paths as extending from the realm of Visnu (goodness) down to the lowest realm (ignorance).

It was noted that of the three groups seen by Brahma, the *adharmis*--the irreligious living entities who cheat themselves of happiness by unrestricted sexual indulgence--dwell in a condemned third world. The *gauna-dharmis* who restrict their senses dwell along a path that stretches from the earth to the moon and from the moon to Brahmhaloka. Where do the eternally blissful *mukhya-dharmis* dwell? Bhaktivinoda Thakura answers in *Sri Namastaka* 1.4 (*Gitavali*):

*caudda bhuvana maha deva-nara-danava  
bhaga jakir balavan  
nama-rasa-piyusa pibo-i anukhana  
chodata karama-geyan*

Within the fourteen worlds, those demigods, men and demons whose fortune is very great, perpetually drink the nectar of the sweet mellows of the holy name of Sri Krsna, casting aside the paths of *karma* and *jnana*.

Thus the eternally blissful pure devotees of the Lord can be found in any situation-- high class or low, married or renounced, good (born among *devas*) or evil (born among *asuras*). But in reality they are apart from all situations in this material creation. Wherever the devotees may seem to be from the point of view of conditioned sense perception, they actually dwell in *sva-dhama*, in the abode of the Supreme Lord.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4.29.76=77:

The caterpillar transports itself from one leaf to another by capturing one leaf before giving up the other. Similarly, according to his previous work, the living entity must capture another body before giving up the one he has. This is because the mind is the reservoir of all kinds of desires.

Srila Prabhupada used this example of the caterpillar to explain that we are creating our next body at present, while within this body. A caterpillar, while passing from one leaf to the next, is for a while on both leaves. Similarly, even while still in the present human body we are subtly connected to the next body by the *karma* we are doing. *Karma* is work that creates our next body; we are doing that work right now, in this body. That work is impelled by our desires. The mind is the reservoir of desire. The mind means the subtle body, which Srila Prabhupada compared to underclothing, the gross body being our overclothes. So the nature of the future gross body begins to manifest in the subtle body during the present lifetime.

The "third world" living entities are human beings whose *karma* is insectoid. Either a human being is on the path of *dharma* (*karma*, *jnana* or *bhakti*) or he is not. If he is not, he belongs to the "third world." Subtly he is already an insect, though physically he still looks human. He is humanoid/insectoid.

The Beat author William Burroughs (*Junkie*, *Naked Lunch*) often depicted in his writings the humanoid/insectoid personality of people addicted to drugs. He seemed to actually perceive the future forms of drug addicts while they were still in their present human bodies. In the 1950s, newspapers and such used to talk about flying saucers and BEMs or "Bug Eyed Monsters." The type of alien the UFO folklore calls "grays" has big, bulging all-black eyes and a small mouth incapable of much movement, which suggest something of an insect-like nature. The grays are of course the alien that has been most reported by those claiming to have seen UFOs and the space creatures that pilot them. The grand-daddy aliens of them all, the little ones that supposedly crashed at Roswell, were classical grays. Some people claim to have seen aliens that are simply big insects that walk erect, like men. The mantid type of insect is very popular with the UFO crowd. Movies, surprisingly, haven't portrayed aliens as humanoid/insectoid very much--apart from the grays, whose appearance only hints at a crossing of human and insect natures. The recent film *Mimic* had mutant insects that could pass for humans on the street in the dark; this film was based on a fascinating short story from the 1940s. (Yes, fascinating for devotees too, because the theme of the story intersects with points of our

philosophy.) *Men in Black* had many kinds of buggy aliens, but of course, that's just for laughs. *Starship Troopers* featured big bugs from outer space, but they had no humanoid aspects. And what about the slang from the '50s and '60s, "Don't bug me?" ("Don't bother me??") Do people still talk like that?

Anyway, my point is that bugs are on peoples' minds these days, and no wonder. The next time you catch a bug in a paper cup and chant Hare Krsna to it before throwing it out the window, remember that this little guy was someone who *never served Krsna in any way* in his previous life.

This "third world" concept opens an interesting, though speculative, window on who or what the aliens may be that so many people have seen in the last 50-plus years. *Do you want to know more?* Well, I for one am not going to say any more about it. Just recite to the bug as you drop him out the window these lines from the Panchatantra:

With no stranger share your house;  
So did Leap, the flea, kill Creep, the louse.

That's a nice story from the Panchatantra, about a flea named Leap and a louse named Creep, two bugs in a king's bed. But it's time to go now.

*Oulu, Finland*  
*1 October 2003*

Yesterday evening I gave a lecture at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi. It was well-attended; the lecture hall was almost completely full of guests who paid close attention to my talk and had nice questions at the end. One young man in the back asked several questions about the *Mahabharata*, which he had been reading. There was a woman who 10 years ago had attended a Hare Krsna program at the University of Lapland, with Smita Krsna Maharaja. She hadn't seen devotees again for all that time but her interest was still very strong. This time she bought *japa-mala* so that she could begin chanting. She had that "devotee" look; if you met her somewhere, just by looking at her you would think she must be a devotee. There was a group of young men who sat up front, all dressed in black. They were musicians who were very interested in spiritual concepts. They came to talk with me after the program, as did the *Mahabharata* reader.

It turned out that the boys in black were friends of the young man at whose apartment we were staying. His name is Alex. He is a DJ. Nowadays at dance parties the guy who plays and mixes the music is called a DJ, which is for me quite funny as this is really old American slang that goes back at least to the 1950s. DJ is short for disc jockey. In the USA, rock'n'roll music burst onto the scene in 1953 thanks to Alan Freed, who was a disc jockey at a big radio station who played this new style of music exclusively.

Anyway, our friend Alex is a modern DJ. At home he keeps a large collection of LPs, twin turntables and a mixer ready to go to parties. But since coming to Krsna consciousness 2 years ago, he does not DJ for people who drink or do other sinful nonsense. I asked him what his DJ name was, since I know these guys have funny

titles like DJ Shadow, DJ Mojo, DJ Stupido. Alex said he recently was using DJ Bhakta but he was not convinced of it, he went by that name because he couldn't think of another. So I told him to go by DJ Avatar. He liked that a lot. For the time we were in Rovaniemi I always called him DJ Avatar.

This morning Tattvavada, Muniraja, Bhakta Jani and I drove back to Oulu. I had a lecture here at that same college at which I gave the TOK lecture a few days ago. Today's lecture was on history. You may recall, it was supposed to have been last week but got moved to this week, Wednesday at 12:30 PM. This was a video conference lecture. Funny thing was, the class I addressed today over the video was physically situated in Rovaniemi! So we drove 140 miles from Rovaniemi to Oulu so that I could speak via TV to a class in Rovaniemi. *This* is modern technology!

The teacher of the class is a Canadian man, very nice. He took careful notes during my talk, in which I told about the change of *yugas*, the ancient Vedic culture and how it relates to the world today. By the end of the lecture he was very enthusiastic. "I thank you personally," he told me. "You gave us a very different way of looking at human origins, and it is important that we know that there are other viewpoints that our Eurocentric one."

Tomorrow I will lecture at an Indian Experience program starting at 6:00 PM at the Oulu city library. The next day, in the afternoon, I fly back to Helsinki. Next week there are more programs at schools in that city and in Tampere.

\* \* \* \* \*

*gar-goyle* n. 1. A roof spout in the form of a grotesque or fantastic creature projecting from a gutter to carry rainwater clear of the wall. 2. A grotesque ornamental figure or projection. 3. A person of bizarre or grotesque appearance. [Middle English gargoyle, from Old French gargole, gargouille, throat, waterspout.]

Gargoyles are a motif in European architecture, particularly in cathedrals. Why have monsters looking out from the sides of a house of worship? The gargoyles are protectors of the treasure within, which is the *darsan* of the Lord. Similarly in South Indian temples there is a grotesque figure often seen above Visnu-*tattva* Deities. He is a demon called Valli; and he renders the service of protecting the worship of the Lord by frightening off the envious.

There is an Indian temple that is a big tourist attraction because on the walls outside are carved figures of male and female couples engaged in lusty activities. Look in any tourist guidebook for India, you are sure to find a photo of this. Very artistic in the classical style, but not something for *brahmacaris* to meditate upon. Why decorate the outside of a temple with pornography? It's the same principle of protection. The minds of lusty people are captivated by the exciting statues; being so preoccupied they do not concoct mischief in their heads for disturbing the worship going on inside the temple. They forget all about the Lord and His devotees, being fully absorbed in *maya*.

\* \* \* \* \*

Speaking of motifs, the *Fleur-de-Lis*, which means "flower of light" in French, and which is often seen in the heraldic art of the European middle ages, is a stylized lotus flower. The first thing to grow in the dark abyss of the universe, before creation, is the lotus from the navel of the Lord. In ancient Egyptian "mythology", the lotus is similarly the first manifestation in very beginning of the world. Growing from the effulgent body of the Lord, the lotus is likewise effulgent, thus it is the very first source of light in the upper spaces of the universe. And that is why it has come to be known in Europe as the *Fleur-de-Lis*, the flower of light.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Mahapurusa is described in Chapter 11 of the 12th Canto of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Srila Sukadeva Gosvami says this chapter,

*etad vai paurusam rupam  
bhuh padau dyauh siro nabhah  
nabhih suryo 'ksini nase  
vayuh karnau disah prabhoh  
prajapatih prajananam  
apano mrtyur isituh  
tad-bahavo loka-pala  
manas candro bhruvau yamah  
lajjottaro 'dharo lobho  
danta jyotsna smayo bhramah  
romani bhuruha bhumno  
meghah purusa-murdhajah*

This is the representation of the Supreme Lord as the universal person, in which the earth is His feet, the sky His navel, the sun His eyes, the wind His nostrils, the demigod of procreation His genitals, death His anus and the moon His mind. The heavenly planets are His head, the directions His ears, and the demigods protecting the various planets His many arms. The god of death is His eyebrows, shame His lower lip, greed His upper lip, delusion His smile, and moonshine His teeth, while the trees are the almighty Purusa's bodily hairs, and the clouds the hair on His head.

*yavan ayam vai puruso  
yavatya samsthaya mitah  
tavan asav api maha-  
puruso loka-samsthaya*

Just as one can determine the dimensions of an ordinary person of this world by measuring his various limbs, one can determine the dimensions of the Mahapurusa by measuring the arrangement of the planetary systems within His universal form.

*bhagavan bhaga-sabdartham  
lila-kamalam udvahan  
dharmam yasas ca bhagavams  
camara-vyajane 'bhajat*

Playfully carrying a lotus, which represents the various opulences designated by the word bhaga, the Supreme Lord accepts service from a pair of camara fans, which are religion and fame.

The lotus is a universal symbol of the Lord's opulence. The glories of the Cosmic Person, the Mahapurusa, are fanned throughout creation by His religion and fame. The Mahapurusa is celebrated in the famous Purusa-*sukta* hymn of the Rg-Veda, which is one of the most ancient glorifications of the Personality of Godhead. That Cosmic Person praised in the Vedas appeared in theosophies of the ancient world outside of India. In Egypt He was known as Osiris. In Platonic philosophy He was *vir unus*, "the One Man." In ancient Persia He was Gayomard. In Jewish mysticism He is Adam Kadmon (the spiritual Adam), and Metatron (Adam as creator). In the Mahayana Buddhist sects that worship the Adi Buddha, He is Mahavairocana, the Great Shining One. In Christianity He is the Pantocrator, Ruler of All.

*Oulu, Finland*  
*2 October 2003*

*ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam*  
*sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam vidya-vadhu jivanam*  
*anandambudhi-varadhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam*  
*sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam*

*cetah* - of the heart; *darpana* - the mirror; *marjanam* - cleansing; *bhava* - of material existence; *maha-davagni* - the blazing forest fire; *nirvapanam* - extinguishing; *sreyah* - of good fortune; *kairava* - the white lotus; *candrika* - the moonshine; *vitaranam* - spreading; *vidya* - of all education; *vadhu* - wife; *jivanam* - the life; *ananda* - bliss; *ambudhi* - the ocean; *vardhanam* - increasing; *prati-padam* - at every step; *purna-amrta* - of the full nectar; *asvadanam* - giving taste; *sarva* - for everyone; *atma-snapanam* - bathing of the self; *param* - transcendental; *vijayate* - let there be victory; *sri-krsna-sankirtanam* - for the congregational chanting of the holy name of Krsna.

"Let there be victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence. That chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities. It is the life and soul of all education. The chanting of the holy name of Krishna expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step. "

The word *vidya* means knowledge, and *vadhu* means "wife"; thus the pure, original knowledge of the living entity, being the *sakti* or energy of the spirit soul, accompanies the soul like a faithful wife. Commenting on this verse in his *Sri Sanmodana Bhasyam*, Srila Bhaktivinoda writes that *vidya-vadhu* means that knowledge is the wife of the Lord. (Goddess Sarasvati, *vidya* personified, is an eternal consort of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ) The *jiva-atma* is a "sample" (Srila Prabhupada's term) of Krsna. Therefore the soul is called *purusa* (which means male person. . . Srila Prabhupada always refers to the soul as "he"), since the Lord is Purusottama, the supreme male personality. As complete *vidya* in the form of Goddess Sarasvati accompanies as the Lord as His wife, so a sample of *vidya* accompanies the *jiva*.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 7. 5 states:

*desatah kalato yo 'sav  
avasthatah svato 'nyatah  
aviluptavabodhatma  
sa yujyetajaya katham*

The pure soul is pure consciousness and is never out of consciousness, either due to circumstances, time, situations, dreams or other causes. How then does he become engaged in nescience?

Narada Muni has this to say about how the originally pure consciousness of the living entity can become engaged in nescience, in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 14. 38:

*tesv eva bhagavan rajams  
taratamyena vartate  
tasmāt patram hi puruso  
yavan atma yatheyate*

O King Yudhisthira, the Supersoul in every body gives intelligence to the individual soul according to his capacity for understanding. Therefore the Supersoul is the chief within the body. The Supersoul is manifested to the individual soul according to the individual's comparative development of knowledge, austerity, penance and so on.

The living entity is always in knowledge, but that knowledge is given by the Paramatma in different degrees and qualities according to the capacity of the living entity to receive knowledge. Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana elaborates in *Prameya-ratnavali* 5. 1:

*atha jivanam taratamyam  
anu-caitanya-rupatva  
jnanitvadya-visesatah  
samyē satyapi jivanam  
taratamyam ca sadhanat*

In both their conditioned and liberated states, the jivas are situated in higher and lower grades. Although all living entities are equally conscious and possess knowledge to the limit of the capacity of an individual soul, they nevertheless manifest that original spiritual nature in varying degrees. The extent to which that original nature is uncovered is determined by their purity and devotion to the Supreme Lord.

The result of the soul's getting material consciousness, or material knowledge, from the Paramatma is that the spirit soul works against his own transcendental nature.

*lokaḥ svayam sreyasi nasta-drstir  
yo 'rthan samiheta nikama-kamah  
anyonya-vairah sukha-lesa-hetor  
ananta-duhkham ca na veda mudhah*

Due to ignorance, the materialistic person does not know anything about his real self-interest, the auspicious path in life. He is simply bound to material enjoyment by lusty desires, and all his plans are made for this purpose. For temporary sense

gratification, such a person creates a society of envy, and due to this mentality, he plunges into the ocean of suffering. Such a foolish person does not even know about this. [Bhag. 5. 5. 16]

This *anyonya-vairah* or society of envy is first experienced within one's own "materialized" self. Even before any consideration of our relationships with persons outside ourselves, each of us has our own personal "social circle" of soul, false ego, intelligence, mind and senses. Sri Prahlada Maharaja, speaking in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 9. 40, compares his senses to wives. *Bhagavatam* 5. 1. 17 refers to the mind and the five *jnanendriyas* as wives of the self. In the following translations of 4th Canto *Bhagavatam* verses concerning King Puranjana, the social relationship of the soul with the material intelligence--here clearly described as the wife of the soul--is indicated.

King Puranjana had unlimited desires for sense enjoyment. Consequently he traveled all over the world to find a place where all his desires could be fulfilled. Unfortunately he found a feeling of insufficiency everywhere. (27. 12) Once, while wandering in this way, he saw on the southern side of the Himalayas, in a place named Bharata Varsa a city that had nine gates all about and was characterized by all auspicious facilities. (27. 13)

While wandering here and there in that wonderful garden, King Puranjana suddenly came in contact with a very beautiful woman who was walking there without any engagement. She had ten servants with her, and each servant had hundreds of wives accompanying him. (27. 20)

The woman was protect on all sides by a five hooded snake. She was very beautiful and young, and she appeared very anxious to find a suitable husband. (27. 21)

Being thus entangled in different types of mental concoction and engaged in fruitive activities, King Puranjana came completely under the control of material intelligence and was thus cheated, Indeed, he used to fulfill all the desires of his wife, the Queen. (27. 61)

In this way, King Puranjana was captivated by his nice wife and was thus cheated. Indeed, he became cheated in this whole existence in the material world. Even against that poor foolish King's desire, he remained under the control of his wife, just like a pet animal that dances according to the order of its master. (27. 62)

But here is the ultimate reality of the relationship between soul and mind:

*guna-vyaktir iyam devi  
vyanjako guna-bhug bhavan  
tvam hi sarva-sariry atma  
srih sarirendriyasayah  
nama-rupe bhagavati  
pratyayas tvam apasrayah*

Mother Laksmi, who is here, is the reservoir of all spiritual qualities, whereas You manifest and enjoy all these qualities. Indeed, You are actually the enjoyer of everything. You live as the Supersoul of all living entities, and the goddess of fortune

is the form of their bodies, senses and minds. She also has a holy name and form, whereas You are the support of all such names and forms and the cause for their manifestation. [*Bhag.* 6. 19. 13]

In the *Siksastakam* verse cited at the beginning, the mind is compared to a mirror in which the self and Superself are nicely reflected when the mirror is cleansed by the chanting of the Holy Names. In this mirror analogy we are offered further insight into the sense of knowledge as *vadhu*, the wife of the soul. Reflectivity is feminine. A mirror reflects and is thus a symbol of the female. The moon reflects the light of the sun; thus the sun is considered masculine, the moon feminine--and furthermore, the moon symbolizes the mind. The *purusa*, the soul, is reflected in the mind; we even have the term "self-reflection" for deep thoughts about the self's place in the universe. Thus the mind is to the soul like the moon is to the sun.

Material consciousness means the covering of "the sun" (the *purusa*) and "the moon" (the reflecting consciousness, or knowledge) by shadow. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12. 4. 32 explains:

*yatha ghano 'rka-prabhavo 'rka-darsito  
hy arkamsa-bhutasya ca caksusas tamah  
evam tv aham brahma-gunas tad-iksito  
brahmamsakasyatmana atma-bandhanah*

Although a cloud is a product of the sun and is also made visible by the sun, it nevertheless creates darkness for the viewing eye, which is another partial expansion of the sun. Similarly, material false ego, a particular product of the Absolute Truth made visible by the Absolute Truth, obstructs the individual soul, another partial expansion of the Absolute Truth, from realizing the Absolute Truth.

The above verse does not mention the moon, but just as a cloud hides the sun from the eye in the daytime, so a cloud hides the moon (or pure spiritual mind) from the eye at night. (Sri Prabhupada indicates this overwhelming of the mind by the false ego in his purport to *Gita* 6. 5: "In fact, the pure soul is entangled in the material world because the mind is involved with the false ego, which desires to lord it over material nature. ") Under the darkness of false ego's cloudy covering, the self and his mind, or his knowledge, struggle with one another. This is the cause of all the twisted psychology that can be observed in the conditioned state of the living entity. For instance, when consciousness comes under false ego it is split into rational awareness and irrational subconscious. The soul sometimes sides with the mind's rational side against the irrational side, and vice versa. A very commonplace illustration of that is our passing from wakefulness (which is rational awareness) into dream, deep sleep (both of which belong to the irrational subconscious) and back to wakefulness.

The soul opposed to his own consciousness? It is explained here:

When one deviates from his original consciousness, he loses the capacity to remember his previous position or recognize his present one. When remembrance is lost, all knowledge acquired is based on a false foundation. When this occurs, learned scholars consider that the soul is lost. (*Bhag.* 4. 22. 31)

Consciousness opposed to the soul? It is explained here:

Material consciousness is the cause of one's conditional life, in which conditions are enforced upon the living entity by the material energy. Although the spirit soul does not do anything and is transcendental to such activities, he is thus affected by conditional life. (*Bhag.* 3. 26. 7)

When the darkness of false ego is removed, then the soul and his original, pure mind or knowledge or consciousness are reunited in great happiness. This is nicely explained in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 11. 7, where *atma* (in the phrase *yena catma prasidyati*) is translated by Srila Prabhupada as "soul, mind, body and everything" in the word-for-word synonyms.

*dharma-mulam hi bhagavan  
sama-vedamayo harih  
smrtam ca tad-vidam rajan  
yena catma prasidati*

The Supreme Being, the Personality of Godhead, is the essence of all Vedic knowledge, the root of all religious principles, and the memory of great authorities. O King Yudhisthira, this principle of religion is to be understood as evidence. On the basis of this religious principle, everything is satisfied, including one's mind, soul and even one's body.

There are many verses that employ a phrase similar to *yena catma prasidyati*. The word *atma* not only means the soul, but also the mind or consciousness. So whenever we read about the *atma* finding its real satisfaction (*prasidyati*) in devotional service, we should remember that this means the soul *and* the mind (or knowledge, or consciousness) together. . . along with the body! Mind and soul, when referred to at once as *atma* (the self), are in happy harmony, like a husband and wife who find love and peace in each other again after some stormy period of matrimonial discord.

The happy end?

*yat sankulam hari-padanati-matra-drstair  
vaidurya-marakata-hema-mayair vimanaih  
yesam brhat-kati-tatah smita-sobhi-mukhyah  
krsnatmanam na raja adadhur utsmayadyaih*

The inhabitants of Vaikuntha travel in their airplanes made of lapis lazuli, emerald and gold. Although crowded by their consorts, who have large hips and beautiful smiling faces, they cannot be stimulated to passion by their mirth and beautiful charms. [*Bhag.* 3. 15. 29]

*Oulu, Finland  
3 October 2003*

It is 12:37 PM as I write this. I am seated in a little room of wooden walls, ceiling and floor where I am waiting my ride to the Oulu airport, from where I fly to Helsinki. The Festival of India program last night was nice. As I mentioned in In2-

MeC for October 1, it was held in the auditorium of the Oulu city library. The audience was mostly people who are not already familiar with Krsna consciousness. But for new hearers, they were attentive and had nice questions. I had to break off the q&a session after the lecture so that the program could proceed on schedule.

*ISKCON Helsinki, Finland  
5 October 2003*

### **Pictures from Northern Finland**

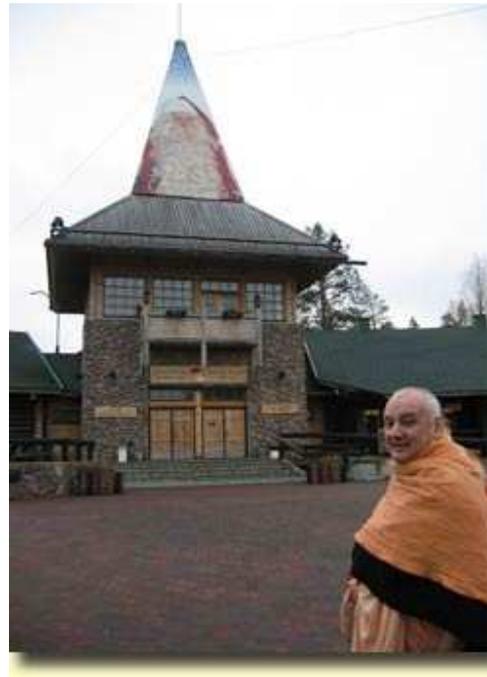
#### **Rovaniemi, Finland**



*Darsan with reindeers above the Polar Circle.*



*Dj Avatar in his constitutional position*



*Outside the temple of Santa Claus, the local place of worship. Darsan with the deity would be after a short while.*



*University of Lapland*



*University program. Audience listened attentively.*

### **Oulu, India Experience**



*India Experience program in Oulu city library.*



*Helsinki, Finland*  
*9 October 2003*

I just returned from Tampere, a city a couple of hundred kilometers to the northeast of Helsinki. I spoke to the college students of an international school that sponsored by UNESCO. This is the second time I've visited there; our contact is a lady teacher of religion and philosophy that I met on the first visit a couple of years ago. She is a very nice lady and a fan of my book *Substance and Shadow*. The students were assembled from two classes: comparative religion and psychology. I explained Vedic psychology and ethics. The teacher much appreciated my presentation, which she said was very clear. She took many notes. The students, I think, were a little green for my style of talk. They were slow to ask questions and mainly focused on simple things like why devotees dress like they do.

But one young fellow asked how we look at the theory of evolution. I explained that the Vedas offer a doctrine of spiritual evolution, of souls moving from birth to death

to rebirth upward through all the species of life. Charles Darwin lived during the 1800s, when Great Britain was the colonial power over India, at a time when ancient Sanskrit texts were first being translated into English by European Indologists. I said it was very likely that Darwin derived his materialistic theory of evolution from the spiritual evolution described in the Vedas. The main difference is that in the Vedic view, the soul is evolving through higher levels of consciousness; in the Western scientific view, only matter is evolving and consciousness either is unreal or it is an epiphenomenon of biochemistry. The extreme materialism of the Western scientific viewpoint robs evolution of any ultimate meaning. If life is an effect of material formation, and material formation is transitory and will end in entropy, then the only purpose of evolution is change. . . change that blindly hurtles towards final destruction. Evolutionists expect in the future that mankind will die out and be replaced by some other form of life that will prove to be more successful in adapting to the conditions of nature. Darwin himself wrote that he personally found the idea of the future extinction of the human race to be most lamentable. That's it, then: humanity will have been nothing more than another a sad chapter of earth's history. The last chapter of that history will be the snuffing out of all life and the dissolution of the universe. So what's the point? The Vedic doctrine of evolution has a point: the rise of the eternal soul towards liberation from temporary embodiment in matter.

The same young man wanted to know about creation. I said that the official Christian doctrine is that the world was created in 4004 B. C. That is not acceptable to modern science, which posits a much older world. But science guesses that the universe began around 20 billion years ago; the Vedas say it began 150 trillion years ago. So the Vedic outlook on the history of the cosmos is much broader than Western science's.

\* \* \* \* \*

I fly out of Finland on the morning of the 11th, this coming Saturday. Destination: Warsaw. Within a couple of days after that I'll be in Prague. A week after that I'll be in Amsterdam. At the end of October I fly to Auckland, New Zealand. In early December I'll return to India.

\* \* \* \* \*

Going back to the topic of evolution: I recently saved to my hard disk the . jpeg images of the pages of a fine old book, *God and Evil* (1942) by the British philosopher C. E. M. Joad. On pages 146-187, Joad criticizes two versions of materialistic evolution. These two are Emergent Evolution and Creative Evolution.

The theory of Emergent Evolution is based on the observation that simple elements combine to form compounds that display properties unknown in the ingredient elements. The theory calls the new properties "emergent"-meaning that they appear out of nowhere. For example, oxygen and hydrogen combine to form water. The wetness of water is not observed in oxygen and hydrogen. Thus wetness is called "an emergent property. " From such examples, the Emergent Evolutionists build a belief that consciousness and even God emerge from a certain stage of material combination.

Joad points out that this belief is unscientific, since a fundamental aim of science is to predict events that are determined by preceding conditions. Consciousness is

nowhere observed in dead matter. If consciousness as a completely new, unforeseen quality does indeed emerge at a particular level of material combination, then consciousness is not linked to a logical chain of causation. It just happens. "We might as well drop the language and concepts of science," Joad asserts, "and pronounce wholeheartedly for an independent creative force of life, or even for a creative God. " Joad adds that a God who emerges from evolution cannot be the eternal and transcendent Deity who is the object of mankind's religious emotions: reverence, awe, the sense of mystery, the desire to worship. The Emergent God "is latent in the natural world and is, therefore, a part of it, changing as it changes, evolving as it evolves. . . As with the universe, so with God; He will cease to exist as the universe which has evolved him ceases to develop. . . He is certainly not the creator of the world; nor is he the loving father of us all participating in, yet apart from the sufferings of His creatures. " Another criticism Joad makes is that since Emergent Evolution sees God as a product of the evolution of the consciousness of mankind, there is nothing worthy of man's reverence that man is himself not the author of. In other words, God is just one more "fact" of the human sphere of existence.

Emergent Evolution is monistic, in that it holds that all is one: matter alone. The theory of Creative Evolution is dualistic and thus reminiscent of the atheistic Sankhya philosophy of India. The components of the dualism are the Life Force (the animating principle of the universe, similar to the purusa of Sankhya) and Matter (the stuff of the physical universe, similar to the pradhana of Sankhya). Matter behaves in accordance with the laws of physics. The Life Force associates with Matter to form the bodies of living organisms. At the earliest stage of this association, the Life Force appeared as a blind, instinctive urge. By evolution it gradually acquired consciousness and purpose. Evolution is a universal moral code. By this code, a living entity is expected to raise the Life Force, as expressed in itself, to a higher level of development. This is a code of effort and endeavor. One ought never take life easily. Rather one ought always commit oneself with full sensory and mental energy to the difficult and dangerous path in order to advance to higher levels. Joad argues that it is a logical fallacy to speak of the evolution of "higher life," "better life" or a "better quality of life" without reference to a standard of value that is outside life in the material world. For example, one cannot measure a roll of cloth without reference to a standard of value outside the cloth: yards and feet marked out on a tape measure.

Similarly, unless there exists a standard of progress to an ultimate goal of consciousness that is outside the evolutionary process, it is meaningless to speak of advancement to higher levels of life. Another problem with Creative Evolution is that the Life Force, Matter and their scheme of interaction (the "moral code" of evolution) have no common source and thus no fundamental unity. Why should they even exist, let alone function synchronously? Writes Joad, "The unity of a single Creator using these as the basic elements from which to construct. . . His universe would be an obvious example of such a unity. " He argues that Creative Evolution has no explanation for the appearance of life's sense of purpose at the later stage of evolution. Why should life, initially a blind instinctive urge, acquire mind and intelligence to conceive of a higher goal of life? This question leads to another question: why should the mind and intelligence purposefully interact with the body (for example, when the body is cold, why is that condition perceived as distressful by the mind, and why does the intelligence therefore plan the lighting of a fire to warm the body)? Creative Evolution has no answer.

Finally, Joad takes Creative Evolution to task for its moral implausibility. "In a creative evolutionary world. . . evil would disappear at a certain stage of life's development. " But the evil of birth, death, disease and old age afflicts living beings now as much as it ever has in the past. And just as Creative Evolution offers no plausible explanation for the unity of the Life Force, Matter and the evolutionary moral code by which these two interact, similarly it offers no plausible explanation of the co-existence of good and evil within the universe. Nor can it account for moral conflict: mankind's struggle with good and evil, in which we find ourselves tempted to pursue evil while knowing we have a duty to overcome that temptation and be good. Finally, if the only real moral code is that we ought to advance the cause of evolution, then we are "good" insofar as we keep ourselves fresh and vigorous, our sensory and mental faculties at cutting edge, and our powers stretched to full capacity. This definition of good is attained by a tiger on the prowl. A criminal similarly thinks himself good if he meets these criteria. Thus the "good" of Creative Evolution is inadequate even for civilized human life, what to speak of the ultimate goal of human life: the revival of our eternal loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Among today's evolutionists there is still speculation that God Himself evolved. In *God-The Evidence* (1997), Chapter Three, Patrick Glynn relates the thinking of Dr. Herbert Benson, a professor at the Harvard Medical School. In an evolutionary sense, Benson accepts the reality of God. His studies of patients showed him that their religious beliefs calm their minds, increase their hopes and even aid the efficacy of some medical treatments. Benson accepts God as a powerful "survival instinct" or "primal motive" within the human organism. He thinks the human mind had to construct God to cope with the rigors of the natural environment during the early stages of evolution. We are "wired for God", he says--the spiritual drive is absolutely fundamental to human physiology, as much as hunger or the sex drive. But the spiritual drive is really a biological drive.

This is really the last gasp of the materialist philosophers. The logic of the existence of God can't be denied, so they try to bind His existence to material laws. This is the strategy of classical Mayavadi philosophy, which posits a two-aspect God. The Isvara aspect--the God of religion, the ruler of the universe--is time-bound. This God will cease to exist at the time of *maha-pralaya*, cosmic dissolution. The Brahman aspect--the impersonal Self which is *nirvisesa*, absent of any characteristics--is beyond time. But He is not the God people worship, for He (It, actually) is not a person. He does not reciprocate with people's prayers and other acts of devotion. He does not even acknowledge the existence of people, or anything in creation. He is mute, senseless, mindless, motionless, emotionless, and completely removed from experience on any level. This impersonal absolute may be transcendental to the miseries of material existence. But such a God cannot help anyone achieve that transcendental state. He is as good as no God at all.

*Helsinki, Finland*  
*10 October 2003*

**Scientists Say Universe May Be Soccer-Ball Shaped**  
Wed Oct 8, 2:16 PM ET

LONDON (Reuters) - Scientists said Wednesday the universe could be spherical and patched together like a soccer ball -- and it may not be infinite.

Jeffrey Weeks, a MacArthur Fellow based in Canton, New York, and researchers from the University of Paris and Observatory of Paris analyzed astronomical data which suggests the universe is finite and made of curved pentagons joined together into a ball.

In research reported in the science journal Nature on Wednesday, the scientists said data from NASA (news-web sites)'s Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP), which maps background radiation left over from the Big Bang, is not consistent with an infinite universe. "Since antiquity, humans have wondered whether our universe is finite or infinite. Now, after more than two millennia of speculation, observational data might finally settle the ancient question," Weeks said.

In a commentary on the research, George Ellis of the University of Cape Town in South Africa, said if Weeks and his colleagues are correct we might indeed live in a small, closed universe.

*Helsinki, Finland  
11 October 2003*

What follows was reported in the news on 27 July of this year.

Students from Hosalagarha Rajkiya Vidyalaya, an Indian government-run school at Angara in Jharkhand, were struck by lightning in the classrooms. Fifteen of them were rendered unconscious. Doctors arrived to find that local villagers had removed the students from the building and had covered them in cow dung. Within a few hours thirteen regained consciousness and were taken home. The remaining two were taken to a clinic. Ashok Bhokta, a local resident, said, "Cow dung is the time-tested and traditional cure for lightning-struck people. "

\* \* \* \* \*

This from April of 2003: An animal-rights group, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), offered officials of the city of Hamburg in Germany a stock of veggie burgers worth thousands of Euros if the city would change its name to Veggieburg. The officials refused.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sold out by a cell phone: in June here in Finland, the news reported about a man who, while cheating on his wife by making love to a girlfriend in a car, accidentally pressed the auto-dial command on his cell phone. The phone rang his house number. His wife picked up and heard her husband's female friend moan, "I love you. " Later the wife so furiously assaulted the pair that she was sentenced to 14 months in prison. The sentence was suspended.

\* \* \* \* \*

A very weird story from July: Huang Tzu-Heng, a 20-year-old shop assistant in Taiwan, wanted to test love of his girlfriend, Hsaio Ian. He began e-mail correspondence with her under the name Mr. J. This correspondence turned into a cyber-romance. At the same time he continued to date Hsaio in his real identity. At last Hsaio told Huang that she didn't want to see him anymore as she had fallen in love with Mr. J. Huang committed suicide, leaving a note that revealed that he and Mr. J were the same man.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is a 74-year-old Croatian man named Frane Selak who lives in the town of Pretnja. In 1962 he was on a train going from Sarajevo to Dubrovnik when it ran off the rails and fell into the ice-cold Neretva River. Seventeen people drowned. Frane narrowly escaped drowning himself and had to be treated for hypothermia and a broken arm.

One year later he was flying aboard a DC-8 airliner between Zagreb and Rijeka. A door flew open. Frane and 19 others were sucked out of the aircraft. The other 19 died, but he landed in a haystack.

In 1966 Frane was riding a bus to Split. It went off the road and into a river. Four people died but he swam to the shore with cuts and bruises.

He was driving his car on the motorway in 1970 when the vehicle caught fire. He jumped free seconds before the fuel tank exploded. Three years later the motor of another car Frane was driving caught fire. Flames shot through the air vents, burning his hair off, but he survived.

In 1995 a Zagreb bus knocked Frane down, but he was only slightly injured. The next year he was driving in the mountains when he turned a corner to see a UN truck coming straight for him. To avoid a collision he had to crash through the roadside barrier. The car went off the side of the mountain and fell 90 meters, exploding at the bottom. Frane jumped out the door as the car went over the edge. He landed in a tree and survived.

In June of 2003, Frane won a half-million dollars at lottery.

No, there's nothing Krsna conscious about the tale of Frane Selak. In fact it's almost totally materialistic, except that he's an incredibly lucky man. The blessings of Goddess Laksmi are with him in this lifetime. It is said, "Faith begins where reason sinks exhausted." From the point of view of reason alone, Frane's story is unbelievable. It should give rise to faith. Unfortunately, people are so dull in Kali-yuga that all the small miracles of life in this world fail to impress them.

Wroclaw, Poland  
12 October 2003

As I announced in an earlier entry here, yesterday a flight took me away from Finland to Warsaw, Poland. I was picked up at the airport by Vidyagati and Rocana Prabhus. I took lunch at the Warsaw temple, then Rocana drove myself and Vidyagati to Wroclaw in his BMW. We stayed overnight in a vacated apartment that belongs to a devotee who is at the moment in India. Tomorrow we shall proceed further south, down to Prague.

\* \* \* \* \*

Everyone has heard of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. I remember as a kid seeing the movie of that name on television, an old black-and-white thriller made in the 1930s. The "original" story was written by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1886; its full title was *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Dr. Jekyll was a mild-mannered physician who, after drinking a potion that he'd developed in his laboratory, was transformed into the loathsome Mr. Hyde, a fiend given to horrendous violence. But this was all just a fiction, a creation of Stevenson's imagination.

Not quite.

Four years before he published *Dr. Jekyll*, Stevenson had collaborated with W. E. Henley to write a stage play called *Deacon Brodie or the Double Life*. This play explored the same theme as *Dr. Jekyll*, that is, the two sides of the human personality--the good side and the evil side. It turns out that Deacon Brodie was a real person who lived in Stevenson's city of Edinburgh one hundred years before. When Stevenson was a boy, his nurse used to tell him tales of the real-life William Brodie, who held the respectable position of Deacon (or head) of the Cabinetmakers' Guild. Brodie was also a city councilor and a man of considerable influence. Yet the same William Brodie was the leader of a band of armed robbers that had plundered the city for some time.

He used his respectability to learn the layout of the General Excise Office, the headquarters of Scotland's customs and tax department. That was also how he managed to make a copy of the key to the place. On the night of 8 March 1788 Brodie and his gang visited the Office again, this time to plunder it. However they only managed to filch some petty cash before they were interrupted by a lawyer, James Bonar, who'd come to the Office to collect some legal papers. The gang escaped but one of them, John Brown, soon made a deal with the authorities. He named two other gang members and said that the head of the outfit was a leading citizen of Edinburgh.

When these facts were reported in the press, Brodie fled Edinburgh for London and then to Amsterdam, where he was nabbed before he could board a ship for New York. He was taken back to Edinburgh and put on trial. The sentence was death by hanging. He tried to cheat the gallows by 1) bribing the hangman to use a short rope, 2) wearing a hidden steel band around his neck, and 3) having friends stand ready to take his body away immediately after the hanging was done. Unfortunately for Mr. Brodie, the authorities noticed the short rope and ordered the hangman to lengthen it. When Brodie dropped through the trapdoor on 1 October 1788, the longer rope snapped his neck.

In the system of analytic psychology taught by C. G. Jung (whom Srila Prabhupada said was the most sensible of all the Western philosophers he'd discussed with his disciples), the criminal is symbolic of the Shadow (Jung's term for "the shadow self", i. e. the side of a person's identity that is mostly hidden in the shadow of the subconscious).

Now, devotees often question whether there is any *sastric* validity to be found such a notion coming from a Western psychologist. Well, as I have tried to show in the "transcendental psychology" series here in In2-MeC, Srila Prabhupada spoke of "the subconscious" as the storehouse of desires. In a song entitled *Keno Hare Krsna Nam* ("Oh Why While Chanting Hare Krsna"), Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura refers to the *maner manush* or "imaginary man of my mind" who appears to be the subtle material identity of the living entity that is indicated in this verse, from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1. 3. 32:

*atah param yad avyaktam  
avyudha-guna-brmhitam  
adrstasruta-vastutvat  
sa jivo yat punar-bhavah*

Beyond this gross conception of form is another, subtle conception of form which is without formal shape and is unseen, unheard and unmanifest. The living being has his form beyond this subtlety, otherwise he could not have repeated births.

Anyway, according to Jung, the Shadow is the aspect of the mental self that is neglected by the dominant collective attitude of society. In the Shadow will be found brutal and animal tendencies, as well as more refined cravings that are denied open expression. Jung proposed that the urges of the Shadow should be *sublimated*, or given expression in a socially acceptable way. Otherwise these urges will become troublesome. The Shadow cannot simply be suppressed as it is as much a part of the personality as the "public" part is. Srila Prabhupada agreed with Jung's notion of sublimation. He said it was accomplished by devotional service.

The "public" side of our personality is called the *Persona*, defined in the dictionary as "the role that one assumes or displays in public or society; one's public image or personality, as distinguished from the inner self." The *Persona* is said by some psychologists to be only one-quarter of the whole self, but it is the part with which we wholly identify.

This division of the ego into quarters is interesting from the Vedic point of view, because indeed the consciousness of the self is said to exist in four states simultaneously: 1) *Vasudeva-sattva* (above the 3 modes), 2) *jagrata* (the life of awakening, or the material mode of goodness), 3) *svapna* (dream, the mode of passion) and 4) *susupti* (unconsciousness, the mode of ignorance). The *Persona* is equivalent to the *jagrata* state.

The Shadow is said in analytical psychology to be "everything at work in the psyche apart from ordinary waking consciousness." I would discount the *Vasudeva* aspect from the Shadow, since *Vasudeva-sattva* is transcendental to the dark shadow cast over consciousness by the false ego. *Jagrata*, *svapna* and *susupti* manifest within the *ahamkara* as false ego in three modes of nature. So the *jagrata* or wakeful ego is itself in shadow; but in mundane consciousness we take the *jagrata* ego to be our

real self in relation to the dreaming and unconscious egos, which fall behind the wakeful Persona like a long dark shadow.

Sublimation means first to cultivate the mode of goodness, then to cultivate pure consciousness beyond the modes entirely. Narada Muni speaks about this cultivation here:

*rajas tamas ca sattvena  
sattvam copasamena ca  
etat samam gurau bhaktya  
puruso hy anjasa jayet*

One must conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by developing the mode of goodness, and then one must become detached from the mode of goodness by promoting oneself to the platform of suddha-sattva. All this can be automatically done if one engages in the service of the spiritual master with faith and devotion. In this way one can conquer the influence of the modes of nature. (*Bhag.* 7. 15. 25)

So, looking back at the strange case of the double life of Deacon William Brodie, the respectable public side of his identity is the Persona. The Shadow is apparent as the criminal side of his nature. Brodie's criminal side defeated him because he had no means to purify his consciousness of the contamination of the modes of material nature. He had no way to raise himself from the darkness of the false ego. Therefore his personality was subject to the duality of good and evil.

Lord Siva presides over the false ego. Even in his personality we see two sides. The two sides are pointed out in this conversation at Navadvip, 27 June 1973:

Sridhara Maharaja: Differentiation on two sides is Siva. This side also, Master of Devi, and this side also. He is searching after something and when the differentiated world ends in Brahmaloaka, there also Siva is devotee. This side, Siva is a *yogi*. He's searching after. And then, there, he's going to meet Narayana, to face (indistinct).

Prabhupada: Both sides, he's a devotee.

Sridhara Maharaja: This side, he's not such a devotee. But that is pure devotee on the other side, Vaikuntha.

Prabhupada: Ah. Sadasiva.

Sridhara Maharaja: Sadasiva, Maha-visnu. On the other side, he's a devotee. *Vaisnavanam yatha sambhuh*.

Prabhupada: Maha-visnu and Sadasiva, the same.

Sridhara Maharaja: Same.

Prabhupada: Advaitacarya.

Sridhara Maharaja: Advaitacarya. On the other side. and this side, sometimes revolving. The other day, I told a gentlemen that Siva is rather the leader of the opposition party.

Prabhupada: Yes, in Daksa-yajna, that is the curse.

Sridhara Maharaja: In Daksa-yajna and in many a place, many demons is encouraged by him. We find.

*Wroclaw, Poland*  
*13 October 2003*

Today I will discuss "revolutionary morality. " This is a sort of continuation of yesterday's In2-MeC entry, which was about the Jekyll-Hyde duality of the Persona and the Shadow.

Every human being has a Shadow ego, which is hidden from society and even mostly hidden from one's own self. Within that shadow lurk desires that are an embarrassment to the Persona, the public ego. The Persona tries to enact the moral individual that society expects each of us to be. But the Persona is troubled by the Shadow, who taps the Persona on the shoulder to remind him that the act he is making is not the truth.

In the Western world a concept of "revolutionary morality" has come into being within the last two centuries. I will let Arthur Koestler explain it. This quotation is from his article in the book entitled *The God That Failed*, published in 1949. He is decrying the moral code of the Communist Party.

. . . bourgeois morality was a Bad Thing. But promiscuity was an equally Bad Thing, and the only correct, concrete attitude towards the sexual urge was Proletarian Morality. This consisted of getting married, being faithful to one's spouse, and producing proletarian babies. But then, was that not the same thing as bourgeois morality?

"The question, Comrade, shows that you are thinking in mechanistic, not in dialectical, terms. What is the difference between a gun in the hands of a policeman and a gun in the hands of a member of the revolutionary working class? The difference between a gun in the hands of a policeman and in the hands of a member of the revolutionary working class is that the policeman is a lackey of the ruling class and his gun is an instrument of oppression, whereas the same gun in the hands of a member of the revolutionary working class is an instrument of the liberation of the oppressed masses. Now the same is true of the difference between so-called bourgeois 'morality' and Proletarian Morality. The institution of marriage which in capitalist society is an aspect of bourgeois decay, is dialectically transformed in its function in a healthy proletarian society. Have you understood, Comrade, or shall I repeat my answer in more concrete terms?"

ISKCON devotees sometimes slip into similar revolutionary jargon when discussing moral questions. Instead of the word "dialectical", we use the word "transcendental. "

We say the *karmis* engage in duties impelled by the mechanistic logic of *karma*, but the devotees are free of *karma*. Still, following Transcendental Morality, the devotees perform duties that may be externally indistinguishable from the duties of the *karmis*. But these duties are transcendently transformed because we do them for Krsna. Such duties become *yukta-vairagya*, or renunciation of material things by engaging them in Krsna's service.

But sometimes the *yukta-vairagya* argument is used to justify nonsense. One ISKCON leader famously used it for giving up Krsna consciousness altogether.

What I wish to focus on here is that one can fall into a trap by relying on stock phrases, not considering what the words he is using really mean. This trap can easily catch people of the "revolutionary" mind-set. Because they are revolutionary, they think it's OK to not adhere closely to traditional definitions. Their intelligence (i. e. their line of discrimination) becomes dizzy, moving to and fro at a moment's notice. It is an interesting way to come to the demoniac conclusion that there is no permanent reality (*asatyam apratistham*). Reality becomes the strategy of the moment; it has no fixed position. In the article I quoted from above, Koester traces out how revolutionary morality put the Communists into grave danger.

In 1931, Koestler was a newspaper reporter in Berlin for the Ullstein chain of newspapers. He was also secretly a member of the KPD, the German Communist Party. He would feed news tips that he'd get as an Ullstein reporter to the *Rote Fahne* (Red Flag), the Communist newspaper. At this time the Communist parties of the West were directed by Josef Stalin in Moscow. Stalin bitterly hated the Socialists, who considered themselves Marxists but refused to follow Moscow's direction. Thus under Stalin's orders, the KPD was completely at odds with the SPD, the Socialist party of Germany. In 1931 the Socialist party was in power in Prussia, the eastern portion of Germany that included Berlin. The Nazi Party was also coming up in Germany at this time, but the Communists saw Hitler's Brownshirts as the lesser enemy. The editorial policy of the *Rote Fahne* was to depict the Socialist government of Prussia as being tolerant of and lending assistance to the Nazis. One day Koester learned that the Prussian police would raid the Nazi headquarters the next day to seize weapons and archives, and to arrest anyone wearing a Brownshirt uniform. He passed the tip onward to the staff of the *Rote Fahne*.

The next day the police action took place exactly as Koestler had been told that it would. All the regular newspapers were discussing the open conflict between the Socialists and the Nazis. But the headline of the *Rote Fahne* announced that the SPD was, as usual, tolerating the Nazis. This, naturally, made the Communists look rather foolish.

Koestler asked Edgar, his "authority" (in the same sense as we use the word in ISKCON: "I'll have to ask my authority, Prabhu") in the KPD, why the *Rote Fahne* had not commented correctly on the police raid. Edgar replied that the KPD's policy toward the Socialists was a long-term program that could not be reversed by a small incident.

"But every word on the front page of the *Rote Fahne* is contradicted by the facts," I objected. Edgar gave me a tolerant smile. "You still have the mechanistic outlook," he said, and then proceeded to give me a dialectical interpretation of the facts. The action of the police was merely a feint to cover up their complicity; even if some

Socialist leaders were *subjectively* anti-Fascist in their outlook, *objectively* the Socialist Party was a tool of Nazism; in fact the Socialists were the main enemy, for they had split the working class. Already convinced, I objected--to save my face--that after all it was the Communist Party which had split away from the Socialists in 1919. "That's the mechanistic outlook again," said Edgar. " Formally we were in the minority, but it was we who embodied the revolutionary mission of the Proletariat; by refusing to follow our lead, the Socialist leaders split the working class and became lackeys of the reaction. "

Gradually I learned to distrust my mechanistic preoccupation with facts and to regard the world around me in the light of dialectic interpretation. It was a satisfactory and indeed blissful state; one you had assimilated the technique you were no longer disturbed by facts; they automatically took on the proper color and fell into the proper place. Both morally and logically the Party was infallible. . .

Moscow had decreed that Communism would come to power in Germany by 1932. To that end, the Communist Party and the Nazis began to cooperate against the Socialists. But the actual outcome of this cooperation was that in 1933 the Nazis came to power and liquidated the Communist Party in Germany. A few years later, just before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Soviets signed a treaty with Nazi Germany called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The Soviet government was anxious not to offend the Germans, so by signing this treaty it practically abandoned the remaining German communists who were hiding underground.

All right, so these are interesting lessons of history, but what do these lessons have to do with Krsna consciousness? Well, as I stated earlier, there is a danger in surrendering one's intelligence (i. e. discrimination) to revolutionary jargon. The word *jargon* is defined so in the dictionary:

1. Nonsensical, incoherent, or meaningless talk. 2. A hybrid language or dialect; a pidgin. 3. The specialized or technical language of a trade, profession, or similar group.

By the word jargon, I am mostly referring to definition 3. In ISKCON, we have words like "transcendental", "engaged", "dovetailed", and so on that we use in a specialized manner. Such words could be called "ISKCON jargon. " But the first definition also plays a part when the specialized language of a group becomes separated from reality. Now, what do I mean by reality? Words have their material definitions that are accepted by people in conditioned consciousness. That is one kind of reality: a lower, conventional reality. The Vedantic term for this is *vyavahara*. The higher reality, in which words find their definitions in spiritual truths, is *paramartha*. The danger of jargon is that words take on meanings that are in fact disconnected from both *vyavahara* and *paramartha*.

*yathasatodanayanadya bhavat  
samula isto vyavahara-margah*

A waterpot is made of earth and is temporary. Actually there is no waterpot; there is simply earth. However, as long as the waterpot can contain water, we can use it in that way. It cannot be said to be absolutely false. (From *Bhag.* 5. 10. 22 and Purport)

The *paramartha* reality is that the earth or clay of a waterpot belongs to the totality of earth. Thus it is false to argue that the earthen pot is different from the earth itself. The *vyavahara* reality is that the waterpot is useful in holding water. Thus it is false to argue that the waterpot, as a thing separate from the earth, has no reality at all, just as it is false to argue that the waterpot has its own reality completely different from the earth. Notice that the false arguments fall inbetween the two realms of truth, connected to neither.

"Revolutionary jargon" is that use of words that tries too hard to be revolutionary, to be different, to be unique. For example, someone may argue that devotees should not worry about the moral codes of the *karmis* because devotees are transcendental. When it is pointed out that *acaryas* have given us moral codes by their own example, the revolutionary may switch to this argument: "But we can't imitate, Prabhu. We have to be practical. " Thus the line of discrimination in revolutionary jargon is "wavering dizzily", to use a phrase of Koestler's.

In Krsna consciousness, the proper line of discrimination separates subjective impressions from objective reality. I thought it might be useful to quote Koestler above so that we might see that others, like the Communists, also distrust subjective impressions. A *subjective impression* is how a thing looks to you, the individual. For example, suppose you've gone to visit the home of another devotee. Just after you arrive there that devotee gets a phone call. "I have to go out for 10 minutes," the devotee tells you. "Just wait here til I return. " During that time you look around the house. You find in the kitchen a freshly baked cake. Your subjective impression is that this cake would be very good to eat. But you do not know if it has been offered or not. If it isn't offered, then it is not good to be thinking about how the cake must taste. The answer to the question, "Is this cake offered?", belongs to objective reality. You can't know that answer on your own. In this way, the philosophy and values of Krsna consciousness oblige us to be distrustful of subjective impressions, and to look to others with superior knowledge for learning what the objective reality is.

This is a simple explanation. But life is never so simple. Often our subjective impressions are in natural agreement with objective reality. For example, it is a natural human response to be disgusted by stool. One does not have to be initiated by a spiritual master and to have studied the *sastra* to know that stool should not be eaten. But then again, we have the case of cow dung, which *sastra* says is pure. Some devotees even use a toothpaste made of cow dung. From the platform of higher discrimination, there's nothing wrong with that, even though our subjective impression would be that it's disgusting.

We may say at this point, "All right. Then proper discrimination means that we shall not trust what our senses tell us, we shall trust only what the Vedas tell us. " But remember that the *acarya* sometimes bends Vedic principles to fit them to relative circumstances. Speaking in a *Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture in 1968, Srila Prabhupada said:

Chant Hare Krsna and gradually realize. So at the present moment we cannot strictly follow; neither we are strictly following; neither it is possible to strictly follow. As far as possible, that's all. Our conception of *brahmacarini* is in the Krsna society, because. . . Especially in India, there is no *brahmacarini*. But here, in your country, the boys and girls mix very freely, but just to restrict such free mixing, we think that

the unmarried girls should remain separately. That is the contemplation. Actually, in the Vedic system there is no *brahmacarini* system. Or get yourself married. That is our proposal, that we do not allow illicit sex life. That is impediment. That will not enhance your spiritual interests.

We learn here that Srila Prabhupada created a *brahmacarini-asrama* for ISKCON when in fact it does not exist in Vedic culture. His goal was to prevent the illicit sex that is common in Western culture where unmarried men and women mix freely. It was not feasible to match up all his female disciples in marriages with male disciples. Thus he devised the *brahmacarini-asrama* to keep the women who could not or would not be married from close contact with males. In this case, one Vedic truth--that there is no such thing as a *brahmacarini-asrama*--was given up for the sake of another Vedic truth--that illicit sex is contrary to the spiritual interests of the soul.

Sometimes we become a bit bewildered by these adjustments. It may seem tempting to just conclude that Srila Prabhupada's was a "revolutionary" and therefore he did whatever he liked. It's quite OK for him to do what he liked because he is Srila Prabhupada. On the other side of the coin, Srila Prabhupada was criticized by his Godbrothers for the same thing--being "too revolutionary"-- and so authorizing things like a *brahmacarini-asrama* that are in conflict with Vedic culture.

But Srila Prabhupada was not being revolutionary for revolution's sake. For example, in authorizing a *brahmacarini-asrama* his aim was to uphold the Vedic purpose: that illicit sex must be stopped. To authorize a thing that is different from the norm *just to be different* is demonic. "The demigods are devotees of Lord Visnu (*visnu-bhaktah smrto daiva*), whereas the demons (*asuras tad-viparyayah*) are always against the *visnu-bhaktas*, or Vaisnavas. " (*Bhag. 6. 7. 39p*) The word *viparyaya* means "reversed. " The demons do things that are reversed from the demigods because they just want to be different.

So, getting back to the point of revolutionary jargon: one has to be careful that he is not hypnotized by the call to revolution, to merely being different from the norm. A great saintly person may make a change in some rigid scriptural standard so that he may deliver souls who are too fallen to follow that standard strictly; but we should not think that his one change is an invitation for us to make "radical," "revolutionary" changes.

And they'll give example, "Christ ate fish" somewhere; therefore we have to maintain the slaughterhouse. Because Christ ate fish, therefore we have to maintain slaughterhouse. (Conversation, 2 July 1976)

I want to look once more at something Koestler said that was quoted above:

What is the difference between a gun in the hands of a policeman and a gun in the hands of a member of the revolutionary working class? The difference between a gun in the hands of a policeman and in the hands of a member of the revolutionary working class is that the policeman is a lackey of the ruling class and his gun is an instrument of oppression, whereas the same gun in the hands of a member of the revolutionary working class is an instrument of the liberation of the oppressed masses.

A gun is a deadly weapon. It is no less a deadly weapon in the hands of a policeman, a criminal, or a revolutionary. The danger of the above argument, which Koestler took from the mouth of a doctrinaire Communist, is that it persuades one who is not thinking carefully to conclude that a gun in the hands of a revolutionary is no longer a deadly weapon, a potential destroyer of innocent life.

This means that the argument neither fits the *paramartha* truth nor the *vyavahara* truth. The *paramartha* truth is, as we see in Gita, that no weapon can kill the soul. The *vyavahara* truth is that a weapon is dangerous because it can take the life from a body. The revolutionary argument is that when a gun is held in the hand of a policeman, it is a danger to life, but when it is held in the hand of a revolutionary, it is an instrument of liberation. Now, a gun certainly may be used for a good cause: to defend oneself from six kinds of aggressors, for example. But that good use does not change the fact that a gun is a deadly weapon that one has to be very careful of.

The revolutionary argument generates a false conception of objective reality; consequently, a false subjective impression of reality must also be created along with it. To argue that a gun is no longer a deadly weapon but an instrument of liberation is to create a false objective reality. What follows that is the false subjective impression that killing another person is a satisfying experience, something to be enjoyed. . . as long as the killing is for liberation.

*suta uvaca*  
*iti bhithah praja-drohat*  
*sarva-dharma-vivitsaya*  
*tato vinasanam pragad*  
*yatra deva-vrato'patat*

Suta Gosvami said: Being afraid for having killed so many subjects on the Battlefield of Kuruksetra, Maharaja Yudhisthira went to the scene of the massacre. There, Bhismadeva was lying on a bed of arrows, about to pass away.

Prabhupada: So the most important point is that the king was, he so responsible, he became afraid, that "I have killed so many *praja*. " *Praja*. It is not said there, "human being. " No. *Praja*.

*Praja* means the living entities that have taken birth in the domain of the responsible person, the king or other administrator. Maharaja Yudhisthira and his brothers were not at fault for having defended themselves with weapons at Kuruksetra. But Yudhisthira did not exult in the death of so many soliders and animals on that great field of battle. He felt soiled by pollution and sought a way to be cleansed of sin. That is why he came before Bhismadeva, who was lying on a bed of arrows.

The revolutionary becomes intoxicated by his justification of killing as a good thing. He goes from thinking "Killing is good" to thinking "Enjoyment of killing is likewise good. " But Maharaja Yudhisthira thought, "While killing may be necessary, it is not good. " In this way there was no scope for him to think, "Enjoyment of killing is good. "

The urge to kill is a desire of the Shadow that must be sublimated. When *ksatriyas* fought, they could release this desire in a manner that did not contradict *dharma* (moral and religious life). Sainly persons among the *ksatriyas*, like Maharaja

Yudhisthira, did not exult when an opportunity for killing presented itself. They performed their duty soberly.

Devotees in the present-day *sankirtana* mission also have a kind of killing to do. They are deputed to kill the demoniac mentality by preaching Krsna consciousness. There is a joy in preaching, and a joy in watching a conditioned soul give up his material convictions and surrender to Krsna. But a preacher must be careful about exulting as he dismantles the ideology of materialism. The demons enjoy destroying the establishment. But they are unable to construct anything of real value in place of what they tear down.

The Russian Czar Nicholas II and his family were killed by drunken Bolsheviks--but for what? The Communist thought they were justified by revolutionary morality to commit these and many millions of other murders. But they had no means of elevating the moral standards of the population. Communism came to be known as one of the most morally corrupt systems of government in the history of the Western world.

Psychologically speaking, what the Communist revolution was all about was the releasing of pent-up forbidden desires (for murder, robbery, rape and destruction) from the Shadow into the Persona. "Revolutionary morality" made it possible for a person to commit terrible crimes in the name of liberation of the oppressed masses. Yet this did not in fact liberate the masses. The revolution was just a convulsion of demoniac sense gratification.

Krsna consciousness is not a license to enjoy killing, or to enjoy destroying traditional morality. Morality always has the same final goal: to curb down the propensity for sense gratification, which is extremely dangerous to the real welfare of the living entities. Moral systems, even the most genuine ones, do in time become corrupt. Therefore, as Krsna Himself says in *Gita* 4. 7, He comes from time to time to restore *dharma*. That restoration may seem to be revolutionary; but *bhakti-yoga* is not a "revolutionary morality" that has a some *completely new, completely different purpose* from the previously established morality. It is not that by "becoming a devotee" (i. e. by putting *tilaka* on the forehead and wearing *kantha-mala* around the neck) that suddenly one becomes a New Man or New Woman who has no personal need of following moral codes any more. (The Communists used to speak of the New Soviet Man, *Homo sovieticus*. ) It is not that Krsna conscious morality is a revolutionary stratagem that can be changed at whim. It can be changed to fit time, place and circumstances. . . but not in blatant contradiction to the objective reality, the Absolute Truth. Krsna affirms in the *Gita*, for example in 7. 14, that *maya* is formidable, not to be trifled with. One can cross beyond it only by surrendering to Him. Surrender to Krsna is the actual aim of morality, religion, law, and all methods of disciplining the self.

*vasudeva-para veda*  
*vasudeva-para makhah*  
*vasudeva-para yoga*  
*vasudeva-parah kriyah*

*vasudeva-param jnanam*  
*vasudeva-param tapah*

*vasudeva-paro dharmo*  
*vasudeva-para gatih*

In the revealed scriptures, the ultimate object of knowledge is Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead. The purpose of performing sacrifice is to please Him. *Yoga* is for realizing Him. All fruitive activities are ultimately rewarded by Him only. He is supreme knowledge, and all severe austerities are performed to know Him. Religion [*dharmā*] is rendering loving service unto Him. He is the supreme goal of life. (*Bhag.* 1. 2. 28-29)

Thus Lord Krsna is the ultimate purpose of moral principles. Thus morality is not just a game of words, a strategy of justification. It has a permanent basis that is evident in the behavior of a truly God conscious person.

A devotee sees any system of established morality as indicating the authority of Lord Vasudeva, even if the moral codes are technically "non-Vedic. "

Sanatana Gosvami wanted to resign. He wanted to join Caitanya Mahaprabhu's movement. So when the Nawab understood that Sanatana Gosvami. . . His name was Dabir Khas. He changed his name. So he said, "No, you cannot resign. Then my whole kingdom will be topsy-turvied. I completely depend, dependent on you. " So Sanatana Gosvami said, "My, Your Majesty, I am no more able to serve you. Kindly excuse me. " Then the Nawab said that "Then I shall punish you. I am Nawab. I am king. " So Sanatana Gosvami said, "Yes, you can punish me because you are representative of God. " He never protested "Oh, you are Mohammedan, I am this, Hindu or. . . " No. He accepted him, that "You can punish me. " So the idea is that formerly the monarch, the king, was actually representative of God. (Lecture in Ahmedabad, 11 December 1972)

The "revolutionary" argument would be that the Nawab is a Muslim, thus he has no rightful authority over a devotee of Krsna. The devotee, on the other hand, has a right to defy the Nawab. For the time being he may appear to follow the laws of the Nawab, but that is only a strategy. In point of fact, the devotee is ever opposed to the non-devotee establishment, and works to overthrow it by any means necessary.

But as we see from Srila Prabhupada's explanation, this was not the attitude of Sri Sanatana Gosvami. Nor did Sanatana Gosvami surrender to the Nawab's desire that he continue on in government service. Sanatana Gosvami found it impossible to go on serving the Nawab, but he acknowledged the Nawab's authority. Thus he did not resent the Muslim king's placing him under house arrest. He depended upon Krsna to decide the issue.

In short, Sri Sanatana Gosvami was not a "revolutionary. "

*Prague, Czech Republic*  
*15 October 2003*

I will not be able to write for In2-MeC for the next several days. Before I leave Europe I need to back up my computer data, so that all the files, audio and video

material on my hard drives will be safely stored while I am away. I was hoping to be able to use Vidyagati's Compaq notebook. You'll recall that when my Fujitsu-Siemens was fried by lightning last July, I replaced it with Vidyagati's Dell Latitude, while he received a brand new Compaq from Omkaranath.

Unfortunately his Compaq seems to be a lemon. Yesterday it went into service because the fan does not cool the computer enough; as a result it keeps freezing up. This will be the second time it's been into service since Vidyagati got it. At least the machine is on warranty; and if it must go into service 3 times he has the right to get his money back.

So: if you are in the market for a new computer, from this experience I would advise you--don't buy a Compaq.

So this backup work I must do myself with the Dell and a big external hard drive with 2 120 Gigabyte hard disks. My computer has been running steadily since yesterday morning, copying, copying, copying...

I want to finish this before I leave by bus for Amsterdam on 20th October evening.

It seems I will stay in Groningen with Dharmaksetra and Pitambara until Govardhana Puja day, 26 October.

I believe on the 29th I fly from Amsterdam to Auckland, New Zealand.

I will be writing here again as soon as the backup work is completed. Probably you'll see nothing here until the weekend is over.

*Prague, Czech Republic  
19 October 2003*

*sudarsana maha-jvala  
koti-surya-sama-prabha  
ajnana-timirandhanam  
vaikunthabha pradarsaka*

O Sri Sudarsana! Your great effulgence is as brilliant as millions of suns! You dispel the darkness of ignorance and thus reveal the path to the eternal world of Vaikuntha.

*deva-deva jagannatha  
prapannarti vinasana  
trahi mam pundarikaksa  
patitam bhava-sagare*

O God of gods! O Jagannatha, the Lord of the Universe! Please destroy this great distress that has overcome me! O Lotus-eyed One! Please deliver this fallen soul from the ocean of material existence!

Yesterday evening, late, I finished the hard disk backup marathon. This afternoon I give the Prague temple Sunday feast program. It will be held in a rented hall. Tomorrow evening Vidyagati and I board a bus bound for Amsterdam. Dharmaksetra Prabhu and his good wife Pitambara are to pick us up when the bus arrives at 6:30 AM the next morning.

\* \* \* \* \*

In *Bhagavad-gita* 2. 58 we find a lesson in obedience:

*yada samharate cayam  
kurmo 'nganiva sarvasah  
indriyanindriyarthebhyas  
tasya prajna pratisthita*

One who is able to withdraw his senses from sense objects, as the tortoise draws its limbs within the shell, is firmly fixed in perfect consciousness.

A devotee withdraws the senses from their objects out of obedience to superior order. That does not mean that he is left with no activity at all. For the superior order consists of two parts: *vidhi* (positive engagement) as well as *nisedha* (negative restriction). The senses are pulled back from material activities so that they may be free for spiritual activities.

A devotee's "work" (*karma*) is *naiskarma*.

When one is freed from all contamination and he acts in devotional service under the direction of the spiritual master, one is on the platform of *naiskarma*. By such transcendental devotional service, the Lord is served. (*Bhag.* 8. 3. 11p)

Becoming detached from material things does not mean becoming inert altogether, as men with a poor fund of knowledge think. *Naiskarma* means not undertaking activities that will produce good or bad effects. . . Therefore, with the development of the *bhakti* cult, with the application of positive service to the positive form, one naturally becomes detached from inferior things, and he becomes attached to superior things. (*Bhag.* 1. 2. 7p)

Often devotees ask this question:

"How do I know, in the middle of having to respond to so many different situations that come up, that I am actually practicing obedience; that I am actually performing *naiskarma*; that I am engaged in positive devotional service? I have received general instructions on what to do and what not to do from my spiritual master and from my temple authorities. But so many specifics arise in the execution of these general order. I find it difficult to match the specifics to the general order. Sometimes it even seems there are contradictions in the orders I've gotten from my different authorities. I find myself wondering if I am not deviating without knowing it. "

The question can be simplified thusly:

As I face specific challenges from moment to moment throughout the day, and when there is no authority at hand for me to consult, *whom am I to obey?*

But in fact every devotee has a Teacher at right at hand. That Teacher is the Nama Prabhu, the holy name of Krsna. This verse says it all:

*etan nirvidyamananam  
icchatam akuto-bhayam  
yoginam nrpa nirnitam  
harer namanukirtanam*

O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge. (*Bhag.* 2. 1. 11)

What a great treasure Srila Sukadeva Gosvami gave Maharaja Pariksit when he spoke this verse to the king! It is the ultimate answer to all questions! Oh, you think it is not the ultimate answer? Then why does Sri Sukadeva Gosvami's disciple Suta Gosvami speak thus in the concluding verse (12. 13. 23) of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*?

*nama-sankirtanam yasya  
sarva-papa pranasanam  
pranamo duhkha-samanas  
tam namami harim param*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord, Hari, the congregational chanting of whose holy names destroys all sinful reactions, and the offering of obeisances unto whom relieves all material suffering.

Here again the chanting of the holy name is glorified as the remover of sinful reactions, which block our path of progress in devotional service. When our mind is troubled with questions about how to progress in Krsna consciousness, the answer is to be found in the chanting of the holy names.

Sukadeva Gosvami speaks of constant chanting of the holy names (*harer namanukirtanam*; the word *anu* means "always.") He says that this chanting is *akutah bhayam*, "free of all doubts and fear." That means that it rids the mind and intelligence of all unanswered questions, which are the fodder for mental speculation. And he says that the method of constant chanting is meant for everyone: for those who are *nirvidyamananam*, free of all material desires, for those who are *icchatam*, full of material desires, as well as for those who are *yoginam*, self-satisfied by dint of spiritual advancement.

But how does this verse answer the question of how one is to find the obedient path as he confronts so many specific tasks that present themselves in the course of his duty?

At the time I was initiated, Srila Prabhupada's personal servant was Aravinda dasa Brahmachari. He came to a point of perplexity in his service to His Divine Grace. He

was uncertain about how to satisfy Srila Prabhupada in the different activities he had to perform for him. So he expressed his doubt to Prabhupada privately; Aravinda became so emotional that he started to cry in the presence of His Divine Grace. Srila Prabhupada picked up a pair of *karatalas* and chanted Hare Krsna and danced around the room. Aravinda could not help but join in.

The best thing we can offer to *guru* and Krsna is the constant chanting of *harinama*. That does not mean chanting at the expense of other duties. This was not the lesson Srila Prabhupada taught Aravinda Prabhu, e. g. "Never mind any other activities, just chant Hare Krsna. " The real point is that *chanting should go on constantly during all other activities*. Then there will be no more doubts about "Which activity is best?", "How do I know if this is really pleasing?", "How to improve the quality of my service?", and so on.

The ultimate meaning of obedience to *guru* and Krsna is to chant the holy name constantly.

If you simply stick to this principle, *gopi-bhartur pada-kamalayor DASA-DASA-ANUDASA*, that "I am nothing except the eternal servant of Krsna," then you are in the liberated platform. Krsna consciousness is so nice. You keep yourself. And for keeping yourself in that consciousness, the simple method is this chanting, Hare Krsna. You keep yourself chanting as many hours, twenty-four hours. Why as many hours? Twenty-four hours. *Kirtaniyah sada harih*. Lord Caitanya says, this is to be practiced twenty-four hours. And that you can do. It requires simply practice. Even in sleeping you can chant Hare Krsna. Even in sleeping. And there is no bar. In sleeping, in eating, in going to the toilet room, there is no restriction. You can go on, "Hare Krsna. " You see. That will keep you in your svarupa, in your real identification, and you'll never be attacked by *maya*. (Initiation lecture, 14 June 1970)

It is said that this human form of life is the only means for crossing over the nescience of *maya*, or material existence. We have a very efficient boat in this human form of body, and there is a very expert captain, the spiritual master; the scriptural injunctions are like favorable winds. (*Bhag.* 3. 31. 10p)

The essence of scriptural injunctions is *harer-namanukirtanam*: "chant the holy name of the Lord constantly. " This constant chanting is the steady, favorable wind. Our other services constitute the proper running of the boat, especially putting the sail up correctly so that it will catch the blowing wind and so push the boat back home, Back to Godhead.

This example shows plainly how to discriminate whether my specific activities are favorable or not. The wind (constant chanting) is favorable; therefore for my activities to be favorable they must not contradict the wind. If I perform works that deaden my enthusiasm for constant chanting of the holy names, something is amiss! I need to re-examine those works with the help of authority to see if they are really favorable: and if authority determines that they are favorable, then I need to re-examine the consciousness in which I perform those works.

Groningen, The Netherlands  
22 October 2003

*namas te nitya vilasad  
vaisnavastra-niketana  
avarya-viryam yad rupam  
visnons tat pranamamy aham*

I offer my obeisances unto the brightly shining Sudarsana Cakra, which never fails to offer all protection to the *vaisnavas*. I humbly bow before Lord Visnu's weapon of irresistible strength.

*namas te jagadadhara  
jagad-atman namo 'stu te  
kaivalya trigunatita  
gunanjana namo 'stu te*

I offer my obeisances unto You, Lord Jagannatha, who are the support of the universe. To You, the very soul of the universe, I humbly bow. You are situated above the three modes of material nature as well as above the impersonal *brahman*, yet your Person is decorated with wonderful qualities that are completely transcendental. To You I offer my humble obeisances.

Now Vidyagati and I are sheltered in the home of Sri Dharmaksetra Prabhu and his good wife Pitambara dasi. As always when we are here, it is very peaceful. Our *vaisnava-grhasta* hosts, who are the epitome of kindness, provide all that is required for a comfortable stay.

\* \* \* \* \*

A professor of neuroscience at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) has scientific evidence that experienced Buddhist meditators are happier than ordinary people. A comparative study of brain scans done by Professor Richard Davidson at the university's Laboratory for Affective Neuroscience shows that the left prefrontal cortex of the brain, associated with positive emotions and good moods, is unusually active in meditators who practice the method of contemplation taught in the Buddhist religion. The left prefrontal cortex is known as "the happiness center" of the brain.

This is surely interesting; I wonder what such a study would determine about the brains of persons who regularly chant 16 rounds of the Hare Krsna *mahamantra* each day. But in reading this news report I was more astonished by a remark made by a professor at Duke University in North Carolina. Dr. Owen Flanagan is quoted as saying, "We can now hypothesize with some confidence that those apparently happy, calm Buddhist souls one regularly comes across in places like Dharamsala really are happy. "

Let me translate that statement into simple English: "We can now speculate with some faith that Buddhists who seem happy, really are happy. "

If this is supposed to be a scientific statement, then one is left wondering just what kind of knowledge science is, and what kind of people scientists are. A man who feels that a bunch of brain scan prints gives him the go-ahead to announce, "Oh yes, now it *seems* all right for me to *guess* that some persons *may* be as happy as they look", *seems* to *may* have something missing, *perhaps*, from his own brain.

\* \* \* \* \*

Only reincarnation can explain this: in a town called Janakipur near Lucknow, lives a 3-year old girl named Shraddha who can recite by heart 3000 *sutras* from the *Ashta Adhyayi*, a Sanskrit text on grammar and linguistics. She started reciting when she was 2. 5 years of age.

\* \* \* \* \*

Instant *karma*: Ranvir Singh lives in Nagia Pal village in South India. He was bothered by a mouse in his house. After catching the mouse in a wire cage trap, he tried to kill it by tying a kerosene-soaked rag around its tail and lighting the highly flammable cloth. But when the cloth was ablaze the mouse escaped and raced around the house, setting different objects on fire as it went by. As a result Mr. Singh's house burned down to the ground. Ravana tried the same thing with Hanuman, and the beautiful Lanka was torched.

\* \* \* \* \*

Remember, "*dosha*" means "fault" in Sanskrit: in Clearwater, California, a 10-month old dog named Doshia was hit by a car in the street on 15 April 2003. A policeman arrived on the accident scene. Taking pity on the injured animal, the cop shot the dog in the head to put her out of her misery. Thinking the dog was dead, authorities from the town animal shelter put Doshia into a plastic bag and stuffed the bag into a freezer for later disposal. Two hours later she found standing up inside the bag, shivering. Doshia was given emergency medical treatment and survived, even though the policeman's bullet remains lodged in her brain.

*kaler dosa-nidhe rajan. . .*

\* \* \* \* \*

Bhrgu Muni, a great supporter of Daksa, was awarded the beard of the goat's head which was substituted for the head of Daksa. It appears from the exchange of Daksa's head that the modern scientific theory that the brain substance is the cause of all intelligent work is not valid. The brain substance of Daksa and that of a goat are different, but Daksa still acted like himself, even though his head was replaced by that of a goat. The conclusion is that it is the particular consciousness of an individual soul which acts. The brain substance is only an instrument which has nothing to do with real intelligence. The real intelligence, mind and consciousness are part of the particular individual soul. (*Bhag.* 4. 7. 5p)

In 1980 a British neurosurgeon named Professor John Lorber (University of Sheffield) announced that he had a patient named Roger with an I. Q. of 126, who was a wizard at mathematics. But Roger had a small problem. Ninety-five percent of his

brain was missing. Professor Patrick Wall of University College in London supported Lorber's findings. He had seen many autopsy reports of seemingly ordinary adults who turned out to have missing brains. An autopsy performed on a janitor in New York in 1970, for example, revealed the man's skull to be empty. Yet he lived to be 35 years old, and friends and relatives thought him to be completely normal.

Because these pieces of evidence are decades old and therefore cannot be easily verified now, some professionals in the field of neuroscience minimize them. But in the year 2002, a woman named Sharon Parker from the north of England was discovered to have only 5% of a brain inside her head. In all other respects she is completely normal. Early tests suggest that her brain keeps working by using a complex and little understood form of rerouting and job-sharing between those few parts that still remain intact.

\* \* \* \* \*

They had normal brains, but look what they used them for:

A 24-year-old unemployed man, identified by police only by his last name, Kim, was found dead on 8 October 2002 in the lavatory of an Internet cafe in Kwangiu, South Korea. He had been playing computer games non-stop for 86 hours, without taking sleep or meals in all that time.

Eleven days later in Fengyuan, central Taiwan, 27-year-old Lien Wen-cheng was found foaming at the mouth and bleeding from his nose in the lavatory of an Internet cafe after playing video games for 32 hours straight. An ambulance came for him but he died on the way to the hospital.

In a game center in Hong Kong on 13 January 2003, a 28-year-old unnamed man was found dead at a computer terminal after playing "Diablo II" for 5 hours.

86 hours, 32 hours, 5 hours. The difference between the first 2 numbers is twice the difference between the last two. . .

*Groningen, The Netherlands  
24 October 2003*

*pratibhatastreni bhisana vara-gunasthoma bhusana  
janibhyastana tarana jagad-avasthana karana  
nikhila-duskarma karsana nigama-saddharma darsana  
jaya jaya sri sudarsana jaya jaya jaya sri sudarsana*

O Sudarsana! All the enemies of your Lord's devotees run away fearing your prowess. All auspicious attributes find their home in you. Those who worship you cross the shoreless ocean of *samsara* and free themselves from their cycles of births

and deaths. The entire universe is stabilized by your mighty power. You cut asunder all the sins of those who approach you as their refuge. You bless all of your devotees with the knowledge about the righteous conduct prescribed by the Vedas. O Lord Sudarsana of these auspicious attributes! All glories unto you, all glories unto you!

*karunamrta pathodhi  
sudhamne namo namah  
dinoddharaika guhyaya  
krpa pathodaye namah*

O Lord Jagannatha, You are an ocean of nectarean compassion. Your abode is most attractive. I offer my obeisances unto You again and again! You are the sole uplifter and deliverer of the fallen souls, but how You do this no one can understand. O ocean of mercy, I offer You my respectful obeisances.

On Wednesday Srimati Mukti-dhatri dd visited here from Amsterdam, bringing with her Bhaktin Hjordis who flew all the way from Los Angeles just to see me. Bhakta Michael drove them here, and another nice boy who lives in Amsterdam and who is just starting devotional service rode with them. At the same time Bhakta August, who lives here in Groningen, stopped by to see me. Hjordis presented me with a big box of Sri-Sri Rukmini-Dvarakadisa *maha-prasadam*.

\* \* \* \* \*

Once we accept that the Western world was in the hands of alcoholics, it becomes easier to explain much of the behavior of our most famous leaders. It cannot be denied that our history is littered with selfish, violent, arrogant, stubborn, libinious, unsteady, unpredictable and over-confident rulers. It is surely no coincidence that these character failings are the same ones manifested by people when drunk. The historians of Western civilization can no longer gloss over the simple fact that alcohol controlled all the decision-makers. Its grip on the current world is often considered dangerous, but this pales into insignificance when we look at the control it exerted over our ancestors. (Paul Gilham, quoted from his *The Hangover of History*, published in FORUM, *Fortean Times*, August 2003, p. 57)

\* \* \* \* \*

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was quoted in the *Irish Times* of 8 March 2003 as saying:

There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. These are things we don't know we don't know.

Categorical thinking is often the most unclear thinking of all...

Even before considering the transcendental reality that devotees at once know they know, know they don't know, and don't know they don't know, there are at least two kinds of mundane reality admitted even by modern gross materialists: *objective reality* and *consensus reality*. The overlapping relationship of these simultaneous

realities make it very hard to draw the line in the mundane sphere between known knowns, known unknowns and unknown unknowns.

The *objective reality* of a thing is decided by how well it can be measured. A cup and a plate, the things we use every day to eat off of, have a very high objective reality. Still, to say that a thing is not measured is not to say it has no reality. At best it is to say that the unmeasured thing cannot be proved to be real.

Not proved to be real? Wait a minute. Consider this: every human culture has social mechanisms for justice and for mercy. Can we imagine a society with *no trace at all* of justice and mercy? Impossible to conceive. That certainly demonstrates the reality of these "things." But grind the universe down to the finest powder, then sift it through the finest sieve. Will you find one molecule of justice, one molecule of mercy?

This brings us to consensus reality.

The *consensus reality* of a thing is how real a thing is believed to be. This reality is rooted in human opinion--the opinion of the majority, for one example, or the opinion of the scientific elite, for another example. The "hard-headed realist" may argue that a thing that is merely agreed upon by people but which has not been measured has no reality at all; however, even if we don't argue "justice and mercy" against that point of view, one question remains--what decides an acceptable measurement? It is consensus reality that decides it!

Think of the theory of evolution. All the hard, measurable data that scientists point to in arguing that man evolved from ape-like subhuman creatures can be gathered into a single large suitcase. Who says that one suitcaseful of fossil bones is enough to validate the theory of evolution? The consensus of most scientists today says it is enough. In their eyes it is enough to demonstrate the superiority of evolutionary theory over any other explanation of mankind's origins.

If someone wishes to argue another scenario of the origin of the species, the scientists will raise the bar of acceptable proof. They will want much, much more than a suitcaseful of measurable evidence. Is that fair? "Yes it is," the scientists reply, "for extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof." But what decides what an extraordinary claim is? The consensus of scientists, that is what. The thing is, though, that just two hundred years ago, the claim that man was not purposefully designed and created by God would have been considered by leading scientists of the time to be an extraordinary claim.

Getting back to things with a high objective reality, like our cup and plate: if microcosmic scales of measurement are applied--i.e. if the comparatively vast spaces between the atoms of the cup and plate are considered--then cup and plate no longer seem so real. If the macrocosmic measurement of vast aeons of time is similarly applied, then cup and plate likewise no longer seem so real. Yet because we use cup and plate every day, our human consensus is that they are very real objects.

So when examined closely, the difference between *objective reality* and *consensus reality* wavers dizzily.

Think on these things. Then think again about "known knowns," "unknown knowns" and "unknown unknowns."

\* \* \* \* \*

In the village of Antoli, Gujarat, a wild leopard and a farmer's cow meet peacefully every evening between 9:30 and 10:00 PM. The cow will often lick the big cat's head and neck. The local dogs bark while the leopard is around, but the villagers are happy because the leopard's friendly visits to the cow frighten off other wild creatures. Normally leopards are more dangerous to man and domestic livestock than tigers and lions. Tigers and lions, as the largest and strongest of the big cats, prefer to hunt large wild animals. Usually, only when they are old or injured, do lions and tigers pose a threat to man and his animals. But leopards, being smaller, very intelligent and extremely vicious, present an everpresent danger to villages that lie in the vicinity of their hunting grounds.

\* \* \* \* \*

Humans wilder than leopards...

In Midnapore district, Bengal, a *tantrika* named Sisir Das sucked the blood from the necks of 207 goats that were beheaded at a sacrificial ceremony in a Kali temple. Thousands of worshippers of the goddess watched Das drink up the goat blood. "I don't know what happens to me," he explained to reporters. "I feel the goddess taking possession of my body."

\* \* \* \* \*

...and lower than scorpions:

Back in Gujarat, fast young rich folks looking for exotic ways to get high are flocking to the tribal areas around the coastal town of Bharuch, where big scorpions are abundant. The local *adivasis* (tribal people) keep scorpions captive; for a fee of up to 200 rupees, an *adivasi* will put a scorpion on the body of a city thrill-seeker and induce it to sting the customer. After the initial pain of the sting, the poison induces a dreamy floating feeling. Aaahhh! Well, if these intoxo-freaks would stop their smoking, drinking and drug abuse and simply stick to scorpion stings, it might not be so bad. I can see it now on an Amsterdam streetcorner: "Psst! Hey! Yeah, you! Wanna buy a live scorpion? Get you high, man..."

In parts of America and Australia, where they have cane toads (a type of very big, ugly, warty, hopping amphibian), kids eager to get "naturally high" lick the hallucinogenic mucous off the backs of these toads, or throw a bunch of 'em into a pot of boiling water and drink the water after it cools.

\* \* \* \* \*

All right, this next one is not so heavy. It's quite like the story of the Finn and his cell phone that I reported here a couple of weeks ago...but funnier! Last summer in the Black Sea resort town of Mamaia, a Romanian couple, Lucia and Victor Dragomirescu, were talking to one another on their cell phones. Lucia was telling

Victor that she was home ill and couldn't get out of bed; Victor was telling Lucia that he was at his parents' house and they were loading him up with housework. Suddenly they bumped into one another. Each had been strolling along the same beach in the sun, phoning lies to the other, thinking the other was somewhere else but on the beach. Now they are getting a divorce.

\* \* \* \* \*

Obviously, Suhotra Swami does not like cell phones.

In Mombasa, Kenya, a woman was answering the call of nature, using an open pit latrine. Her cell phone slipped out of her pocket and fell down into the stooily sewer waste. She offered 1000 shillings, a little more than 10 Euros, to anyone who would retrieve the phone. Two men went down a ladder--the first a 30-year-old radio technician, the second his friend--and were overcome by the fumes. They drowned in the sewage. A third man went down to rescue them. He lost his consciousness but was hauled up by neighbors. Too late--he died on the way to the hospital. The police prevented a fourth man from climbing down. The lady never got her phone back. I regret the useless waste of three human lives, but that is the best way to dispose of a cell phone that I have ever heard of.

*Groningen, The Netherlands  
25 October 2003*

*subha-jagadrupa mandana sura-ganatrasi khandana  
satamaka-brahma vandita satapata-brahmanandita  
pratita-vidvat sapaksita bhajata ahirbudhnya laksita  
jaya jaya sri sudarsana jaya jaya jaya sri sudarsana*

O Sudarsana! You are resplendent as a precious decoration on the hand of Narayana, who has the universes as His body. Through your grace, Devas are freed from the fear caused by the Asuras. Indra and Brahma always worship you. The Satapata Brahmana belonging to Yajur Veda hails your glories and pays its tributes to you. The scholars of this universe seek your help to overcome their contestants. Ahirbudhnya Samhita states that Ahirbudhnya (Mahesa) worships you and sought the boon to see your beautiful form with His own eyes. O Lord Sudarsana of illustrious attributes! All glories to you, all glories to you.

*paritrahi jagan-natha  
dina-bandho namo 'stu te  
nistirno 'ham bhavambodhim  
prapya tvam taranim sukham*

O Lord Jagannatha, please rescue me! O friend of the fallen, I offer my obeisances unto You. Please deliver me from this vast material ocean! Obtaining Your lotus feet I will become supremely happy.

\* \* \* \* \*

A 15-year-old Norwegian schoolgirl named Maria Lindbjoer Kristoffersen tried to make a call on her Nokia 3310 cell phone inbetween classes at her school in the town of Fjellidal. Smoke poured from the phone as it started shaking in her hand while emitting squeaking noises. Maria flung it away in terror, and the phone exploded like a hand grenade! Burning splinters left scars in the classroom ceiling, walls and floor. Thick smoke filled the room and spread out into the corridor. In a report from Taiwan, another Nokia 3310 burst into flames while in use.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hira Ratan Manek, 65, is a mechanical engineer in Calicut, Kerala, India. Apparently he has not eaten food since 1995. He claims to take nourishment directly from the sun, by standing barefoot and gazing at the sun during the first hour of sunrise and the last hour of sunset.

\* \* \* \* \*

There are places along the highways of the Western world that are called "accident black spots" because of the high occurrence of fatal crashes for no apparent reason. One such spot was between Uebelbach and Deutschfeistritz on the A9 Pyhm motorway in Styria (Steirmark), Austria. The officials had tried resurfacing the road and putting up warning signs. Despite these measures, accidents continued to happen.

Finally the officials brought in a "Druid priest" named Gerald Knobloch. He erected two crystal monoliths, each weighing a ton, on either side of the road, to rectify disturbed energy lines that he claimed were the cause of the accidents. All this was done in secret. But recently the officials went public about the Druidic hocus pocus on the highway, because their studies show that the accident rate of six fatalities per year fell to zero since the big quartz stones were put up.

\* \* \* \* \*

My sweet Lord, this report is very strange.

Pineda, Spain, 9 January 2003--a man on a Hayabusa motorbike raced through a highway tollgate without paying, travelling at a speed well beyond the lawful limit. The police were alerted. They set out after the speeder on police motorcycles. Pursuing him for 70 kilometers at speeds up to 180 km/h, they were unable to get his attention. Finally a police rider pulled up next to him and reached, pulling the biker's hand from the throttle. The bike slowed, went off the road, and crashed. The biker was found to have been dead for a time of 30 minutes *before* his bike crashed. He had frozen to death while riding.

*Groningen, The Netherlands  
26 October 2003*

Myself, Vidyagati, Dharmaksetra and Pitambara dd just concluded a small morning Govardhana day program here in Groningen.

Soon we'll leave for Amsterdam. There will be a Govardhana Puja ceremony at the ISKCON temple there. Devotees have asked that my Giriraja *sila* be bathed in their *abhiseka* ceremony.

Jaya Giriraja!

Let us humbly pray to Srila Prabhupada that by His Divine Grace we may take advantage of this holy Govardhana Puja, and the Kartika month, to cross over the obstacles that separate our hearts from the blissful realm of pure Vaisnava *sanga*.

#### Poem to Sri Giriraja

Nanda's lotus-eyed son  
At only seven years of age  
Lifted the Govardhana Mountain  
Balanced it on his little finger for a week  
Sheltered all His beloved devotees  
And defeated Indra's pride.

The law is on Indra's side.  
After all, he is the king of heaven.  
But he made a mistake when he thought to impose  
The duality of the material world upon Vrndavana.  
"Be good, you Vrajavasis, and worship me!  
I who sit on the throne of Svarga  
Will bless you with due rewards.  
Neglect me, and you're bad...  
Subject to my punishment."

Such are the rules of the external world.  
But the life and soul of Sri Vrndavana Dhama  
Is Lord Krsna Himself  
And He instructs the residents of His abode,  
"Here, we need only worship Govardhana hill."

King Indra, all respects to you  
But don't you see that this land of Vraja  
Is the Lord's own heart!  
Please don't try to police this place  
With your Vedic codes;  
Otherwise as great as you are  
You will run afoul of duality yourself  
And risk becoming something like Kamsa  
Who sent his riotous agents of destruction,  
Putana and the rest,  
Into Vrndavana to be delivered by Krsna.  
O ruler of Amaravati and enemy of the *asuras*!  
Don't let pride force you to imitate the demon-king!

But as ordained by the script of fate  
(written by none other than Sri Hari)  
Indra ordered his powerful Samvartaka clouds

To inundate Vraja with rains of devastation.  
Krsna is so kind...  
He did not treat those clouds as demons.  
Weapons of Indra are respectable,  
As Garuda respected the *vajra*.  
For seven days  
Sri Giridhari blessed the clouds  
With the *darsana* Of His Govardhana-*lila*!  
When the sky cleared, Surabhi proclaimed Sri Krsna  
"The real Indra"  
And Indra himself fell at the Lord's lotus feet.

Why do I attend to topics other than this,  
Krsna's Govardhana pastimes,  
And thus waste my miserable life?  
I beg you, Sri Giriraja,  
Lift this heavy stone of worldliness from my heart  
And let just one nectarean drop of taste  
For hearing and chanting Your glories  
Water the parched soil there.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
*27 October 2003*

#### The Darker the Weather

I pick up the shards  
Of the heart that I dropped  
A spilled hand of cards  
A clock that has stopped.

I wipe away the tears  
Of an anger so old  
Of sadness and fears  
Told and retold.

The cracks run so deep  
Yet the core remains whole  
Faith's armored keep  
Is the pure spirit soul.

Prabhupada, strength!  
And stay this fierce pride  
Lead me up this last length  
Following your stride.

O Gaura Nitai  
Lift me this day

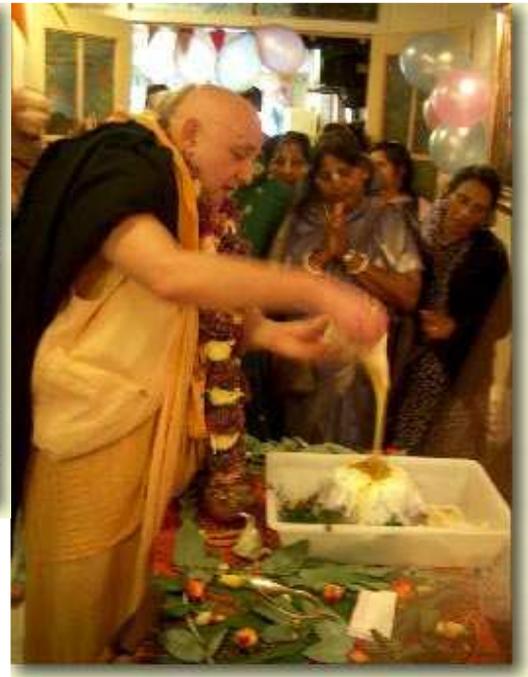
Out of the swamp of my "I"  
Into *sankirtana's* sway.

Krsna, put me together  
I need so much repair  
The darker the weather  
The more You are there.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands*  
*28 October 2003*

My prayer to Srila Prabhupada today, on his *tirobhava mahotsava*, is for the death of all that is inside my heart that stands between me and his sublime *guru-vani*.

Photos from the Govardhana Puja celebration in Amsterdam temple:



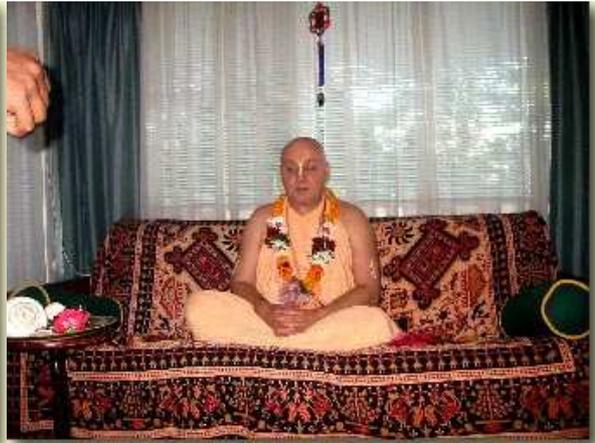


*Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
29 October 2003*

In 20 minutes I am leaving for the airport. My next entry here will, Krsna willing, be sent from Auckland, New Zealand. My very best wishes to all of you. May Lord Krsna bless and protect you. Hare Krsna!

*Auckland, New Zealand  
1 November 2003*

After a loong air trip I am at last here in Auckland, staying at the home of Sriman Padmasambhava das and his good family. Some photographs follow of my first morning here. I am a bit ill with diarrhea. Tonight there's a *namahatta* gathering here at Padma's house. Tomorrow morning I give *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class at the ISKCON temple, which is nearby.



*Auckland, New Zealand  
2 November 2003*

*Taittiriya Upanisad* Part Two is called *Brahmavalli*. The eighth chapter of *Brahmavalli* offers an analysis of *ananda*, bliss.

It is said that a full measure of human bliss is experienced by a young, strong, learned man who owns all the wealth of the world. But greater than such a man is a Gandharva of the earthly realm. The happiness of the earthly Gandharva is a hundred times the full measure of human happiness. Such happiness is also attained by the man who knows all the Vedas and is free from desire. Superior to the Gandharva of this earthly region is the Gandharva of the world above Earth. He enjoys happiness a hundred times greater than the earthly Gandharva. His bliss is

known by a man who knows all the Vedas and is free from desire. Higher than the Gandharvas of the upper world are the forefathers; their bliss is a hundred times greater. Such bliss is tasted by the man who knows the Vedas and is free from desire. Above the forefathers are the demigods who achieved their status by good birth. Their bliss is a hundred times greater than that of the forefathers. A man who knows all the Vedas and is free from desire attains this bliss also. Above those born into demigod families are those who achieved demigod status by performance of sacrifice. A hundred times greater is the bliss they enjoy. A man who knows all the Vedas and is free of desire is established in that bliss. Higher yet are the natural demigods whose happiness is a hundred times more; it too is tasted by the man who knows all the Vedas and is free of desire. The bliss of Indra is a hundred times more than that, but still a man who knows all the Vedas and is free of desire enjoys the same bliss. A hundred times increased is the bliss of Brhaspati. A man who knows all the Vedas and is free of desire tastes Brhaspati's bliss as well. Prajapati's bliss--and the bliss of a man who knows all the Vedas and is free of desire--is greater by a hundred times. The bliss that Brahman enjoys is a hundred times more than that of Prajapati. This bliss is relished by the man who knows all the Vedas and is free of desire.

One who knows the bliss of Brahman is never afraid, Chapter Nine of *Brahmavalli* declares. He does not agonize by thinking, "Why did I not do the right thing? Why did I do the wrong thing?" His achievement of the liberated state is understood by his freedom from these two thoughts. This is the hidden teaching of the Upanisad.

But:

*tvat-saksatkarahlada-  
visuddhabdhi-sthitasya me  
sukhani gopadayante  
brahmany api jagad-guro*

My dear Lord, O master of the universe, since I have directly seen You, my transcendental bliss has taken the shape of a great ocean. Being situated in that ocean, I now realize all other so-called happiness to be like the water contained in the hoofprint of a calf. (*Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* 14. 36)

*krsna-name ye ananda-sindhu-asvadana  
brahmananda tara age khatodaka-sama*

Compared to the ocean of transcendental bliss which is tasted by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the pleasure derived from impersonal Brahman realization [*brahmananda*] is like the shallow water in a canal. (*Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* Adi 7. 97)

*Auckland, New Zealand  
3 November 2003*

A Segment of the *Santi Parva* of *Mahabharata*

Next, Bhishma related this history. During a Satya-yuga of the Svayambhuva manvantara, the great sage Dharma had begotten four incarnations of Lord Narayana. These were Nara, Narayana, Hari and Krishna. Hari and Krishna were to first to undergo severe austerities at Badari, and then, later on, Nara and Narayana also did so.

Narada Muni once came to see Nara and Narayana and asked, "O foremost of rishis, who is it that you are worshipping?"

Narayana Rishi replied, "My dear Narada, we are meditating upon Lord Vishnu, for He is the Supreme Absolute Truth. "

After hearing this, Narada Muni made up his mind to go to Svetadvipa to see the Supreme Lord directly. After worshiping Nara and Narayana Rishis and receiving worship from them, Narada Muni set out, and when he arrived at the peak of Mount Meru, he rested for awhile. From there, Narada Muni could see Svetadvipa within the ocean of milk, toward the northwestern direction. In that transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord, all of the residents have four arms and effulgent white complexions.

At this point, Maharaja Yudhisthira interrupted because he wanted to hear more about the residents of Svetadvipa. In reply, Bhishma referred to the talks of the great sages Ekata, Dvita and Trita with Brihaspati.

Ekata, Dvita and Trita said, "After being born from Lord Brahma's mind, we had gone to the North. There, we had performed austerities for thousands of years, and at last we began to stand upon one leg, just like stakes in the ground. While standing on the shore of the Milk Ocean, north of Mount Meru, we desired to see Lord Narayana in His original transcendental form. "

"At last, when our austerities became mature, we heard a very deep and sweet voice speak to us from the sky, and that transcendental sound filled our hearts with great joy. The voice informed us, 'O rishis, there is a white island known as Svetadvipa near the northern shore of the Milk Ocean. There, Lord Narayana lives along with His pure devotees, who have no other desire or engagement than service at His lotus feet. You should go there and see how the Supreme Absolute Truth is being revealed in His personal, transcendental form. '"

"After hearing this, we journeyed to Svetadvipa in great eagerness, but after arriving there, we could not see anything because of the Supreme Lord's blinding effulgence. Thus, we could understand that no one is able to see the personal feature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead unless he is sufficiently qualified. Being undaunted, however, we sat down there to worship Lord Vishnu and perform austerities to further purify ourselves. "

"Finally, after one hundred celestial years, we began to see wonderfully effulgent personalities having white complexion and possessed of all auspicious bodily features. They kept their hands joined as if they were praying, and we could hear them constantly chant the holy names of the Lord. "

"Next, we saw an intensely concentrated effulgence approaching and all of the residents of Svetadvipa began to joyfully run toward it with their hands joined in a reverential attitude. We began to lose consciousness, however, due to the great energy that emanated from that concentrated effulgence, and because of this, we also lost our vision. We could only feel the fragrant breezes and hear the combined sounds of the devotees as they glorified the Lord. Thus, even though the Supreme Lord was present before us, we could not see His personal form because it was covered by His Yogamaya potency. "

"In this way, we had the chance to personally experience what we had already learned from shastra--that the Absolute Truth, although non-dual, is realized progressively in three features--as Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. "

"This can be compared to the progressive stages by which one understands the sun. First of all, one can see the glaring all-pervading sunshine. Then, one can understand that this energy is coming from a localized source. In other words, that which had appeared to be formless is realized as emanating from a specific form. Finally, if one is able to enter the sun planet and receive the mercy of the presiding deity, Surya, then he can understand that in reality, everything is emanating from him. "

"Similarly, the brahmajyoti is the all-pervading effulgence of the Supreme Lord's transcendental body. Paramatma is the Lord's localized expansion upon whom the yogis meditate within the region of the heart. Bhagavan is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Krishna, who resides in His own abode and who expands Himself unlimitedly. "

"Thereafter, when the Lord left that place, the fragrant breezes stopped blowing and the sounds of glorification ceased. After regaining our senses, we opened our eyes and saw that we were amongst thousands of the Lord's devotees, although none of them paid the slightest attention to us. We were already very weak because of our prolonged austerities, and due to being neglected like this, we became somewhat depressed. "

"Then, from the sky, a voice informed us, 'O rishis, only those that are qualified by unalloyed devotion are able to see the personal form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such pure devotion is characterized by one's being devoid of any desire other than to render undeviating service to the Supreme Lord with one's body, mind and words. In other words, the pure devotee has no desire to materially benefit by engaging in fruitive activities, nor does he wish to become liberated by merging into the Lord's effulgence. The pure devotees only desire to serve the Supreme Lord, without personal motivation, in any condition of life, whether it is in the material or spiritual world. Due to having developed unalloyed love for the Supreme Lord, the pure devotee has no room in his heart for any other desire than to simply please Him. This elevated condition of life can only be achieved when one surrenders unto a pure devotee of the Lord and receives his mercy. Only in this way can one hope to one day come face to face with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. My dear sons of Brahma, please return home now. '"

Bhishma resumed the narration that had been interrupted by Yudhisthira's request to hear more about the residents of Svetadvipa.

From the peak of Mount Meru, Narada Muni resumed his journey to Svetadvipa. Upon his arrival, the devarshi met all of the residents of that white island, and after worshipping them, he accepted their worship in return. Then, in the hopes of meeting Lord Narayana, Narada Muni began to perform austerities by keeping his arms upraised, and as he did so, he recited prayers in glorification of the Supreme Lord.

Before long, Lord Narayana appeared before Narada Muni in a wonderful form possessing hundreds of heads, arms and trunks. As Narada Muni bowed down with great awe and veneration, the Lord spoke to him: "My dear son of Brahma, the rishis Ekata, Dvita and Trita had come here in the hopes of seeing Me, but they were unable to do so. In fact, no one is able to see Me unless his heart has become completely purified by having rendered loving devotional service unto Me. "

"My dear Narada, I consider you to be the best of My pure devotees. Therefore, I am ready to fulfill whatever your heart may desire. "

Narada Muni replied, "My dear Lord, just to see You is in itself the highest benediction, and I consider it to be ample reward for whatever austerities I may have performed. "

Lord Narayana then said, "Narada, I exist along with My associates in a transcendental position, beyond the manifest and unmanifest conditions of material nature. Therefore, I cannot be perceived by materially tinged senses. To come to Me in My eternal transcendental abode is the complete stage of liberation, whereas merging into My glaring effulgence is partial and impersonal. Indeed, it is a kind of punishment for those spiritualists that, out of envy, do not surrender unto Me. "

"O Narada, I have revealed My universal form to you so that you can graphically experience how the entire universe, and all of the living entities contained therein, from the tiny germ up to Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva, are all My parts and parcels, and are resting in Me. "

After describing Himself in this way, Lord Narayana suddenly disappeared from Narada's vision. Narada Muni then went to Badari, to see Nara and Narayana Rishis. Thereafter, Narada Muni recited Lord Narayana's words to the Siddhas residing in Brahmaloaka, and this treatise became known as the Pancharatra shastra.

*Auckland, New Zealand  
4 November 2003*

#### *A Segment of the Vana Parva of Mahabharata*

The Pandavas continued to dwell happily at the Vishakhayupa forest, and then, after the end of the monsoon season, they returned to Kamyakavana. The Pandavas were very happily received by all the sages living there, and one of the brahmanas informed them, "Lord Krishna and Markandeya Rishi will come here very soon to visit you. . . "

Remarkably, just as the brahmana was saying this. Lord Krishna arrived on His chariot, accompanied by His wife, Satyabhama. After dismounting, Krishna first of all offered His obeisances to Maharaja Yudhishthira, Bhima and Dhaumya. Then, He embraced Arjuna with great affection while Nakula and Sahadeva came and offered their obeisances at the Lord's lotus feet. Lord Krishna was meeting the curly-haired Arjuna after a long period of separation, and thus He embraced him again and again. Indeed, the Lord's transcendental beauty was seen by all to increase in the association of His dearest friend. Then, as Satyabhama embraced Draupadi, Arjuna inquired about the welfare of Subhadra and Abhimanyu, who were residing in the Lord's care at Dvaraka.

Finally, Krishna sat down, surrounded by the Pandavas, and He praised Maharaja Yudhishthira by saying, "My dear King, you have always acted righteously. In spite of the most trying circumstances, you undeviatingly adhere to religious principles. Your actions are always performed out of a sense of duty, and not from personal motives for enjoyment. Indeed, no other person could have tolerated the insults that Draupadi received in the assembly of Kurus!"

Turning to Draupadi, Krishna said, "Princess, you can rest assured that your sons are well and fine. Subhadra is looking after them very nicely, and My son Pradyumna is training them in the military science. "

Lord Krishna then suggested to Yudhishthira, "O King, if you so desire, the Yadavas can go right now and vanquish the wicked Duryodhana. Thus, when your period of exile is over, you can enter Hastinapura peacefully, without a struggle. "

Maharaja Yudhishthira replied, "My dear Lord, I am extremely grateful that You are ready to help us in all circumstances. Indeed, You are our only refuge. The twelfth year of our exile is now coming to an end, and so we will soon have to begin our year of living incognito. After that, I am sure that by Your mercy I shall be able to regain my kingdom without having deviated from my vows. "

While Lord Krishna and Maharaja Yudhishthira were thus conversing, the great sage, Markandeya, arrived. Lord Krishna, the Pandavas, and all the brahmanas quickly got up from their seats to receive the illustrious rishi, who, even though thousands of years old, appeared to be just like a young man, devoid of any signs of old age. When Markandeya Rishi was comfortably seated, after having been worshiped by the Pandavas, Lord Krishna requested him to narrate some ancient histories that instill in the listener a sense of the moral values of life.

Then, as everyone surrounded Markandeya Rishi, anxiously awaiting his discourses, Narada Muni came there. Everyone got up to worship him, but because Narada understood that Markandeya was about to speak, he encouraged the rishi to go ahead without delay. Thus, everyone sat down once again, being very eager to hear.

Maharaja Yudhishthira started things off by asking, "My dear sage, I am always perplexed when I think about how the wicked sons of Dhritarashtra are prospering, whereas we are suffering, even though we act righteously. Please explain what part God plays in man's happiness and distress, for it seems to me that such results are simply the fruits of one's endeavors. I would also like to understand the concept of karma. Are the reactions to our work enjoyed by us in this life or in the life

hereafter? If the reactions are meted out in a future life, then how could there ever be a cessation to the cycle of action and reaction and its resultant birth and death?"

Markandeya Rishi replied, "My dear King, your questions are most praiseworthy, and I shall try to answer them to the best of my ability. In the beginning of creation, Lord Brahma made the bodies of human beings pure and sinless, and thus they were on a par with those of the demigods. These human beings had all of their desires automatically fulfilled, they were able to fly in the sky, and they were completely freed from the demoniac qualities of lust and envy. They lived for many thousands of years, and they all had the power to die at their own will. Because there was so little suffering, fear was practically unknown and thus everyone lived very peacefully and happily. "

"Gradually, however, in the course of time, human beings became overcome by lust and greed, and so they began to depend upon cheating methods for earning their livelihood. Men lost the ability to traverse the airways and thus they had to walk on the surface of the Earth. Because of their sinful acts, men were forced to go to hell and suffer, and in this way, they came to reap the results of their actions. "

"My dear King, at the time of death, only the gross body of the living entity is destroyed. The actions that one performs are all recorded in the subtle mind. Then, after death, when the subtle body carries one to the next gross body, his fruitive acts follow him just like a shadow and then fructify in the next life. However, by the practice of yoga and devotion to the Supreme Lord, the results of one's fruitive actions can be destroyed. In this way, one can become peaceful in mind and freed from all diseases, fear and other material miseries. Indeed, those who have become spiritually advanced, by dint of mature practice of bhakti-yoga, can always envision the relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in any condition of life, even while encased in the mother's womb!"

"O King, human beings can be divided into four classes. Those who work hard to acquire wealth by any means, simply for the purpose of enjoying sense gratification, can feel happiness in this life, but not in the next. Those who engage in austerity and meditation, who subdue their passions, and even sacrifice their bodily strength and health by executing rigid vows, attain happiness in the next life, but not in this one. Those who live piously, accumulating wealth by virtuous means, who live a life of regulated sense enjoyment in marriage, while performing sacrifices and giving in charity, experience happiness in this life and in the next as well. "

"Then, there are those who are distinct from the above-mentioned three classes of persons because they are simply lazy and foolish. Such men cannot enjoy any happiness in this life nor in the next. My dear Yudhisthira, because you are very pious, and are engaged in performing austerities, you will come to enjoy the supreme happiness in due course of time. Of this there is no doubt. "

In response to Maharaja Yudhisthira's inquiries, Markandeya Rishi spoke at great length, citing numerous historical accounts. Some of this vast narration is given as follows. Markandeya Rishi said, "Let me first of all offer my most respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Janardana, because He is the soul of all souls. He is the primeval Lord, the cause of all causes,

and the master of all the demigods. He alone is the cause of creation, maintenance and annihilation, and thus it is He who is the ultimate shelter of all beings. "

"My dear King, as you very will know, there are four yugas (ages). The duration of the Krita-yuga is 4000 celestial years (one celestial year equals 360 solar years), and at the beginning and the end, the transitional periods each extend for 400 celestial years. Treta-yuga has a duration of 3000 celestial years, and the transitional periods each last 300 celestial years. The duration of the Dvapara-yuga is 2000 celestial years, and its transitional periods are 200 years each. Kali-yuga lasts for 1000 celestial years, and it has transitional periods of 100 years. Thus, the cycle of four yugas has a duration of 12,000 celestial years, and 1000 such yuga cycles constitutes the daytime of Lord Brahma. "

"O King, please listen as I describe the symptoms of the upcoming Kali-yuga. As time goes on, the brahmanas will take up the work of shudras, and shudras will endeavor to acquire wealth like vaishyas. The brahmanas will give up meditation and the recitation of Vedic hymns while the shudras take up these practices. "

"In the age of Kali, men become very short-lived and weak in terms of physical strength and energy. They have diminutive bodies and they give up even the last remaining religious principle by making their speech devoid of all truth. The world become ruled by Mleccha kings who act no better than plunderers. Then, toward the end of the age, the human population begins to dwindle while animals become oversized and increase in number until they crowd the earth. "

"In this degraded age, children are born stunted and they are devoid of all good behavior. As a result of sinful life, there is great scarcity and famine, and prostitutes are seen lining the roads. Indeed, women in general become very hostile toward their husbands and devoid of all sense of modesty. Cows yield very little milk, and trees, instead of producing profuse fruit and flowers, become the sitting places for swarms of crows. "

"O King, in the age of Kali, many persons become imitation sadhus simply to facilitate economic improvement, and the ashrams become filled with wretched persons who advocate a life of dependence upon others, like parasites. Rain no longer falls in season, and indeed, the entire Earth begins to take on a sinful aspect. In this degraded age, only sinful persons flourish, and those few that are virtuous remain impoverished. Sinful behavior will become so rampant that it will be a common sight even in public places. Even those with meager wealth will become very proud in this fallen age, due to being intoxicated by their accumulated money. "

"As the Kali-yuga advances, girls will give birth to children at the age of seven or eight, and boys will become fathers by the age of ten or eleven. By the age of sixteen, people will begin to experience the symptoms of old age, and soon thereafter, they will meet with their deaths. "

Markandeya then explained, "During the night of Lord Brahma, the whole universe remains one great expanse of water, and all the living entities, including the demigods, are no longer manifest. O King, I am the only person remaining at that time, and upon seeing the universe devoid of living beings, I become exceedingly depressed. All I can do is wander through the great expanse of water, and because I can find no resting place, I become very tired. "

"Finally, I see a great banyan tree within the water, and upon one of the branches I see a most wonderfully beautiful boy. Having a moon-like face, eyes like lotus petals, the mark of Shrivatsa on His chest, and radiating a dazzling effulgence, the boy is seated upon a heavenly couch. I am highly astonished to think of how this boy could survive the devastation, and in spite of my infallible knowledge that encompasses past, present and future, I cannot understand His identity. "

"The boy then smilingly says, 'O rishi, I can understand that you are exceedingly fatigued. Therefore, you may rest here for as long as you like by entering into My body. I am very pleased with you and so I have designated this as your resting place. ' As the boy continues speaking, I can feel myself swimming in an ocean of bliss, and thus losing my normal sense of identity. "

"The boy then suddenly opens His mouth and I helplessly enter into His body by His supreme will. Finally, upon coming to the boy's stomach, I see the entire Earth situated there, with all of its kingdoms, mountains and rivers, and all of the inhabitants are engaged in performing their duties according to the four social orders. "

"Thereafter, as I wander in the boy's stomach, I see the great oceans and the sky bedecked with sun and moon. I see all the great mountains and I see all kinds of animals, Nagas, Yakshas, Daityas and demigods, and indeed, every kind of moving and nonmoving being. "

"Living only on fruit, I wander about the universe for many hundreds of years, and yet I never find the limit of the boy's body. Finally, when I become very anxious, I begin to surrender to that Supreme Person, admitting that He is the predominate and that I am His eternal subordinate. Just then, a powerful wind projects me out of the boy's body, and thus once again I see Him seated as before on the branch of a banyan tree, dressed in yellow cloth. "

"The boy then smilingly says, 'O rishi, you have dwelt within My body for a long time and thus you have certainly become very tired. Now, to mitigate your material pangs, I will enlighten you with transcendental knowledge. ' As the boy continues to speak, I can feel myself becoming liberated from the illusion of material existence, while at the same time my spiritual vision awakens. In that self-realized condition, I can understand that this boy is the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the source of all emanations, and the master of all worlds, material and spiritual. I thus worship His reddish lotus feet by placing them on my head with great reverence. "

"Then, with folded hands, I say, 'My dear Lord, O origin of all, including myself, please explain about Yourself and Your illusory energy. Why do you remain here as a small boy? How is it that the entire universe was seen by me to be situated within Your transcendental body?'"

"The boy replies, 'O rishi, I am the eternal Lord, Narayana, who lies down upon the water of the Garbhodaka Ocean. It is I who am the creator, maintainer and destroyer of everything, and thus the entire cosmic manifestation constitutes My universal form. I become the ingredients of sacrifice, it is I who award the results of sacrifice, and I am the Vedas personified. I am the cause of all causes, and the One who maintains the innumerable living beings while sustaining the cosmic creation. At

various times, I incarnate within the universe, to establish religious principles, as well as to protect the demigods and annihilate the great demons who cannot be killed by anyone else. "

"During Brahma's night, I submerge the universe into the water of dissolution for 1000 yuga-cycles. While Brahma thus sleeps, I keep myself in this form as a small boy. Because you had become depressed, after seeing the universe completely inundated with water, I took you within My body, to show you how the three worlds remain conserved there. Now, until the time when Brahma once again awakens, you can stay here and reside peacefully. ' After saying this, the boy suddenly vanishes from that place, and thereafter, in due course of time, I witness the creations of Brahma. "

"My dear Yudhisthira, this same Supreme Personality of Godhead has now appeared as your cousin, Lord Krishna. Therefore, your best course is to always take shelter of Him and depend on Him alone. "

*Auckland, New Zealand  
5 November 2003*

### **From Canto Seven of *Agni Purana*:**

#### Dreams, Omens and Signs

##### Dreams

Some dreams are bad omens. In fact, they are nightmares. Examples are: dreams about grass or trees growing on one's body, dreams in which the dreamer is shaven-headed or is wearing shabby clothes or dreams in which one is falling from above. It is also bad to dream of marriages, singing, the killing of snakes and the killing of chandalas or animals. If you dream that you are drinking oil or eating bird meat, that is also a bad omen. Other examples are: where the dreamer dreams that he is playing with monkeys or chandalas, when he dreams that devas, brahmanas, the king or the guru is angry or when he dreams that his house had collapsed.

Remedies have to be found if one dreams such evil dreams. Brahmanas have to be worshipped, a yajna has to be performed and the dreamer has to pray to Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Ganesha or Surya. Dreams dreamt in the first quarter of one's sleep normally come true over the next one year. Dreams from the second quarter come true over the next six months and dreams from the third quarter over the next three months. Dreams from the last quarter come true over the next fortnight and dreams dreamt right at dawn come true within the next ten days. If one first dreams a good dream and then an evil one, it is the evil dream the will come true. Therefore, if one dreams a good dream, one should not sleep anymore. One should immediately arise.

There are many dreams that are good dreams. For example, dreams that involve mountains, palaces or snakes. Or the dreamer might dream that he is riding on a

horse or a bull. It is also good to dream of white flowers in the sky or to see trees in a dream. Especially good dreams are those of the dreamer's possessing many arms or many heads or of grass and bushes sprouting from his navel. What if you dream of wearing white garlands or clothes? That too is good. If you dream of eclipses of the sun, the moon or the stars, by all means rejoice. And if in a dream you see that you have caught hold of the enemy's flag, that surely means that you will triumph over the enemy. And if you actually dream of defeating the enemy, the interpretation is clear enough.

Strangely enough, a dream where the dreamer sees that he is eating rice pudding is a good dream. As is the case with dreams of drinking wine or blood. Or even of eating wet meat. A clear sky in a dream is good. Dreaming of milking a cow or a buffalo with one's own mouth is also good. The dream continues to be a good one if one dreams of milking a lioness or a she-elephant thus. Other dreams which have good interpretations are, for example, dreams of the dreamer's receiving blessings from devas or brahmanas or of being anointed with water.

The dreamer who dreams of his coronation is blessed. And he is doubly blessed if he dreams that his head has been cut off or that he has died or even that his house has been burnt down. The relatives of such a dreamer increase in number and he also prospers. It is good to dream of musical instruments being played. Or of riding a bull or climbing a tree. Wet clothes, trees laden with fruit and clear blue skies in dreams are especially good.

#### Omens and Signs

If one is about to go out of the house, one should take care of any bad omens that there might be. Such bad omens are cotton, dried grass, cowdung, coal, molasses, leather, hair, a lunatic, a chandala, a widow, a dead body, ashes, bones and a broken vessel. If one comes across these as one is about to leave, one should not start without pacifying the elements through prayers to Vishnu. The sound of musical instruments is not an auspicious sound at the beginning of a journey. If the means of transport by which one is travelling breaks down, that too, is a bad omen. If weapons break, perhaps you should postpone the journey. The same is the case if an umbrella held over one's head happens to fall. If one hits one's head against the lintel of the door as one is about to cross the threshold, prayers are again indicated. And never call back someone who has just left. That is a bad omen and bodes ill for the success of the journey.

There are good omens for a departure and if one sees these good omens, the journey is bound to be successful. Good omens are white flowers, full vessels, meat, distant noises, an old goat, a cow, a horse, an elephant, fire, gold silver, a sword, an umbrella, fruit, clarified butter, curds, a conch shell, sugarcane, the sound of thunder, lightning and a dead body with no one crying over it.

Omens are important even if one is not going on a journey. A peacock crying on the left means that something is going to be stolen. If a donkey brays with a broken voice, that is good omen and something good will happen. If a boar or a buffalo crosses over from the left to the right, that is a good omen. But if they cross over from the right to the left, that is a bad omen. One's desires will be attained if horses,

tigers, lions, cats or donkeys cross over from the right to the left. jackals, moles, lizards, pigs and cuckoos are good omens on the left and monkeys are good omens on the right. If a jackal calls once, twice, thrice or four times, that is a good omen. It is a bad omen if a jackal calls five or six times. It is a very good omen if a jackal calls seven times.

If crows caw on the left of an army, the soldiers will not be able to win. If a crow can be seen near the door of a house, this means that there will soon be a guest. A crow looking at the sun with one eye signifies great danger. A crow covered with mud means the attainment of one's desires. A dog barking inside the house leads to the death of the householders. A person whose left limbs are sniffed by a dog, will attain riches. If the right limbs are sniffed, there will be danger. A dog blocking one's path signifies theft. A dog with a bone or a rope in its mouth means the loss of property. But it is a good omen to see a dog with meat in its mouth.

Cows mooing irregularly mean threats to the master of the house. If this happens at night, there will be a theft or a death in the house. If the cows have horns that are wet or daubed with mud, that is a good sign for the householders. A cow that plays with cranes or doves is bound to die. A cow that licks its feet is also destined to die. If an elephant strikes its right foot with its left, that is a good sign. Prosperity comes if an elephant rubs its right tusk with its foot.

There is great danger if an umbrella falls just as one is about to leave on a trip. Journeys are to be avoided if the stars are not favourable.

#### **From Canto Four of *Brahma-vaivarta-purana*:**

Lord Krsna and Srimati Radharani converse in the presence of the demigods about departing the spiritual world for Their earthly pastimes.

Text 185

deva gacchantu prthivim  
amsena bhara-harakah  
kalaya deva-patnyas ca  
gacchantu prthivi-talam

deva-the demigods; gacchantu-should go; prthivim-to the earth; amsena-by parts; bhara-harakah-removing the burden; kalaya-by a part; deva-of the demigods; patnyah-the wives; ca-and; gacchantu-should go; prthivi-talam-to the earth.

In this way the demigods must go, by their partial expansions, to the earth and help to remove its burden. The demigods' wives must also go, by their partial expansions, to the earth.

Text 186

ity evam uktva bhagavan  
virarama ca narada

sarvam nivaranam srutva  
tatrovasa praja-patih

ity-thus; evam-thus; uktva-having spoken; bhagavan-the Supreme Personality of Godhead; virarama-stopped; ca-and; narada-O Narada; sarvam-all; vivaranam-words; srutva-hearing; tatra-there; uvasa-stood; praja-patih-Brahma.

At that point Lord Krsna stopped speaking. O Narada, Brahma stood there, listening.

Text 187

krsnasya vame vag-devi  
daksine kamalalaya  
purato devatah sarvah  
parvati capi narada

krsnasya-of Lord Krsna; vame-on the left; vag-devi-sarasvati; daksine-on the right; kamalalaya-laksmi; puratah-before; devatah-the demigods; sarvah-all; parvati-Parvati; ca-and; api-also; narada-O Narada.

Sarasvati was at Lord Krsna's left and Laksmi at His right. Parvati and all the demigods were before Him.

Text 188

gopyo gopas ca purato  
radha-vaksah-sthala-sthita  
etasminn antare sa ca  
tam uvaca vrajesvari

gopyah-the gopis; gopas-and gopas; ca-and; puratah-before; radha-Radha; vaksah-sthala-sthita-resting on His chest; etasminn-there; antare-after; sa-She; ca-and; tam-to Him; uvaca-said; vrajesvari-the queen of Vraja.

The gopis and gopas were before Him. Sri Radha rested on His chest. At that moment Sri Radha, the queen of Vraja, spoke to Lord Krsna.

Text 189

sri-radhikovaca

srnu natha pravaksyami  
kinkari-vacanam prabho  
prana dahanti satatam  
andolayati me manah

sri-radhika uvaca-Sri Radha said; srnu-please hear; natha-O Lord; pravaksyami-I will tell; kinkari-vacanam-the words of Your maidservant; prabhah-O Lord; prana-life; dahanti-burns; satatam-always; andolayati-swings to and fro; me-My; manah-mind.

Sri Radha said: O Lord, please hear the words of Your maidservant. My life has become a blazing fire that burns without stop. My mind trembles, swinging to and fro.

Text 190

caksur-nimilanam kartum  
asakta tava darsane  
tvaya vina katham natha  
yasyami dharani-talam

caksuh-eyes; nimilanam-closing; kartum-to do; asakta-unable; tava-of You; darsane-in the sight; tvaya-You; vina-without; katham-how?; natha-O Lord; yasyami-I will go; dharani-talam-to the earth.

When I look at You I cannot even blink. O Lord, how can I go to the earth without You?

Text 191

kati-kalantaram bandho  
melanam me tvaya saha  
pranesvara bruhi satyam  
bhavisyaty eva gokule

kati-kalantaram-after how long?; bandhah-O friend; melanam-meeting; me-of Me; tvaya-You; saha-with; pranesvara-O master of My life; bruhi-please tell; satyam-the truth; bhavisyaty-will be; eva-indeed; gokule-in Gokula.

O friend, how much time must pass before I will meet You again in Gokula? O master of My life, please tell the truth.

Text 192

nimesam ca yuga-satam  
bhavita me tvaya vina  
kam draksyami kva yasyami  
ko va mam palayisyati

nimesam-a blink; ca-and; yuga-satam-a hundred yugas; bhavita-will become; me-of Me; tvaya-You; vina-without; kam-what?; draksyami-will I see; kva-where?; yasyami-will I go; kah-who?; va-or; mam-Me; palayisyati-will protect.

An eyeblink without You will be a hundred yugas for Me. What will I look on? Where will I go? Who will protect Me?

Text 193

mataram pitaram bandhum  
bhrataram bhaginim sutam

tvaya vinaham pranesa  
cintayami na kam ksanam

mataram-mother; pitaram-father; bandhum-friend; bhrataram-brother; bhaginim-sister; sutam-child; tvaya-You; vina-without; aham-I; pranesa-O master of My life; cintayami-think; na-not; kam-what?; ksanam-moment.

O master of My life, how can I for a moment think of mother, father, relatives, friends, brother, sister, or children when You are gone?

Text 194

karosi mayayacchannam  
mam cen mayesa bhu-tale  
vismrtam vibhavam dattva  
satyam me sapatham kuru

karosi-You do; mayaya-with Your maya' potency; acchannam-covered; mam-Me; cet-if; mayesa-O master of maya; bhu-tale-on the earth; vismrtam-forgotten; vibhavam-glory; dattva-giving; satyam-truth; me-to Me; sapatham-promise; kuru-please do.

O master of illusions, please promise Me that when I am on the earth You will not cover Me with illusion and make Me forget Your glories.

Text 195

anuksanam mama mano  
madhupo madhusudana  
karotu bhramanam nityam  
sa-madhvike padambuje

anuksanam-at every moment; mama-My; manah-mind; madhupah-a bee; madhusudana-O Krsna; karotu-please do; bhramanam-wandering; nityam-always; sa-madhvike-filled with honey; pada-fdeet; ambuje-lotus.

O Krsna, please turn My mind into a bumblebee always wandering among the nectar lotus-flowers of Your feet.

Text 196

yatra tatra ca yasyam va  
yonau janma bhavato idam  
tvam svasya smaranam dasyam  
mahyam dasyasi vachitam

yatra tatra-whenever; ca-and; yasyam-which; va-or; yonau-womb; janma-birth; bhavativ-may be; idam-this; tvam-You; svasya-own; smaranam-memory; dasyam-service; mahyam-to Me; dasyasi-will give; vachitam-desired.

Wherever I may be born, please give Me service to You and remembrance of You.

Text 197

krsnas tvam radhikaham ca  
prema-saubhagyam avayoh  
na vismarami bhumau ca  
dehi mahyam param varam

krsnah-Krsna; tvam-You; radhika-Radha; aham-I; ca-and; prema-saubhagyam-the good fortune of love; avayoh-of Us; na-not; vismarami-I remember; bhumau-on the earth; ca-and; dehi-please give; mahyam-to Me; param-great; varam-blessing.

You are Krsna and I am Radha. When I am on the earth may I never forget the glory of Our love. O Lord, please give Me this benediction.

Text 198

yatha tanva saha pranah  
sariram chayaya saha  
tathavayor janma yatu  
dehi mahyam varam vibho

yatha-as; tanva-the body; saha-with; pranah-life; sariram-body; chayaya-with a shadow; saha-with; tatha-so; avayoh-of Us; janma-birth; yatu-may attain; dehi-please give; mahyam-to Me; varam-boon; vibhah-O Lord.

As breath always stays with the body and as the body always stays with its shadow, may We Two always stay together when We take birth. O Lord please give Me this benediction.

Text 199

caksur-nimesa-vicchedo  
bhavita navayor bhuvi  
tatragatyapi kutrapi  
dehi mahyam varam prabho

caksur-nimesa-vicchedah-an eyeblink; bhavita-will be; na-not; avayoh-of Us; bhuvi-on the earth; tatra-there; agatya-going; api-even; kutrapi-somewhere; dehi-please give; mahyam-to Me; varam-benediction; prabhah-OLord.

When We are on the earth let Us not be separated for even an eyeblink. O Lord, please give Me this benediction.

Text 200

mama pranais tava tanuh  
kena va varyate hare  
atmano murali-padau  
manasa va vinirmitau

mama-of Me; pranaih-with life; tava-of You; tanuh-the body; kena=by what?; va-or; varyate-is made; hare-O Krsna; atmanah-own; murali-flute; padau-feet; manasa-with the mind; va-or; vinirmitau-made.

Who was it that used My life-breath to create Your body, feet, and flute?

Text 201

striyah kati-vidhah santi  
purusa va puru-stutah  
nasti kutrapi kanta va  
kantasakta ca madrsi

striyah-women; kati-vidhah-how many kinds; santi-are; purusa-men; va-or; puru-stutah-glorious; na-not; asti-is; kutrapi-anywhere; kanta-beloved; va-or; kantasakta-attached to her beloved; ca-and; madrsi-like Me. .

How many kinds of women are there? How many kinds of glorious men praised again and again? No woman is attached to her lover as I am to You.

Text 202

tava dehardha-bhagena  
kena vaham vinirmita  
idam evavayor bhedo  
nasty atas tvayi me manah

tava-of You; dehardha-bhagena-by half the body; kena-how?; va-or; aham-I; vinirmita-made; idam-this; eva-indeed; avayoh-of Us; bhedah-difference; na-not; asti-is; atah-then; tvayi-to You; me-of Me; manah-the mind.

How is it that I was created from half of Your body? There is no difference between Us. That is why My mind always thinks of You.

Text 203

mamatma-manasa-pranams  
tvayi samsthapya kena va  
tavatma-manasa-prana  
mayi vasam sthita api

mama-of Me; atma-self; manasa-mind; pranah-life; tvayi-in You; samsthapya-situated; kena-how?; va-or; tava-of You; atma-self; manasa-mind; pranah-and life; mayi-in Me; vasam-residence; sthita-situated; api-also.

How is it that My mind, heart, and life were placed in Your body, and Your mind, heart, and life were placed in Mine?

Text 204

tato nimesa-viraha-  
datmano viklavam manah  
pradagdham santatam prana  
dahanti viraha-srutau

tatah-therefore; nimesa-an eyeblink; viraha-separation; da-giving; atmanah-of the self; viklavam-calamity; manah-the mind; pradagdham-burned; santatam-always; prana-life; dahanti-burns; viraha-srutau-hearing of separation.

That is why an eyeblink's separation from You brings a great catastrophe to My mind. That is why, when it hears that We may be separated, My life-force burns in an unending fire.

Text 205

ity evam uktva sa devi  
tatraiva sura-samsadi  
bhuyo bhuyo rurodoccair  
dhrtva tac-caranambuje

ity-thus; evam-thus; uktva-speaking; sa-She; devi-the goddess; tatra-there; eva-indeed; sura-samsadi-in the assembly of the demigods; bhuyah-again; bhuyah-and again; ruroda-wept; uccaih-loudly; dhrtva-holding; tac-caranambuje-His lotus feet.

After speaking these words in the assembly of demigods, again and again Sri Radha grasped Lord Krsna lotus feet and loudly wept.

Text 206

krode krtva ca tam krsno  
mukham sammrjya vasasa  
bodhayam asa vividham  
satyam tathyam hitam vacah

krode-on His lap; krtva-placing; ca-and; tam-Her; krsnah-Krsna; mukham-face; sammrjya-wiping; vasasa-with a cloth; bodhayam asa-taught; vividham-many; satyam-truths; tathyam-true; hitam-auspicious; vacah-words.

Then, placing Her on His lap and with His own garment wiping the tears from Her face, Lord Krsna spoke many true and beneficial words.

Text 207

sri-krsna uvaca

adhyatmikam param yogam  
soka-cchedana-karanam  
srnu devi pravaksyami  
yogindranam ca durlabham

sri-krsna uvaca-Sri Krsna said; adhyatmikam-spiritual; param-great; yogam-yoga; soka-cchedana-brekaing grief; karanam-the cause; srnu-please hear; devi-O goddess; pravaksyami-I will tell; yogindranam-of the kings of the yogis; ca-and; durlabham-difficult to attain.

Sri Krsna said: Goddess, please listen and I will describe to You the yoga of the Supreme, a yoga even the kings of the yogis cannot understand, a yoga that cuts grief into many pieces.

Text 208

adharadheyayoh sarvam  
brahmandam pasya sundari  
adhara-vyatirekena  
nasty adheyasya sambhavah

adhara-the resting place; adheyayoh-and that which rests; sarvam-all; brahmandam-the universe; pasya-look; sundari-O beautiful one; adhara-from the resting place; vyatirekena-with separation; na-not; asty-is; adheyasya-of that which rests; sambhavah-is possible.

O beautiful one, consider this: The entire universe is constructed of two things: resting places and things that rest in them. It is not possible for a resting thing to be separated from its resting place.

Text 209

phaladharam ca puspam ca  
puspadharas ca pallavah  
skandhas ca pallavadharah  
skandhadharas taruh svayam

phala-of fruit; adharam-the resting place; ca-and; puspam-flower; ca-and; puspadharas-the resting place of the flower; ca-and; pallavah-twig; skandhas-branch; ca-and; pallavadharah-the resting place of the twig; skandhadharah-the resting place of the branch; taruh-the tree; svayam-itself.

For the fruit the resting place is the flower. For the flower the resting place is the twig. For the twig the resting place is the branch. For the branch the resting place is the tree itself.

Text 210

vrksadharo 'py ankuras ca  
bija-sakti-samanvitah  
astir evankuradharas  
casty adharo vasundhara

vrksa-of the tree; adharah-the resting place; api-also; ankurah-the seedling; ca-and; bija-sakti-samanvitah-with the power of the seed; astih-the seed; eva-indeed;

ankuradharah-the resting place of the seedling; ca-and; asty-is; adharah-the resting place; vasundhara-the earth.

For the tree the resting place is the sapling. For the sapling, which is manifest from the seed, the resting place is the seed. For the seed the resting place is the earth.

Text 211

seso vasundharadharah  
sesadharo hi kacchapah  
vayus ca kacchapadharo  
vayv-adharo 'ham eva ca

sesah-Lord Sesa; vasundharadharah-the resting place of the earth; sesadharah-the resting place of Sesa; hi-indeed; kacchapah-the tortoise; vayuh-wind; ca-and; kacchapadharah-the resting place of the tortoise; vayö-adharah-the resting place of the wind; aham-I; eva-indeed; ca-and.

For the earth the resting place is Lord Sesa. For Lord Sesa the resting place is the great tortoise beneath Him. For the tortoise the resting place is the wind. For the wind the resting place is I Myself.

Text 212

mamadhara-svarupas tvam  
tvayi tisthami sasvatam  
tvam ca sakti-samuha ca  
mula-prakrtir isvari

mama-of Me; adhara-the resting place; svarupah-personified; tvam-You; tvayi-in You; tisthami-I stand; sasvatam-always; tvam-You; ca-and; sakti-samuha-the host of potencies; ca-and; mula-prakrtih-the root of nature; isvari-the goddess.

For Me the resting place is You. I always rest in You. You have all powers. You are the root from which the material nature has sprung. You are the Supreme Goddess.

Text 213

tvam sarira-svarupasi  
tri-gunadhara-rupini  
tavatmaham nirihah ca  
cestavams ca tvaya saha

tvam-You; sarira-svarupa-the resting place of bodies; asi-are; tri-gunadhara-rupini-the resting place of the three modes of nature; tava-of You; atma-the Self; aham-I; nirihah-inactive; ca-and; cestavan-active; ca-and; tvaya-You; saha-with.

You are the resting place of all bodies. You are the resting place of the three modes of nature. You are the resting place of Me, for I am Your heart. Without You I cannot act. Only by Your grace have I the power to act.

Text 214

purusad viryam utpannam  
viryat santatir eva ca  
tayor adhara-rupa ca  
kamini prakrteh kala

purusat-from the man; viryam-seed; utpannam-manifested; viryat-from the seed; santatih-children; eva-indeed; ca-and; tayoh-of them both; adhara-the resting place; rupa-the form; ca-and; kamini-woman; prakrteh-of matter; kala-a part.

From the man the seed is manifest. From the seed children are manifest. The resting place of both seed and children is the woman, who is manifest from material nature.

Text 215

vina dehena kutratma  
kva sariram vinatmana  
pradhanyam ca dvayor devi  
vina dvabhyam kuto bhavah

vina-without; dehena-a body; kutra-where; atma-the self; kva-where?; sariram-the body; vina-without; atmana-the self; pradhanyam-the primordial stage of matter; ca-and; dvayoh-of both; devi-O goddess; vina-without; dvabhyam-with both; kutah-where?; bhavah-the birth.

How can the spirit-soul exist without the body? How can the body exist without the spirit-soul? They are both the first cause. O goddess, how can the creation be manifest without them both?

Text 216

na kutrapy avayor bheda  
radhe samsara-bijayoh  
yatrata tatra dehas ca  
na bhedo vinayena kim

na-not; kutrapy-anywhere; avayoh-of Us; bheda-difference; radhe-O Radha; samsara-of the material world; bijayoh-and the seed; yatra-where; atma-the self; tatra-there; dehas-the body; ca-and; na-not; bhedah-difference; vinayena-with humbleness; kim-what is the need?

O Radha, We are not different. We are the seed and the world grown from the seed. I am the soul and You are the body. Where the soul is present, there also is the body. We are not different. Why must You be so humble?

Text 217

yatha ksire ca dhavalayam  
dahika ca hutasane

bhumau gandho jale saityam  
tatha tvayi mama sthitih

yatha-as; ksire-in milk; ca-and; dhavalyam-whiteness; dahika-heat; ca-and;  
hutasane-in fire; bhumau-in earth; gandhah-fragrance; jale-in water; saityam-  
coolness; tatha-so; tvayi-in You; mama-of Me; sthitih-the presence.

As whiteness is present in milk, as heat is present in fire, as fragrance is present in  
earth, and as coolness is present in fire, so I am always present in You.

Text 218

dhavalya-dugdhayor aikyam  
dahikanalayor yatha  
bhu-gandha-jala-saityanam  
nasti bhedas tathavayoh

dhavalya-of whiteness; dugdhayoh-of milk; aikyam-oneness; dahika-of heat;  
analayoh-and fire; yatha-so; bhu-earth; gandha-fragrance; jala-water; saityanam-  
coolness; na-not; asti-is; bhedah-difference; tatha-so; avayoh-of Us.

As milë and its whiteness, fire and its heat, earth and its fragrance, and water and its  
coolness are one and cannot be separated, We are one also. We cannot be  
separated.

Text 219

maya vina tvam nirjiva  
cadrsyo 'ham tvaya vina  
tvaya vina bhavam kartum  
nalām sundari niscitam

maya-Me; vina-without; tvam-You; nirjiva-lifeless; ca-and; adrsyah-invisible; aham-  
I; tvaya-You; vina-without; tvaya-You; vina-without; bhavam-existence; kartum-to  
do; na-not; alam-able; sundari-O beautiful one; niscitam-indeed.

Without Me, You are lifeless. Without You, I am invisible. O beautiful one, without  
You I cannot exist.

Text 220

vina mrda ghatam kartum  
yatha nalām kulalakah  
vina svarnam svarna-karo  
'lankaram kartum aksamah

vina-without; mrda-clay; ghatam-a pot; kartum-to make; yatha-as; na-not; alam-  
able; kulalakah-a potter; vina-without; svarnam-gold; svarna-karah-a goldsmith;  
alankaram-an ornament; kartum-to make; aksamah-unable.

Without clay a potter cannot make a pot. Without gold a goldsmith cannot make a gold ornament.

Text 221

svayam atma yatha nityas  
tatha tvam prakrtih svayam  
sarva-sakti-samayukta  
sarvadhara sanatani

svayam-personally; atma-the soul; yatha-as; nityah-always; tatha-so; tvam-You; prakrtih-nature; svayam-personally; sarva-all; sakti-power; samayukta-with; sarvadhara-the resting place of everything; sanatani-eternal.

As the spirit-soul is eternal, You are also eternal. You are the material nature. You are all-powerful. You are the eternal resting place of everything.

Text 222

mama prana-sama laksmir  
vani ca sarva-mangala  
brahmesananta-dharmas ca  
tvam me pranadhika priya

mama-of Me; prana-life; sama-equal; laksmir-Laksmi; vani-sarasvati; ca-and; sarva-mangala-all-auspicious; brahma-Brahma; isa-Siva; ananta-Ananta; dharmah-Yama; ca-and; tvam-You; me-to Me; pranadhika-more than life; priya-dear.

Laksmi, all-auspicious Sarasvati, Brahma, Siva, Sesa, and Yamaraja are dear as life to Me. But You are more dear than life to Me.

Text 223

samipa-stha ime sarve  
sura devyas ca radhike  
etebhyo 'py adhika no cet  
katham vaksah-sthala-sthita

samipa-stha-nearby; ime-they; sarve-all; sura-demigods; devyas-demigoddesses; ca-and; radhike-O Radha; etebhyah-than them; api-even; adhika-greater; nah-not; cet-if; katham-how?; vaksah-sthala-sthita-staying on the chest.

If this were not so, then why do the demigods and demigoddesses stay nearby, but You rest on My chest, O Radha?

Text 224

tyajasru-moksanam radhe  
bhrantim ca nisphalam sati  
vihaya sankham nihsanke  
vrsabhanu-grham vraja

tyaja-abandon; asru-of tears; moksanam-shedding; radhe-O Radha; bhrantim-mistake; ca-and; nisphalam-fruitless; sati-O saintly one; vihaya-placing; sankham-doubt; nihsanke-free from doubt; vrsabhanu-grham-to Vrsabhanu's home; vraja-go.

O Radha, give up Your tears. O saintly one, give us this fruitless and mistaken worry and go to King Vrsabhanu's house.

. . . to be continued!

*Auckland, New Zealand  
6 November 2003*

Continued from yesterday. . .

Text 229

bhumistha-matrat tato mam  
gokulam prapayisyati  
tava hetor gamisyami  
krtva kamsa-bhaya-cchalam

bhumistha-matrat-from the moment of coming to the earth; tatah-then; mam-me; gokulam-to Gokula; prapayisyati-will bring; tava-of You; hetoh-for the sake; gamisyami-I will come; krtva-having done; kamsa-bhaya-cchalam-on the pretext of fearing Kamsa.

The moment I come to earth Vasudeva will carry Me to Gokula. Pretending to fear Kamsa, I will go there for Your sake.

Text 230

yasoda-mandire mam ca  
sanandam nanda-nandanam  
nityam draksyasi kalyani  
samaslesana-purvakam

yasoda-mandire-in the home of Yasoda; mam-Me; ca-and; sanandam-blissful; nanda-nandanam-the son of Nanda; nityam-eternal; draksyasi-You will see; kalyani-O beautiful one; samaslesana-purvakam-an embrace.

I will be Nanda's son in Yasoda's house. O beautiful one, again and again You will happily see me and tightly embrace Me.

Text 231

smrtis te bhavita kale  
varena mama radhike  
svacchandam viharisyami  
nityam vrndavane vane

smrtih-memory; te-of You; bhavita-will be; kale-at the time; varena-by the boon; mama-of Me; radhike-O Radha; svacchandam-independent; viharisyami-I will enjoy pastimes; nityam-always; vrndavane-in Vrndavana; vane-forest.

O Radha, because of the benediction I give You, You will remember everything. Following My own wish, I will enjoy pastimes with You in Vrndavana forest again and again.

Text 232

trih-sapta-sata-kotibhir  
gopibhir gokulam vraja  
trayas-trimsad-vayasyabhih  
su-siladibhir eva ca

trih-sapta-sata-kotibhih-twenty one billion; gopibhih-with godis; gokulam-to Gokula; vraja-go; trayas-trimsat-33; vayasyabhih-with close friends; su-siladibhih-virtuous; eva-indeed; ca-and.

Therefore, accompanied by thirty-three virtuous friends and twenty-one billion gopi-associates, please go to Vraja.

Texts 233 and 234

samsthapya sankhya-rahita  
gopir goloka eva ca  
samasvasya prabodhais ca  
mitaya ca sudha-gira

aham gopan asankhyams ca  
samsthapyatraiva radhike  
vasudevasrayam pascad  
yasyami mathuram purim

samsthapya-placing; sankhya-rahita-numberless; gopih-gopis; goloka-in Gokula; eva-indeed; ca-and; samasvasya-comforting; prabodhaih-with explanations; ca-and; mitaya-with eloquent; ca-and; sudha-nectar; gira-words; aham-I; gopan-the gopas; asankhyan-numberless; ca-and; samsthapyatraiva-placing; radhike-O Radha; vasudeva-of Vasudeva; asrayam-to the shelter; pascad-then; yasyami-I will go; mathuram-to Mathura; purim-City.

O Radha, after comforting with eloquent nectar words the numberless gopas and gopis left behind in Goloka, I will go to Vasudeva's home in Mathura' City.

Text 235

vrajam vrajantu kridartham  
mama sange priyat priyah  
ballavanam grhe janma  
labhantu gopa-kotayah

vrajam-to Vraja; vrajantu-should go; kridartham-to enjoy pastimes; mama-of Me; sange-in the company; priyat-than the dear; priyah-morew dear; ballavanam-of the gopas; grhe-in the home; janma-birth; labhantu-should attain; gopa-kotayah-ten million gopas.

The ten million gopas most dear to Me should take birth in the homes of the gopas. To enjoy pastimes with Me they should go to Vraja.

Text 236

ity evam uktva sri-krsno  
virarama ca narada  
usur devas ca devyas ca  
gopa gopyas ca tatra vai

ity-thus; evam-thus; uktva-speaking; sri-krsnah-Sri Krsna; virarama-stopped; ca-and; narada-Narada; usuh-stayed; devah-the demigods; ca-and; devyah-demigoddesses; ca-and; gopa-gopas; gopyas-gopis; ca-and; tatra-there; vai-indeed.

O Narada, then Lord Krsna stopped speaking. The demigods, demigoddesses, gopas, and gopis were silent.

Text 237

brahmesa-dharma-sesas ca  
sri-krsnam tat-parat param  
siva-padma-sarasvatyas  
tustuvuh paraya muda

brahmesa-dharma-sesah-Brahma, Siva, Yama, and Sesa; ca-and; sri-krsnam-to Sri Krsna; tat-parat-than the greatest; param-greater; siva-padma-sarasvatyah-Parvati, Laksmi and Sarasvati; tustuvuh-offered prayers; paraya-with great; muda-joy.

Then Brahma, Siva, Yama, Sesa, Parvati, Laksmi and Sarasvati joyfully offered prayers to Lord Krsna.

Text 238

bhakta gopas ca gopyas ca  
viraha-jvala-katarah  
tatra samstuya sri-krsnam  
pranemuh prema-vihvalah

bhaktah-devoted; gopas-gopas; ca-and; gopyas-gopis; ca-and; viraha-jvala-katarah-tormented by the fires of separation; tatra-there; samstuya-offering prayers; sri-krsnam-to Sri Krsna; pranemuh-bowed down; prema-vihvalah-overcome with love.

Overcome with love and burning in the flames of imminent separation, the devoted gopas and gopis offered prayers to Lord Krsna and bowed down before Him.

Text 239

pranadhikam priyam kantam  
radha purna-manoratha  
paritustava bhaktya ca  
viraha-jvala-katara

pranadhikam-more than life; priyam-dear; kantam-beloved; radha-Radha; purna-manoratha-Her desires fulfilled; paritustava-offered prayers; bhaktya-with devotion; ca-and; viraha-jvala-katara-tortured by the fires of separation. .

Burning in the flames of imminent separation even though Her desires were all fulfilled, Sri Radha' devotedly offered prayers to Her lover Krsna, who is more dear to Her than life.

Text 240

sasru-purnati-dinam ca  
drstva radham bhayakulam  
prabodha-vacanam satyam  
uvaca tam harih svayam

sasru-purna-filled with tears; ati-dinam-very pitiful; ca-and; drstva-seeing; radham-Sri Radha; bhayakulam-frightened; prabodha-vacanam-words of enlightenment; satyam-true; uvaca-spoke; tam-to Her; harih-Lord Krsna; svayam-Himself.

Seeing that Sri Radha' was weeping many tears of distress, Lord Krsna spoke to Her truthful words of enlightenment.

Text 241

sri-krsna uvaca

pranadhike maha-devi  
sthira bhava bhayam tyaja  
yatha tvam ca tathaham ca  
ka cinta te mayi sthite

sri-krsna uvaca-Sri Krsna said; pranadhike-more dear than life; maha-devi-O goddess; sthira-steady; bhava-become; bhayam-fear; tyaja-abandon; yatha-as; tvam-You; ca-and; tatha-so; aham-I; ca-and; ka=what?; cinta-worry; te-of You; mayi-in Me; sthite-situated.

Sri Krsna said: O goddess more dear than life, please be peaceful. Give up Your fears. What You feel I also feel. Why should You be unhappy while I am with You.

Text 242

kintu te kathayisyami  
kicid evasty amangalam

varsanam satakam purnam  
tvad-vicchedo maya saha

kintu-however; te-to You; kathayisyami-I will tell; kicit-something; eva-indeed; asti-is; amangalam-inauspicious; varsanam-of years; satakam-a hundred; purnam-full; tvad-vicchedah-Your separation; maya-me; saha-with.

However, I will tell You something that is not good. You will be separated from Me for a hundred years.

Text 243

sridama-sapa-janyena  
karma-bhogena sundari  
bhavisyaty eva mama ca  
mathura-gamanam tatah

sridama-sapa-janyena-caused by Sridama's curse; karma-bhogena-the result of work; sundari-O beautiful one; bhavisyaty-will be; eva-indeed; mama-of Me; ca-and; mathura-gamanam-going to Mathura; tatah-then.

O beautiful one, I will go to Mathura and, because of Sridama's curse, We will be separated.

Text 244

tatra bharavataranam  
pitroh bandhana-moksanam  
malakara-tantra-vaya-  
kubjikayas ca moksanam

tatra-there; bharavataranam-removing the earth's burden; pitroh-of My parents; bandhana-moksanam-release from bandage; malakara-of the florist; tantra-vaya-a tailor; kubjikayah-and a hunchbaë girl; ca-and; moksanam-liberation.

In Mathura' I will remove the earth's burden, release My parents from bondage, and give liberation to a florist, a tailor, and a hunchbacë girl.

Text 245

ghatayitva ca yavanam  
mucukundasya moksanam  
dvarakayas ca nirmanam  
rajasuyasya darsanam

ghatayitva-killing; ca-and; yavanam-a yavana; mucukundasya-of Mucukunda; moksanam-liberation; dvarakayah-of Dvaraka; ca-and; nirmanam-building; rajasuyasya-of the Rajasuya-yajna; darsanam-the sight.

Then I will kill Kalayavana, deliver Mucukunda, build the city of Dvaraka, and see a Rajasuya-yaja.

Text 246

udvham raja-kanyanam  
sahasranam ca sodasa  
dasadhika-satasyapi  
satrunam damanam tatha

udvham-wedding; raja-kanyanam-of princesses; sahasranam- ca sodasa  
dasadhika-satasya-16,100; api-also; satrunam-of enemies; damanam-stopping;  
tatha-so.

Then I will marry 16,100 princesses and defeat many enemies.

Text 247

mitropakaranam caiva  
varanasyas ca dahanam  
harasya jrmbhanam tatra  
banasya bhuja-karttanam

mitra-of friends; upakaranam-help; ca-and; eva-indeed; varanasyah-of Varanasi;  
ca-and; dahanam-burning; harasya-of Lord Siva; jrmbhanam-yawning; tatra-there;  
banasya-of Bana; bhuja-arms; karttanam-cutting.

Then I will help My friends, burn Varanasi, make Siva yawn, and cut Banasura's  
arms.

Text 248

parijatasya haranam  
yad yat karmanyad eva ca  
gamanam tirtha-yatrayam  
muni-sangha-pradarsanam

parijatasya-of the parijata flower; haranam-stealing; yat-what; yat-and; karma-  
deed; anyat-another; eva-and; ca-and; gamanam-going; tirtha-yatrayam-on  
pilgrimage; muni-sangha-pradarsanam-seeing the assembly of sages.

I will forcibly take the Parijata tree, see many saintly sages when I go on pilgrimage,  
and perform many other activities.

Text 249

sambhasanam tu bandhunam  
yaja-sampadanam pituh  
subha-ksane punas tatra  
tvaya sardham pradarsanam

sambhasanam-conversation; tu-and; bandhunam-of friends and relatives; yaja-  
sampadanam-performing the yajna; pituh-of My father; subha-ksane-at an

auspicious moment; punah-again; tatra-there; tvaya-You; sardham-with;  
pradarsanam-seeing.

While on pilgrimage I will speak with My friends and relatives, help My father  
perform a yaja, and, at an auspicious moment, see You again.

Text 250

karisyami ca tatraiva  
gopikanam ca darsanam  
tubhyam adhyatmikam dattva  
punah satyam tvaya saha

karisyami-i will do; ca-and; tatra-there; eva-indeed; gopikanam-of the gopis; ca-  
and; darsanam-sight; tubhyam-to You; adhyatmikam-transcendental knowledge;  
dattva-giving; punah-again; satyam-truth; tvaya-You; saha-with.

There I will also see the gopis and again I will teach You the truth of spiritual  
philosophy.

Text 251

diva-nisam avicchedo  
maya sardham atah param  
bhavisyati tvaya sardham  
punar agamanam vrajam

diva-day; nisam-and night; avicchedah-without separation; maya-Me; sardham-  
with; atah-then; param-then; bhavisyati-will be; tvaya-You; sardham-with; punah-  
again; agamanam-return; vrajam-to Vraja.

From that time We will never really be separated for even a moment of the day or  
night. Then, after some time, I will return to Vraja.

Text 252

kante viccheda-samaye  
varsanam satake sati  
nityam sammilanam svapne  
bhavisyati tvaya saha

kante-O beloved; viccheda-samaye-at the time of separation; varsanam-of years;  
satake-a hundred; sati-being so; nityam-always; sammilanam-meeting; svapne-in  
dream; bhavisyati-will be; tvaya-You; saha-with.

Beloved, during the hundred years We are separated We will meet in Our dreams  
again and again.

Text 253

mama narayanamso yas  
tasya yanam ca dvarakam  
sata-varsantare sadhyam  
etany eva su-niscitam

mama-of Me; narayanamsah-the expansion of Lord Narayana; yah-who; tasya-of Him; yanam-journey; ca-and; dvarakam-to Dvaraka; sata-a hundred; varsa-years; antare-after; sadhyam-to be attained; etany-they; eva-indeed; su-niscitam-determined.

In My Narayana form I will go to Dvaraka for those hundred years. In that way I will enjoy My pastimes there.

Text 254

bhavisyati punas tatra  
vane vasam tvaya saha  
punah pitros ca gopanam  
soka-sammarjanam param

bhavisyati-willbe; punah-again; tatra-there; vane-in the forest; vasam-residence; tvaya-You; saha-with; punah-again; pitros-of My parents; ca-and; gopanam-of the gopas; soka-the grief; sammarjanam-wiping away; param-then.

Then I will return to live with You in the forest. Then I will wipe away all the sufferings of My parents and the gopas and gopis.

Text 255

krtva bharavataranam  
punar agamanam mama  
tvaya sahapi golokam  
gopair gopibhir eva ca

krtva-doing; bharavataranam-the removal of the burden; punah-again; agamanam-return; mama-of me; tvaya-You; saha-with; api-also; golokam-to Goloka; gopaih-with the gopas; gopibhir-and gopis; eva-indeed; ca-and.

When I have removed the earth's burden I will return to Goloka with the gopas, gopis, and You.

Text 256

mama narayanamsasya  
vanya ca padmaya saha  
vaikunthagamanam radhe  
nityasya paramatmanah

mama-of Me; narayanamsasya-the expansion of Narayana; vanya-Sarasvati; ca-with; padmaya-laksmi; saha-with; vaikuntha-to Vaikuntha; agamanam-return; radhe-O Radha; nityasya-eternal; paramatmanah-the Supreme Lord.

O Radha, in My form as eternal Lord Narayana I will return to Vaikuntha with Laksmi and Sarasvati.

Text 257

svetadvipam dharmageham  
amsanam ca bhavisyati  
devanam caiva devinam  
amsa yasyanti svaksayam

svetadvipam-Svetadvipa; dharmageham-the home of religion; amsanam-of incarnations; ca-and; bhavisyati-will be; devanam-of the demigods; ca-and; eva-indeed; devinam-of the demigoddesses; amsa-the incarnations; yasyanti-will go; svaksayam-to their own abodes.

My various incarnations will return to svetadvipa, the home of religion, and the partial incarnations of the demigods and demigoddesses will all return to their respective abodes.

Text 258

punah samsthitir atraiva  
goloke me tvaya saha  
ity evam kathitam sarvam  
bhavisyam ca subhasubham  
maya nirupitam yat tat  
kante kena nivaryate

punah-again; samsthitih-staying; atra-here; eva-indeed; goloke-in Goloka; me-of Me; tvaya-with You; saha-with; ity-thus; evam-thus; kathitam-told; sarvam-all; bhavisyam-will be; ca-and; subhasubham-auspicious and inauspicious; maya-by Me; nirupitam-described; yat-what; tat-that kante-O beloved; kena-by whom?; nivaryate-will be stopped.

Then You and I will again live in Goloka. Beloved, now I have told You everything both good and bad. Who can stop from happening what I have foretold?

Text 259

ity evam uktva sri-krsnah  
krtva radham sva-vaksasi  
tasthau tasthuh surah sarve  
sura-patnyas ca vismitah

ity-thus; evam-thus; uktva-speaking; sri-krsnah-Sri Krsna; krtva-doing; radham-Radha; sva-vaksasi-on His chest; tasthau-stayed; tasthuh-stayed; surah-the demigods; sarve-all; sura-patnyas-the wives of the demigods; ca-and; vismitah-surprised.

After speaking these words, Lord Krsna had Radha rest against His chest. All the demigods and their wives were astonished.

Text 260

uvaca sri-harir devan  
devis ca samayocitam  
deva gacchata karyartham  
svalayam visayocitam

uvaca-said; sri-harih-Lord Krsna; devan-to the demigods; devis-demigoddesses; ca-and; samayocitam-appropriate; deva-O demigods; gacchata-go; karyartham-for the mission; svalayam-to your own abodes; visayocitam-respective.

Then Lord Krsna said to the demigods and demigoddesses: O demigods, please return to your homes and prepare for your mission.

*Auckland, New Zealand*  
*7 November 2003*

### ***Sayujya-mukti* as Defined by Sripad Madhvacarya**

From Srila Prabhupada's books, we understand *sayujya-mukti* thus:

There are five types of liberation, one of which is called *sayujya-mukti*, or being merged into the existence or body of the Lord. The other forms of liberation maintain the individuality of the particle soul and involve being always engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. (*Bhag. 2. 6. 35p*)

But Madhvacarya, who re-established the Brahma-*sampradaya* in the Kali-*yuga*, taught a different understanding of *sayujya-mukti*. Since there is an historical connection between the Gaudiya Vaisnava *sampradaya* of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and the Tattvavadi *sampradaya* of Acarya Madhva, it is useful to understand the distinct conceptions of *sayujya* in these two schools.

Madhvacarya teaches that a soul ascends to *moksa* (liberation) via four steps: 1) *karma-ksaya*, or the destruction of *karma*, both *punya* (good) and *papa* (evil); 2) *utakranti-laya*, the stoppage of rebirth; 3) *arciradi-marga*, the soul's traversing of the *arciradi* path of the sun that passes through the region of the fire gods to the realm of Brahman, from which there is no return; and 4) *bhoga*, the enjoyment of four kinds of liberation.

Madhva's four kinds of liberation are *salokya*, *samipya*, *sarupya* and *sayujya*.

Here it should be mentioned that it is typical for *sastra* to list five kinds of liberation, as we find in *Srimad-Bhagavatam 3. 29. 13*: *salokya-sarsti-samipya-sarupya-ekatvam*, defined by Srila Prabhupada in his word-for-word translation as "living on the same planet", "having the same opulence", "to be a personal associate", "having the same bodily features", and "oneness".

Madhvacarya subsumes *sarsti* liberation into *sayujya*. And what is *sayujya* for Madhva? It is the supreme liberation, in which the transcendental bliss of the soul is

of the the same quality (though not the same unlimited quantity) as that of the Supreme Lord. Hence it is a state of complete intimacy with Him.

The Mayavadis define *sayujya* as *ekatvam*, merging into and becoming one with Brahman. The Gaudiya Vaisnavas understand *sayujya* in that way also. But in the *Nyayamrta*, the great *acarya* Vyasatirtha defends Madhva's conception of *sayujya* by stating that it should never be interpreted to mean total identity.

*Sayujya*, for Madhva and his followers, can be attained only by the complete subservience of the soul to the Supreme Lord. They define the Lord as He who possesses unlimited *aisvarya*, transcendental opulence--and therefore the supreme aspect of God for the Tattvavadis is Sri-Sri Laksmi-Narayana. It follows that the liberated soul can never equal Laksmi-Narayana, who are the very forms of supreme opulence, but by Their grace he can share Their bliss. So *sayujya-mukti* here is a perfection of the *dasya-rasa* (the *rasa* of servitude) in *aisvarya-bhava*, the majestic Vaikuntha mood of *bhakti*.

Like Ramanujacarya, Madhvacarya does not discuss the sweet *madhurya* aspect of the Supreme Truth--Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna. *Madhurya-bhava* (the Vrndavan mood) is taught in the *Brahma-sampradaya* by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu His followers. It is also taught to some extent in the Kumara and Rudra *sampradayas* by Nimbarkacarya and Vallabhacarya.

For those who understand *Srimad-Bhagavatam* in the light of Lord Caitanya's teachings, the five kinds of liberation are *aisvaryas* (opulences) that the Lord offers to His devotees in gratitude for their devotional service; but the pure devotees of the *madhurya-bhava* do not accept them. And so we find in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 29. 13: *na grhnanti vina mat-sevanam janah*, "a pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation in exchange for pure devotional service. "

If someone would ask me why Madhvacarya defined *sayujya-mukti* as he did, I would answer that his definition arises from his extremely strong and loyal mood of devotion in *aisvarya*. The Mayavadi philosophers attempt to strip the Absolute of His divine opulence. They do not like to think of Him as the Supreme Person, much less as the husband of Laksmi in Their transcendental abode, Vaikuntha-loka. They wish to reduce the Lord to an impersonal light that they themselves can be one with. Their motivation is envy. So Madhva ripped the *sayujya* conception out of the Mayavadis' hands and redefined it as the highest bliss achieved by a devoted servant of Sri-Sri Laksmi-Narayana. He does not permit oneness to be considered as any kind of liberation at all.

The Gaudiya Vaisnavas see no need to argue in this way, since for them liberation is not actually a goal. They will even allow that *ekatvam* or *sayujya* is a kind of liberation that the Lord kindly awards the successful impersonalists. The Gaudiya Vaisnavas are simply not much concerned about liberation because it is an *aisvarya*, while their mood is *madhurya*.

### **Video Games Are Addictive, Say Scientists**

Tue Nov 4, 6:42 PM ET Reuters News Service By Lucas van Grinsven, European Technology Correspondent

UTRECHT, Netherlands (Reuters) - Computer game fanatics should not be labeled addicts, although many players say they are hooked on a hobby that is affecting their social lives, scientists said Tuesday.

Some evidence exists that games stimulate the same areas in the brain as alcohol and other drugs, psychologists, sociologists and others were told at the world's first interdisciplinary games conference here.

But unlike the addictive substances, there is no medicine to deal with compulsive gaming behavior, they heard.

"Is (the popular online game) Everquest addictive? Well, it's no more addictive than school or work. The time invested in those also make them addictive," said Florence Chee, a research student at Simon Fraser University in Canada.

Scientific interest in the multibillion dollar computer games industry has mushroomed in recent years, after teenagers in several countries killed themselves and others after playing violent games. Various governments have put pressure on the industry to add a health warning to games packages.

But many players actually described themselves as addicts, said Stephen Kline, a social psychology professor and media analyst at Simon Fraser University.

"Fifteen percent of Everquest players say: 'I'm addicted'. Thirty percent can be categorized as addicts," he said.

Although he used the word "addiction" in the classic Greek sense of "devotion," his survey of hundreds of heavy online games players showed half of them reported family conflict and romantic failure as a result of their hobby.

#### VIOLENCE SPILLS OVER

Heavy games players can play an average 17 to 26 hours a week. The online games, in which players battle with opponents online, are considered the most gripping and time-consuming.

Children from the age of 10 are now starting to play online games, he said, and families should know it is radically different from comics.

"Game entertainment is not a classic media experience. It has a potency that offers a new psychological experience," Kline said, adding he could imagine violent experiences in games to spill over in real life.

Other scientists, who like Chee have carried out scientific surveys, said heavy games players were in fact sociable and not the pathological loners they are often made out to be.

Sociology Professor Holin Lin at National Taiwan University discovered many players were members of an online 'clan' to try to become more successful against opponents in the game. She also found many had relationships with clan members in real life.

*Auckland, New Zealand*

*8 November 2003*

All glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga

(1)

agre kurunam atha pandavanam  
duhsasanenahrta-vastra-kesa  
krsna tadakrosad ananya-natha  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Before the assembled Kurus and pandavas, when Duhsasana caught her hair and clothing, Krsna (Draupadi), having no other Lord, cried out, " Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(2)

sri krsna visno madhu-kaitabhare  
bhaktanukampin bhagavan murare  
trayasva mam kesava lokanatha  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O Lord Krsna, Visnu, enemy of the Madhu and Kaitabha demons; O Supreme Personality of Godhead, enemy of Mura, merciful upon the devotees; O Kesava, Lord of the worlds, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava, please deliver me.

(3)

vikretukama kila gopa-kanya  
murari-padarpita-citta-vrttih  
dadhyadikam mohavasad avocad  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Though desiring to sell milk, dahi, butter, etc. , the mind of a young gopi was so absorbed in the lotus feet of Krsna that instead of calling out "Milk for sale," she bewilderedly said, "Govinda!", "Damodara!", and "Madhava!"

(4)

ulukhale sambhrta-tandulans ca  
sanghattayantyo musalaih pramugdhah  
gayanti gopyo janitanuraga  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Their grinding-mortars full of grains, the gopis minds are overcome as they thresh with their pestles, singing "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(5)

kacit karambhoj a-pute nisannam  
krida-sukam kimsuka-rakta-tundam  
adhyapayam asa saroruhaksi  
govinda damodara madhaveti

A lotus-eyed girl instructed the red-beaked pet parrot that was seated in the cup of her lotus hand; she said, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava . . . "

(6)

grhe grhe gopa-vadhu-samuhah  
prati-ksanam pidjara-sarikanam  
skhalad-giram vacayitum pravrtto  
govinda damodara madhaveti

In each and every house, a bevy of gopa-women is engaged in making the caged parrots constantly utter with broken words, "Govinda," "Damodara," and Madhava. "

(7)

paryyankikabhajam alam kumaram  
prasvapayantyo 'khila-gopa-kanyah  
jaguh prabandham svara-tala-bandham  
govinda damodara madhaveti

With the little boy lying in the swing, all of the gopis used to expertly sing compositions set to musical notes and rhythm; they went, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava," while putting Him to rest.

(8)

ramanujam vikšana-keli-lolam  
gopi grhitva nava-nita-golam  
abalakam balakam ajuhava  
govinda damodara madhaveti

The younger brother of Balarama, playing mischievously, was dodging about her with restless eyes. Taking a ball of fresh butter to lure Him over, a gopi called Him: "O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava . . . "

(9)

vicitra-varnabharanabhirame-  
-bhidhehi vaktrambuja-rajahamse  
sada madiye rasane 'gra-range  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O my tongue, since my mouth has become like a lotus by dint of the presence there of these eloquent, ornamental, delightful syllables, you are like the swan that plays there. As your foremost pleasure, always articulate the names, "Govinda,"

"Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(10)

ankadhirudham sisu-gopa-gudham  
stanam dhayantam kamalaika-kantam  
sambodhayam asa muda yasoda  
govinda damodara madhaveti

The one and only Lord of Laksmidevi, as an inconspicuous little cowherd baby, was seated in the lap of mother Yasoda, drinking her breast-milk. Merged in bliss, she addressed Him as "Govinda," "Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(11)

kridantam antar-vrajam atmanam svam  
samam vayasyaih pasu-pala-balaih  
premna yasoda prajuhava krsnam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

In Vraja-dhama, Krsna was playing with His playmates, the boys of His age who protected the animals. With great love, mother Yasoda called out to her own son, "O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(12)

yasodaya gadham ulukhalena  
go-kantha-pasena nibadhyamanam  
ruroda mandam navanita-bhoji  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Being firmly tied up to the grinding mortar with a cow's rope by mother Yasoda, the plunderer of butter softly whimpered. "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava. "

(13)

nijangane kankana-keli-lolam  
gopi grhitva navanita-golam  
amardayat pani-talena netre  
govinda damodara madhaveti

In His own courtyard, Krsna was carelessly playing with a bracelet. So the gopi took a ball of butter to Him, and shutting His eyes with her palm, she distracted Him, "O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava . . . (Guess what I have for you!)"

(14)

grhe grhe gopa-vadhu-kadambah  
sarve militva samavaya-yoge  
punyani namani pathanti nityam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

In house after house, groups of cowherd ladies gather on various occasions, and together they always chant the transcendental names of Krsna--"Govinda, Damodara, and Madhava. "

(15)

mandara-mule vadanabhiramam  
bimbadhare purita-venu-nadam  
go-gopa-gopi-jana-madhya-samstham  
govinda damodara madhaveti

His face is pleasing, and the flute at His lips is filled with Divine sound. Amidst the cows, gopas, and gopis, He stands at the base of a coral tree. Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!

(16)

utthaya gopyo 'para-ratra-bhoge  
smrtva yasoda-suta-bala-kelim  
gayanti proccair dadhi-manthayantyo  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Having risen early in the Brahma-muhurta, and remembering the childish activities of the Son of mother Yasoda, the gopis loudly sing while churning butter--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(17)

jagdho 'tha datto navanita-pindo  
grhe yasoda vicikitsayanti  
uvaca satyam vada he murare  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Having churned and then set aside a fresh lump of butter in the house, mother Yasoda was now suspicious--it had been eaten. She said, "Hey--Murari! Govinda, Damodara, Madhava, now tell me the truth . . . "

(18)

abhyarcya geham yuvatih pravrdha-  
-prema-pravaha dadhi nirmamantha  
gayanti gopyo 'tha sakhi-sameta  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Having finished worship at home, a young gopi, (like) a strong current of love for Krsna, churned the butter, and then joins together with all the gopis and their friends and they sing, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(19)

kvacit prabhate dadhi-purna-patre

niksipya mantham yuvati mukundam  
alokya ganam vividham karoti  
govinda damodara madhaveti

One time, early in the morning, just as a girl had put aside her churn in a pot full of butter--she saw Mukunda. She then began to sing songs in various ways, about Govinda, Damodara, and Madhava.

(20)

kridaparam bhojana-majjanartham  
hitaishini stri tanujam yasoda  
ajuhavat prema-pari-plutaksi  
govinda damodara madhaveti

(Without having even bathed or eaten,) Krsna was absorbed in play. Overwhelmed with affection, mother Yasoda, who thought only of her son's welfare, called out, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava! (Come, take your bath and eat something. )"

(21)

sukham sayanam nilaye ca visnum  
devarsi-mukhya munayah prapannah  
tenacyute tanmayatam vrajanti  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Devarsi Narada and other Munis are always surrendered to Lord Visnu, who rests upon His couch. They always chant the names of "Govinda," "Damodara," and "Madhava," and thus they attain spiritual forms similar to His.

(22)

vihaya nidram arunodaye ca  
vidhaya krtyani ca vipramukhyah  
vedavasane prapathanti nityam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

After giving up sleep at dawn, having completed their ritualistic duties, and at the end of their Vedic chanting, the best of the learned brahmanas always loudly chant, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(23)

vrndavane gopa-ganas ca gopyo  
vilokya govinda-viyoga-khinnam  
radham jaguh sasru-vilocanabhyam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

In Vrndavana, seeing Srimati Radharani overwhelmed with separation from Govinda, groups of gopas and gopis sang, with tears in their lotus eyes, "Govinda! Damodara!

O Madhava!"

(24)

prabhata-sad'cara-gata nu gavas  
tad-raksanartham tanayam yasoda  
prabodhayat pani-talena mandam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

The cows having already gone out to graze early in the morning, mother Yasoda gently roused her sleeping son with the palm of her hand, softly saying, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava. "

(25)

pravala-sobha iva dirgha-kesa  
vatambu-parnasana-puta-dehah  
mule tarunam munayah pathanti  
govinda damodara madhaveti

With long, matted hair the color of coral, and bodies purified by eating only leaves, water, and air, the sages sit beneath the trees and chant, "Govinda," "Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(26)

evam bruvana virahatura bhramam  
vraja-striyah krsna-visikta-manasah  
visrjya lajjam ruruduh sma su-svaram  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"After speaking these words, the ladies of Vraja, who were so attached to Krsna, felt extremely agitated by their imminent separation from Him. They forgot all worldly shame and loudly cried out, 'O Govinda! O Damodara! O Madhava!'" n. b. --(This verse is identical with Srimad Bhagavatam, 10. 39. 31; it describes the gopis' reaction to Akrura's taking Krsna and Balarama away from Vrndavana. The above translation is that of H. H. Hridayananda Gosvami. )

(27)

gopi kadacin mani-piñjara-stham  
sukam vaco vacayitum pravrtta  
ananda-kanda vraja-candra krsna  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Sometimes a gopi is engaged in teaching a parrot within a jewelled cage to recite names like: "Ananda-kanda" (source of bliss), "Vraja-candra" (moon of Vraja), "Krsna," "Govinda," "Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(28)

go-vatsa-balaih sisu-kaka-paksam  
badhnantam ambhoja-dalayataksam  
uvaca mata cibukam grhitva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

The lotus-eyed Lord was tying the sikha of a cowherd boy to the tail of a calf when His mother caught Him, lifted up His chin, and said, "Govinda! Damodara! Madhava!"

(29)

prabhata-kale vara-vallavaugha  
go-raksanartham dhrta-vetra-dandah  
akarayam asur anantam adyam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

In the early morning a group of His favorite cowherd boys arrived, stick-canes in hand, to take care of the cows. They addressed the unlimited, primeval Personality of Godhead, "Hey, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(30)

jalasaye kaliya-mardanaya  
yada kadambad apatan murare  
gopanganas cakrusur etya gopa  
govinda damodara madhaveti

When Lord Murari jumped from the Kadamba branch into the water to chastise the Kaliya serpent, all the gopis and cowherd boys went there and cried out, "Oh! Govinda! Damodara! Madhava!"

(31)

akruram asadya yada mukundas  
capotsavartham mathuram pravistah  
tada sa paura jayatity abhasi  
govinda damodara madhaveti

After Lord Mukunda had met with Akrura and entered Mathura to attend the ceremony of breaking the bow of Kamsa, all the citizens then shouted, "Jaya Govinda! Jaya Damodara! Jaya Madhava!"

(32)

kamsasya dutena yadaiva nitau  
vrndavanantad vasudeva-sunau  
ruroda gopi bhavanasya madhye  
govinda damodara madhaveti

When both sons of Vasudeva had actually been taken out of Vrndavana by the messenger of Kamsa, Yasoda sobbed within the house, wailing, "Govinda,

Damodara, Madhava!"

(33)

sarovare kaliya-naga-baddham  
sisum yasoda-tanayam nisamya  
cakrur lutantyah pathi gopa-bala  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Hearing how the son of Yasoda, who was but a child, was wrapped within the coils of the Kaliya serpent at the pond, the cowherd boys cried "Govinda! Damodara! Madhava!" and scurried down the path.

(34)

akrura-yane yadu-vamsa-natham  
samgacchamanam mathuram niriksya  
ucur viyogat kila gopa-bala  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Seeing the Lord of the Yadus proceeding towards Mathura upon Akura's chariot, the cowherd boys, upon realization of their impending separation, said, "O Govinda! Damodara, Madhava! (Where are you going? Are You actually leaving us now?)

(35)

cakranda gopi nalini-vanante  
krsnena hina kusume sayana  
praphulla-nilotpala-locanabhyam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

At the edge of a lotus forest, a gopi lay down upon the bed of flowers, bereft of Krsna. Tears flowed from her lotus eyes (as she wept,) "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava. "

(36)

mata-pitrbyam parivaryamana  
geham pravista vilalapa gopi  
agatya mam palaya visvanatha  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Being very restricted by her mother and father, the lamenting gopi entered the house, thinking, "(Now that) I have arrived home, save me, O Lord of the universe! O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(37)

vrndavana-stham harim asu buddhva  
gopi gata kapi vanam nisayam

tatrapy adrstvati-bhayad avocad  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Thinking that Krsna was in the forest, a gopi fled into the forest in the middle of night. But seeing that Krsna wasn't actually there, she became very fearful, and cried, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(38)

sukham sayana nilaye nije 'pi  
namani visnoh pravadanti martyah  
te niscitam tanmayatam vrajanti  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Even the ordinary mortals comfortably seated at home who chant the names of Visnu, "Govinda, Damodara," and "Madhava," certainly attain (at least) the liberation of having a form similar to that of the Lord.

(39)

sa nirajaksim avalokya radham  
ruroda govinda-viyoga-khinnam  
sakhi praphullotpala-locanabhyam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Seeing Srimati Radharani crying from the pangs of separation from Govinda, the blooming lotus eyes of Radha's girlfriend also filled with tears, and she too cried, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava. "

(40)

jihve rasajde madhura-priya tvam  
satyam hitam tvam paramam vadami  
avarnayetha madhuraksarani  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O my tongue, you are fond of sweet things and are of discriminating taste; I tell you the highest truth, which is also the most beneficial. Please just recite these sweet syllables: "Govinda," "Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(41)

atyantika-vyadhiharam jananam  
cikitsakam veda-vido vadanti  
samsara-tapa-traya-nasa-bijam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

The knowers of the Vedas say that this is the cure-all of the worst diseases of mankind, and that this is the seed of the destruction of the threefold miseries of material existence--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(42)

tatajḍāya gacchati ramcandre  
salaksmāne 'ranyacaye sasite  
cakranda ramasya nija janitri  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Upon Ramacandra's going into the forest due to his father's order, along with Laksmana and Sita, (and thus becoming) a forest-rover, His mother cried, "O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(43)

ekakini dandaka-kananantat  
sa niyamana dasakandharena  
sita tadakrosad ananya-natha  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Left there alone, Sita was carried out of the forest by the ten-headed Ravana. At that time, accepting no other Lord, Sita cried, "O Govinda! Damodara! Madhava!"

(44)

ramadviyukta janakatmaja sa  
vicintayanti hr̥di rama-rupam  
ruroda sita raghunatha pahi  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Separated from Rama, the daughter of King Janaka was completely anxious, and with the form of Rama within her heart, she cried, "O Raghunatha! Protect me! O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(45)

prasida visno raghu-vamsa-natha  
surasuranam sukha-duhkha-heto  
ruroda sita tu samudra-madhye  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O Lord Visnu, be gracious! Lord of the Raghu clan, cause of the happiness and distress of gods and demons alike, O Govinda, Damoadara, Madhava!" Thus Sita cried, (by the time she had been carried) over the middle of the ocean.

(46)

antar-jale graha-grhita-pado  
visr̥sta-viklista-samasta-bandhuh  
tada gajendro nitaram jagada  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Caught by his foot and pulled into the water, Gajendra, his friends all harassed and frightened away, then called out incessantly, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(47)

hamsadhvajah sankhayuto dadarsa  
putram katahe prapatantam enam  
punyani namani harer japantam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Along with his priest Sankhayuta, King Hamsadhvaja saw his son Sudhanva falling into a vat, but the boy was chanting the transcendental names of Hari, Govinda, Damodara, and Madhava.

(48)

durvasaso vakyam upetya krsna  
sa cabravit kanana-vasinisam  
antahpravistam manasajuhava  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Accepting Durvasa Muni's request (that she feed his thousands of disciples, even though she hadn't the means to do this) Draupadi mentally called out to the Lord within, the Lord of a forest dweller (like her), and she said, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(49)

dhyeyah sada yogibhir aprameyah  
cinta-haras cintita-parijatah  
kasturika-kalpita-nila-varno  
govinda damodara madhaveti

He is always meditated upon by the yogis as being inscrutable. He is the remover of all anxieties, and is the desire-tree of all that is desireable. His bluish complexion is as attractive as Kasturika. Govinda! Damodara! Madhava!

(50)

samsare-kupe patito 'tyagadhe  
mohandha-purne visayabhitapte  
karavalambam mama dehi visno  
govinda damodara madhaveti

I am fallen into the deep, dark well of material life, which is full of illusion and blind ignorance, and I am tormented by sensual existence. O my Lord, Visnu, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava, please grant me Your supporting hand to uplift me.

(51)

tvam eva yace mama dehi jihve

samagate dandadhare krtante  
vaktavyam evam madhuraṁ su-bhaktya  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O my tongue, I ask only this of you, that at my meeting the bearer of the sceptre of chastisement (Yamaraja), you will utter this sweet phrase with great devotion: "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(52)

bhajasva mantram bhava-bandha-muktyai  
jihve rasajḍe su-labham manojḍam  
dvaipayanadyair munibhih prajaptam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O my tongue, O knower of rasa, for release from the hellish bondage of material existence, just worship the charming, easily obtainable mantra that is chanted by Vedavyasa and other sages: "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(53)

gopala vamsidhara rupa-sindho  
lokesa narayana dina-bandho  
ucca-svarais tvam vada sarvadaiva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

You should always and everywhere just loudly chant, "Gopala, Vamsidhara, O ocean of beauty, Lord of the worlds, Narayana, O friend of the poor, Govinda, Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(54)

jihve sadaiva bhaja sundarani  
namani krsnasya manoharani  
samasta-bhaktarti-vinasanani  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O my tongue, just always worship these beautiful, enchanting names of Krsna, "Govinda, Damodara," and "Madhava," which destroy all the obstacles of the devotees.

(55)

govinda govinda hare murare  
govinda govinda mukunda krsna  
govinda govinda rathanga-pane  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O Govinda, Govinda, Hari, Murari! O Govinda, Govinda, Mukunda, Krsna! O Govinda, Govinda! O holder of the chariot wheel! O Govinda! O Damodara! O

Madhava!"

(56)

sukhavasane tv idam eva saram  
dukhavasane tv idam eva geyam  
dehavasane tv idam eva japyam  
govinda damodara madhaveti

This indeed is the essence (found) upon ceasing the affairs of mundane happiness. And this too is to be sung after the cessation of all sufferings. This alone is to be chanted at the time of death of one's material body--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(57)

durvara-vakyam parigrhya krsna  
mrgiva bhita tu katham kathad'cit  
sabham pravista manasajuhava  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Somehow or other accepting the unavoidable command of Duhsasana, Draupadi, like a frightened doe, entered the assembly of princes and within her mind cried out to the Lord, "Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(58)

sri krsna radhavara gokulesa  
gopala govardhana-natha visno  
jihve pibasvamrtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O tongue, drink only this nectar (of the names), "Sri Krsna, dearest of Srimati Radharani, Lord of Gokula, Gopala, Lord of Govardhana, Visnu, Govinda, Damodara," and "Madhava. "

(59)

srinatha visvesvara visva-murte  
sri devaki-nandana daitya-satro  
jihve pibasvamrtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"Srinatha, Lord of the universe, form of the universe, beautiful son of Devaki, O enemy of the demons, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O my tongue, just drink this nectar.

(60)

gopipate kamsa-ripo mukunda  
laksmipate kesava vasudeva

jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"Lord of the gopis, enemy of Kamsa, Mukunda, husband of Laksmidevi, Kesava, son of Vasudeva, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O my tongue, just drink this nectar.

(61)

gopi-janahlada-kara vrajesa  
go-caranaranya-krta-pravesa  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O You who give bliss to the gopis! Lord of Vraja, You who have entered the forest for herding the cows, O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O my tongue, just drink this nectar.

(62)

pranesa visvambhara kaitabhare  
vaikuntha narayana cakra-pane  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O Lord of my life! Upholder of the universe, foe of Kaitabha, Vaikuntha, Narayana, holder of the Sudarsana-cakra! Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O my tongue, just drink this nectar.

(63)

hare murare madhusudanadya  
sri rama sitavara ravanare  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O Lord Hari, enemy of Mura, Madhusudana, Sri Rama, dearmost of Sita, enemy of Ravana, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O tongue, now just drink this nectar.

(64)

sri yadavendradri-dharambujaksa  
go-gopa-gopi-sukha-dana-daksa  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O best of the Yadus, O bearer of Govardhana hill, O lotus-eyed expert in giving happiness to the cows, the gopas, and the gopis, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O tongue, please just drink this nectar.

(65)

dharabharottarana-gopa-vesa  
vihara-lila-krta-bandhu-sesa  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O uplifter of the earth's burdens in the guise of a cowherd boy, Lord of sportive pastimes in which Ananta-sesa has become Your brother! O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O my tongue, just drink this nectar.

(66)

baki-bakaghasura-dhenukare  
kesi-trnavarta-oghata-daksa  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O enemy of Baki (Putana), Bakasura, Aghasura, and Dhenuka, O Lord who expertly smashed Kesi and Trnavarta!" O tongue, just drink this nectar--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(67)

sri janaki-jivana ramacandra  
nisacarare bharatagrajesa  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O Ramacandra, O life and soul of the beautiful daughter of Janaka Maharaja, enemy of the night-roving demons, O elder brother of Bharata!" O my tongue, just drink this nectar--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(68)

narayanananta hare nrsimha  
prahlada-badhahara he krpalo  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"O Lord Narayana, Ananta, Hari, Nrsimhadeva, remover of the afflictions of Prahlada, O merciful Lord! Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O my tongue, simply drink this nectar.

(69)

lila-manusyakrti-rama-rupa  
pratapa-dasi-krta-sarva-bhupa  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

O Lord who assumed the man-like form of Rama, who by dint of Your prowess, turned all other kings into Your servants! "O Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!" O tongue, just drink this nectar.

(70)

sri krsna govinda hare murare  
he natha narayana vasudeva  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

"Sri Krsna! Govinda! Hari! Murari! O Lord, Narayana, Vasudeva!" O tongue, please drink only this nectar--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

(71)

vaktum samartho 'pi na vakti kascid  
aho jananam vyanabhimukhyam  
jihve pibasvamtam etad eva  
govinda damodara madhaveti

Even though anyone is able to chant, still no one does. Alas! How determined people are for their own undoing! O tongue, just drink the nectar of these names--"Govinda, Damodara, Madhava!"

iti sri bilvamangalacarya-viracitam  
sri govinda-damodara-stotram sampurnam

Thus the Sri Govinda Damodara Stotram composed by Sri Bilvamangalacarya is completed.

*Auckland, New Zealand*  
*9 November 2003*

Srila Jiva Gosvami, writing in his *Priti-sandarbha*, helps us to see the essential difference between the bliss of liberation--and here I mean the four personal kinds of liberation--and the bliss of pure devotional service.

The bliss of the personal kinds of *moksa* is the liberated soul's experience of the Lord's *svarupananda*, the joy He feels in His own transcendental perfection. But the most intimate happiness of the Lord, which surpasses even His *svarupananda*, is called *svarupasaktyananda*. This is the bliss of His interplay with His personal potency. In its purest essence, *svarupasaktyananda* is the bliss of His loving affairs with his *adyasakti* (original potency), Srimati Radharani, as well as with His pure devotees who are blessed by Her divine *hladini* nature.

Thus the Lord is more satisfied by transcendental exchanges with devotees who exhibit wonderful love of Krsna than He is by the joy of His own perfection. Pure devotional service, by its very nature, admits the soul into *svarupasaktyananda*.

*Svarupasaktyananda* appears in three degrees: *aisvarya* (majestic), *aisvarya-madhurya-misra* (a mix of majesty and sweet intimacy), and *madhurya* (pure intimacy). In the first (*aisvarya*), the devotee's love is entirely expressed through his consciousness of the Lord's greatness. In a previous journal entry I explained that this is the Vaikuntha mood of *bhakti*. In the second (*aisvarya-madhurya-misra*), the devotee thinks at heart of the Lord in an intimate way, as his near and dear one, but the love is expressed in the context of Krsna's majestic position. For example, in *Mahabharata*, Lord Krsna in the midst of a majestic assembly of kings displays a pastime in which His finger is slightly cut by His own Sudarsana weapon. In loving concern Princess Draupadi rushes close to Him to affectionately bind His finger with a piece of her own cloth. Then she resumes her place next to the Pandavas, as their obedient wife. In the third (*madhurya*), there is no sense of formal distance between the devotee and the Lord; awareness of His power, opulence and majesty completely recedes from the relationship. The damsels of Vraja love Krsna as He who is nearest and dearest to their hearts. They do not think of Him as "God", "all-powerful", "greater than the greatest" and so on.

*Prema-bhakti* actually surpasses even *svarupasaktyananda*. How is that? Because the only object of *prema-bhakti* is service to the Lord. The ecstasies that arise in *svarupasaktyananda* are considered by the *prema-bhakta* to be impediments to unalloyed, completely attentive devotional service. The *prema-bhakta* is wholly committed to contributing to the Lord's transcendental happiness by acts of pure devotion; this commitment is in total disregard for the *prema-bhakta's* personal happiness. The question of self-enjoyment, whether in *svarupananda* or in *svarupasaktyananda*, simply does not arise in the mind of the *prema-bhakta*. Therefore the Lord feels Himself especially beholden to the *prema-bhakta* because He does not know how to repay such a selfless devotee.

*Auckland, New Zealand*  
*10 November 2003*

At Padmasambhavaji's home I held a five-day seminar on Vedic Psychology from 3-7 November. I am told it was very well-attended compared to other seminars that *sannyasis* have held here. I have also been giving *Bhagavatam* class here in the morning, except for the three mornings that I spoke in the temple. On Saturday November 8 evening I gave a talk to the South Auckland Nama Hatta group, at the residence of an Indian devotee family. The next day I gave the Sunday feast lecture at the temple.

This week I am giving morning class at the temple from the 11th through the 13th. On Friday 14 I shall be driven down to a town called Tauranga where I am to stay with a community of devotees over the weekend. After that I go to the ISKCON temples in Wellington and then in Christchurch; but I am returning here to Padmaji's house for one more week before I leave New Zealand for India.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Sanskrit word *saksatkara* refers to the spiritual vision of an advanced devotee by which he sees the Lord face to face. In his *Priti-sandarbha* Srila Jiva Gosvami writes

*sa catmasaksatkaro dvididhah antaravirbhavalaksano bahir-avirbhavalaksanas ca*, that there are two kinds of *saksatkara*: *antah* and *bahih*, or internal and external. Some worshipers of the Lord get the vision of the Lord within themselves. This is *antah saksatkara*. Others are blessed to see Him outside themselves. This is *bahih saksatkara*. Srila Jiva Gosvami considers *bahih saksatkara* to be the real *darsana*, because the Lord reveals Himself in a substantial fullness that is evident to the external senses.

In *Priti-sandarbha* Srila Jiva Gosvami has some interesting things to say about *sayujya-mukti*. While accepting *sayujya* to be the merging of the living entity in the Lord, he states that sometimes a soul who has merged is pulled out again by the Lord for the sake of *lila*. For example, Jaya and Vijaya merged into the Lord after He killed them in their incarnations as Sisupala and Dantavakra; but they were retrieved from the state of oneness to resume their service as *parsadas* (the Lord's associates, as gatekeepers of Vaikuntha-*dhama*). Sri Jiva also says that some liberated souls, though they have achieved *sayujya*, remain outside the Lord. The "merging" they experience is that of their consciousness into the Lord's transcendental bliss. This explanation of *sayujya* is the same as Madhvacarya's. But again, Madhvacarya and his followers do not admit that the merging of the soul's identity into the Lord is *sayujya*.

Madhvacarya's definition of *sayujya* disallows impersonalism. But so does the Gaudiya-*sampradaya's* definition of *kaivalya*. The Sankhya philosophers use the word *kaivalya* for their conception of liberation. . . which is impersonal, but not in the same way as the Mayavadi notion of merging into Brahman. In Sankhya *kaivalya*, the soul gets detached from *prakrti* but does not merge into other souls or into a supreme soul. It goes on existing as a separate unit *without perception of anything at all* and *without any activity at all*. Perception and activity are only possible, say the Sankhya philosophers, if the soul is in touch with *prakrti*. So no connection to *prakrti* means nothing for the soul to know and nothing for him to do. This understanding of *kaivalya* seems to be exactly like the idea of the German philosopher Leibnitz who said that the soul in its individual essence is a "windowless monad", a unit of substance that has no consciousness of anything else but itself. So that is the Sankhya idea of *kaivalya*. But Srila Jiva Gosvami holds that *kaivalya* means pure *bhakti*.

*Kaivalya* is a form of the word *kevala*, which means "one" in the sense of "one thing only", or "unalloyed", or "pure". Srila Prabhupada explains that the impersonalists aspire for *kevala-jnana*, "pure knowledge".

*Kevala jnana mukti dite nare bhakti vina, krsnonmukhe sei mukti haya jnana vina. Mukti*, liberation. . . The impersonalists think that "Simply by cultivating knowledge that I am not matter, I am spirit, or I am one with the Supreme Spirit, I am now. . . Out of ignorance, I am thinking different, but when I am fully elevated to the platform of knowledge, then I become liberated. " (Lecture, 11 January 1967)

In the Gaudiya scriptures, *kevala* and *kaivalya* are used to mean pure loving devotional service that is mixed with nothing else, not even the awe and reverence of the majestic Vaikuntha mood.

*Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya* 19. 192 states:

*punah krsna-rati haya duita prakara  
aisvarya-jnana-misra, kevala-bheda ara*

Attachment for Krsna is divided into two categories. One is attachment with awe and reverence (*aisvarya-jnana-misra*), and the other is pure attachment without reverence (*kevala*).

In the verses that follow this one, it is explained that *kevala* is the Goloka mood of *bhakti* while *aisvarya* is the Mathura, Dvaraka and Vaikuntha mood.

Locana dasa Thakura has sung:

*parama karuna pahu davi-jana,  
nitai-gauracandra  
saba avatara sara siromani  
kevala ananda kanda*

Here *kevala ananda* means "pure bliss", the bliss of Krsna consciousness.

In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2. 3. 12p, Srila Prabhupada explains:

This transcendental bliss is experienced even in the stage of devotional practice (*sadhana-avastha*), if properly undertaken under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. And in the mature stage the developed transcendental feeling culminates in realization of the particular relationship with the Lord by which a living entity is originally constituted (up to the relationship of conjugal love with the Lord, which is estimated to be the highest transcendental bliss). Thus *bhakti-yoga*, being the only means of God realization, is called *kaivalya*. Srila Jiva Gosvami quotes the Vedic version (*eko narayano devah, paravaranam parama aste kaivalya-samjnitah*) in this connection and establishes that Narayana, the Personality of Godhead, is known as *kaivalya*, and the means which enables one to approach the Lord is called the *kaivalya-pantha*, or the only means of attainment of Godhead. This *kaivalya-pantha* begins from *sravana*, or hearing those topics that relate to the Personality of Godhead, and the natural consequence of hearing such *hari-katha* is attainment of transcendental knowledge, which causes detachment from all mundane topics, for which a devotee has no taste at all.

Gaudiya Vaisnavas do not much use the words *mukti* and *moksa* to describe the devotee's attainment of release from material bondage. They prefer the words *kevala* and *kaivalya*, by which they mean the attainment of "*bhakti* only".

*Auckland, New Zealand  
11 November 2003*

### **Some of My Very Favorite Pastimes from Mahabharata *Adi-Parva!***

Thereafter, the five brothers consulted one another. Then, after coming up with a plan for avoiding any misunderstanding among themselves, Yudhisthira went and

informed Narada, "O best of the devarshis, we have made the following rule. As long as any one of us is sitting with Draupadi, the others must not see him in that situation. If any of us happens to see one of his brothers sitting with Draupadi, then he must retire to the forest for twelve years, living a life of brahmacharya. "

Narada approved of this arrangement, and thereafter, he departed so that he could continue wandering at will. From Indraprastha, the Pandavas gradually brought many kings under their sovereignty, and because of their pious rule, the entire Kuru dynasty became very prosperous and happy.

One day, a band of thieves stole some cows from a brahmana. Giving vent to his uncontrolled rage, the brahmana came to the royal palace at Indraprastha and began to reproach the Pandavas as follows: "The so-called kings extract one-sixth of the citizens' production as taxes, and yet do not even make a show of protection! My cows have been stolen, and so it is the duty of the rulers to pursue the thieves and recover my property!"

Upon hearing this, Arjuna replied, "O brahmana, please restrain your grief. Rest assured that I will punish the thieves without delay and then return your cows. I can promise you this because when I am mounted upon my chariot, with my bow in my hand, there is no one who can escape my wrath!"

When Arjuna went to get his bow, however, he realized that Yudhishthira was sitting with Draupadi in the room where the weapons were being stored. Thus, Arjuna was put into a dilemma, and so he considered the situation as follows: "If I enter the room it will be an offense against my elder brother. As a result, I will have to go into exile for twelve years. On the other hand, if I do not fulfill my vow of protection to the brahmana, this will cause both Yudhishthira and I to incur sin for our negligence, and this irreligiosity will be broadcast throughout the entire kingdom. "

Finally, Arjuna concluded that service to the brahmanas is much more important than bodily comfort, and thus he entered the room. Then, after briefly explaining the situation to Maharaja Yudhishthira, he came out with his bow and mounted upon his chariot. Arjuna soon intercepted the thieves, and after piercing them with his arrows, he returned the cows to the brahmanas. Thereafter, when Arjuna returned to Indraprastha, the citizens praised him highly for his unflinching execution of the royal duties. However, coming before Maharaja Yudhishthira, Arjuna said, "My dear brother, please give me your permission, so that I may depart for the forest at once, to fulfill my vow. "

Maharaja Yudhishthira felt very pained at heart upon hearing these unpalatable words. To try and convince Arjuna to give up the idea of going to the forest, the King said, "My dear brother, you had entered my room for the purpose of executing your religious duty. Therefore, I am not at all displeased with you for having done so. Besides, there is no fault when a younger brother enters a room where his elder brother is sitting with his wife, although it is certainly faulty for an elder brother to enter a room where his younger brother is similarly engaged. "

Arjuna replied, "O Yudhishthira, you always say that in regard to truth and duty, there can be no compromise. Therefore, please grant me the permission that I request. "

Maharaja Yudhisthira could not argue with this, and so, soon thereafter, Arjuna set out for the forest, accompanied by a large number of brahmanas. After passing through many territories, he arrived at the Ganga and decided to reside there for some time. Thereafter, Arjuna began to pass his time happily, while the brahmanas there engaged themselves in sacrificial performances.

Then, one day, after bathing and offering water to his departed ancestors, as Arjuna was about to come out of the water, he was forcibly dragged to the bottom of the river. What had happened was that Ulupi, the daughter of the Naga King, Kauravya, had become lusty after seeing Arjuna, and so she forcibly carried him to her father's palace. There, Arjuna saw that a sacrificial fire had been ignited for his use, and so he sat down to complete his morning religious duties. Arjuna then inquired from his captor, "Who are you? Why did you perform such a rash act? Where have you brought me?"

In response, Ulupi introduced herself and then said, "O hero, as I watched you bathe in the Ganga, I immediately fell in love with you. I beg you to fulfill my desire by marrying me. "

Arjuna replied, "I have taken a vow of brahmacharya for twelve years. O lovely girl, if there is some way whereby I can satisfy your desire and at the same time keep my vow, then I will be most happy to do so. "

Ulupi then said, "Arjuna, I know all about your forest exile. As you very well understand, it is the duty of a kshatriya to accept a woman who approaches him out of lust. Therefore, I am sure that the slight diminution of your virtue that will be brought about by breaking your vow will be amply offset by the great piety you will achieve by accepting me. O best of all males, please do not refuse me, for I shall not be able to go on living if I am rejected by you. "

Arjuna became won over by Ulupi's ardent appeal, and so he fulfilled her desire by spending the night with her. The next morning, Arjuna arose at sunrise and then returned with Ulupi to the place where the Ganga flows onto the plains. Before taking her leave, Ulupi granted Arjuna the benediction of being able to defeat all creatures that live within the water. Thereafter, Arjuna described to the brahmanas all that had happened to him, and then started out for the Himalayas.

On the way, Arjuna came to many sacred places, and he bathed in many holy rivers. In these places, he gave many thousands of cows in charity to the brahmanas.

Then, after descending from the Himalayas, Arjuna toured other regions, and when he reached the kingdom of Kalinga, all of the brahmanas that had accompanied him departed. Thus, with only a few attendants, Arjuna continued his travels to numerous holy places. Then, after some days, he reached the state of Manipura.

Arjuna entered Maharaja Chitravahana's palace, and there, he happened to see the King's beautiful daughter, Chitrangada, who was roaming about at her pleasure. As soon as he saw Chitrangada, Arjuna desired to have her as his wife, and so he went to the King and submitted his request. Maharaja Chitravahana then inquired about his guest's lineage, and so, Arjuna explained that he was the son of Kunti.

In response, the King described his own dynasty as follows: "My ancestor, Prabhanjana, happened to be childless, and so he worshiped Lord Shiva in the hopes of receiving a son. After some time, Lord Shiva became pleased and granted the King his wish, but at the same time informed him that all of his descendents would also be destined to have only one child. Since that time, everyone in Prabhanjana's line had a son to perpetuate the dynasty, but unfortunately, I have received a daughter. Because of this, O prince, I will agree to give Chitrangada to you only on the condition that her son will become the inheritor of my kingdom, and not your other sons. "

Arjuna gave his consent and then continued to reside at the capital of Manipura for three years, along with Chitrangada.

Finally, when she gave birth to a son, Arjuna embraced his wife fondly and then went to Maharaja Chitravahana to take leave of him. Thereafter, as Arjuna continued his wanderings, he arrived at the Southern Ocean, where there were five sacred lakes bearing the names of great rishis. Much to his surprise, Arjuna saw that even though there were many ascetics living in the area, all of them avoided the immediate vicinity of these lakes. Arjuna curiously inquired from the rishis about this, and in response, they explained that within the water there lived five large crocodiles that would seize anyone who dared to bathe there.

Although the rishis tried to dissuade him, Arjuna went to the first lake and boldly plunged into the water, to bathe. As soon as Arjuna entered the water, one of the crocodiles seized him by the leg. The powerful crocodile tried to pull Arjuna further into the water, but instead the son of Kunti pulled the powerful beast onto the shore. As soon as the crocodile came out of the water, it miraculously transformed into a beautiful girl, who was decorated with costly ornaments. Being very surprised, Arjuna inquired, "Who are you? What sin did you commit so that you were forced to fall down into this most abominable condition of life?"

The girl replied, "O magnanimous hero, I am the Apsara, Varga. One day, as I was going to visit Kuvera, along with four of my friends, we happened to see a very handsome brahmana studying the Vedas in a secluded place. He seemed to illuminate the entire region with his splendor, and because we were very attracted to him, we tried to catch his attention by singing and playing nearby. However, instead of being attracted, the brahmana glanced at us with great anger and then cursed us to become crocodiles for one hundred years. "

"We humbly tried to beg for the rishi's forgiveness by admitting our false pride caused by our youthful beauty. The brahmana refused to withdraw his curse, however, although at last he did inform us, 'You will be delivered when an exalted person comes and drags you out of the water. Thereafter, the lakes in which you had resided will be considered sacred places, and they will be called by your names. ' After hearing this, we offered our obeisances and circumambulated the rishi before departing. "

"Thereafter, all we could think about was the brahmana's curse, and while going, we happened to meet the great saint, Narada Muni. He inquired about the cause of our sorrow, and so we told him all that had happened. Narada then assured us that a person named Arjuna would soon deliver us from our curse. O hero, the person Narada referred to must be you. Now, kindly deliver my four friends as well. "

Arjuna cheerfully consented, and when he dragged the other four crocodiles out of the water, they also regained their original forms as Apsaras. Finally, after taking permission from Arjuna, the five Apsaras left that place in order to return to their heavenly abode.

After some time, Arjuna became eager to see Chitrangada once again, and so he quickly returned to Manipura. Upon entering the royal palace, Arjuna saw that his son, Vabhruvahana, was now sitting upon the throne. After a brief stay with his wife, Arjuna left Manipura to travel to the holy places on the shore of the Western Ocean. In this way, he finally came to Prabhasa.

When Lord Krishna heard that His dear friend was at Prabhasa, He immediately went there to meet him. When they met, Lord Krishna and Arjuna embrace one another with great fraternal love. They, they sat down so that Arjuna could describe to Him all about his travels. Krishna and Arjuna remained together at Prabhasa for some days. Then, they travelled to the Raivatika Mountain, which had been gorgeously decorated and stocked with all kinds of enjoyable articles, under the instruction of Lord Krishna.

Krishna and Arjuna sat down together to watch the actors and dancers that had been brought there to perform. That night, the two dear friends lay down on the same bed together, and as Arjuna described the sacred places that he had visited, they drifted off to sleep. The next morning, Krishna and Arjuna were awakened by professional singers. Then, later in the day, Krishna took Arjuna on His golden chariot and set out for Dvaraka.

The city had been especially decorated in Arjuna's honor, and upon his arrival, hundreds of thousands of citizens thronged the streets, being very eager to see him. In this way, Arjuna felt great transcendental ecstasy while witnessing the incomparable mercy of his friend, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Krishna. Arjuna offered his respects to all of the elder members of the Vrishni, Bhoja and Andhaka dynasties, and then he took up residence in Lord Krishna's palace.

Arjuna passed many days in great happiness in the association of Lord Krishna. Then, the members of the Vrishni dynasty organized a grand festival was organized at the Raivatika Hill, and so thousands of people went there, along with their wives. The whole area had been provided with palaces and gardens, and amidst the music and other festivities, profuse charity was distributed to the brahmanas.

Baladeva came with His consort, Revati, and Ugrasena next arrived, along with his 1000 wives. All the other leading Yadavas, such as Uddhava and Satyaki, also attended, and Krishna and Arjuna spent their time wandering here and there, never leaving one another's company for a moment. In this way, they happened to come to where Subhadra was seated, surrounded by her maidservants, and as soon as Arjuna saw her, he became completely enamored.

Lord Krishna could see how Arjuna's gaze was longingly fixed upon His sister, and so He smilingly addressed His friend as follows: "O son of Kunti, how is this? Can the heart of such a great warrior become pierced by the arrows of Cupid? My dear Arjuna, if you so desire, then I will ask My father for Subhadra's hand in marriage, on your behalf. "

Arjuna replied, "O Krishna, being endowed with such beauty, whom could this girl not captivate? Now, please tell me, by what means will I be able to achieve Subhadra's hand, without fail? I am ready to accomplish anything humanly possible, to obtain her as my wife. "

Lord Krishna then said, "Arjuna, the holding of a svayamvara is customary for kshatriyas like us. However, in this case, the outcome would be uncertain, for the girl's inclination is not yet known. On the other hand, it is also customary for very heroic kshatriyas to kidnap a girl he desires, and this is also considered to be virtuous. Therefore, I advise you to abduct Subhadra, since it is uncertain whether she would select you if the choice were left up to her. "

A speedy messenger was then sent to Maharaja Yudhisthira, to inform him of Arjuna's intention. After receiving the message that his brother was going to kidnap Subhadra, Maharaja Yudhisthira unhesitatingly gave his approval, because the suggestion had come from Lord Krishna Himself. Subhadra's father, Vasudeva, also gave his consent, and so, with Lord Krishna's blessings, Arjuna put on his armor and mounted upon a chariot that was fully equipped with weapons. He then set out, and whoever happened to see him thought that he was on his way to the forest to hunt, as usual.

Meanwhile, after having worshiped various deities at Raivataka Hill, Subhadra was on her return journey to Dvaraka. Then, all of a sudden, Arjuna appeared on the scene, and after forcibly taking Subhadra on his chariot, he sped off toward Indraprastha. The armed guards had been helpless in this situation, and so they returned to Dvaraka and reported everything to the chief officer at the Sudharma royal assembly house.

Upon hearing this alarming news, the officer loudly blew his trumpet, which was the signal to call everyone to arms. Thus, all of the Yadava heroes immediately left their duties and began pouring into the assembly hall. After everyone was seated, the chief officer described with great agitation the nefarious deed performed by Arjuna. As a result, there was an uproar in the assembly, and without even bothering to discuss the matter, the highly enraged Yadavas called for their chariots and weapons. However, Balarama quickly stood up and restrained the assembly by shouting, "Why are all of you acting so rashly when Lord Krishna is sitting here silently?"

Baladeva then said, "My dear Krishna, why do you remain silent? This rogue Arjuna was lavishly entertained at Dvaraka, and now, in order to return our hospitality, he has greatly insulted the Yadu dynasty by kidnapping our sister. This cannot be tolerated, and so, in revenge, I hereby vow to single-handedly rid the world of the entire Kaurava dynasty once and for all!"

After hearing this impassioned speech, all of the Vrishnis, Bhojas and Andhakas let out a roar of approval. Then, when things had quieted down a bit, Lord Krishna began to speak as follows: "My dear assembled heroes, in reality, Arjuna has not insulted our family. Instead, he has actually enhanced our reputation. Arjuna considered that to give away a daughter in charity is actually a demeaning act, like the gift of a useless animal. Therefore, because of the fault in this type of marriage, Arjuna decided to take Subhadra away by force instead, since that is always considered to be an honorable display of valor for great heroes. "

"Arjuna has taken birth in a dynasty of very exalted saintly kings, and indeed, he is said to be the direct son of the heavenly king, Indra. Besides, his prowess is absolutely unparalleled, and thus, only Lord Shiva and no one else can vanquish him in battle. I therefore consider the Pandava hero to be a most worthy friend and ally. Now, let us go and make peace with Arjuna and bring him back to Dvaraka so that the marriage can be celebrated with great festivity. "

The Yadavas became pacified by Lord Krishna's speech, and so they peacefully brought Arjuna back to Dvaraka and then arranged for him to be united with Subhadra in marriage. Thereafter, Arjuna resided with Lord Krishna for one full year, and he came to be greatly respected by all the members of the Yadu dynasty.

Arjuna then went to Pushkara to pass the final year of his exile, and from there, he returned to Khandavaprastha. Arjuna first of all went and offered his respects to Maharaja Yudhisthira, and then to all of the brahmanas. At last, when Arjuna came before Draupadi, she began to reproach him, due to jealous anger: "Why have you come here? Why are you not with Vasudeva's daughter? Because I am not qualified enough, you will surely spend all your time with Subhadra, absorbed in loving affairs. What need will there be to even give me a second thought?"

Arjuna was able to pacify Draupadi, however, by assuring her of his love and by very humbly begging for her forgiveness. Arjuna then made Subhadra approach Draupadi, after taking off her royal dress and ornaments and putting on the clothing of a cowherd girl. Subhadra first of all worshiped Kuntidevi, and in return, her mother-in-law affectionately embraced her and smelled her head. Subhadra then approached her co-wife, Draupadi, and introduced herself by saying, "Please consider me to be your insignificant maidservant. "

Draupadi was very touched at heart by these sincere and humble words, and thus she immediately got up and embraced Subhadra with great affection. Thus, it turned out that the five Pandavas were able to resume living together very happily and peacefully as before.

When Lord Krishna learned that Arjuna had returned to Indraprastha, He went there, along with many of His sons, as well as Balarama, Akrura, Uddhava and numerous other Yadava heroes. When Maharaja Yudhisthira was informed that the Yadus were approaching, he sent out Nakula and Sahadeva to greet them. Then, when Krishna and Balarama entered the city, all the citizens came out of their houses to worship the two Lords.

When Krishna and Balarama entered the royal palace, Maharaja Yudhisthira hurriedly came forward and embraced Them with great ecstasy. In return, Lord Krishna respectfully worshiped Yudhisthira and Bhima, because they were His elders, and He presented innumerable gifts to Arjuna, Subhadra and the other Pandavas.

Lord Krishna, Balarama and the other Yadava heroes continued to reside in Indraprastha for some time. They passed their days enjoying life along with the Kurus with great merriment, and thus it appeared as if they were residents of the heavenly planets. Then, after some time, Balarama and the others returned to Dvaraka, taking with them the innumerable gifts presented to them by the Pandavas. Only Lord Krishna remained at Indraprastha, because He wanted to stay with

His dearest friend, Arjuna. Lord Krishna and Arjuna spent most of their time together, roaming in the forest while practicing the kshatriya sport of hunting.

In due course of time, Subhadra gave birth to a son who was given the name Ahhimanyu. Lord Krishna personally performed the birth ceremonies, and as Ahhimanyu grew up, he became the dear-most favorite of both the Lord and the Pandavas. As a youth, Ahhimanyu became highly accomplished in the use of weapons, and fully conversant with all branches of Vedic knowledge.

Thereafter, Draupadi gave birth to five sons, one year after another, begotten by each of her five husbands. Because Yudhishthira's son would be able to bear like the Vindhya Mountains the weapons showered upon him by his enemies, the brahmanas gave him the name Prativindhya. Since Bhima's son was born after his father had performed 1000 Some-yagyas, he was given the name Sutasoma. Arjuna's son was conceived after the Pandava hero had performed many wonderful feats while in exile, and thus he was given the name Shrutakarman. Nakula named his son Shatanika, after one of his Kuru ancestors, and because Sahadeva's son was born under the constellation Kritika, he was called Shrutasena, one of Kartikeya's names.

*Auckland, New Zealand  
12 November 2003*

#### A Srila Prabhupada Pastime Remembered by Sruta-kirti Prabhu

It is about 5:30 in the morning and Srila Prabhupada just called me into his sitting room wanting to know why Shyamasundara and Pradyumna are still sleeping. "I don't know," I replied. He tells me to bring them to his room. When we returned Srila Prabhupada tells us all that we must conquer over sleep.

"Rising early and taking a cold shower are not austerities, but just common sense and good hygiene" says Srila Prabhupada. Then revealing a wonderful truth His Divine Grace says, "By chanting 16 rounds, following the regulative principles, rising early, reducing one's eating and sleeping, one gets spiritual energy. If one follows these guidelines for 12 years, all he speaks will be perfect!"

All Glories to Srila Prabhupada!

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is something wonderful from Srila Jiva Gosvami's *Gopala Campu*. He writes that before Lord Krsna's appearance, Nanda and Yasoda had been hoping to have a son for a long time. For years they performed sacrifices and austerities. All of the Vrajavasis, who so loved Nanda and Yasoda, performed the same rites and penances. But still Yasoda did not give birth to a son. Finally they performed the *dvadasi-parama-vrata* for one year. At the end of this period, Lord Hari appeared to Nanda Maharaja in a dream. The Lord assured His devotee that his desire would soon be fulfilled, by the appearance of the Lord Himself as the son of Nanda and Yasoda! When he awoke, Nanda Maharaja's heart was bursting with joy and after taking bath in the Yamuna with Yasoda-devi he gave away great wealth in charity to

the demigods, who came before him in the guise of *brahmanas*, saints and sages. Thereafter he worshiped Lord Visnu. It was after this that he was told a *yogini* had come. Nanda invited that *brahmacarini tapasvi* into his house and gave her a nice seat. Yasoda-devi fell crying at the feet of the *yogini*. That austere lady drew Yasoda to her lap and comforted her. Placing her hand on the head of the queen of the cowherd women, the *brahmacarini* said, "My dear Yasoda, you shall soon give birth to an excellent son. " As soon as they heard this, all the *gopas* and *gopis* assembled in the house emitted a joyful cry.

It is interesting that while (as Srila Prabhupada himself declared) there is no such thing as a *brahmacarini* in Vedic culture, in the Krsna-centered culture of Vrndavana, there is! Nanda Maharaja was assured by the Supreme Lord that he would have a son, but it was a *brahmacarini* who gave that assurance to Yasoda-devi. Srila Prabhupada created *brahmacarinis* in ISKCON. Sure, in the International Society for Krsna Consciousness, why wouldn't there be *brahmacarinis*?

*Auckland, New Zealand*  
*13 November 2003*

#### **VAISNAVA SARVABHAUMA SRILA JAGANNATHA DASA BABAJI**

The following article appears in the sixth year of the monthly *Gaudiya* magazine that was published under the direct guidance of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. It is written by the head school master of Satrujit High School, Sri Yanunandana Adhikari, a disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura.

It was the second year after the opening of the Sri Caitanya Matha in Vrndavana. The resident devotees had left for Delhi to preach the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. I had remained behind the others because I often become ill at the festivals. Three or four days had passed since the devotees had departed. My mind was feeling somewhat restless and uncomfortable. I was sitting alone upstairs on the veranda in front of the door to my room. I was gazing here and there empty-minded. It was now about 10:00 AM; at this time an old Vaisnava from Vrndavana arrived. He entered into the temple grounds from the front entrance and gradually made his way up the flight of stairs. As the old figure climbed the stairs he stopped for a few moments to regain his balance.

I paid my obeisances unto the old Vaisnava and offered him a sitting place on a nearby large rug. As he gasped in short drawn breaths it was apparent that he was exhausted from his travels abroad. Just the mood in which he humbly introduced himself as Bihari dasa Babaji would make clear to many Vaisnavas that this was a special personality. I remembered that I had met this venerable Vaisnava on a previous occasion.

Following a short exchange of reception he said, "I personally served Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji for nearly forty years. At the present age of 86 I feel very weary. I find it somewhat difficult to come and go these days. Previously my body was very strong. Often I would carry Srila Babaji Maharaja eight to ten miles on my back. I witnessed a host of transcendental pastimes.

"You know, during that time I was discouraged by Babaji Maharaja from living in Vrndavana. He would frequently say, 'Look Bihari, don't ever go and live with those false monkey-like renunciates. ' For this reason I never associated with persons outside other than when it was absolutely necessary.

"Srila Jagannatha Babaji was especially close to Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura. I have firm faith in your spiritual master. I often saw him in Calcutta at Manikatala as a boy when I would visit there with Srila Babaji Maharaja. Your spiritual master (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta) would only be clothed with a pullover shirt. He struck me as always having a serious nature. I was attracted by his effluence and his learning. He was always attached to the Holy Name. In his earlier years his frame was very lean and Srila Babaji Maharaja loved him very much. "

The old Vaisnava in this manner described many topics about Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji Maharaja and also his own life. I was deeply moved by the realization that this old respectable Vaisnava had undergone innumerable difficulties in his service to Srila Jagannatha das Babaji Maharaja. As a neophyte devotee my curiosity was stimulated to no bounds. There he sat before me, the actual servant of Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji. Numerous questions came to my mind.

Indicating that he had anticipated my questions he delivered their answers by recounting his past. He himself was born in a family of milkmen in West Bengal. As a youth he had very little academic training. He had spent much of his time in Bangladesh. His Bengali was spoken in an indistinct, broken fashion. Even so he was characterized by a very simple, easy going nature. In this disposition Bihari dasa Babaji would depict his relationship with Jagannatha dasa Babaji. In view of our Vaisnava cultural heritage today these topics are certainly priceless.

Srila Bihari dasa Babaji began to speak, "A long time has passed. It's difficult to exactly recollect. Once when Srila Jagannatha das Babaji was living in Navadvipa a householder from Calcutta suddenly appeared before him. The householder had already spent several days in Navadvip. Touching Srila Jagannatha das Babaji's feet, the gentleman seated himself before him. The unexpected visitor in his first breath requested Srila Jagannatha das Babaji to come with him to Calcutta. The man was desiring to take first initiation from him. Srila Jagannatha das Babaji was always opposed to the idea of going to Calcutta. On first consideration he decided that the best decision was not to go. But the gentleman was very insistent. He came every day for fifteen days and prayed to Babaji Maharaja to go to Calcutta. Finally Srila Jagannatha das Babaji relented and agreed to go with the man to his residence in Kasipura. Srila Jagannatha das Babaji made the compromise that he would not accept any foodstuffs from the gentleman's house.

"So by boat they went together. We arrived at the residence of the householder whereupon he immediately tried to coax us into accepting some cooked foodstuffs. Srila Jagannatha das Babaji became so annoyed that he said quietly to me, 'Take me to the residence of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura. ' He then told me the address.

"I arranged for a horse carriage to take us to Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura's house. When we arrived Thakura Bhaktivinode was upstairs. A message was sent up. This was the first time I had seen Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura. He was somewhat tall with an effulgent golden hue like complexion. His nose was very elegant and his mouth well formed. Oh, and how expertly Srila Bhaktivinode knew how to serve the

Vaisnavas! Thakura Bhaktivinode would personally serve Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji with his own hands. They would offer visit one another in Navadwip and Calcutta.

"Once Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura arrived at the residence of Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji with a *kirtana* party. Srila Babaji Maharaja joined the party and it quickly advanced towards Sri Mayapura. During this time another *kirtana* group was approaching from the Bamanapukura side. The two parties chanting the glories of Lord Caitanya assembled together at the place of the present day Yoga Pith.

"Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji was more than 130 years old. Being humpbacked, he normally could not sit in an erect position. But when he would perform the congregational chanting of the Lord he would extend his body by the distance of five hand lengths and spring upward a distance of over one yard! How wonderful it was when he pointed out the location of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's appearance site. It is also still fresh within my mind the way he struck his stick on the ground with a resounding 'crack' (Srila Bihari das Babaji, who is holding a stick enacts the pastime again as true as life itself). He pointed out, some distance away, a well which contained the broken hull of a mrdanga. Sometimes Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji would chastise persons who were opposed to the authenticity of Sri Mayapura. "

Again Bihari dasa Babaji began to explain with full vigor other transcendental pastimes he had seen. He continued, "I came to Navadwipa and prepared the foundation of Babaji Maharaja's bhajana kuthir. I dug it out by hand and constructed a fence around its sides. Many persons would come and visit Babaji Maharaja, leaving donations. I would place that money in a water pot for safe keeping. Every fifteen days to one month I would remove the money and count it. Normally the funds would be expended each month. Being fearful I would sometimes hide the money outside the premises. I considered that I would place 15 rupees aside for any emergency which might arise in the future. After doing so Babaji Maharaja called me and in a deep voice shouted, "Where did you place that 15 rupees?"

He had never paid any attention to me as his eyelids extended well beyond his lower eyebrow as if they were hanging loosely. Whenever he wanted to see he would lift his long eyelids above his eyes. Srila Babaji Maharaja also never accounted for what was spent or given. In whatever way he wanted the money was spent. Once he said, "Go and buy *rasogullas*! I'm going to feed all the cows in the holy *dhama*. " Two hundred rupees were taken and *rasogullas* were distributed by him to all the cows. But Babaji Maharaja never wanted to spend anything on the imposter Vaisnavas. He would say, "Don't let them come here. "

"Srila Babaji Maharaja would often sit and accept prasadam from a large plate. Once five puppies took birth outside his *bhajana-kuthir*. At *prasadam* time the puppies would appear from four sides and surround his place. As they began to eat he would feel to make sure they were all present. Once, seeing this, I became disturbed and began placing them outside. Srila Babaji Maharaja interrupted me in his deep voice. 'Bring them back in or I will not eat. ' What could I do? I again brought the puppies inside and placed them around his plate. Satisfied, he said, 'The dogs of the *dhama*. '

"Many persons would come desiring his brahmin underwear. There was one personality by the name of Gaura Hari dasa who was determined to secure his underwear. But Srila Babaji Maharaja would never give any personal items away. For

a period of three days Gaura Hari remained outside the *bhajana- kutir* of Babaji Maharaja. Finally, Jagannatha das Babaji gave me permission to give him his *kaupina*.

"Srila Jagannatha das Babaji would always become angry when he would see someone acting independently. Once one *kirtana* party approached Babaji Maharaja from a distance chanting unbonafide *mantras*. Srila Babaji Maharaja hearing them became very angry and said, 'Drive them all away from here. Don't let them come!'

"I've never seen such an effulgent personality as Babaji Maharaja. A few days before his disappearance he told me, 'Oh Bihari, it's not necessary to inconvenience yourself to maintain your stomach. You don't have to separately endeavor for this. Don't ever mix with those false monkey-like renunciates. ' He didn't desire to remain any longer. If I could give up my body thinking of him then I could obtain real happiness. "

\* \* \* \* \*

Padmasambhava Prabhu subscribes to *Newsweek* magazine. On page 60 of the November 10 issue is an article about the hugely successful American pop singer Britney Spears. She is a good-looking girl of 21 years, but unfortunately behind the pretty face there is not much brain. Her new album is called "In the Zone. " *Newsweek* reports that it is heavily influenced by Indian music. The *Newsweek* reporter asked Britney why.

"I've been into a lot of Indian spiritual religions," she answered.

The reporter asked if one of these religions is Hinduism.

"What's that? Is that like kabbalah?"

*Katikati, New Zealand*  
*15 November 2003*

I am now staying at a house on a hill above the town of Katikati, which is three hours by car south of Auckland. Katikati is near the port city of Tauranga, on the Pacific seacoast. There is no central ISKCON temple here; but there is a preaching center in Tauranga, and a good number of devotee families reside in this area.

My godbrother Atmananda Prabhu drove me down from Auckland, and he continues to drive me around Katikati. Atmananda is going to university in Auckland but he keeps his home on this same hilltop where I am staying.

The house in which I live is owned by Trivikrama das, a disciple of HH Prabhavisnu Maharaja. This is a comfortable, roomy place that Trivikrama built himself over a period of seven years. It is made from mud bricks that have a 10 percent cement content. From touch, these bricks have a heavy solid feel, like stone blocks, not cement. The house has its own water source and the electricity comes from a nearby

waterfall, where Trivikrama installed a generator. I told him, "When the world ends you'll be the last to know."

The devotees took me to a hot pool spa today. We soaked in the mineral water for nearly 2 hours. It was very relaxing! This evening I am giving a lecture at the home of Jayatirtha Caran Prabhu, my old friend who gives me valuable advice about *puja*. I stopped in his home for lunch yesterday when I arrived in Katikati from Auckland. He daily worships 50 *silas* on his altar!

Tomorrow (Sunday) I give the feast lecture at the Tauranga preaching center. Today I took lunch prasadam at the home of the family that operates this center. Caitanya Nitai and Mother Goloka Prema are *grhastha* disciples of HH Giriraja Swami; their daughter is Citralekha dasi. Citralekha had an unfortunate accident when she was a little girl. She broke her neck. Since then she has been confined to a wheelchair. Now, as a young woman, she cannot walk and has limited use of her hands and arms. But she goes out on the street in Tauranga in her wheelchair and distributes books and preaches. Twice a weeks she gives lecture at the preaching center. All the devotees here respect her as a saintly person. She believes that Lord Krsna arranged her to have that accident so that she would become a serious devotee, and not be swept away by the *maya* that attacks young people when they reach adolescence.

The weather in New Zealand is ever-changing at this time of year. It is not yet summer; this country lies in the southern hemisphere, beneath the equator, so its seasons are opposite those of the northern half of the planet. When it is winter in Europe it is summer in New Zealand and Australia. For many of the days that I have been here (like today!) it's been cool and cloudy; often it rains. At least it is not really *cold*, but it is not warm either.

From the *Katha Upanisad*

That by which one perceives both  
the states of sleep and of being awake;  
Knowing that it is the immense, all-pervading Self,  
a wise man does not grieve.

He who was born before heat,  
who before the waters was born,  
who has seen through living beings--  
Entering the cave of the heart,  
one sees Him abiding there.

A person the size of a thumb  
resides within the body;  
The Lord of what was and what will be--  
from him He does not hide Himself.

The person the size of a thumb  
is like a fire free of smoke;  
The Lord of what was and what will be;  
the same today and tomorrow.

Wellington, New Zealand  
17 November 2003

At 7:00 this morning I flew in a cramped two-propellor airplane from Tauranga to Wellington, a city situated on the southern end of New Zealand's North Island. (The main land mass of this country consists of two long islands that lie end to end, separated by a strait; the cities I have visited so far are located on the North Island, but in a few days I shall fly down to Christchurch, the biggest city on the South Island.) The weather in Wellington is colder, clouder and rainier than any place I have seen in this country. In these travels I have been steadily moving south. Thus it is getting colder, because I am coming closer to the South Pole. If you look on a globe-map of the world you'll see that New Zealand is not so far away from Antarctica. I expect in Christchurch the weather will be even worse than here.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yesterday I gave a Sunday feast program at the Tauranga preaching center, which is called "Gauranga." If you know the Amsterdam temple, then you can imagine this Tauranga center, which is a similar sort of storefront and very near the same size. But the Tauranga center doesn't have an upstairs floor like ISKCON Amsterdam. "Gauranga" in Tauranga is newly opened and most people in the area still don't know about it, but yet there was a nice amount of guests who all chanted and danced at the end.

My dear friend Jaya Tirtha Caran Prabhu, who lives in Katikati near Tauranga, gave me a Saligram *shila*. Now I have six Saligrams plus one Govardhana *sila*. Others have offered to give me *silas* but I refused, considering that as a traveling *sannyasi* I have quite enough. But Jaya Tirtha Caran told me that this particular *sila*, a small Ananta-sesa, *spoke to him* to say He wanted to go with me. So how could I refuse? Besides, I am already worshiping a Laksmi-Sesasayi *sila*, who is Laksmi, Narayana and Ananta-sesa combined. The new little Ananta fits nicely together with Laksmi-Sesasayi on Their Kurma-*asana*; I don't have to increase my present worship because I've already been worshiping Ananta.

This *sila* is very special because He comes from Damodara Kund, a pond near the border of Nepal and Tibet. Damodara Kund is the source of all the *silas* in the Gandaki River. When the Himalayan mountain ice melts in the spring, floodwaters rush from Damodara Kund into the Gandaki, pushing thousands of new *silas* into the river.

It is very difficult to visit Damodara Kund. When devotees go to Nepal to find Saligram *silas* they look for them in the Gandaki, which flows south through the Nepali Himalayas into India where it joins the Ganga. Along the Gandaki are resthouses where one can stay overnight. But to reach Damodara Kund you have to walk for four days through total wilderness...no resthouses, no villages, just sand and bare rocks with jagged mountains all around. The region is restricted also, so one has to get special permission from the Nepali government to go there. That permission involves paying a thousand US dollars for a "trekking fee."

\* \* \* \* \*

Anuraga-valli

## The Vine of Love

*deharbudani bhagavan yugapat prayaccha  
vaktrabudani ca pnah pratideham eva  
jihvarbudani krpaya prativaktram eva  
nrtyantu tesu tava matha gunarbudani*

Please give me millions of bodies and millions of mouths in each body. By your mercy place millions of tongues in each mouth. O Lord, may Your millions of transcendental qualities dance on those tongues.

*kim atmana yatra na deha-kotyō  
dehena kim yatra na vaktra-kotyāh  
vaktrena kim yatra na koti-jihvah  
kim jihvaya yatra na nama-kotyāh*

What is the use of a soul that does not have millions of bodies? What is the use of a body that does not have millions of mouths? What is the use of a mouth that does not have millions of tongues? What is the use of a tongue that does not chant Your millions of names?

*atmastu nityam sata-deha-vartī  
dehas tu nathastu sahasra-vaktrah  
vaktram sada rajatu lakṣa-jihvam  
grnatu jihva tava nama-kotim*

O Lord, may I perpetually have hundreds of bodies and may each body have thousands of mouths. May each mouth have millions of tongues, and may each tongue chant millions of Your Holy Names.

*yada tada madhava yatra yatra  
gayanti ye ye tava nama-lilah  
tatraiva karnayuta-dharyamanas  
tas te sudha nityam aham dhayani*

O Madhava, whenever, wherever, or whoever chants Your names and pastimes, there may I with millions of ears eternally drink Your nectar.

*karnayutasyaiva bhavantu lakṣa-  
kotyo rasajna bhagavams tadaiva  
yenaiva lilah srnavani nityam  
tenaiva gayani tatah sukham me*

May I have millions of ears and millions upon millions of tongues. Then, O Lord, I will eternally and happily hear and chant Your pastimes.

*karnayutasyeksana-kotir asya  
krt-kotir asya rasanarbudam syat  
srutvaiva drstva tava rupa-sindhūm  
alingya madhuryam aho dhayani*

May I have millions of ears, millions of eyes, millions of hearts and minds, and millions of tongues. Hearing about, seeing, and embracing the ocean of Your handsomeness, I will drink its sweetness.

*netrarbudasyaiva bhavantu karna-  
nasa-rasajna hrdayarbudam va  
saundarya-sausvarya-sugandha-pura-  
madhurya-samslesa-rasanubhutyai*

May I have millions of eyes, ears, noses, tongues and chests, so that I may continually taste the nectar of Your handsomeness, Your sweet sounds, sweet fragrance, and Your embrace.

*tvat-parsva-gatyai pada-kotir astu  
sevam vidhatum mama hasta-kotih  
tam siksitum syad api buddhi-kotir  
etan varan me bhagavan prayaccha*

May I have millions of feet to go to Your side. May I have millions of hands to serve You. May I have millions of intelligences to teach that service. O Lord, please grant me these boons.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is some mode of goodness fun waiting for you at this website:

<http://www.peta.org/feat/meatrix/>

*Wellington, New Zealand  
18 November 2003*

Two Letters to In2-MeC

(1)

All glories to Srila Prabhupada! PAMHO-- this is Hasygrami Das electronically accessing you. A very warm remembrance of VJ from you. Thanks so much. I love travelling to those times and places on the vehicle of our fellow devotees memories, let us all write those pastimes for the benefit of each other.

A bunch of stuff: I probabally told you my first VJ dream at some time in the past, this came to me shortly after the devotees returned from India without Maharaja and I and lots of us were in some anxiety/dislocation

---Where's Visnu Jana? What? He dissappeared from Mayapura? We're never gonna see him again?.....

Anyway, I dreamed I saw him (at some undefined location it seemed to be a temple in outer space or at least not any temp i had been to) and he was wearing very

unusual garments--can't describe but they were shiny and bright like a costume/uniform--he then spoke to me these two sentences: You should know that service to Radha and Damodara is eternal. Therefore there is never a time when I am not serving Radha and Damodara. I remember that very clearly, those words.

Now, there have been other dreams, with Srla Prabhupada and with VJ in all kinds of other circumstances, some glorious, some cruddy, but that one was what I see as my "farewell, prabhu". I am quite sure we will be together again in the purified future, all of us actually, with Srla Prabhupada..I don't see how it could be otherwise..

(2)

I must commend you for Aug. 3rd writing; it touches, exactly the point. That there is no perfection(s), to be attained in and I quote: "the politics of mind-numbing committee meetings, monotonous Internet discussions, dry, interminable position papers, or bombastic proclamation-declarations."; but rather perfection is found in love of Krsna. And said love is attained, in this age of Kali, only by the ahaituki-apratihata performance of Harinam Sankirtan. ALL difficulties, individually and collectively (Iskcon), have arisen from the abandonment of such and can be corrected by the re-adoption of said.

Thanking you for your service, truthfulness, honesty and frankness; and hoping this finds you and yours well.

Radha-Govinda dasa

*Wellington, New Zealand  
19 November 2003*

### ***Sri Krishna Upanisad***

#### Introduction

Seeing Lord Mahavisnu-Ramacandra, whose every limb was very handsome, some sages living in the forest became filled with wonder. To Him they said, "Alas, we cannot understand Your incarnations. We will simply embrace You." Then Lord Ramacandra said to them, "In another birth, when I become Krishna, you will become gopis and then you will embrace Me. Others will incarnate as gopas and you will be their wives."

#### Chapter One

1 (Then Siva and the demigods said), 'We will also accept those forms. Again and again You will touch us and we will touch You.'

2 Hearing these words of Siva and the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead said, "I will touch your limbs. I will do what you have said."

3 All the demigods became happy. "Now our lives are successful," they said. One of them became blissful Nanda and another became his wife Yasoda, who was liberated even while staying in the world.

4-5 The illusory potency Maya is said to have three features: goodness, passion, and ignorance. The mode of goodness is said to be manifested in the devotee Siva, the mode of passion in Brahma, and the mode of ignorance in the demons. In this way Maya is said to have three features. Her devotees chant her names Maya, Ajaya and Vaisnavi. She was born before Lord Krishna.

6 Devaki, who is glorified by the Vedas, had the Supreme Personality of Godhead as her son. Vasudeva, who was learned in all the Vedas, was the father of Krishna and Balarama.

7 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, whom the (sages and demigods) glorify without end, descended to the earth. In the forest of Vrndavana He enjoyed pastimes with the saintly gopas and gopis.

8 The personified Vedas became gopis and cows, Brahma became Lord Krishna's stick, Lord Siva became Lord Krishna's flute, and Indra became Lord Krishna's buffalo-horn bugle. Someone became the demon Aghasura.

9 The forest of the spiritual world became Gokula. Personified austerities became the trees there. Greed, anger, and other vices became demons. The time of Kali disappeared.

10 The Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared in His original form as a cowherd boy. Cheated and bewildered by His illusory potency, the world could not understand His true identity.

11 Even all the demigods cannot defeat the Lord's Maya potency. By the Lord's Yogamaya potency Brahma became a stick and Siva became a flute. How did the Lord's Maya potency manifest the entire universe?

12 Knowledge is the strength of the demigods. The Lord's Maya potency steals away that knowledge in a single moment. Lord Sesanaga appeared in His original form as Lord Balarama. The eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared in His original form as Lord Krishna.

13 The personified Vedas and personified Upanisads became 16 108 women whose forms were perfectly spiritual.

14 Personified hatred became the wrestler Canura. Personified envy became Mustika. Personified arrogance became Kuvalayapida. Personified pride became the demonic bird Baka.

15 Personified mercy became Mother Rohini. The earth goddess became Satyabhama. Personified disease became Aghasura. Personified quarrel became King Kamsa.

16-17 Personified peacefulness became the Lord's friend Sudama. Personified truthfulness became Akrura. Personified self-control became Uddhava. Lord Visnu Himself became Krishna's conch shell, which made a roar like thunder and which, also born from the milk-ocean, was the goddess of fortune's kinsman. Breaking a pot to steal yoghurt, Lord Krishna created an ocean of milk.

18 In this way the Lord becomes a child and enjoys pastimes as He had before in the great ocean (of milk). Lord Krishna appeared to remove His enemies and protect (His devotees).

19 To show mercy to all living entities, Lord Krishna fathered a son, religion, who protects all. Lord Krishna also created His cakra, which is made of spirit.

20 Vayu became the time of Lord Krishna's birth. Yamaraja became Lord Krishna's camara. Lord Siva became Lord Krishna's glittering sword.

21 Kasyapa became the grinding mortar and Mother Aditi became the rope. The siddhi and the bindu on the head of all became Lord Krishna's cakra and conch shell.

22 The wise bow down before all the forms the sages say to be incarnations of Lord Krishna. Of this there is no doubt.

23 Time became Lord Krishna's club, the killer of all enemies. The Lord's yogamaya potency became His Sarnga bow. The autumn season became His delicious meals.

24 In His hand Lord Krishna playfully holds the lotus root that is the seed of the material universes. Garuda became a great banyan tree (in Vrndavana). Narada Muni became Sudama.

25 Personified devotional service became the gopi Vrnda. The activities of devotional service became the wisdom that enlightens all living beings. The all-powerful Supreme Lord is not different from these. Neither is He exactly the same as them either.

26 The Lord brought to the earth the entire spiritual world along with its inhabitants

## Chapter Two

1 From Lord Vasudeva was manifested Lord Sesa, who was also named Sankarsana, and who was the father of all living entities. He desired, "I shall create children."

2 From Him was born the person named Pradyumna. From Pradyumna was born Aniruddha, who had the names Ahankara and Hiranyagarbha. From Pradyumna were born the ten Prajapatis, beginning with Marici and including Sthanu, Daksa, Kardama, Priyavrata, Uttanapada, and Vayu. In this way from Lord Sesa all living beings were born and into Sesa they enter (at the time of cosmic devastation).

3 Lord Sesa fathered all living beings. He protects them. He created grammar, astrology, and the other sciences. He is worshipped by the sages that yearn for liberation. He holds the entire universe on His head. The sages know His glories. The sages glorify Him with prayers. With His many heads He eclipses Mount Meru's thousand peaks. He created the ether and false ego.

4 Lord Sesa is the Personality of Godhead. Yuga after yuga He appears in many forms. He took birth as Laksmana, the son of Sumitra and descendent of King Ikshvaku. Learned in the science of archery and weapons, He killed all the demons and protected varnasrama-dharma.

5 Lord Sesa is the Personality of Godhead. At the time of the yuga-sandhya (junction of the yugas) He appeared as Lord Balarama, the son of Vasudeva and Rohini. He was splendid like an autumn cloud. Expert in fighting with a club and other weapons, and yearning to kill the hosts of demon kings, he uprooted the earth's burden.

6 In the fourth yuga the Supreme Personality of Godhead takes birth in a brahmana family. Desiring to teach the message of all the Upanisads, preach the truths of the dharma-sastras, and deliver all the people, He preaches all the truths of vaisnava-dharma and He also uproots all the atheists and offenders.

7 He is the Supersoul present in everyone's heart. He is the object of meditation for they who yearn after liberation. He is the giver of liberation. By meditating on Him one becomes free from all sins. By chanting His holy names one attains liberation.

8 One who meditates on Him during the day becomes free from the sins of the previous night. One who meditates on Him at night become free from the sins of the previous day. This is the secret of the Vedas. This is the secret of the Upanisads. By meditating on Him one attains the fruits of all seasons, one attains peace, one attains a pure heart, one attains the result of all pilgrimages. He who knows this becomes free from again entering a material body. Thus the Upanisad.

*Wellington, New Zealand  
20 November 2003*

### ***Bhagavad-Gita in Essence***

Years ago I put together a seminar entitled "*Bhagavad-gita in Essence*." I believe I taught this only twice, in Radhadesh, Belgium, and in Perth, Australia in the early to mid-1990's. Just yesterday I found the files for the course on my hard disk and became absorbed in reading through them. The research I'd done to construct these course files is quite interesting. So I'm publishing the files here as a series.

Today we'll see 10 verses that, for reasons to be revealed in coming days, constitute the essence of the entire *Bhagavad-gita*. Srila Prabhupada's purports to these verses show us that Lord Krsna's confidential intention for speaking the *Gita* is encapsulated as follows:

*Christchurch, New Zealand*  
*21 November 2003*

Yesterday in the early afternoon I arrived by air in Christchurch from Wellington. Surprisingly, the weather here is wonderful: blue sky, warm, birds singing sweetly. New Zealanders call Christchurch "the garden city." The streets are lined by trees, many of which are bearing flowers that are white, blue, yellow and purple. Christchurch has many stately churches, buildings and homes made of stone brick, much like old English structures. HH Prahladananda Maharaja is here; he stays til Saturday. I stay til Monday the 24th, when I fly back to Auckland.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Christchurch, New Zealand*  
*22 November 2003*

A Letter to In2-MeC

Hare Krsna Maharaj,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Thank you very much for your enlivening diary.its really wonderful...the pastimes....the philosophy....the feeling that one is going closer to the lotus feet of SRI SRI RADHIKAMADHAVA is really .....

Maharaj, i had a question regarding your articles on Dreams..... i had read that SP said that dreams are not worth thinking if its not of Krsna's or Spiritual masters(paraphased not as it is).

After the Jan issue on HH Vishnujana Maharaj you never came up with your ecstatic pastimes with him.Actually after i read RADHADAMODAR VILASA i was a bit fascinated by his personality...but unfortunately i was able to get only the first volume. Can you tell me how he disappeared from this mortal world to join SP in the loving pastimes of SRI SRI RADHADAMODRA.

Thank you very much.  
your most insignificant servant,

vikram pandit  
ISKCON YOUTH FORUM ,PUNE.

Dear Vikrama Pandit Prabhu,

Please accept my respects. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Hare Krsna! Your appreciation of In2-MeC is most welcome. Thank you.

Regarding the article on dreams, that is a summary of the *Agni Purana's* interpretation of dreams, omens and signs. I do not know if Srila Prabhupada made this statement that you were told. But this I do know--that in Srila Prabhupada's last days, when his disciples were trying to find an ideal medicine to strengthen his waning health, His Divine Grace had a dream of an Ayurvedic *kaviraja* who wore Sri Vaisnava *tilaka*. It soon turned out that the devotees made contact with just such a *kaviraja* in Calcutta, a *pakka brahmana* who always kept the large South Indian style of *tilak* on his forehead. The devotees quickly brought him to Vrndavana to treat Srila Prabhupada. In any case, Srila Prabhupada soon departed this world back to Godhead. But in this wonderful manner, that Vaisnava *kaviraja* was present to assist His Divine Grace in his final pastimes. So, in reference to the point you made in your letter, this *kaviraja* was not on the level of Krsna or the spiritual master, but still Srila Prabhupada saw him in his dream, and his coming to see Srila Prabhupada was somehow auspicious...even though by his medicine he could not keep His Divine Grace in this world longer.

Regarding Visnujana Maharaja's disappearance, I did not write about that because I do not know what happened. Years ago I asked HH Tamal Krsna Maharaja if he had any idea of Visnujana Maharaja's fate. He told me quite clearly that he did not. There is a story widely believed in ISKCON that Visnujana Maharaja gave up his body at Allahabad by drowning himself in the Triveni. I think HG Vayasaki Prabhu presents this account in the end of his *Radha-Damodara Vilasa*. But HH Tamal Krsna Maharaja told me personally that he thoroughly investigated the case for a long time and could not uncover any proof in support of the Triveni scenario. All that I know is, Visnujana Maharaja disappeared from this world. Despite the ISKCON legend, how he really disappeared seems to be a pure mystery.

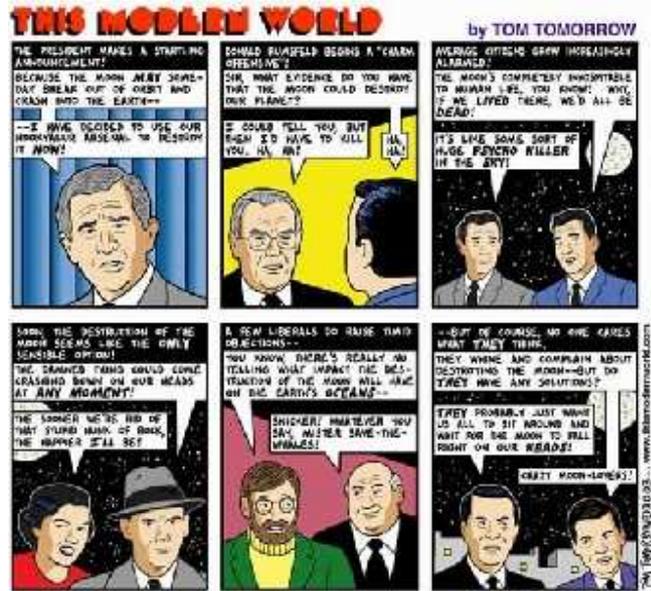
Hoping this finds you well,

Suhotra Swami

*Christchurch, New Zealand*  
*23 November 2003*

ISKCON Christchurch is a nice temple. The Deities (Sri-Sri Nitai-Gaurasundara) are nice, the devotees are nice, and the building that houses Their Lordships and Their servants is nice. But the weather is no longer so nice. It's getting cold and dreary.

I've been a bit ill since Wellington, where it was very cold. My disciple Madhu Pandit Prabhu, bless him, is providing me with natural medicine and fruit juices. So far my activities haven't been too disturbed by the illness; I've been giving morning and evening classes.



Yesterday HH Prahlanananda Maharaja gave the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* class before he departed Christchurch. He mentioned how people worship famous human beings as God, and he gave the example of the pop star Michael Jackson. But now to the disappointment of his fans, Jackson is in trouble; a couple of days ago he was arrested. Apparently he is accused of child molestation. Apart from that, he is in trouble from the time factor, as you can see by going here:

[www.doneanddusted.co.uk/nick/Movie2.html](http://www.doneanddusted.co.uk/nick/Movie2.html)

Michael Jackson is God (not!).

Christchurch, New Zealand  
24 November 2003

Today I am flying back to Auckland, and, as before, I'll be staying in the home of Padmasambhava Prabhu.



\* \* \* \* \*

Christchurch, New Zealand  
26 November 2003

Today I was supposed be driven by Padmasambhava Prabhu to HH Mukunda Gosvami's place, which is about an hour and a half north of Auckland by auto. But yesterday Maharaja phoned to say he had taken ill. He has a problem with his heart. So instead, today Padma took me about an hour south of Auckland to Helensville, where we visited a hot pool. Then we went to disciple Rohita das' house and took *prasada*. After that we visited another disciple, Indrakarma das, who had an auto accident yesterday morning. Thus he was unable to attend the Vyasa Puja ceremony. He cracked his breastbone and has to stay in bed for 10 days. His car was wrecked beyond repair, but the insurance will pay for it. The accident was not Indrakarma's fault. It was caused by a fellow who tried to do an illegal turn. The really good thing is that although Indrakarma had his two-year-old son, Radhesyama, with him, the boy was by Krsna's grace unhurt.

**THIS MODERN WORLD** by TOM TOMORROW



HH Mukunda Maharaja, one of the very first of Srila Prabhupada's disciples, recently became a citizen of New Zealand. Having not enough *sukrti* to get his *darsana*, I can't give more news about him.

Tomorrow at 7:00 PM I begin a new seminar, this one on the *Kalisantarana Upanisad*.

\* \* \* \* \*

Auckland, New Zealand  
27 November 2003

>Dear Maharaj,

>Please accept my respects.  
>All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

>I recently came across some issues, whilst giving a KC presentation to the Hindu Society at the University of London (Royal Holloway). I was asked about the ethical standing of the asvamedha yagna. To my limited knowledge I simply replied that the animal was sacrificed for the elevation of its position to a gandharva.

>Maharaj, please could you provide me with a more complete response to this question? A brief background of the yagna would be great.

Regarding Asvamedha-yajna, Vedic kings used to conduct this ritualistic ceremony in order to get absolved of all sins. They fixed a victory flag upon the head of a horse and sent it out to roam about freely. If anybody caught the horse and tethered it, the king marched with his army to defeat that challenger in battle and bring back the horse. If the king was victorious then the horse was sacrificed. If a king could do a hundred such yajnas he could become Indra in the next life.

Regarding the ethics of that sacrifice, some salient points are: it was arranged for by kings within narrow circumstances, so obviously the occasion of such a sacrifice was rare (think how many horses are killed nowadays in slaughterhouses for no reason other than to provide meat, glue, leather and so on); the soul of the sacrificed horse was promoted to heaven; the brahmanas of those times demonstrated to the audience of the sacrifice their power over the destiny of that soul by sometimes bringing, by mantra, the dead horse back to life in a rejuvenated body; the asvamedha-yajna is forbidden in Kali-yuga because there are no such brahmanas to perform it.

>Also, I came across the issue of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura having rejected his diksha guru for some reason; my apologies in providing such a speculative query but i hope that you could clarify this apparent break in lineage challenge that I was presented with. I would also appreciate if you could clarify other controversies such as Bhaktivinoda Thakura apparently eating fish (again - not sure on the validity of this one as i heard some person speaking it).

**THIS MODERN WORLD** by TOM TOMORROW



Either you misheard that person or that person was speaking mistakenly. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura did not reject his initiating spiritual master, Vipina Bihari Gosvami. Rather, his son, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, did not show much respect to V.P.G. as he was a jata-gosai, a caste Gosvami in householder life. In any case, the Gaudiya Vaisnava sampradaya does not run so much on the diksa line of succession as it does on siksa (instruction). Taking a look at the list of spiritual masters in the disciplic succession given by Srila Prabhupada in his Bhagavad-gita, we find that some were not initiated by the one before. Sripada Madhvacarya, for example, was not initiated by Srila Vyasadeva.

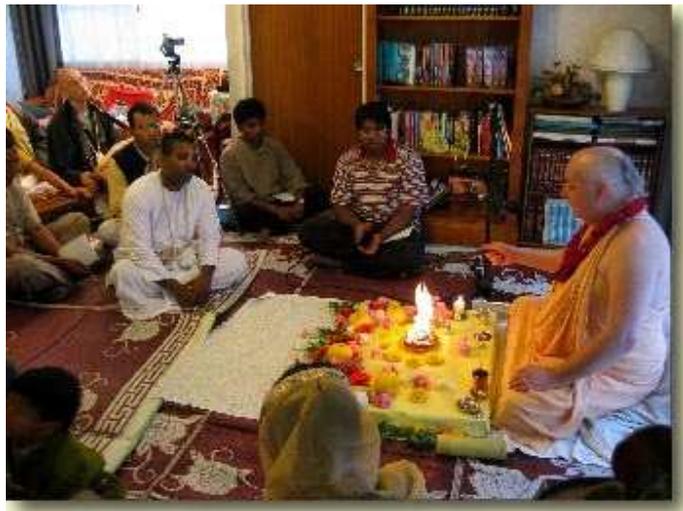
Hoping this meets you well,

dasanudasa Suhotra Swami

\* \* \* \* \*

*Auckland, New Zealand  
28 November 2003*

Yesterday I began the seminar on *Kalisantarana Upanisad* with a *yajna*. Since the Upanisad is composition of Vedic *mantras*, it is appropriate that the attendees of the seminar chant it before the Lord in the form of the sacrificial fire. I will end the seminar with another *yajna*.



Auckland, New Zealand  
29 November 2003

Rather busy today. Went with Padmasambhava and two of his sons to Helensville; visited hot pool, then Rohita and wife, then to pick up a trunkful of second-hand greenhouse glass for Padmaji's garden. In the evening I did a *nama-hatta* program. Kalasamvara Prabhu, the temple president of ISKCON Auckland, was present. Tomorrow I am to give the Sunday feast program in the temple. I understand HH Devamrta Maharaja is in Auckland, but I haven't met him yet.



Auckland, New Zealand  
30 November 2003

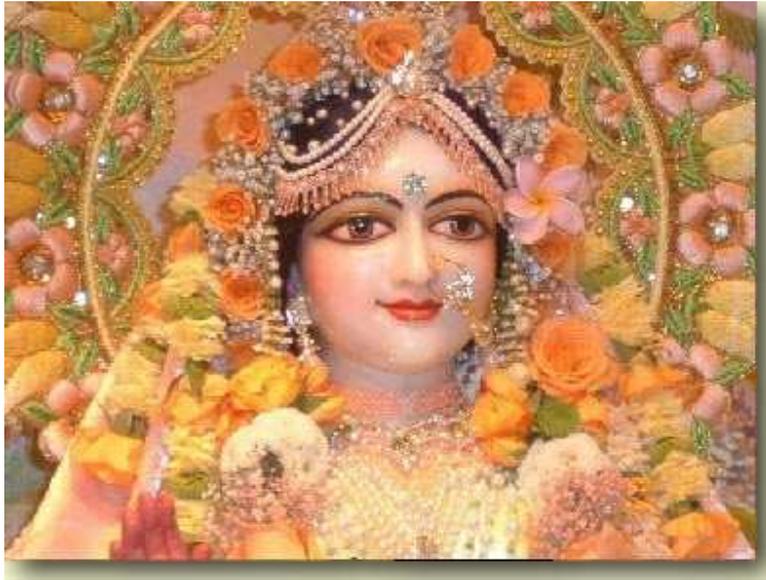
ORANGE CITY, Fla. - A mob of shoppers rushing for a sale on DVD players trampled the first woman in line and knocked her unconscious as they scrambled for the shelves at a Wal-Mart Supercenter.

Patricia VanLester had her eye on a \$29 DVD player, but when the siren blared at 6 a.m. Friday announcing the start to the post-Thanksgiving sale, the 41-year-old was knocked to the ground by the frenzy of shoppers behind her.

"She got pushed down, and they walked over her like a herd of elephants," said VanLester's sister, Linda Ellzey. "I told them, 'Stop stepping on my sister! She's on the ground!'"

Ellzey said some shoppers tried to help VanLester, and one employee helped Ellzey reach her sister, but most people just continued their rush for deals.





Auckland, New Zealand  
2 December 2003

### **What is Yogamaya?**

His wonderful creative power, *yogamaya*, cannot be easily understood even by the masters of *yoga*. (SB 3. 16. 37)

My dear Lord, You alone create the universes. O Personality of Godhead, desiring to create these universes, You create them, maintain them and again wind them up by Your own energies, which are under the control of Your second energy, called *yogamaya*, just as a spider creates a cobweb by its own energy and again winds it up. (SB 3. 21. 19)

Sri Devahuti said: My dear husband, O best of *brahmanas*, I know that you have achieved perfection and are the master of all the infallible mystic powers because you are under the protection of *yogamaya*, the transcendental nature. (SB 3. 23. 10)

In this verse the word *mayaya* means "by your causeless mercy." The Mayavadi philosophers explain the word *maya* as meaning "illusion" or "falseness." However, there is another meaning of *maya*--that is, "causeless mercy." There are two kinds of *maya*--*yogamaya* and *mahamaya*. *Mahamaya* is an expansion of *yogamaya*, and both these *mayas* are different expressions of the Lord's internal potencies. As stated in *Bhagavad-gita*, the Lord appears through His internal potencies (*atma-mayaya*). (SB 4. 16. 2p)

The stage of self-realization is called *yoga-nidra*. All material activities appear to be a dream when one is spiritually awakened. Thus *yoga-nidra* may be explained to be *Yogamaya*. (SB 10. 2. 15p)

The potency of the Lord, known as *visnu-maya*, who is as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will also appear with Lord Krishna. This potency, acting in different capacities, captivates all the worlds, both material and spiritual. At the request of her master, she will appear with her different potencies in order to execute the work of the Lord. (SB 10. 1. 25)

*Yoga-nidra* (divine sleep) is spoken of as ecstatic trance which is of the nature of the bliss of the true subjective personality. The above- mentioned Ramadevi is *yoga-nidra* in the form of *Yogamaya*. (BS 12p)

All these arts manifesting their own eternal forms are ever visible in the region of Goloka as the ingredients of *rasa*; and, in the mundane sphere, they have been unstintedly exhibited in the pastimes of Vraja by the spiritual (*cit*) potency. *Yogamaya*. So Sri Rupa says, *sadanantaih. . . santi tah*, ie. , Krishna is ever manifest in His beauty with His infinite pastimes in Goloka. Sometimes the variant manifestation of those pastimes becomes visible on the mundane plane. Sri Hari, the Supreme Lord, also manifests His pastimes of birth, etc. , accompanied by all His paraphernalia. The divine sportive potency fills the hearts of His paraphernalia with appropriate spiritual sentiments in conformity with the will of Krishna. Those pastimes that manifest themselves on the mundane plane, are His visible pastimes. All those very pastimes exist in their nonvisible form in Goloka beyond the ken of mundane knowledge. In His visible pastimes Krishna sojourns in Gokula, Mathura and Dvaraka. Those pastimes that are nonvisible in those three places, are visible in their spiritual sites of Vrindavana. From the conclusions just stated it is clear that there is no distinction between the visible and nonvisible pastimes. The apostle Jiva Gosvami in his commentary on this *sloka* as well as in the gloss of *Ujjvala-nilamani* and in *Krsna-sandarbha* remarks that "the visible pastimes of Krishna are the creation of His *cit* (spiritual) potency. (BS 37p)

Those sixty-four arts that have been enumerated above, do in reality exist unstintedly only in Goloka. Unwholesomeness, insignificance, grossness are found in those arts in accordance with the degree of self-realization on the part of aspirants after the knowledge of the Absolute. According to Srila Rupa and Srila Sanatana all those pastimes, that have been visible in Gokula, exist in all purity and free from all tinge of limitation in Goloka. So transcendental autocratic paramourship also exists in Goloka in inconceivable purity. Judged by the same standard and reasoning, all manifestations by the *cit* potency, *Yogamaya*, are pure. So, as the above paramourship is the creation of *Yogamaya*, it is necessarily free from all contamination, and appertains to the absolute reality. (BS 37p)

In the spiritual world, there is another energy, the superior spiritual energy, or internal energy, which acts under the direction of *yogamaya*. *Yogamaya* is the internal potency of the Supreme Lord; she also works under the Lord's direction, but she works in the spiritual world. When the living entity puts himself under the direction of *yogamaya* instead of *mahamaya*, he gradually becomes a devotee of Krishna. Yet those who are after material opulence and material happiness place themselves under the care of the material energy, *mahamaya*, or under the care of material demigods like Lord Siva and others. In *Srimad Bha&317;gavatam* it is found that when the gopis of Vrindavana desired Krishna as their husband, they prayed to the spiritual energy, *yogamaya*, for the fulfillment of their desire. In the *Sapta-sati* it is found that King Suratha and a merchant named Samadhi worshiped *mahamaya*

for material opulence. Thus one should not mistakenly equalize *yogamaya* and *mahamaya*. (TLC, "The Transcendental Pastimes of Radha and Krsna")

The Lord sometimes took the part of goddess Durga, Lakshmi [the goddess of fortune] or the chief potency, *Yogamaya*. Sitting on a cot, He delivered love of Godhead to all the devotees present. (Cc *Adi* 17. 242)

*Yogamaya* is the spiritual or internal energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those who are interested in being promoted to the spiritual world and engaging in the service of the Lord attain spiritual perfection under the control of *yogamaya*. (Cc *Mad* 8. 90p)

Subhadra is *yogamaya*. The spiritual energy is called *yogamaya*. And she has 16 different expansions. Out of these 16 expansions, Subhadra is one. The *mahamaya* of the material energy is also expansion of the energy of *yogamaya*; and both *yogamaya* and *mahamaya* are equally important to Krishna as much as any government department is equally important for functioning of the government. The police department may be horrible for the criminals, but to the government it is a department as good as university department. Similarly, *mahamaya* is horrible to the conditioned soul, but to the liberated soul, there is no fear of *mahamaya*, because he is protected by *yogamaya*. It is stated in the *Bhagavad-gita* when Krishna said the following: "I am not visible to everyone on account of being curtained by *yogamaya*." So when a conditioned soul surrenders unto Krishna, the *yogamaya* winds up the curtain and Krishna is visible to the devotee. (Letter to Madhusudan, 29 July 1968)

Regarding your questions:

Your first question, "Are great sages put under *yogamaya* or *maya*? Also are all the eternally liberated souls under *yogamaya*?"

*Yogamaya* means the mercy of the Supreme Lord which connects a devotee in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, and *mahamaya* means the external potency of the Lord which puts a conditioned soul into illusion that he will be happy by material adjustment. So great sages who are impersonalists are also under the spell of *mahamaya*, because a conditioned soul in the material world wants to improve his material position as exalted as possible, and the concept of becoming one with the Supreme Lord is the greatest illusion for them. Because it is a fact that nobody can be equal or greater than the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such, anyone desiring to become one with the Supreme means that he is still in the trap of *maya*. On the other hand, a humble devotee who may not be a great sage, but simply by his implicit acceptance of the Lotus Feet of the Lord as the goal of his life means that he is under the protection of *yogamaya*. I think this will clear the idea. (Letter to Aniruddha, 14 November 1968)

### **Yogamaya and Mahamaya are one and different**

The energy of the Lord called *avidya* is the bewildering fact or of the conditioned souls. The material nature is called *avidya*, or ignorance, but to the devotees of the Lord engaged in pure devotional service, this energy becomes *vidya*, or pure knowledge. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita*. The energy of the Lord transforms from *mahamaya* to *yogamaya* and appears to pure devotees in her real feature. (SB 3. 10. 17p)

The Supreme Lord has two energies, material and spiritual. The living entities are marginal energy. As marginal energy, a person may be under the control of the material energy or the spiritual energy (*yogamaya*). (SB 3. 23. 10p)

In the Vedas it is said that the potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are called by different names, such as *yogamaya* and *mahamaya*. Ultimately, however, the Lord's potency is one, exactly as electric potency is one although it can act both to cool and to heat. The Lord's potency acts in both the spiritual and material worlds. In the spiritual world the Lord's potency works as *yogamaya*, and in the material world the same potency works as *mahamaya*, exactly as electricity works in both a heater and a cooler. In the material world, this potency, working as *mahamaya*, acts upon the conditioned souls to deprive them more and more of devotional service. (SB 10. 1. 25p)

Thus the Lord's potency, *visnu-maya*, has two features--*avaranika* and *unmukha*. When the Lord appeared, His potency came with Him and acted in different ways. She acted as *yogamaya* with Yashoda, Devaki and other intimate relations of the Lord, and she acted in a different way with Kamsa, Shalva and other *asuras*. By the order of Lord Krishna, His potency *yogamaya* came with Him and exhibited different activities according to the time and circumstances. *Karyarthe sambhavisyati*. *Yogamaya* acted differently to execute different purposes desired by the Lord. As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita* (9. 13), *mahatmanas tu mam partha--daivim prakritim ashritah*. The *mahatmas*, who fully surrender to the lotus feet of the Lord, are directed by *yogamaya*, whereas the *duratmas*, those who are devoid of devotional service, are directed by *mahamaya*. (SB 10. 1. 25p)

*Yogamaya* is the spiritual potency of the Lord. Out of affection for His devotees, the Lord always stays in spiritual touch with them, although otherwise His *maya* potency is so strong that she bewilders even exalted demigods like Brahma. Therefore the Lord's potency is called *yogamaya*. Since the Lord is Vishvatma, He immediately ordered *Yogamaya* to give protection to Devaki. (SB 10. 2. 6p)

Both *Yogamaya* and *Mahamaya* act in all material activities (*prakriteh kriyamanani gunaih karmani sarvashah*), but although the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead acts under the Supreme Lord's direction (*mayadhyakshena prakritih suyate sa-caracaram*), doglike watchmen such as politicians and diplomats think that they are protecting their neighborhoods from the dangers of the outside world. These are the actions of *maya*. But one who surrenders to Krishna is relieved of the protection afforded by the dogs and doglike guardians of this material world. (SB 10. 4. 1p)

Kamsa addressed his sister and brother-in-law as *maha-bhagau* because although he killed their ordinary children, the goddess Durga took birth from them. Because Devaki bore Durgadevi in her womb, Kamsa praised both Devaki and her husband. (SB 10. 18p)

The Vedic scripture *Candi* describes *maya*, the energy of the Supreme Lord, as *nidra: durga devi sarva-bhuteshu nidra-rupena samasthitah*. The energy of *Yogamaya* and *Mahamaya* keeps the living entities sleeping in this material world in the great darkness of ignorance. *Yogamaya*, the goddess Durga, kept Kamsa in darkness about Krishna's birth and misled him to believe that his enemy Krishna had been born elsewhere. (SB 10. 4. 29p)

The commentary of Madhva on *Shrimad-Bhagavatam* mentions that the following sixteen spiritual energies are present in the spiritual world: (1) *shri*, (2) *bhu*, (3) *ila*, (4) *kanti*, (5) *kirti*, (6) *tushti*, (7) *gih*, (8) *pushti*, (9) *satya* (10) *jnanainana*, (11) *jaya utkarshini*, (12) *vimala*, (13) *yogamaya*, (14) *prahvi* (15) *ishana* and (16) *anugraha*. In his commentary on the *Laghubhagavatamrta*, Shri Baladeva Vidyabhushana has said that the above energies are also known by nine names: (1) *vimala*, (2) *utkarshini* (3) *jnana*, (4) *kriya*, (5) *yoga*, (6) *prahvi* (7) *satya*, (8) *ishana* and (9) *anugraha*. In the *Bhagavat-sandarbha* of Shrila Jiva Gosvami (verse 117) they are described as *shri*, *pushti*, *gih*, *kanti*, *kirti*, *tushti*, *ila*, *jaya*, *vidyavidya*, *maya*, *samvit*, *sandhini*, *hladini*, *bhakti*, *murti*, *vimala*, *yoga*, *prahvi*, *ishana*, *anugraha*, etc. All these energies act in different spheres of the Lord's supremacy. (Cc Adi 5. 84p)

Following the example of the gopis, the devotees sometimes worship the goddess Katyayani, but they understand that Katyayani is an incarnation of *yogamaya*. The gopis worshiped Katyayani, *yogamaya*, to attain Krishna for their husband. On the other hand, it is stated in the *Sapta- sati* scripture that a *kshatriya* king named Suratha and a rich *vaishya* named Samadhi worshiped material nature in the form of goddess Durga to attain material perfection. If one tries to mingle the worship of *yogamaya* with *mahamaya*, considering them one and the same, he does not really show very high intelligence. (Cc Mad 8. 90p)

It is a known fact that Maya is very strong, but one who associates with Krsna in the above mentioned ways, Maya can show no strength or Maya converts herself from Maha Maya to Yoga Maya. (Letter to Upendra, 18 August 1970)

### **Yogamaya Arranges the Pastimes of the Lord and His Devotees**

The Lord exchanges transcendental relations in five ways, as proprietor, master, friend, son and lover, and in each of these pastimes He plays fully by the potency of *yogamaya*, the internal potency. (SB 1. 11. 39p)

When the Lord, however, appears in His person as Lord Sri Krishna, His other plenary portions also join in Him by His inconceivable potency called *yogamaya*, and thus the Lord Krishna of Vrindavana is different from the Lord Krishna of Mathura or the Lord Krishna of Dvaraka. (SB 1. 14. 8p)

Because of her deep affection for Krishna, she could never think that her very son was Narayana, the Personality of Godhead Himself. That is the action of *yogamaya*, the internal potency of the Supreme Lord, which acts to perfect all the pastimes of the Lord with His different types of devotees. Who could play such wonders without being God? (SB 2. 7. 30p)

O Narada, although the potencies of the Lord are unknowable and immeasurable, still, because we are all surrendered souls, we know how He acts through *yogamaya* potencies. (SB 2. 7. 43-45)

The Lord is unlimited and, by the grace of the *yogamaya*, helps the surrendered soul to know Him proportionately with the advance of one's surrender. (SB 2. 7. 43-45p)

The right conclusion of dovetailing everything in relationship with the Lord is called *yoga-maya*, or the energy of union, and the wrong conception of detaching a thing

from its relationship with the Lord is called the Lord's *daivi maya*, or *maha-maya*. Both the *mayas* also have connections with the Lord because nothing can exist without being related to Him. As such, the wrong conception of detaching relationships from the Lord is not false but illusory. (SB 2. 9. 34p)

The Lord appeared in the mortal world by His internal potency, *yoga-maya*. He came in His eternal form, which is just suitable for His pastimes. (SB 3. 2. 12)

The six excellent opulences which He displayed in the mortal world by the agency of His internal potency, *yoga-maya*, are rare even in the Vaikunthalokas. All His pastimes were manifested not by the material energy but by His spiritual energy. The excellence of His *rasa-lila* at Vrindavana and His householder life with sixteen thousand wives is wonderful even for Narayana in Vaikuntha and is certainly so for other living entities within this mortal world. His pastimes are wonderful even for other incarnations of the Lord, such as Sri Rama, Nrisimha and Varaha. His opulence was so superexcellent that His pastimes were adored even by the Lord of Vaikuntha, who is not different from Lord Krishna Himself. (SB 3. 2. 12p)

By His internal potency the Lord can expand Himself into various personalities of *svayam-prakasha* and again into *prabhava* and *vaibhava* forms, and all of them are nondifferent from one another. The forms into which the Lord expanded to marry the princesses in different apartments were all slightly different just to match each and every one of them. They are called *vaibhava-vilasa* forms of the Lord and are effected by His internal potency, *yoga-maya*. (SB 3. 3. 8p)

The omnipotent Lord, by His different energies, can perform anything and everything He likes. The creation of the cosmic world is done by His *yogamaya* energy. (SB 3. 5. 22p)

The transcendental happiness exhibited in the spiritual world and all other spiritual manifestations there are made possible by the influence of *yogamaya*, the internal potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (SB 3. 15. 26p)

The highest opulence in the material world is called *parameshthya*, the opulence of Brahma. But that material opulence of Brahma, who lives on the topmost planet within this material world, cannot compare to the opulence of the Supreme Lord because the transcendental opulence in the spiritual world is caused by *yogamaya*, whereas the opulence in the material world is caused by *mahamaya*. (SB 3. 16. 15p)

The activities of the Lord's internal potency are inconceivable, but by a slight exhibition of this potency, the Lord, by His grace, can deliver one from nescience. *Sucah* means "miseries"; the miseries of material existence can be extinguished by the Lord by His potential energy of internal *yogamaya*. (SB 3. 18. 4p)

The Lord comes to this material world through the agency of His internal potency, and similarly, when a devotee or associate of the Lord descends to this material world, he does so through the action of the spiritual energy. Any pastime conducted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is an arrangement by *yogamaya*, not *mahamaya*. Therefore it is to be understood that when Jaya and Vijaya descended to this material world, they came because there was something to be done for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Otherwise it is a fact that no one falls from Vaikuntha. (SB 7. 1. 35p)

Krishna was always living with the Pandavas. Although the Pandavas, because of the influence of Krishna's *yogamaya*, could not think of their fortunate position, every saintly person, including the great sage Narada, could understand it, and therefore they constantly visited Maharaja Yudhishtira. (SB 7. 10. 48p)

Thus the Lord's potency, *visnu-maya*, has two features--*avaranika* and *unmukha*. When the Lord appeared, His potency came with Him and acted in different ways. She acted as *yogamaya* with Yashoda, Devaki and other intimate relations of the Lord, and she acted in a different way with Kamsa, Shalva and other asuras. . . . . (SB 10. 1. 25p)

Therefore the Lord's potency is called *yogamaya*. Since the Lord is Vishvatma, He immediately ordered *Yogamaya* to give protection to Devaki. (SB 10. 2. 6p)

Both *Yogamaya* and *Mahamaya* act in all material activities (*prakriteh kriyamanani gunaih karmani sarvashah*), but although the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead acts under the Supreme Lord's direction (*mayadhyakshena prakritih suyate sa-caracaram*), doglike watchmen such as politicians and diplomats think that they are protecting their neighborhoods from the dangers of the outside world. These are the actions of *maya*. But one who surrenders to Krishna is relieved of the protection afforded by the dogs and doglike guardians of this material world. (SB 10. 4. 1p)

The Vedic scripture *Candi* describes *maya*, the energy of the Supreme Lord, as *nidra: durga devi sarva-bhuteshu nidra-rupena samasthitah*. The energy of *Yogamaya* and *Mahamaya* keeps the living entities sleeping in this material world in the great darkness of ignorance. *Yogamaya*, the goddess *Durga*, kept *Kamsa* in darkness about Krishna's birth and misled him to believe that his enemy Krishna had been born elsewhere. (SB 10. 4. 29p)

Sometimes a beautiful woman is dangerous because everyone, being captivated by external beauty (*maya-mohita*), is unable to understand what is in her mind. Those who are captivated by the beauty of the external energy are called *maya-mohita*. *Mohitam nabhijanati mam ebhyah param avyayam (Bg 7. 13). Na te viduh svarthagatim hi visnum durashaya ye bahir-artha-maninah (Bhag. 7. 5. 31)*. Here, of course, the two mothers *Rohini* and *Yashoda* were not *maya-mohita*, deluded by the external energy, but to develop the pastimes of the Lord, they were captivated by *yogamaya*. Such *mayamoha* is the action of *yogamaya*. (SB 10. 6. 9p)

*Nanda Maharaja* could not understand how the inhabitants of his house had allowed *Putana* to enter the house, nor could he imagine the gravity of the situation. He did not understand that Krishna had wanted to kill *Putana* and that His pastimes were performed by *yogamaya*. *Nanda Maharaja* simply thought that someone had entered his house and created havoc. This was *Nanda Maharaja's* simplicity. (SB 10. 6. 43p)

The nearby children saw that actually Krishna had kicked the wheel of the cart and this was how the accident happened. By the arrangement of *yogamaya*, all the *gopis* and *gopas* thought that the accident had taken place because of some bad planet or some ghost, but in fact everything was done by Krishna and enjoyed by Him. (SB 10. 7. 9p)

Just as *Shri Krishna* had His birth in the mundane *Gokula* through the agency of *Yogamaya* who is the primal energy of the Supreme Lord, so with her help He

manifests the *lila* of His birth in the womb of Shaci-devi in Navadvipa on this mundane plane. (BS 5p)

*Mayadhyakshena prakritih suyate sa-caracaram*: "The mundane energy *prakriti* gives birth to this universe of animate and inanimate beings by My direction. " The purport of this *shloka* of the Gita is that Maya, the perverted reflection of spiritual (*cit*) potency was at first inactive and her extension of matter constituting the material cause was also in the separately dislocated state. In accordance with the will of Krishna this world is manifested as the resultant of the union of the efficient and the material causal principles of Maya. In spite of that, the Supreme Lord Himself remains united with His *cit* potency, *yoganidra*. The word *yoganidra* or *yogamaya* indicates as follows: The nature of *cit* potency is manifestive of the Absolute Truth, while the nature of her perverted reflection, Maya, is envelopment in the gloom of ignorance. When Krishna desires to manifest something in the mundane ignorance-wrapt affairs, He does this by the conjunction of His spiritual potency with His inactive nonspiritual potency. This is known as Yogamaya. It carries a twofold notion, namely, transcendental notion and mundane inert notion. Krishna Himself, His subjective portions and those *jivas* who are His unalloyed separated particles, realize the transcendental notion in that conjunction, while conditioned souls feel the mundane inert notion. The external coating of transcendental knowledge in the conscious activities of conditioned souls, bears the name of Yoganidra. This is also an influence of the *cit* potency of the Divinity. This principle will be more elaborately considered hereafter. (BS 19p)

There *yogamaya* acts as His maidservant in the *rasa-lila* dance. (TLC, "The Opulences of Krsna")

In the spiritual world, there is another energy, the superior spiritual energy, or internal energy, which acts under the direction of *yogamaya*. *Yogamaya* is the internal potency of the Supreme Lord; she also works under the Lord's direction, but she works in the spiritual world. When the living entity puts himself under the direction of *yogamaya* instead of *mahamaya*, he gradually becomes a devotee of Krishna. Yet those who are after material opulence and material happiness place themselves under the care of the material energy, *mahamaya*, or under the care of material demigods like Lord Siva and others. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* it is found that when the *gopis* of Vrindavana desired Krishna as their husband, they prayed to the spiritual energy, *yogamaya*, for the fulfillment of their desire. In the *Sapta-sati* it is found that King Suratha and a merchant named Samadhi worshiped *mahamaya* for material opulence. Thus one should not mistakenly equalize *yogamaya* and *mahamaya*. (TLC, "The Transcendental Pastimes of Radha and Krsna")

*Yogamaya* is the name of the internal potency that makes the Lord forget Himself and become an object of love for His pure devotee in different transcendental mellows. This *yogamaya* potency creates a spiritual sentiment in the minds of the damsels of Vraja by which they think of Lord Krishna as their paramour. This sentiment is never to be compared to mundane illicit sexual love. It has nothing to do with sexual psychology, although the pure love of such devotees seems to be sexual. One should know for certain that nothing can exist in this cosmic manifestation that has no real counterpart in the spiritual field. All material manifestations are emanations of the transcendence. The erotic principles of amorous love reflected in mixed material values are perverted reflections of the

reality of spirit, but one cannot understand the reality unless one is sufficiently educated in the spiritual science. (*Cc Adi* 4. 29p)

In Goloka Vrindavana there is an exchange of love known as *parakiya-rasa*. It is something like the attraction of a married woman for a man other than her husband. In the material world this sort of relationship is most abominable because it is a perverted reflection of the *parakiya-rasa* in the spiritual world, where it is the highest kind of loving affair. Such feelings between the devotee and the Lord are presented by the influence of *yogamaya*. *Bhagavad-gita* states that devotees of the highest grade are under the care of *daiva-maya*, or *yogamaya*. *Mahatmanas tu mam partha daivim prakritim ashritah* (*Bg* 9. 13). Those who are actually great souls (*mahatmas*) are fully absorbed in Krishna consciousness, always engaged in the service of the Lord. They are under the care of *daivi prakriti*, or *yogamaya*. *Yogamaya* creates a situation in which the devotee is prepared to transgress all regulative principles simply to love Krsna. A devotee naturally does not like to transgress the laws of reverence for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but by the influence of *yogamaya* he is prepared to do anything to love the Supreme Lord better. Those under the spell of the material energy cannot at all appreciate the activities of *yogamaya*, for a conditioned soul can hardly understand the pure reciprocation between the Lord and His devotee. But by executing devotional service under the regulative principles, one can become very highly elevated and then begin to appreciate the dealings of pure love under the management of *yogamaya*. In the spiritual loving sentiment induced by the *yogamaya* potency, both Lord Shri Krishna and the damsels of Vraja forget themselves in spiritual rapture. By the influence of such forgetfulness, the attractive beauty of the *gopis* plays a prominent part in the transcendental satisfaction of the Lord, who has nothing to do with mundane sexology. Because spiritual love of Godhead is above everything mundane, the *gopis* superficially seem to transgress the codes of mundane morality. This perpetually puzzles mundane moralists. Therefore *yogamaya* acts to cover the Lord and His pastimes from the eyes of mundaners, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita*, where the Lord says that He reserves the right of not being exposed to everyone. The acts of *yogamaya* make it possible for the Lord and the *gopis*, in loving ecstasy, to sometimes meet and sometimes separate. These transcendental loving affairs of the Lord are unimaginable to empiricists involved in the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. Therefore the Lord Himself appears before the mundaners to bestow upon them the highest form of spiritual realization and also personally relish its essence. (*Cc Adi* 4. 30p)

Actually the activities of *yogamaya* are absent in the spiritual sky and the Vaikuntha planets. She simply works in the supreme planet, Goloka Vrindavana, and she works to manifest the activities of Krishna when He descends to the material universe to please His innumerable devotees within the material world. (*Cc Mad* 21. 104p)

. . . when the Lord appears it is mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gita* that He does so in His Own Internal Potency. This Internal Potency is called *Yogamaya*. All pastimes and activities of the Lord are administered by the *Yogamaya*. Therefore, He is not under the influence of material energy, as the conditioned souls are. By the arrangement of *Yogamaya*, the devotees sometimes forget the presence of the Omnipotent Lord. Just like Yasoda Mayi treats Krishna as her begotten Son, and forgets Krishna's inconceivable power. Therefore, she asks Krishna to open His mouth to see whether He actually ate some earth. He showed her that He swallowed not only a bit of earth, but the whole cosmic manifestation. Yasoda Mata was astonished to see this miracle,

but still she forgot that Krishna is God, that Krishna is the Supreme Lord Himself, and not her ordinary Son. In this way, reciprocation between the Lord and His devotees takes place. The Lord doesn't forget but in order to enthuse the pastimes of the Lord, the action of *Yogamaya* is prominent. (Letter to Upendra, 1 March 1968)

It is a known fact that Maya is very strong, but one who associates with Krsna in the above mentioned ways, Maya can show no strength or Maya converts herself from Maha Maya to Yoga Maya. (Letter to Upendra, 18 August 1970)

### ***Yogamaya* Curtains the Lord**

The Lord is not approachable by everyone because He is curtained by His *yogamaya* potency. But one should not wrongly conclude that the Lord was formerly unmanifested and has now manifested Himself in the human form. This misconception of the formlessness of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is due to the *yogamaya* curtain of the Lord and can be removed only by the supreme will, as soon as the conditioned soul surrenders unto Him. (SB 2. 5. 20p)

The reason is that the Lord reserves the right of not exposing Himself to the nondevotee who, even after a thorough study of literature like the *Bhagavad-gita*, remains an impersonalist simply by obstinacy. This obstinacy is due to the action of *yogamaya*, a personal energy of the Lord that acts like an aide-de-camp by covering the vision of the obstinate impersonalist. (SB 2. 5. 24p)

In the *Bhagavad-gita* also, it is said that the Lord reserves the right of not being exposed to everyone, and He keeps Himself concealed from the faithless by His *yoga-maya* potency. (SB 2. 9. 32p)

The Lord, however, does not disclose Himself to a casual or inauthentic worshiper to be exploited. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita* (7. 25): *naham prakashah sarvasya yoga-maya-samavritah*. Rather, by *yoga-maya*, the Lord remains concealed to the nondevotees or casual devotees who are serving their sense gratification. The Lord is never visible to the pseudodevotees who worship the demigods in charge of universal affairs. The conclusion is that the Lord cannot become the order supplier of a pseudo devotee, but He is always prepared to respond to the desires of a pure, unconditional devotee, who is free from all tinges of material infection. (SB 3. 9. 11p)

For the impersonalists and the so-called *yogis*, the Lord is always hidden by the curtain of *yogamaya*. *Bhagavad-gita* says that even when Lord Krishna was seen by everyone while He was present on the surface of the earth, the impersonalists and the so-called *yogis* could not see Him because they were devoid of devotional eyesight. (SB 3. 15. 50p)

The real purpose of the *yoga* system is to achieve the favor and shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but this purpose is covered by the illusory energy of *yogamaya*. (SB 5. 6. 15p)

### ***Yogamaya* is a Person**

The Lord ordered Yogamaya: O My potency, who are worshipable for the entire world and whose nature is to bestow good fortune upon all living entities, go to Vraja, where there live many cowherd men and their wives. In that very beautiful land, where many cows reside, Rohini, the wife of Vasudeva, is living at the home of Nanda Maharaja. Other wives of Vasudeva are also living there incognito because of fear of Kamsa. Please go there. (SB10. 2. 7)

O all-auspicious Yogamaya, I shall then appear with My full six opulences as the son of Devaki, and you will appear as the daughter of mother Yashoda, the queen of Maharaja Nanda. (SB 10. 2. 9)

Thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yogamaya immediately agreed. With the Vedic *mantra om*, she confirmed that she would do what He asked. Thus having accepted the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she circumambulated Him and started for the place on earth known as Nandagokula. There she did everything just as she had been told. (SB10. 2. 14)

The activities of Yogamaya are distinctly visible in this chapter, in which Devaki and Vasudeva excuse Kamsa for his many devious, atrocious activities and Kamsa becomes repentant and falls at their feet. Before the awakening of the watchmen and the others in the prison house, many other things happened. Krishna was born and transferred to the home of Yashoda in Gokula, the strong doors opened and again closed, and Vasudeva resumed his former condition of being shackled. The watchmen, however, could not understand all this. They awakened only when they heard the crying of the newborn child, Yogamaya. (SB 10. 4. 1p)

The child, Yogamaya-devi, the younger sister of Lord Vishnu, slipped upward from Kamsa's hands and appeared in the sky as Devi, the goddess Durga, with eight arms, completely equipped with weapons. (SB 10. 4. 9)

O Kamsa, you fool, what will be the use of killing me? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has been your enemy from the very beginning and who will certainly kill you, has already taken His birth somewhere else. Therefore, do not unnecessarily kill other children. (SB 10. 4. 12)

After speaking to Kamsa in this way, the goddess Durga, Yogamaya, appeared in different places, such as Varanasi, and became celebrated by different names, such as Annapurna, Durga, Kali and Bhadra. (SB 10. 4. 13)

After that night passed, Kamsa summoned his ministers and informed them of all that had been spoken by Yogamaya [who had revealed that He who was to slay Kamsa had already been born somewhere else]. (SB 10. 4. 29)

### ***Yogamaya* is the Cause of Creation**

Learned men say that the five elements, eternal time, fruitive activity, the three modes of material nature, and the varieties produced by these modes are all creations of *yogamaya*. This material world is therefore extremely difficult to understand, but those who are highly learned have rejected it. May the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the controller of everything, be pleased with us. (SB 8. 5. 43)

Auckland, New Zealand  
3 December 2003

Yesterday I ended the *Kalisantarana Upanisad* seminar with a *yajna*; the attendees glorified the appearance of the Lord as the sacrificial fire by chanting the eleven verses of that Vedic scripture. Then we had a long *kirtana* and a very fine feast cooked by Padmasambhava Prabhu and his good wife Arcana dd.

I have a couple quiet days before I fly from New Zealand to India.



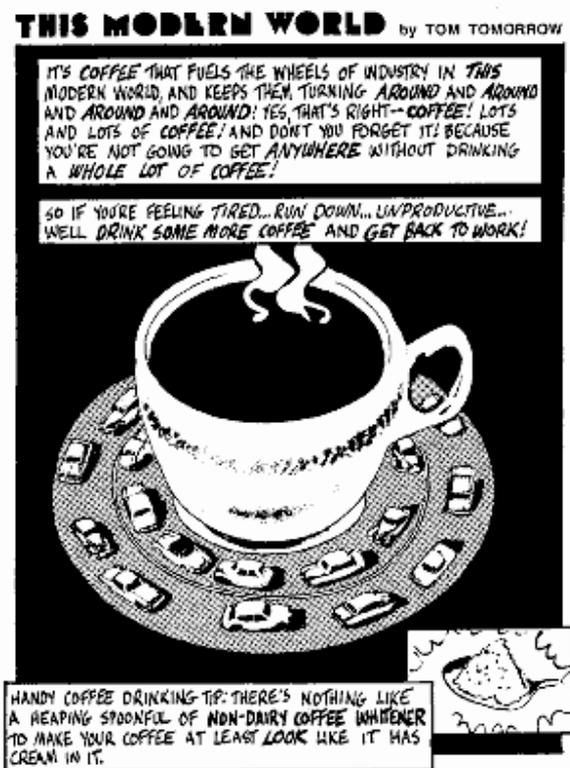
Auckland, New Zealand  
4 December 2003

Some days ago I published a letter from a devotee named Rajiv who inquired about *asvamedha-yajna*. He furthermore wanted clarification of a story he heard about Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura rejecting his *diksa guru*. These two questions I answered, but a third question I overlooked. Rajiv wanted to know if it was true that Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura had eaten fish. In *Svalikhita Jivani*, the autobiography of Srila Bhaktivinoda (which is broadly available as a datafile within the ISKCON community

of computer users), the Thakura does mention that before he took initiation at age 50 he did accept non-vegetarian dishes that are popular in Bengal, including fish. That should not be surprising for devotees with discrimination; after all, Bhaktivinoda Thakura played the role of an English-educated man of sophistication before he revealed himself as the Seventh Gosvami.

For devotees without discrimination, the Thakura's culinary habits before his initiation into Gaudiya Vaisnavism will remain a subject of bafflement. If you are baffled, you need a *guru*; if you have a *guru* and are yet baffled, awful sorry about that.

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Auckland, New Zealand

5 December 2003

### Why There is Anything?

A room conversation with Srila Prabhupada in Mexico City

January, 1975

Guest (1) (German Man): I would like to ask you a question. Once Leibnitz, who is one of the fathers of the Western tradition, formulated the question which was the beginning of metaphysics in a way, Western metaphysics. The question is "Why there is anything?" What is your stand about this classic point?

Prabhupada: Why?

Guest (1): Why there is anything?

Hrdayananda: Why anything exists? What is the reason for the existence of. . . ?

Prabhupada: "Why anything exists?" (laughter) What do you mean by anything?

Guest (1): Well, that's precisely the point. What is the purpose? What is the sense, if there is any, or does the very question make sense?

Prabhupada: No, no, unless understand what is that "anything. . ." First of all, you have to understand what is that "anything. " Anything. . . Just like this book, this table, this bell, the electric they are so many things. So you can take any one of them; that is anything. What is your idea of anything?

Guest (1): Oh, reality. Material, external, reality to our ego, our internal reality as well.

Prabhupada: Internal reality and external reality?

Guest (1): Both. For me, the word "anything" covers both.

Prabhupada: Yes. So that also we understand, "anything. " There are so many varieties of things, and you can take any one of them. That is "anything. " But your question should be, "Wherefrom these things coming?" That should be the proper question.

Professor: What is the reason of this (indistinct) "anything"?

Prabhupada: Yes. There are so many things, and you can take any one of them. That is "anything. " But the real question should be "Wherefrom all these things are coming?" That is real question, "What is the origin of all these things?"

Guest (1): Well, origin, that is more on the theoretical side. It's a question, "Why?" But I am, rather, after the purpose.

Prabhupada: Yes. That is a nice question. But there is the real source of everything. That is the Vedanta-sutra. . . Perhaps you have read. Vedanta-sutra, first question is: "Wherefrom all these things come?" So the answer is that janmady asya yatah:

"Brahman. The original thing is Brahman, or the Absolute Truth, and from Him, everything is emanating. " Just like physical. . . The sun is there, and whole material world is product of the sunshine. What your physical science says? Eh? Eh? Do they not say? It is a fact that sunshine. . . Due to the sunshine all these material things are there.

Guest (1): Well, it's more involved than just saying that. Sun is just a big complex of hydrogen and helium, a big pile of rubbish really, but it develops this marvelous reactions which causes it to work as a big nuclear reactor, an entirely different story, what the vision of science, of the present science, about the meaning of celestial bodies and the meaning of, in particular, of sun and moon and so on. We are extremely realistic about this world.

We can't see, assuming all the glory of that what happens on the earth due to the existence of those bodies, we do not try to look inside of the structure of these things, as something meant for us. Just universe as it is. . . And this question, like Nietzschean question which I am repeating--that's not my point--this big question is...

Western philosophy presently does not answer, does not ask this question. I think that this scientist who did ask it had quite a point. This question expresses the quest of the human race for some meaning for some sense, for some sense. That's what religion is now offering us, or philosophy, or. . . Rarely, directly, we hear the direct answer to that.

Prabhupada: What is your direct answer?

Guest (1): Oh, I don't have any. If I would have, I wouldn't ask you.

Prabhupada: That means your knowledge is insufficient.

Guest (1): Precisely. Precisely. That is the beginning of. . .

Prabhupada: Therefore, if you have no answer. That's all right. That "We don't know" means our knowledge is insufficient. But knowledge means must be progressive. We should not remain in insufficient knowledge. We must make further progress to get sufficient knowledge. Inquiry.

Guest (1): But you referred to some other, more direct ways of acquiring knowledge than just the standard. . .

Prabhupada: No, because we have got insufficient knowledge, we cannot approach directly. It is not possible. We have to take knowledge--who has got sufficient knowledge, from him. Because you have got insufficient knowledge, so you cannot make progress. Just like beyond this wall, you cannot say what is there. That is insufficient knowledge. But that does not mean there is nothing. Because you cannot say what is beyond this wall, that does not mean that there is nothing beyond this wall. Your knowledge is insufficient. Is it not?

Professor: But this was more or less my question. . .

Prabhupada: Just try to hear. Then. . .

Professor: If Indian philosophy. . .

Prabhupada: No, no, it is no Indian or American. It is the philosophy. It is philosophy. The philosophy is not Indian or American. Truth is truth, not Indian truth or American truth. That is not truth. That is relative truth. The Absolute Truth is absolute. That is neither Indian nor American nor. . .

Guest (1): But in what sense you use the concept "truth" here? Is it in the ontological sense, or is it in somehow in a more pragmatism human sense, refers to human beings or. . . ?

Prabhupada: Yes, it is pragmatic, that you cannot see beyond this wall. That is your insufficient knowledge or your senses are insufficient. You cannot go beyond this wall. But that does not mean there is nothing beyond this wall. So if you want to know what is beyond this wall, you have to know from a person who knows it. Yes. Because you cannot see, you cannot know, that is not the end. There must be something.

Guest (1): What?

Prabhupada: Eh? It is actual fact. That is pragmatic. It is actual fact. There is. . . So many things there are, but you do not know because your senses are imperfect. Your eyes are imperfect, your touch, imperfect, the gathering senses. . . The senses which gathers knowledge. . . Just like eyes. . . We can see and gather knowledge. We can hear; we gather knowledge. We can taste; we gather knowledge. So, because your senses are imperfect, therefore your knowledge gathered, that is imperfect.

Professor: But in the case of a mystical man that has been able to see. . .

Prabhupada: There is no question of mystic. First of all we have to admit that on account of our senses being imperfect, whatever knowledge we gather, that is imperfect. That is imperfect. Therefore, if you want to possess real knowledge you have to approach somebody who is perfect. You cannot. . . Huh?

Guest (1): How can we know that somebody is perfect?

Prabhupada: That is another thing. But first of all, the basic principle is we have to understand that our senses are imperfect, and whatever knowledge we gather by these imperfect senses, they are imperfect. So if we want perfect knowledge, then we have to approach somebody whose senses are perfect, whose knowledge is perfect. That is the principle. That is the Vedic principle.

Therefore the Vedic principle says, tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet. You know Sanskrit, yes. "In order to know that perfect knowledge, one should approach guru. " So who is guru? Then the next question will be. . . Your question is that, "How I can?"

Guest (1): How can I know that. . . ?

Prabhupada: That I am coming. That I am coming. Guru. . . That is next line. It is said, srotiyam brahma-nistham. Guru means who has properly heard the Vedas,

sruti. Srotriyam. And as a result of his hearing he is firmly convinced in the existence of the Absolute Truth, God.

Professor: Well, this is. . . We've only come to one of the mentioned(?) theories of knowledge, I think, sabda.

Prabhupada: Sata? Sabda, yes, sabda-brahman. Yes.

Professor: Then if you are able to communicate to heart with knowledge through sabda, no?

Prabhupada: Yes. Sabda-brahman. Just like many thousands of miles away we are getting some radio message and we learn that "Something is happening there. Something is there. " Therefore sabda. This is. . . Sabda means sound, sound, sound vibration. So that is the real source of knowledge. That is the real source of. . . Sabda-brahman.

Professor: One of the sources of knowledge or the only one?

Prabhupada: No, that is the only one. There are others; they are subordinate. But the sabda, knowledge received, sabda, through sabda, sabda-brahman, that is perfect knowledge. Just like the same example: beyond this wall I cannot see, but if somebody there says, "This is the position here"--the sound comes--that is perfect. You cannot see what is going on, but if somebody says, sends radio message or any message, sound, then you know. Therefore sabda-pramana, sabda, knowledge received through sabda, that is perfect knowledge.

Professor: That means through sabda, and through other means you can have a direct intuition but you can't intact. . . Direct intuition of things.

Prabhupada: Intuition is different. Direct perception. Sabda, you can (have) direct perception. It is not intuition. It is perception. Therefore the word is used, srotriyam brahma-nistham. So our process is to receive knowledge through sabda-brahman, Vedic.

Just like eko narayana asit. Eko narayana asit: "Before creation there was only Narayana. " Na brahma na isah: "There was no Brahma; there was no Siva. " So this is sabda-pramana, sabda-pramana, that "In the beginning there was God, nothing else. " So in this way our Vedic principle is: when your knowledge is corroborated by the Vedic version then it is perfect.

Professor: But according to Sankara it is not only way that you can approach truth. You can also approach through deduction.

Prabhupada: There are many ways. Just like hypothesis. Hypothesis. Yes. History, history. Hypothesis, history. Then direct perception. There are many. But of all these, sabda-pramana is taken as best. Sabda-pramana, evidence through the sound. That is the best.

Professor: No, but (indistinct). According to (indistinct). If one comes to value, existential value of a thing, through deduction. . . Is it possible or not only through intuition, through direct intuition of the reality of the whole?(?)

Prabhupada: Value by intuition?

Professor: Direct knowledge of the existence of a thing, of anything.

Prabhupada: Yes. The knowledge of existence, that nityah-sasvato 'yam, nityah sasvatah, that is knowledge of existence. So you have to learn which is nitya and which is not nitya from the authority. "This is nitya, and this is anitya. " So nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam. These are the Vedic version: "There is one chief nitya amongst the many nityas. " Just like we, we living entities, we are nityas, eternal.

First of all try to understand eternity. You were a child or I was a child. Now that body, child body, is no longer existing. But I understand, I know, that I had a body, child. Therefore I am nitya. I am existing. The body has gone, but I am existing. Therefore I am eternal, nitya. Is it clear?

Professor: Well, I remember one other explanation, that when you are sleeping and you have a dream. . .

Prabhupada: No, when I am sleeping I am working.

Professor: . . . and you have a dream, and then, when you are coming back from sleep. . .

Prabhupada: Yes.

Professor: . . . you can remember your dream.

Prabhupada: Yes.

Professor: That means that you are conscious of your existence even on the suppression of consciousness.

Prabhupada: I am not only conscious, but the consciousness depends on me. Because I am there, therefore consciousness. . . So I am nitya. This is the proof of nitya, that many changes have taken place, but the changes, the phenomenal changes, they have gone out. They are no more existing. Therefore they are not nitya.

Just like dream. At night I saw one dream, but the dream is no more existing, but I remember that last night I saw the dream. Therefore I am nitya. And the dream is anitya. The dream is anitya. Similarly, this phenomenal world, when I am not sleeping, but I am so-called awakened, so I am seeing. I am seeing you, I am seeing the table, this book, you see, but. . . (aside:) Don't. . . But when I am asleep I forget all these things. I forget. I am in a different world. I am seeing different things. So this is also dream, and the dream at night, that is also dream. But I, the seer of this dream and that dream, I am the eternal.

Professor: The thing is not to make dependent on the conscious of any individual the existence of thing.

Prabhupada: Existence of thing. . . I say that at night, when I am dreaming, I do not see existence of these things. And at this time, in daytime, when I am seeing these things, I do not see the existence of the dream. So the conclusion should be both these things I see in daytime and I see at night, they have no existence. They are phenomenal. But I am the seer; I am eternal. I am existing. This is the proof.

Because at night I am seeing and daytime I am seeing, so therefore I am eternal. But the phenomenal manifestation, they are temporary. We don't say it is false. Temporary. The Mayavadi philo. . . Sankara said it is false. Brahma satyam jagan mithya. Mithya means false. We don't say false. We don't say that this book is false. It has got reality, but temporary. This book has come into form at a certain date, and it will exist for certain days, and when it will be worn out or old, there will be no existence. Therefore the formation of this book is temporary. But I am the reader of the book; I am eternal.

So two things are there, temporary and eternal. The temporary existence, somebody says, "False," but we say, "It is not false; it is temporary. " But there is an eternal existence. Just like I am eternal. That is. . . We have to learn from sabda, vibration. Na hanyate hanyamane sarire. You understand Sanskrit. Na hanyate hanyamane sarire. That eternal thing is existing, it will continue to exist. Even after the destruction of this temporary body, it will continue to exist.

Professor: But coming again to the question that Professor (indistinct) put to you, but it is possible to understand all those things (indistinct)

Prabhupada: You have to understand. . . I have already said that we have got our imperfect senses. We cannot understand. But we have to understand from a person who has got perfect knowledge.

Professor: But why existence of all these things?

Prabhupada: So? Why? Then the answer will be: "Why there shall not be existence?" First of all you answer this. If you question like that--"Why there is existence?"--then I shall inquire, "Why there shall not be existence?" Therefore the decision should be taken from the Absolute. Your question, my answer, will not solve. If you say, "Why there is existence?" I can ask you, "Why there shall not be existence?" And who will decide this?

Guest (1): If I may something, this basic question, I suppose, may be asked only on the level of all religion, all philosophy, which does not put a line of division between practice in life. . .

Prabhupada: Yes.

Guest (1): . . . and abstract investigations. Now, in normal Western thinking we do deny the very purpose of that question. As a matter of fact, we never ask it. Since time when Leibnitz did ask this question we all forgot it, or deliberately we suppress it. We simply say, "All right, let's be concerned only with those things which we can

deal with effectively in material world. And the question of purpose let's leave aside.  
" Now, I suppose that within this system of thought which you have. . .

Prabhupada: I may tell you two things. The purpose is. . . That is experienced by every one of us, what is the purpose of life, what is the purpose, anything. That, everyone, we can understand very easily. The purpose is ananda. Pleasure. That is the purpose. There is no difficulty to understand what is the purpose. The purpose is pleasure-seeking. Or purpose is pleasure. One who hasn't got the pleasure, he's seeking after it. That is the purpose. Purpose is ananda. Anandamayo 'bhyasat.

That is the Vedanta-sutra. Everyone of us, seeking ananda. The scientific knowledge, philosophy, or even driving the car or whatever you are doing--the purpose is ananda. That is a common factor. Purpose is. . . Why I am eating palatable dishes? I can eat anything, but I am seeking that "This sort of foodstuff will please me. " That is ananda.

Guest (1): That is driving force and motivation of most human activities. But the question, purpose, which Leibnitz was asking for, he was asking on higher plane, in abstraction.

Prabhupada: Higher plane means you are seeking after pleasure, but that is being obstructed. That is your position. You are seeking pleasure, but it is not unobstructed. Therefore you are seeking higher, where there is no obstruction. Pleasure is the purpose, but when you speak of higher plane, that means you are experiencing obstruction in getting pleasure. So you are seeking a platform where there is no obstruction. But the purpose is the same.

Guest (1): Must it necessarily be so? That would be so, supposing that we human beings are at the center of existence, and our criteria should be applied, measuring everything which exists. Now, the question, "Why there is anything?" is asked on the more higher level, in the sense, trying to forget about this answer for anthropocentric thinking.

Prabhupada: No, thinking. . .

Guest (1): This question relates to everything what may exist, other beings, other intelligences.

Prabhupada: This is a fact, that intelligent or not intelligent, that doesn't matter. Everyone is seeking pleasure, ananda. The Sanskrit word is ananda. So ananda. . . Suppose I am constructing a big house to live there, but before the construction is finished I am, by nature, I am taken away. I die. Just like Napoleon. That, in France, that Arc in Paris?

Devotee: Arc de Triumph.

Prabhupada: He could not finish. You see? There are so many things. We are thinking, "By finishing this, we shall be happy," but that is sometimes hampered. So ananda is checked. So this is the position. So higher means where ananda is not checked. That is higher position. The purpose is ananda, but in this material world we are experiencing ananda being checked.

Just like nobody wants to die. That's a fact. Why you shall die? I already discussed that I know that I was a child, I was a boy, I was a young man, and now I have got this body, old man's body. It is now going to finish. So I am little anxious. Now, whatever ananda I was drawing in my living condition, now it is going to be finished. But if we think properly that "I am eternal, so although the body will be finished, I'll not be finished. . . ." This is very natural, that "I was not finished. Because my childhood body was finished, so I was not finished. My boyhood body was not finished; I was not finished. My youthhood was finished, but I was not finished. " Similarly, the conclusion should be: "Even though this body will be finished, I'll not be finished. "

That is stated in the Bhagavad-gita, tatha dehantara praptir dhira tatra na muhyati. Dhira, one who is intelligent, he is not disturbed. Dhira tatra na muhyati. So dhira, one who is dhira, sober, philosopher, he knows that "I am not going to be finished. I shall have to accept another body. "

Now, whether that body will be ananda? That is the consideration. I'll get another body, just like I have got this body, after changing so many bodies. Moment after moment, we are changing body. That is the medical science, changing of blood corpuscles. So this body will be changed again.

Then I will have to enter the mother's womb and packed up for at least ten months in suffocated condition. This is scientific, all. Then again I'll come out when the body is prepared nicely to come out and exist. So that period of formation of body is not ananda. To remain compact in this way for ten months, it is not ananda. It is not ananda, just opposite ananda.

Then when we die. . . Die, death, means the miserable condition is so great that we cannot live. We have to go out. There is no ananda. Then, when we have got this body, changing, there is no ananda because we are sometimes diseased, and to become old man, that is also not ananda.

Therefore I am eternal. I am seeking after something which is eternal ananda. Therefore next consideration should be that "Whether this condition of repetition of birth, death, old age and disease can be changed?" That is next question. And if there is possibility, then we shall try for it. But there is possibility here.

The conclusion is: so long we get this material body. . . Because matter is not eternal. Anything you take, material--earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intelligence and false ego--these are all material things. So these material things, they are not eternal, none of them. This table is created; it is not eternal. It will be finished at a certain date, anything you take. But I am eternal. So if I transfer myself in another nature which is eternal, then my ananda will be eternal. That is the purpose of life.

Professor: No, but the point is the identity between atman and. . .

Prabhupada: Yes, I am atma. You are atma. Atma.

Professor: . . . the atman of the world, let's say, absolute. . .

Prabhupada: Yes. The atma and Paramatma, Paramatma. As I was speaking, nityo nityanam. We are all nityas, eternal, but there is one chief nitya. Just like leader. Everywhere we go, we have got a leader. Now, this, your Mexico state, there is a president. You cannot avoid it. In your college there is principal. There must be a leader. Similarly, the whole thing taken together, there must be one leader. You have to speak from experience that in your physical department or in your religious department there is a chief, leader, professor. Or you may be. But that is the way.

Therefore Vedic information is that we are eternal, but there is another eternal who is chief eternal. That is God. He is eternal; we are also eternal. Then what is difference? The difference is that eko yo bahunam vidadhati kaman: "That one eternal, chief eternal, He is maintaining all the subordinate eternals. " So both eternals are eternal and. . . The purpose is pleasure. Just like a small example, a family man. The father is the chief man in the family. The mother is there, the children are there, all together. But the father is the chief man in the family. He is maintaining the family, and there is ananda, pleasure. Similarly, ananda is the aim of both, all the eternals, the chief eternal or the subordinate eternal. But the supplier is the chief eternal. So when we come together, the chief eternal and the subordinate eternals, and enjoy together, that is the purpose of life.

Professor: According to existential philosophy or Indian philosophy, like for instance the Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and all that. . .

Prabhupada: They are not philosopher. They have no philosophy.

Professor: Eh?

Prabhupada: They have no philosophy.

Professor: I think you are also supporting the possibility to acquire knowledge through contact.

Prabhupada: Our position is--I have already explained--that we are all imperfect. Therefore we have to take knowledge from the perfect. So God is perfect, or Krsna is perfect, so we have to receive knowledge from Him. Then our knowledge is perfect. And so long we shall speculate, that is not perfect because you are speculating with imperfect instruments, what is the use? If I want to cut this table, I must have proper instrument. If I want to cut this table with this book, "Let me cut this," how it will be possible? You must know that for cutting this table it requires this instrument.

Professor: Yes, they say that the only way to acquire knowledge is through sabda.

Prabhupada: Yes. Sabda-pramana.

Professor: And I think other pramanas will be also possible according to those. . .

Prabhupada: Just like I am trying something, and some experienced man says, "Do like this. " This is sabda-pramana. The sabda-pramana, one who knows, he says, "Do like this. " The "Do like this," means sabda, sound, and it enters your ear, and you do adjustment. Therefore sabda-pramana. Just like you are sleeping, and one is,

another man is coming to kill you. And another friend says, "Get up, get up, get up! There is enemy. He is coming to kill you. " Then you wake up.

Therefore the sound is the pramana, there was enemy. These are crude examples. When you are asleep, you cannot understand. You have got eyes, you have got hands, you have legs but no experience, but the ear gives you warning even if you are sleeping. There is enemy, your eyes cannot see, your hand cannot touch, but the ear can give you evidence, "Yes. " As soon as you are awakened you say, "Yes, here is enemy. He is coming to kill me. " Therefore the aural reception, sound reception, is the evidence. Knowledge received through authentic sound vibration, that is perfect.

Guest (1): Let's just say I would like to ask a question in this way. We don't doubt what you said, the assumption that individual ego is eternal and also subordinate to that which is eternal, hierarchically higher, nevertheless is the part of that which is the eternal reality. And that is (indistinct) that which you later developed. Question, sir: Is this statement what you made, a statement of fact based on direct perception, or it is something what follows traditional belief and is just the axiomatic basis of your philosophy or similar other philosophies of axiomatic basis.

Prabhupada: No, this is axiomatic basis because you have to accept that your senses are imperfect. So you, by speculation, cannot have perfect knowledge. This is axiomatic truth.

Guest (1): With that epistemological truth, all right we may go along, and, as a matter of fact, doubt about the truths of direct sensual perception is the basis, one of models of scientific activity.

Prabhupada: Direct perception. . .

Guest (1): My question is, rather, this statement, this basic statement about eternal ego and so on, is a statement which you somehow give to us as revealed message, something what is. . . ,

Prabhupada: Yes, revealed.

Guest (1): . . . or is. . . ? Yes. Yes.

Prabhupada: Revealed. It is revealed. Hm? Just like in the Bhagavad-gita the vibration is coming from Krsna. Now, you practically realize it: "Yes, what is said is correct. " That is direct perception. First of all, you receive the message, and then apply your logic and see that it is fact. Therefore it is perfect. When you receive the knowledge and when you directly apply it to your perception, when you see it is correct, that is the proof that the message which you received, that is correct.

Professor: Very difficult to have proofs of that, where the eternality of your own atman for instance, things of that. . .

Prabhupada: That is called realization. Yes. First of all you receive the sound, then apply your instruments, and when you find it, it is correct--that is the realization. So our process is to receive knowledge from the perfect. That's all. We are not perfect.

But the knowledge we are getting, that is perfect. So according to that perfect direction, if we mold our life, then we are successful.

Otherwise you go on experimenting, speculating. Ciram vicinvan. Ciram, you understand, "perpetually," vicinvan, "thinking. " Ciram vicinvan.

athapi te deva padambuja-dvaya- prasada-lesanugrhita eva hi

janati tattvam (bhagavan mahimno) na canya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan

What is the use of speculating with imperfect senses? Useless waste of time.

Professor: (indistinct)

Prabhupada: But that is the tendency of modern. . . They do not accept that their senses are imperfect. They want to see something, distant place, with microscope. . . What is called? Telescope. Telescope. But the telescope is manufactured by you. It is imperfect.

Professor: But I would say that even in India, where ancient tradition. . . They would propose how to arrange our telescopes to be able to see more correctly.

Prabhupada: You have to see. . . That. . . Vedic injunction says, sastra-caksusa. Sastra-caksusa: "Your eyes should be the sastra. " There is another crude example. Just like who is your father? How do you understand? Through the vibration of the mother. The mother says, "He is your father. " You accept it. Otherwise there is no experiment.

So things which are beyond your perception, beyond your defective senses, that should not be speculated. Na tams tarkena yojayet. Acintya khalv ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet. These are the injunction. What is beyond your perception, beyond your speculation, don't waste your time so-called argument and logic. What is argument? Mother says, "He is your father. " Where is the argument? You cannot apply any argument.

Professor: No, I said old tradition in India has been going on into argument itself.

Prabhupada: No, argument you can go on, but if you want to know the truth it will not be attained by argument because argument is also within your thinking power: thinking, feeling, willing. So if your thinking, feeling, willing is imperfect, what is the use of your argument? What is the use of your so-called advancement of knowledge? Basically, if the senses, knowledge acquiring senses, are imperfect, then how you can get perfect knowledge?

Professor: Well, then what do we with all techniques, all systems, that have been developed? I am thinking only India, I am not thinking other places, and all the old tradition, since Sankara onwards, of different ways to think, to study, to go deeply to all these relations between. . .

Prabhupada: Sankara has interpreted. Sankara has interpreted by his limited knowledge. So that is not perfect knowledge. Therefore we don't accept Sankara's philosophy.

Professor: But I said if he belongs to the same tradition, and you belong to the other. . .

Prabhupada: That tradition is nothing. Tradition is just temporary. You make your tradition; he makes your tradition. That is another thing. But the, fact is fact. That is not dependent on tradition. Tradition we can make, tradition. "We believe. " Just like somebody says, "We believe. " What is the use of such saying, "We believe"? You may believe something which is not fact.

Professor: Yes, but we could say that since the Upanisads and later, all things have been sustaining the thing which you have just said a moment ago, that there exists an identity between atman and Brahman.

Prabhupada: Identity is there. That, therefore, I have already said, nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam. Both of them are identical so far nitya is concerned or cetana is concerned, but one is dependent, and other is maintainer. That is difference. Both of them are truth. Both of them truth. You are truth; I am truth. You are living; I am living, existing. This is truth. This is truth, but you are professor and I am something else. That is temporary. But so far you are, as living being, and I am, as living being, that is truth. But your dress and my dress, that is temporary. So we have to understand like that.

In this material world we are mixed up with temporary and eternal. The living entity is eternal, but his body is temporary. This is the position. So the problem is: why the eternal has got temporary things? That is hampering his ananda. Just like I am sitting here. Now, if somebody says, "Now you'll have to die and accept another body," this is not very pleasing to me. Or even I am sitting in this apartment, and somebody. . . , "No, you change your apartment. Come. Come here. " Again I change another apartment. So I'll seek after: "Why I am changing this apartment? Is it not possible to get an eternal apartment?" That should be the brahma-jijnasa. That is. . . Vedanta-sutra first says, athato brahma-jijnasa. "Why I am subjected to this change?" That is intelligence. "Why not eternal apartment if I am eternal?" That is intelligence.

Professor: Did you say that for the atman, are part of the eternal? For the atman, it is. . . A need for the being is for the purpose, ananda.

Prabhupada: Ananda, yes.

Professor: That means he is inquiring. . .

Prabhupada: Nature, nature ananda.

Professor: This other thing, they have it because of lila, pleasure, playing.

Prabhupada: That is also ananda. Just like somebody goes within the water. Nowadays it has become a fashion. What is that? Go within the water?

Devotee: Diving.

Prabhupada: But he does not belong to the water, but he takes some pleasure.

Professor: He needs the pleasure.

Prabhupada: Therefore he's seeking pleasure. That is the real aim. Therefore he's going into the water. He has no business to go to the water, but because he is seeking pleasure--"Let me see if there is some pleasure. Experiment. " That's all. But he does not get. . . Just like they are going to the moon planet, moon planet: "Let us see. " Because there is no ananda, he is seeking another type of ananda. And now they have failed. Now they're going to Venus or what?

Devotees: Mars.

Prabhupada: Mars. This is going on. Bhutva bhutva praliyate. He's not seeking after where is eternal happiness. He's. . . Temporarily, he's seeking here, there. Bhutva bhutva praliyate. In this way his life is finished, seeking ananda, and he gets another body, another term. So his intelligence is not coming to the point that "What is this ananda? I am eternal. I am seeking eternal ananda. Why this ananda? Sometimes this body, sometimes this position, sometimes that position--what is this?" That is intelligence.

Professor: I understand it very well from the point of view of particular individual and atman. . .

Prabhupada: Individual, we are part and parcel. The same thing: the supreme eternal, and we, means subordinate eternal. We are of the same quality. Quality is the same but quantity different. Therefore our knowledge quantity and his knowledge quantity different. Therefore we should take knowledge from Him, who has large quantity of knowledge. We have got tiny quantity of. . . This is the difference. He is also cognizant, I am also cognizant, but his knowledge is vast, unlimited; my knowledge is tiny. Therefore, if I want to know more, we should know from Him. That is perfect knowledge. Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet srotiyam brahma-nistham. This is the process.

Professor: May I ask a personal question?

Prabhupada: No, first of all, our basic principle is pleasure. So whatever gives pleasure, we accept. That is natural. But in the material world, they take material pleasure, but we are for spiritual pleasure. So as soon as we speak of pleasure, there must be varieties. Without. . . Variety is the mother of enjoyment. So the only thing is that the material pleasure, that is temporary. It is finished after certain period, and spiritual means eternal.

So our endeavor is to transfer ourself from this material pleasure to the spiritual pleasure. But the pleasure is the aim, either in this material world or in the spiritual world. This is. . . Anandamayo 'bhyasat. This is the Vedic. . . Our position is anandamaya, to remain in pleasure. But here in this material world, the body is temporary, and everything is temporary. Therefore pleasure is temporary.

Guest (1): The question is, well, Vedic idea that knowledge, human knowledge, is imperfect, does that not then go along. . . Of course, we are limited by, all time by biological limitation and so on. But this statement, that there is perfect knowledge, that it can be acquired, and that there are some people who did acquire it, that's very strong statement indeed, and my question is of the practical nature. How one can know that given source of supposed spiritual truth is an actual truth? Is there any technique how one can get to it?

Prabhupada: That I have already said, that you take the vibration from the Vedic knowledge and you experiment it. Observation and experiment, that is scientific. So first of all observation and then experiment. And when you are satisfied by experiment, then it is perfect knowledge.

Guest (1): If I am satisfied? Can I rely that much on myself?

Prabhupada: Anyone can do, provided he knows the art how to do it. It is a technique also. You cannot make experiment as a crude man. You must be expert. But it is. . . In our Caitanya-caritamrta you'll find that there is a statement, caitanyera dayara katha karaha vicara: "Just try to make an experiment on the mercy of Lord Caitanya. " Vicara karile citte pabe camatkara: "When you make an experiment, then you'll be awe-full 'Oh, it is so nice. "' So it is not to be accepted blindly.

Professor: Can one perceive by their own senses what is that. . . ?

Prabhupada: No, you have to see through the eyes of the sastra, but God has given you the instrument by which you can make an experiment. Yes. The same thing, as it is stated. . . Find out that verse from Bhagavad-gita, dehino 'smin yatha dehe. (break) This is the statement. Now you make experiment. You have got physical laboratory. (laughter)

Guest (1): It would be rather difficult, I'm afraid.

Prabhupada: That you must know the, how it can be experiment. It is given. The example is given that. . . What is that? "As the child is passing"?

Hrdayananda: "As the embodied soul continually passes in this body from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. "

Prabhupada: That's it. Now, this is a fact. Everyone knows that body is changing. Now, how the last body's changed? That you make experiment, how it is passing. Yes. To make experiment means you have to know the science how to make experiment. That is knowledge. You take the basic principle of knowledge, and then you make your experiment and you will know this is perfect.

Guest (1): Is there any direct line of division between that which you would call knowledge and that what you call religion?

Prabhupada: Religion, as it is passing on at the present moment, "a kind of faith," this is not religion. This is not religion. According to. . . Religion means dharma, the characteristic. Just like you are eating something salty, something sweet. So the

sugar, the characteristic, it is sweet. That is religion. And the salt is salty. The chili is pungent. So these characteristic is religion. So you'll have to find out religion, what is your real characteristic. That is religion. Now, religion is going, "I believe in this way. " That is another thing, sentiment. Religion without philosophy is sentiment, and philosophy without religion, mental speculation. Those two things must be combined, philosophy and sentiment. Then it is religion. (end)

*Auckland, New Zealand*

*6 December 2003*

### ***What is Mayavadi Philosophy?***

#### ***An Outlined Analysis and Refutation***

I. Introduction: This outline will deal with 4 topics:

A. What is Mayavada philosophy?

B. How to defeat it with their own arguments.

C. How to defeat it with Bhagavata arguments.

D. The historical background of the rise of Shankara's Mayavadi Vedanta in India.

II. Mayavada philosophy is very old.

A. Even the 4 Kumaras were impersonalists.

B. Any person in Maya is naturally a Mayavadi.

1. If you want to defeat someone you should know his philosophy.

2. We should know Mayavadi philosophy

a. for preaching.

b. for our own benefit as well, because we also are contaminated by it.

c. and because pure devotional service means jnanam-karmani-anavrtam.

i. Jnana is of 3 kinds: knowledge of self, God and oneness.

ii. The knowledge of oneness is the jnana that is not acceptable in Vaisnava philosophy. Knowledge of self and God explains everything nicely, including the oneness too. No need of such a separate department of monistic knowledge.

III. Elements of Mayavada philosophy:

A. It is also called Vivartavada (lit. "superimpositionism").

1. arthadhyasa - superimposition of one object on another.

2. jnanadhyasa - imposition of illusion upon oneself.

3. For this superimposition to happen, there must be

a. Senses.

b. An abnormal situation (e.g. darkness).

c. Experience.

d. An example of above three components: seeing a rope as a snake in the darkness.

B. Philosophical proofs, and which philosophers accept them:

1. Direct perception--pratyaksa is accepted by Charvakas.
2. Inference--anumana + 1 is accepted by Buddhists.
  - a. Hypothesis = there is fire on the mountain.
  - b. Cause (hetu) = because there is smoke there.
  - c. Example = Where there is smoke, there is fire.
  - d. Review of cause = The mountain has smoke...
  - e. Conclusion = ...therefore the mountain has fire.
3. Sabdha (spiritual sound) + 1&2 is accepted by Vaishnavas.
4. Arthavati (similarity) + 1-3 is accepted by logicians.
  - a. "Have you seen a blue cow?"
  - b. "No, but I would know one if I did" (cow +blue).
5. Arthapatti: "This fat man does not eat in the day therefore he must eat at night."  
(Logicians)
6. Abhava (nonexistence) + 1-5 is accepted by Mayavadis.
  - a. Nonexistence means: "There is no cow here."
  - b. It is a kind of knowledge based on the absence of knowledge or perception of something.

C. Four categories within Mayavadi Philosophy:

1. Sat = existence (Brahman).
2. Asat = nonexistence (horns on rabbit).
3. Sat-asat = something that exists for a time, then ceases to exist.
4. Anirvachaniya = neither 1-3, i.e. Maya (which makes one think a rope is a snake. Inexplicable, illusiory).

D. Levels of perception according to Shankaracharya:

1. Paramarthika - transcendental (Brahman).
2. Vyavaharika - "practical".
3. Pratibhasika - apparent, but illusory (like dreaming).
  - a. One must go from this stage to next higher.
  - b. When coming to second stage, individuality remains.
  - c. But at highest stage, individuality is erased.

E. Maya:

1. Maya is inexplicable; example - a dumb person cannot describe the taste of rasgulla, but still there is taste. Brahman is covered by Maya, but don't ask why.
2. Two stages of Maya:
  - a. Covering with illusion; that's simply Maya.
  - b. Distorting with ignorance (avidya).
3. When Maya covers Brahman with illusion, Iswara-consciousness appears. He is conditioned to be the Lord.
4. When Brahman is further distorted by avidya, jiva consciousness appears. Avidya makes the subtle body.
5. There is no transformation in this process, only imposition (of a false conception).
6. When illusion and ignorance are dispelled, no state of any describable existence remains.
7. Mayavadi story: Vyasadeva sent Sukadeva to learn from Janaka. Janaka said to Sukadeva, "Give me my dakshina before I teach you anything, because after you learn this teaching, you will reject everything, including me (the Guru)."

F. Example of Mayavadi logic:

1. Brahman "reflects" into Maya. Q: But how? If it reflects (e.g. moon on water) it must have a form.
2. A: First understand that Brahman is not a substance, so rules like that don't apply to it.
3. And apart from that, consider an object or substance that has qualities. Form is one such quality. But does form have form?
4. Q. What are you saying, 'Does form have form?'
5. A. When you see a shadow or reflection, what is being reflected - form or substance?
6. Q. Well - the form.
7. So the form is not the substance. Form is what is reflected, but that form is different from the substance.

G. Jayatirtha Muni gives this example of Mayavadi process: just as when a person has a bad dream, the dream wakes him up; similarly, though the Mayavadi philosophy is still "maya", it can wake one up out of illusion.

H. Two schools of Mayavadi philosophy.

1. One accepts only Upanisads, Vedanta and Bhagavad-gita (prasthan-traya).
2. But the so-called Bhagavat-sampradaya (with acaryas like Citsukhacarya and Madhusudana Sarasvati) accept Puranas, Ramayana, etc. Just as Mayavadis in general are more dangerous than Buddhists, the Bhagavat-sampradaya is most dangerous of all. They even accept Krishna's form is spiritual, but say that when He returns to the Paramvyoma, His form "dissolves" into Brahman. First school would argue Krishna's form is material.

I. Bhag Tyag Lakshana:

1. Bhag (person).
2. Tyag (give up)
3. I.e. Now you have this designation; give it up.
  - a. On wall of Vaishnava temple, a Mayavadi wrote "So'ham" (I am Him).
  - b. A devotee came later and added Da, "DaSo'ham" (I am His servant).
  - c. Mayavadi returned, added Sa for SaDaSo'ham (I am eternally Him).
  - d. Devotee returned again and added Da for DaSaDaSo'ham (I am the servant of His servant).

#### IV. Weaknesses of Mayavadi Philosophy.

A. Their "Brahman" and Vyasadeva's Brahman are not the same.

1. Their Brahman is the Brahmajyoti.
2. Vyasadeva's Brahman is Krishna, the Purushottama.
3. Because they have no interest in Krishna, their Brahman categorically has no reality (it is wrongly defined from the outset).
  - a. Vyasa used the word Brahman as we use the word "God."
  - b. It is a general term, used to create interest among as many people as possible (even those who are averse to Krishna).

B. They speak of "Sarvikalpa jnana" and "Nirvikalpa jnana", but these are actually the same thing.

1. Example of approaching a mountain from a distance - at each stage, the same entity is being viewed.
2. But Mayavadis say the far-off vision of a great shape on the horizon is of a different thing than the close-up view of the mountain.

C. They interpret Sanskrit words inaccurately to fit their own ideas.

1. Lord is "asarira." They say this means He has no sarira or body; but the root of the word sarira means "decay", so the word really refers to a body that decays, not simply a body.

2. Lord is "akarana." They say this means He has no senses; but this word really means that His senses are not energized by something else (e.g. as our material senses are energized by life energy) because He is directly His own form.

D. They interpret "He desired to become many" as meaning the progression from Brahman-Iswara-Jiva; but it is the Iswara who has the desire to become many. How the desireless Brahman desired to become the Iswara they do not explain.

E. If Brahman is all-pervading, where is Maya?

F. How is the Brahman cut into individual parcels of consciousness?

G. Mayavadis say, "By knowledge (jnana), one becomes Brahman."

1. But they also say that jnana and ajnana are Maya.

2. So you may remove your ajnana with jnana, but then with what will you remove the jnana?

3. To this they answer, "It is by the mercy of Brahman." (!)

H. They say Brahman is without energy (shakti). Then how does it exist? (No answer).

I. Snake and Rope:

1. In order for this example to have validity, the person must have prior knowledge of both "what is a rope" and "what is a snake." How can undifferentiated Brahman have prior knowledge of Maya, which it then mistakes itself to be?

2. Besides that, in this example, the rope and snake are both real things, and that's why the illusion is effective. And since the illusion is effective, it is also true, i.e. the consequences of that illusion are no less effective than if the rope was really a snake (I'm scared, I scream, run away, etc.).

J. They say Maya is like a dream, but there's no continuity in our dreams from one night to the next. In the waking state we find day-to-day continuity. So to compare this life to a mere dream is facile.

K. Why is this illusion so consistent, if it is just hallucination? Why doesn't illusion come us to in other ways, e.g. instead of Brahman is the world (rope is snake), why not the world is Brahman (snake is rope)?

L. Mayavadis say one can only achieve liberation after death. Then his individuality ceases forever.

1. But how does this relate to their favorite rope/snake analogy? One man lights a lamp and sees that the snake is really just a rope; another man runs off, frightened, never knowing it was an illusion. How are these two men different in their essential existence?

M. Who suffers in hell, the soul or the body?

1. Mayavadi may answer, "the body suffers only."

2. But the body is matter, is it not?

3. Yes.

4. How can dead matter suffer?

5. Then it must be the soul that suffers.

6. Then you are saying Brahman suffers? But your philosophy says there's no suffering in Brahman.

N. Upanishads say that nothing can attach itself to Brahman and it cannot be described in words. Shankara says these statements form the complete description of Brahman.

1. Sankara says take these descriptions literally.

2. How? By hearing these words, don't the Mayavadis become attached to Brahman?

O. Katha Upanishad 3.11: Above the jagat is avyakta, above avyakta is Purusha, and beyond Him is nothing else.

V. A look at Jiva Goswami's refutations of Mayavadi Philosophy:

A. He established the Srimad Bhagavatam as the shastric reference par excellence.

1. Brhad Aranyaka Upanishad 2.41 - 4 Vedas, Itihasa and Puranas have come from breath of Narayana.

2. Chandogya Upanishad 3.15.7 - 4 Vedas, Itihasas and Puranas are 5th Veda.

a. 4 cows and 1 buffalo are never grouped as a herd of 5 cows, because a buffalo is not a cow.

b. 5 cows means 5 cows.

3. Mahabharata says "Puranas make Vedas complete."

4. Shankaracharya's guru's guru wrote a commentary on a book that cited slokas from the Srimad Bhagavatam.

5. Garuda Purana says "artho 'yam brahma sutranam": Bhagavat Purana gives meaning of Vedanta-sutra, Gayatri and the 4 Vedas.

6. Srimad Bhagavatam is the ripened fruit of the tree of the Vedic scriptures.

7. Srimad Bhagavatam is Veda: "it is compiled by the Lord Himself."

8. Sukadeva Goswami was a Brahmajnani who became a devotee. Vyasadeva compiled the Bhagavatam only for Sukadeva, because only he could understand it (his other disciples were not qualified).

a. Sukadeva ran away as soon as he was born. Vyasa told his other disciples to chant 3 verses from the Srimad Bhagavatam in order to attract him back to the ashram (they were to chant these verses out loud when entering the forest to gather firewood or fetch water).

b. Thus Sukadeva was attracted and returned to learn Srimad Bhagavatam at the feet of his father. He cannot be attracted by anything material. Therefore S.B. has something higher than even Brahman realization (atmarama verse).

B. Srimad Bhagavatam establishes Krishna as the Param Brahman.

1. Hiranyakashipu used the "neti neti" process to negate any possible chance of his being killed by an enemy when he requested a boon from Lord Brahma.

a. He left no chance that any type of entity within the material world could harm him.

b. Practically he left only the Brahman. And that Brahman came as Narasimha and destroyed him; thus Lord Nrsimhadeva is the Supreme Brahman.

2. Sridhar Swami commented on "krishna stu bhagavan", "narayana eva." But Srila Jiva Goswami established Lord Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

3. In the wrestling arena, everyone saw Krishna differently. The yogis saw Him as the Tattva Paramam (Supreme Truth).

4. The pastime of Lord Damodar shows how the Supreme is unlimited, yet has a body.

5. Devaki said, "That Brahman, jyoti...etc. that all the impersonalists (jnanis and yogis) are seeking is You."

VI. Vadiraja's Refutations of Key Tenets of Mayavadi Philosophy.

A. Vadiraja comes in the line of Madhvacharya. He lived in the 16th century. He is said to have lived for 120 years.

## B. How Vadiraja exposed Mayavadi misinterpretations:

1. Vadiraja showed how Mayavadis have taken the "neti-neti" statement out of context.

a. They say "not this, not this" means "not jiva, not jada" (Brahman is neither the individual soul, nor matter - therefore, since only Brahman exists, jiva and jada must be unreal).

b. But they've derived "neti-neti" from Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.22, which states: "For the desire for sons is the desire for wealth and the desire for wealth the desire for worlds; both these are, indeed, desires only. This Self is not this, not this."

c. This verse is stating that the Self (atman) is not to be had by desiring wealth or worlds. The direct meaning is sufficient; the "jada-jiva" interpretation is without foundation.

2. The meaning of "advaita":

a. Mayavadis take "advaita" (not dual) to mean that Brahman has no difference. Therefore undifferentiated oneness is the only truth.

b. But the context is found in Chandogya Upanishad 6.2.1&2 - "In the beginning, my dear, this was Being, one only, without a second."

c. Vadiraja showed that "one without a second" means, according to grammar and logic, "one Being without a second Being", or "He has no second", i.e. there is only one God. But this does not mean that some thing or things below God can't be distinguished from Him.

i. If the the word "advitiam" as it appears in this verse actually means that nothing except undifferentiated Brahman exists, then the very text from which the word comes would be unreal, as it is a feature of the realm of difference.

ii. Thus the validity of the text would be destroyed by the very philosophy the Mayavadis ascribe to it.

iii. He proved his point further with this example - if one says "The lotus is blue", he does not mean to say that "lotus" and "blue" are exact synonyms. He means that blueness is a quality of the lotus. Similarly, when shastra says "Brahman is everything", "everything" and "Brahman" are not exact synonyms, rather "everything" (souls and matter) are qualities of Brahman. Or, as blueness is a quality inseparable from the lotus, so we are inseparable from Brahman (but as Brahman has qualities we don't have, still there is distinction in this inseparability).

3. Vadiraja points out that Mayavadis say that both practical life and the scriptures are on the vyavaharika platform - which means both are ultimately unreal. Yet they honor the scriptures and honor sattvik life as dispellers of illusion.

a. In practical life, what is "true" is what works, i.e. what brings good results. What is "untrue" breeds bad results. But a Mayavadi cannot distinguish between these two categories of action. Thus even on their so-called vyavaharika platform, they have no ultimate reference for deciding what is auspicious and what is inauspicious.

b. For example, using a Mayavadi analogy, the Mayavadis are not able to explain the difference between a man who sees that there is no silver in a silvery shell and the man who thinks that silver is there.

i. They will say the man who discovered his error is conventionally correct (vyavaharika), and the man who did not is under pratibhasika illusion.

ii. But the main thing is, both are in ultimate illusion. Now, the silvery shell analogy is used by them to illustrate how one comes out of ULTIMATE illusion and attains the truth (paramarthika). Yet, using their own doctrine as the test, this example proves itself invalid. So what are we left with?

4. Vadiraja compares the Mayavadis with Paundraka. He asks, "If Mayavadi philosophy is so pregnant with Truth, why did Krishna and His associates in Dwaraka laugh derisively when they heard Paundraka's letter, which simply made the same claims as the Mayavadi philosophers? Why did Shukadeva Goswami, when reciting this event to Maharaja Parikshit before the learned assembly of great saints and sages, censure Paundraka repeatedly? Why did Vyasa, who wrote this narration down, also not come to the rescue of this doctrine?" Especially since the Mayavadis would hold that Krishna, His court, Shukadeva, Parikshit, the assembly of sages and Vyasa were actually all Mayavadis too.

5. How Mayavadis explain the perception of this world:

a. Brahman is the only reality.

b. When we see an object (e.g. a silvery shell), it is nothing other than the Brahman-consciousness itself appearing in that way.

c. But Brahman appears like a shell because of upadhi (designation) that is superimposed upon it.

d. Still, Pure Consciousness shines through the upadhi, making the object perceivable to our minds and senses.

e. This phenomenon of appearance is happening because Brahman is obscured by avidya.

f. Before avidya can be removed, a vritti (modification) of the viewer's mind must destroy the avidya surrounding the silvery shell when the senses make contact with

it. This vritti is compared to a canal through which pure consciousness flows to envelop the object in right understanding.

g. When that happens, Brahman is mirrored in the vritti which then lights up the object, revealing its true identity with Brahman. Note: in this philosophy, the senses do not perceive the object. Nor even the mind. Nor the vritti, for the vritti is but a key that unlocks the door behind which is the floodlight of Brahman, which is the only consciousness.

i. Who perceives the object? The Mayavadi answers that the jiva (individual soul) does.

ii. But the jiva is verily Brahman, who thinks himself an individual due to avidya

iii. By seeing the object in its true light, the jiva knows its oneness with Brahman.

6. Vadiraja probes the Mayavadi explanation of perception:

a. If in the example of the silvery shell, only the Brahman-consciousness is perceiving, then how can the shell be seen in two ways?

i. If the origin of the phenomenon "silvery shell" is one and only one, why is it sometimes seen as a shell, and sometimes as silver?

ii. The only "real" mechanism available to explain this (since shell, avidya, jiva, senses, mind, and even vritti are illusory) is that Brahman is "shining forth." For this, Shankara has quoted a verse that appears in three Upanishads (Katha 2.2.15, Mundaka 2.2.15, Shvetashvatara 6.14): "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, much less this fire. After Him when He shines everything shines; by the light of Him all this is lighted."

b. Still, there is no reason for the silver shell illusion in the statement, "Brahman shines forth", nor in the quotes given to support the statement.

c. Mayavadis say maya has two powers - veiling and projecting. When it obscures Brahman, it exercises the first potency, and when it projects an object (the shell) onto consciousness, the second potency is exercised. But what about the illusion of silver in the shell? That is not explained.

d. Vadiraja asks another question: Mayavadis say the object is a "part" of Brahman, and that the perceiver of the object is likewise a "part" of Brahman, each "part" arising out of the avidya-covering of the whole. So how does the one "part" get transferred to the other (the object to the perceiving consciousness)? Because, in Mayavadi philosophy, these two "parts" are dealt with as being two separate manifestations of Brahman, i.e. Mayavadis do not say the object and perceiver are identical with each other, but that both are identical with Brahman.

e. Mayavadis have an answer: the object is imposed upon the perceiver by means of the vritti (mental adjustment). But then Vadiraja is quick to point out that the

vritti was first postulated as the means of illumination. Now it is being used as the cause for an illusory perception of an object as well. So what is the need of saying the object is a manifestation of Brahman? The vritti (mental adjustment) gives rise to both illusion and liberation.

f. The Mayavadis give material objects too much reality by identifying them with Brahman; on the other hand, they give them too little reality by saying they are illusions.

g. Mayavadis say there is a shakti of avidya called jadatmika avidyashaktih, and this potency transforms itself into the visible material manifestations of objects. But this avidya is said to be destroyed upon enlightenment (i.e. when the vrittih illumines the object). So, when ignorance is destroyed, then the jadatmika shakti must also be destroyed, and so it follows that the object itself would be destroyed.

i. One Mayavadi commentator, Bharatitirtha, has an answer of sorts to this penetration of their philosophy. He says there are two kinds of ignorance: one which is covering the jiva and another which covers the Lord. The jiva-ignorance (pratibhasika) is removable when an object shines forth, but the Lord-ignorance (vyavaharika) is removed only at the time of liberation (or death).

ii. But Bharatitirtha says this distinction between illusions is vyavaharika (or illusory).

h. Since ignorance is destroyed, but the object remains even after enlightenment, then it follows that the object is the supreme Brahman; in other words, Brahman is maya. There is no need for Mayavadis to postulate their elaborate theories of how Brahman is covered by ignorance, etc. The bottom line is: Brahman is maya - which runs directly against all shastra.

i. Another evidence of this is - the vritti is the cause of enlightenment as well as ignorance. This vritti is also maya. So maya gives both illusion and knowledge.

j. The Mayavadis have two theories regarding world-appearance: 1) superimposition and 2) the material causality of ignorance (the aforementioned jadatmika avidyashaktih). These theories are mutually exclusive: one demands that ignorance be destroyed (by the vritti) for objects to appear; the other demands that ignorance be present for objects to exist.

k. Vadiraja says, "unintelligibility is not only the trademark of your ignorance, it is also the trademark of your methodology." He's spoofing the Mayavadi Vimuktatman (13th century) who wrote "Unintelligibility is the trademark of ignorance, not an objection to it"; i.e., you can't hold our philosophy accountable for being unintelligible because it is describing an avidya which is unintelligible.

## 7. Other arguments:

a. The Mayavadis attribute no qualities or powers to Brahman. Avidya creates an illusion of separate identity from Brahman; their example is that Brahman is like space, and avidya is like a pot. Vadiraja asks, "then from where do activities arise? Does the space in a pot exhibit activities?"

b. Since Mayavadis have no answer for this, it would appear that they are postulating a completely different consciousness for each embodied being, consciousnesses which in turn are different from the impersonal Brahman. Then what good is their adherence to oneness of consciousness of all beings?

## VII. A historical comparison of Vaisnava-vedanta, Mayavadi-vedanta and Buddhism.

A. Many uninformed people think "Vedanta" is synonymous with Shankaracharya's Mayavadi Advaita-Vedanta. But originally Vedanta meant Vaisnava-vedanta. The Vedanta-sutras were compiled by Vyasadeva, a Vaisnava. The Srimad Bhagavatam is the natural commentary on the Vedanta-sutra, written by Vyasadeva himself 5000 years ago.

1. The philosophy of Shankaracharya (usually said to have been born about 600 AD), is really just Buddhism in disguise, as explained by Padma Purana (mayavada-asacchastram pracchanam baudham ucyate).

2. This can be demonstrated by the chronology of key Mayavadi philosophical explanations, which appear first in Buddhist scriptures and later show up in the philosophy of Shankara and his followers.

B. With the advent of the Age of Quarrel (Kali-yuga), the six systems of Vedic philosophy (i.e. Nyaya, Vaishesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Karma Mimamsa and Brahma Mimamsa) which were originally the different departments of Vedic study like the departments of study at a university, began to compete with one another.

C. By the time of the Buddha (usually said to be 500 BC), philosophical disputation between the six schools had become rampant all over India. The philosophy of the Buddhists as well as the Jains are spin-offs of the quarrels of the six systems.

1. Both Buddhism and Jainism combine different aspects of the six systems, and both reject the authority of the Vedic scriptures, because the constant bickering of the Vedic philosophers had already undermined the force of Vedic authority among the people.

2. Buddha descended to lead people away from Vedic scholarship and ritualism, which atheistic-minded brahmanas had turned into dry mental speculation and animal slaughter. In reaction against these brahmanas, the Buddhist metaphysical

conclusion is Shunyavada (voidism), and the ethical conclusion is Ahimsa (nonviolence).

D. Vedanta according to early Buddhist records.

1. It is clear from Buddhist scriptures that "Vedanta" was originally synonymous with Vaishnava-vedanta.

a. Certain pre-Shankara Buddhist scriptures contain descriptions of the teachings of philosophers who used to argue against the Buddhists. These scriptures were originally in Sanskrit, but now only exist in Chinese and Tibetan translations.

b. The Abhidharma-mahavibhasha-shastra (written around 150 A.D.) and the Satyasiddhishastra (250 A.D.) say that the followers of the Vedas and Upanishads believe in the Mahapurusha, who existed before the world began and exists within the heart of all creatures with a form the size of a thumb. The Abidharma-mahavibhasha-shastra says that the followers of the Vedas believe that "All that exists is nothing but purusha. All that happens is caused by the transformation of the self-existent Ishwara."

c. In a work called Shastra by Aryadeva, Vedantists are portrayed as those who believe that the world was created by Brahma, who appeared from the navel of Vishnu.

d. In the Tattvasamgraha, the Buddhist writer Kamalashila equates "Vedavadin" with "Purushavadin."

e. The Buddhist writer Bhavya in the Madhyamaka-hrdaya- karika describes the Vedanta philosophy as "Bhedabheda" ("one-and-different") philosophy [Gaudiya Vaisnavas call their own philosophy Acintya Bhedabheda-tattva].

f. Conclusion: Pre-Shankara Vedantism was personal (aimed at knowing Vishnu) and did not hold to a doctrine of "all-is-illusion-only".

2. In Buddhist scriptures like the Mahaparinirvana-sutra and the Lankavatara sutra the seeds of Sankara's Mayavadi philosophy are found.

a. There are four main schools of Buddhist philosophical thought, which appeared one after the other before Shankara's Mayavadi philosophy.

i. Vaibhashika, or direct realism.

ii. Sautrantika, or representationalism.

iii. Vijnanavada, or subjective idealism.

iv. Shunyavada, or voidism.

b. Sri Yamunacharya, writing in Siddhitraya, and Ramanujacharya in his Sribhasya, have both pointed out the similarities between Shankara's Mayavada and Vijnanavada. Vallabhacharya also mentioned the same point.

c. The Shunyavada philosophy teaches that shunya (void) is an inexpressible and transcendent truth (a concept echoed in Shankara's explanation of Brahman). The Vijnanavada school teaches that consciousness is the only truth and that the world we perceive is illusion. Mayavada says the same.

i. Moreover, in the Lankavatara-sutra, Shunyavada is expressed in terms that resemble Upanishadic language: nishthabhava param brahma ("the Supreme Brahman is the ultimate state of existence"). This work also asserts that the words Brahman, Vishnu and Ishwara are other names for the Buddha-consciousness.

ii. Shunyavada had an influence on the members of the Brahminical community who were atheistic at heart. Gradually this began to influence Vedanta scholarship. Mayavada began to appear in Vedanta commentaries even before Shankaracharya; for example, in the writings of Gaudapada.

3. That Mayavada had appropriated for itself the salient features of shunyavada was not unnoticed by the Buddhists themselves.

a. In a Chinese version of the Mahaparinirvana-sutra, written after Buddhism was driven out of India, we find the following note regarding the state of affairs of Buddhist philosophy in India of that time: "Nowadays there are some remaining teachings of Buddha that were stolen by Brahmins and written into their own commentaries."

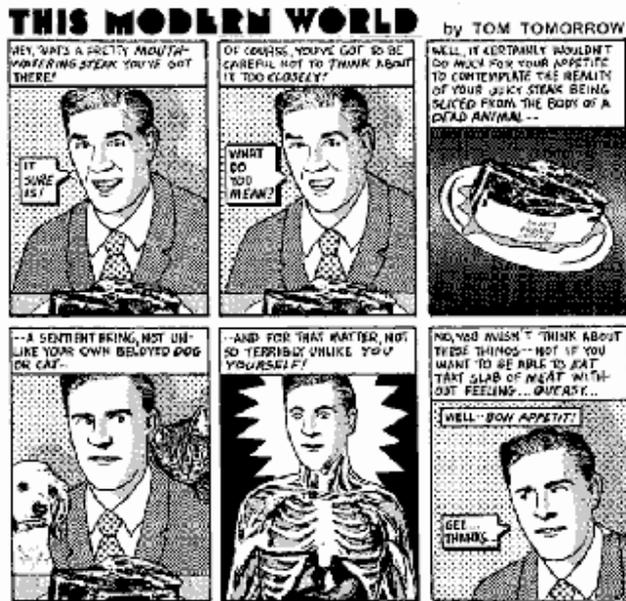
b. A Buddhist writer by the name of Bhartrhari, who lived about the same time as Shankaracharya, wrote that Shankara had similar ideas as did he and other Buddhist philosophers of that time.

4. Furthermore, we find in the writings of early Mayavadis a self-conscious defense against the charge that their philosophy is simply Buddhism in new dress.

a. One, Shriharsha, in a work called Khandanakhandakhadya, says that while Buddhism says the world of multiplicity is false, we Mayavadis say the world of multiplicity is non-dual, or advaita.

b. But that's a poor defense, because Mayavadis also say Brahma satya, jagan mithya ("Brahman is truth, the world is illusion"). And Buddhists say enlightenment means understanding pratitya-samutpada, or "conditioned co-production", which is a monistic theory of the world. It argues that all phenomena are inseparably entangled with one another: a thing is not a separate reality that becomes the source of another thing which after its creation exists independently of the first creator-thing. Rather, the two things define one another. For example: Buddhist philosophy teaches that ignorance sets into motion an ever-turning causal cycle of twelve phases: 1) past impressions (samskaras), 2) initial awareness (vijnana), 3) the psychophysical organism (namarupa), 4) the six organs of cognition (sadayatana),

5) the contact of the senses with their objects (sparsa), 6) previous sense experience (vedana), 7) thirst to enjoy (trsna), 8) mental attachment (upadana), 9) the will to be (bhava), 10) birth (jati), 11) old age and death (jamarana), and 12) ignorance again. Any one of these twelve cannot exist without all the others in a train. Avidya is both "the first cause" and "the final effect." This is monism.



Delhi, India  
7 December 2003

### The Glories of Srimati Radharani

From the **Rk-parisista**:

"Srimati Radharani is always to be found with Sri Krsna, and Madhava is always to be seen with Radhika. One is never without the other's company. "

From the **Gopalottara-tapani**:

"She is the embodiment of maha-bhava, or the highest transcendental ecstasy, and none of the other gopis, or cowherd damsels of Vrndavana, possesses Her excellent qualities. Radharani is therefore known as the most famous Gandharva. "

In the **Padma Purana** Narada Muni describes Srimati Radharani:

"As much as Srimati Radhika is dear to Lord Krsna, Her pond Radha-kunda is as beloved to Him. Among all the gopis Srimati Radharani is most dear to Krsna.

From the **Ujjvala-nilamani** of Srila Rupa Goswami

"The principal characteristics of Srimati Radharani, the Queen of Vrndavan, are that She is charming, ever-youthful, has roving eyes, and ever-sparkling smile, a body marked with all auspicious lines, Her fragrance drives Krsna mad with desire. She is an exponent of fine music, has sharp intelligence, is dextrous, shy, respectable, patient, grave, playful, eager to display the highest ecstasy of maha-bhava, that She is the primary source of supreme spiritual love, the most famous, the object of attraction for Her elders, that She is controlled by the love of Her girlfriends, the principal of Krsna's many loves, and She has Him always under Her control. "

Rupa Goswami prays to Srimati Radharani in his **Catu-puspanjali** [**Stavamala**] as follows:

"O Queen of Vrndavana, Sri Radha, I worship You. Your fair complexion is more resplendent than molten gold, the color of Your sari the hue of a blue lotus flower. Your beautiful braided hair is long and raven-black, its coiffure studded with many brilliant gems, like the shining black hood of a cobra.

"Even the beautiful lotus in full bloom or the rising full moon offers no comparison to Your breathtaking face, for it is much more exquisite. Your shining forehead is marked by a tidy saffron tilaka.

"The arches of Your elegant eyebrows put to shame Cupid's bow. Your cascading black tresses sway, and the dark mascara on Your roving eyes makes them look like restless black partridges.

"Your fine nose is decorated by a ring studded with the noblest pearl, and Your lips are more charming than bright red tulips. Your sparkling, even teeth are like rows of spotlessly white jasmine buds.

"The golden earrings that dangle gracefully from Your ears like a pair of Laburnum flowers are inlaid with many precious gems. The gentle cleft of Your delicate chin is decorated with a dot of musk, and an intricately bejewelled necklace sparkles on You with regal splendor.

"Your nicely formed arms are like lotus stems, adorned with fine and precious gems, and the two armlets inlaid with blue sapphires softly jingle with Your slightest movements, pleasing all ears with their sweet music.

"Your hands are beautiful and soft, like the lotus, and Your fingers are decorated with rings mounted with precious jewels. Your breasts are adorned with a large necklace finely set with stones and gems.

"The central jewel of Your regal necklace sits atop a line of dark gems that grow gradually larger in size. One could mistake it for a black snake carrying a gem on its hood. You are slender around the waist, and Your belly is concave because it must carry the burden of Your full breasts. It is marked by three lines like entwining creepers.

"A tinkling girdle of gold inset with precious stones adorns Your broad flaring hips, and Your shapely thighs put to shame the pride of the golden trunks of banana trees.

"Your kneecaps are so delicate and well-formed that they are far more attractive than round golden caskets studded with gems. The ankle-bells on Your finely formed feet sing an eternal melody, and the pink lotuses that blossom in autumn bow their heads in ardent worship to the beauty of Your lotus feet.

"The brilliance of millions upon millions of full moons pales before the opalescent nails of Your lotus feet. Innumerable ecstatic symptoms are Your natural embellishments, and You become stunned and perspire freely when Your yearning sidelong looks from afar intimately traverse Krsna's body. Uncontrollable erotic waves overcome You, and when You meet with Your beloved Krsna You are swept away in a surge of sublime ecstasy. O Queen of Vrndavan, You are the reservoir of all divine qualities, and I therefore worship Your lotus feet.

"O Srimati Radharani, all the symptoms of the very highest ecstasy, maha-bhava, become simultaneously manifest in You, and Your heart is benumbed. You are the ocean of unlimited transcendental emotions found only in perfect heroines, and everyone is amazed when You exhibit these ecstatic emotions.

"All the charming and captivating traits which make a heroine perfect are offering their obeisances to Your lotus feet in silent praise. The great beauty Laksmi-devi, the goddess of fortune, is humbly praying to attain residence on the toenails of Your lotus feet.

"You are the crest jewel of the damsels of Vraja, an eternal resident of Gokula, the most beloved object of the gopis. Your gentle smile acts as the life sustaining salve for Lalita and other sakhis.

"When Your roving eyes glance on Krsna with a sidelong look, it acts on Him like a drop of ambrosia, maddening and inciting Him with love. You are the apple of Your father king Vrisabhanu's eyes, and the soothing rays of Your moonlike activities exhilarate him.

"Your heart is like an ocean which is overflowing with waves of compassion. Therefore, O Radhika! shower Your mercy, and be pleased with this person who is begging to become Your maidservant.

"O Radha my mistress! When will I be fortunate to see that after a lover's quarrel, when Krsna tries to pacify You, His indignant lady-love, with sweet cajoling words, in which He is truly expert, and begs You for a lovers' tryst, You are really pleased within but nonetheless turn Your face away and look at Krsna from the corner of Your eyes.

"O Divine Lady! Will that day ever come? When Lord Krsna, who is adept at everything, strings a charming garland of myrtle blossoms and slips it over Your head and His electric touch sends waves of ecstasy pulsating through You, and You begin to perspire profusely, when will I be fortunate enough to gently fan You with a palm leaf fan?

"O divine Lady! O beautiful Queen! When after Your hours of pleasure with Krsna Your intricately made-up hair becomes dishevelled and You need someone to set it properly again, when will You instruct this maidservant to do this service?

"O Divine beauty with cherry lips! Will I be able to see the wonderful dalliances between You and Krsna? When I place betel-nut pan into Your lotus mouth, Krsna tries to take it out of Your mouth and chew the same pan.

"O Srimati Radha! Among all the beloved gopis of Krsna You are His most cherished jewel. Therefore kindly be pleased with me and quickly shower Your mercy by including me amongst Your family members.

"O Queen of Vraja! I beg repeatedly at Your lotus feet for Your compassionate grace. Please allow me to become Your maid-in-attendance (sakhi) and confidante, so that when You become indignant after a lover's quarrel Krsna will approach me, knowing that I am Your sakhi, and flatter me to take Him to You; then I will take His hand and guide Him to You.

"Anyone who reads this prayer, named Catuspuspanjali, dedicated to Radharani, the Queen of Vrndavana, with faith and devotion, will very soon receive Her mercy directly. "

In his **Sri Prarthana-paddhati [Stavamala]**, Srila Rupa goswami prays:

"O Queen of Vrndavana, O Radharani, Your complexion is like molton gold, Your doe-like eyes are captivatingly restless, a million full and brilliant moons wane before Your lustrous countenance, and a blue sari, having stolen the hue of a fresh rain-laden cloud, has enwrapped Your exquisite form. O Radha, You are the crest-jewel of all the dallying damsels of Vrndavana, fragrant and pristine like a budding jasmine flower. Your sublime form is adorned with priceless jewelry , and you are the best of all the charming and intelligent gopis. You are decorated with all wonderful excellences and surrounded by eight dedicated and beloved cowherd girls known as the asta-sakhis.

"The ambrosia of Your beautiful lips, red as the bimba fruit, is life-giving syrup to Krsna. O Radha, I am rolling on the banks of the Yamuna, my poor heart filled with anticipation, praying to You with all humility. I am guilty of being an offender, a rascal, a useless wretch-yet I beg You to kindly engage me in even the smallest service to Your lotus feet. O most merciful Lady, it will not become You to ignore this most distressed soul, for Your heart is always overflowing with compassion and love. "

Raghunatha dasa Goswami writes in the **Vilap-kusum-anjali**

"O Supreme Ladyship, Queen of my heart, Radha! Laksmi-devi the goddess of fortune does not possess even a drop of the beauty that exudes from Your exquisite toenails, therefore if You do not grant me the proper vision to perceive Your transcendental pastimes, then what use do I have for this life, which is burning in the fire of excruciating sorrow?

"O merciful Lady! Indeed, lately I am floating in a nectarean ocean of hope, and passing time in hardship and pain, but if You do not shower mercy upon me then this life, living in Vrndavana, and even Lord Krsna are all meaningless to me. " (101-102)

"The Queen of Vraja is my mistress. O Lady mistress, O Radha, I am Your maidservant, but the flames of intense separation are incinerating my heart and I grow feeble from profuse crying. Finding no other means, I am therefore sitting somewhere in Govardhana and composing these verses in deep lamentation.

"O dallying damsel of Vraja, Sri Radhika, I am sucked into an ocean of grief and my condition is so miserable! Kindly send me Your mercy in the form of an infallible boat and save me from this whirlpool. Please give me sanctuary at Your lotus feet. "

"O Radha-kunda, pond of sublime joy, my mistress Srimati Radhika is always absorbed in divine amorous pastimes with her beloved paramour Sri Krsna on your banks, and you have endeared yourself to this Divine Couple more than anything else They cherish. Please, therefore, be merciful upon me and allow me but a moments vision of the object of my greatest adoration, Srimati Radharani.

### **Sri Vrndavana-mahimamrita**

I pray that the queen of Vrndavana, whose every limb shines with an ocean of wonderful golden moonlight, and whose beautiful form displays a wonder of ever-fresh youthfulness, may appear before me. (**Sri Vrndavana-Mahimamrita** 2. 68)

The motions of the beautiful gopi's eyes hinted to Lord Krsna that Radha had gone to take rest in the forest cottage. Meeting Her there, Lord Krsna kissed and embraced Her. Please meditate on Srimati Radharani enjoying pastimes in this way. (*SVM* 2. 75)

Within the boundary of Vrndavana forest a certain youthful form fills the ten directions with the splendor of its limbs, which shine like molten gold. This form rests on the chest of the splendid dark moon that is Lord Krsna. This form is overcome with the nectar of transcendental mellows and maddened with the bliss of transcendental love. The ornaments that decorate this form tinkle with the movements of transcendental pastimes. The garments that cover this form have fallen and the flower garlands decorating this form have become broken. Maddened with amorous passion, this form no longer feels any embarrassment. (*SVM* 2. 78)

In Vrndavana forest, in a grove of very fragrant blossoming jasmine flowers, Sri Sri Radha-Krsna sit down together. Overwhelmed with the nectar of transcendental mellows, They touch each other, repeatedly decorating each other's body with many wonderful flower ornaments although in the course of Their amorous pastimes these decorations become broken. Let me worship Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, Who enjoy pastimes in this way. Vrndavana's queen Radha is now drowning in the blissful nectar ocean that is dark complexioned Lord Krsna, and Krsna is also plunged in the shoreless blissful nectar ocean of Sri Radha. The gopis' hearts and bodies swim in the blissful nectar ocean of gazing at the transcendental pastimes of the divine couple, who are billions of times more dear to each other than Their own life's breath. I meditate on Radha, Krsna, and the gopis in this way. (*SVM* 2. 80-81)

The forms of Radha's maidservants are wonderful bubbles from the particles of foam from the effulgent spiritual ocean of sweet transcendental love that flows from the beauty of Radha's lotus feet. These young girls are filled with all artistic skill, and their wonderfully beautiful limbs are decorated with splendid garments and

ornaments. O friend, please become the follower and servant of these maidservants of Sri Radha. (SVM 2-86)

Please meditate on Her being anointed by a friend with scented oil, bathed, and offered tirtha-kriya, a sumptuous feast, a splendid garland of fragrant forest flowers, betel-leaves, music, and a foot-massage as She, the flower-crown of Vraja's girls, lies down with dark Krsna. (SVM 3. 77)

When will I see the fulfillment of my desires, the ocean of the splendor of Sri Radha's feet, the bodily hairs risen with ecstatic devotional love, the sweet music that was learned, and the wonderful flower garlands, jewel necklaces, ornaments, and garments left by Her and Her beloved in Vrndavana? When in Sri Vrndavana's groves and paths will I see a splendor as fair as molten gold and like an ocean of beauty moving at every step with hundreds of currents of the gracefulness of ever-fresh youth and violently tossed by great waves of ever-fresh love for the dark moon of Krsna? Glimpsing Her braids, beautiful face, breasts, eyes, teeth, lips, and flower-blossom luster, any other girl becomes embarrassed. May She, the fair splendor that in a forest grove is now a wonderful ornament on Lord Syama's chest, appear before me. May Vrndavana's splendid treasure, which has a youthful body, a golden complexion, is tossed by waves of ever-new amorous pastimes, flooded with currents of eternal, wonderful beauty, overwhelmed by great, transcendental love, decorated with splendid flower garlands, garments, and ornaments, and, Oh! with its auspicious glory fills the

gopis with wonder, appear before me. (SVM 3. 79-82)

Sri Syamananda Prabhu was named Duhkhiya by his mother and father because before his birth, his parents had many sons and daughters who passed away. The word *dukha* means "suffering." Duhkhiya's birth relieved his parents of great suffering.

As time passed, the purificatory rites, his first taking of grains, tonsure (the hair-cutting ceremony) and the rites for beginning his education were performed, one after the other. The scholars of Orissa, where Duhkhiya appeared, were astounded to see the boy's profound intellect. Within a short period he completed his studies of grammar, poetry and rhetoric. When he heard of the glories of Sri Gaura-Nityananda from the Vaisnavas of his village, a very deep attachment to Their lotus feet developed in him.

Duhkhiya's father, Sri Krsna Mandal, was himself a very advanced devotee. Seeing that his son was always absorbed in thinking of Gaura-Nityananda, he told him that he should be initiated into the divine *mantra*. The boy replied, "Sri Hrdaya Caitanya is my *guru*. He is at Ambika Kalna. His guru is Sri Gauri dasa Pandita. The two brothers, Sri Gaura-Nityananda, are eternally present in his house. If you give your permission, I will proceed there to become his disciple. "

His father asked, "But Duhkhiya, how will you get there?" "Father, there are many people from here who go there to bathe in the Ganges. I will go with them. " His father deliberated for a

great while on this matter and after going so he finally gave his permission. Thus Duhkhiya set out for Gaudadesa.

Gradually he came to Navadvipa, then Santipur and finally Ambika Kalna, where he inquired from the local people where he might find the house of Gauri dasa Pandita. Outside the gate of the *mandira*, he fell down and offered his *dandavats*.

Sri Hrdaya Caitanya happened to be passing by at this time. Hrdaya Caitanya Prabhu looked at him for a few moments and then asked, "Who are you?" Duhkhiya replied, "I have come to serve Your lotus feet. My home is at Dharendra Bahadurpur in Utkala (Orissa). I was born in the caste of *sad-gopas*. My father's name is Sri Krsna Mandal. My name is Duhkhiya. "

Sri Hrdaya Caitanya was very pleased by this sweet speech. He told the boy, "From now your name is Duhkhiya Krsna das. Since early this morning I was feeling that someone would come today. " The renamed Krsna dasa began his service with great devotion, and on an auspicious day his *guru* initiated him into the divine *mantra*. Sri Hrdaya Caitanya could see that his new disciple was extremely intelligent and at the same time very devoted, so he ordered him to go to Vrindavana to study the literatures of the Gosvamis under the tutelage of Srila Jiva Gosvami.

Duhkhiya Krsna das bowed his head in assent, and on an auspicious day he set out for the holy dhama. At the time of his departure, his *guru* gave him many instructions and conveyed through his disciple his obeisances to the lotus feet of the Gosvamis of Vrindavan.

Arriving at Vrindavana after passing through Navadvipa and Gaya, Krsna das learned the whereabouts of Srila Jiva Gosvami. He offered his obeisances to the lotus feet of that great *acarya*. After being asked, he introduced himself with full particulars. "Gurudeva has committed me to your charge. His petition to Your Divine Grace is, 'I am entrusting Duhkhi Krsna das to your care. Please fulfill his mind's desire and send him back to me after some time. "

Srila Jiva Gosvami was extremely happy to receive Duhkhi Krsna dasa into his care. Krsna das very carefully began to serve Jiva Gosvami as well as study the literatures of the Gosvamis. Srinivasa Acarya and Narottama dasa Thakura also came to Sri Jiva at this time to study under him. Thus Krsna das had the opportunity to meet them.

Krsna das requested Srila Jiva Gosvami for a special service. Sri Jiva instructed him to sweep the forest grove of Sevakunja everyday. From that day he began to carry out this service with great pleasure. He felt that his life had become successful. As he

swept, tears flowed from his eyes. Sometimes he would loudly chant the names of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda and sometimes he would become inert while remembering Their pastimes. Sometimes he would put the broom, which was full of dust, on his head. Even Lord Brahma and Lord Siva pray to receive a little of this dust of Vrindavana on their heads.

The Lord of Vrindavana and His consort were very pleased with the service of Krsna das, and desired to grant him Their *darsan*. One day while Krsna das was cleaning the *kunja*, his heart filled with love. Just then he happened to notice a very beautiful ankle bracelet lying in the dust. He picked it up, touched it to his head and then bound it in the corner of his upper cloth. "I'll give it to whomever it belongs to when they come to look for it," he thought.

The next morning the *sakhis* were quite shocked when they noticed that Srimati Radharani's left ankle bracelet was missing. Radharani explained, "Last night, when I was dancing in the *kunja*, it must have fallen off. Please look for it and bring it back to me, whoever finds it. " When the *gopis* came to search for the bracelet, Visakha@devi noticed Krsna das sweeping the grove. She asked him, "Have you found an ankle bracelet here?" Duhkhi Krsna dasa was so mesmerized by her sweet words and radiant form, which was like that of a demigoddess descended from heaven, that he simply stared at her dumbfounded. Again she asked him, "Have you found an ankle bracelet here?" Duhkhi Krsna made obeisances and humbly replied, "Yes, I found it. Who are you?"

"I am a cowherd girl. "

"Where do you stay?"

"In this village. "

"Is it your ankle bracelet?"

"No it isn't mine. It belongs to a new bride in our house. "

"How did it get here?"

"She came here yesterday to pick flowers and it must have fallen off then. "

"All right, then please tell her she can come and collect it from me. "

"No, you can just give it to me. "

"No, I want to give it to her personally. "

After a few moments, Visakha-devi returned with Srimati Radha Thakurani who stood in the shade at the foot of a large tree. Visakha called out to Krsna dasa, "Bhakta, the person who lost her ankle bracelet has come to receive it. "

Duhkhi Krsna das completely forgot himself while gazing, even though it was from some distance, at the unparalleled, brilliant spender of Sri Vrsabhanunandini. In great joy he handed the ankle bracelet to Visakha. At this point, Duhkhi Krsna dasa could sense that something very profound was about to take place. His eyes filled with tears and he fell down on the ground to offer his obeisances. In great ecstasy he rolled in the dust. Visakha then told him, "O best of the devotees! Our Sakhi wants to give you a benediction to express her gratitude. " Duhkhi Krsna dasa saw the holy waters of Radha-kunda before him. After offering his obeisances, he immersed himself in Her waters. Thus he attained a transcendently beautiful feminine form. Coming out of the sacred *kunda*, he stood before Visakha-devi and offered prayers. Taking this 'forest sakhi' by the hand, Visakha approached Srimati Radha Thakurani, and the new *sakhi* fell down at Her lotus feet. Then Srimati Radharani decorated her forehead with tilaka using the ankle bracelet and the kumkum of her lotus feet. "This tilak will remain on your forehead. From today you will be known as Syamananda. Now you can go. " After She said this, Srimati Radha Thakurani and Her sakhis were no longer to be seen. Dukhi Krsna dasa's trance broke and he found himself as before, alone and in his male body: yet with the tilaka applied by Srimati Radharani still on his forehead. Being overwhelmed with emotion, he repeated over and over, "What have I seen?" "What have I seen?", while tears of ecstasy rolled down his cheeks. After reciting prayers hundreds and hundreds of times to Sri Radhika, he finally returned to Srila Jiva Gosvami.

Sri Jiva Prabhu was struck with wonder when he saw the brilliant new design of tilaka on his young student's forehead. After offering his prostrated obeisances, Dukhi Krsna dasa, his eyes brimming with tears, recounted at Jiva Goswami's request his experience in Sevakuna. Hearing of his great fortune, Sri Jiva was elated, but cautioned Dukhi, "Don't reveal this blessed event to anyone. From today, just carry on with the name Syamananda. "

Noticing that Dukhi Krsna dasa's name and style of tilaka had for reasons unknown been changed, the Vaisnavas naturally began to discuss this strange development amongst themselves. The news finally reached Ambika Kalna. When he heard of the seemingly unauthorized behavior of his disciple, Hrdaya Caitanya Prabhu was unsettled and angered. He immediately set out for Vrindavana. Arriving there some months later, he let it be known

In Vrndavana, which is very beautifully decorated by Sri Radha, who is served by splendid servant-girls that are great treasures of all - intelligence and all-expertise and the shade of whose lotus feet is difficult for even the most beautiful of all young gopis to attain, who (Radha) is eternally overcome with the bliss of transcendental amorous passion, who is loved day and night by beautiful friends whose bodily hairs stand erect in ecstatic love for

the divine couple, Who is a wonderfully splendid and auspicious crescent moon shining in the midst of the many glistening stars that are the host of Her friends and dear maidservants, who floods the world with festive nectar waves from the ocean of wonderful golden splendor rising from each of Her transcendental limbs, who fills all directions with waves of pure love, of Her wonderful, beautiful, golden complexion and of the graceful sweetness of Her delicate limbs sprouting from youth, who relishes perfect, intoxicating bliss, Who continually enchants the birds, beasts, trees, vines, and others, Whose wonderful beauty is millions and millions of oceans of beauty, where the beauty of Laksmi, Gauri, and the splendid demigodesses is not even a single drop, who stands at the topmost limit of splendid, wonderful skill in the arts of love, whose bodily hairs stand erect as She again and again tastes the nectar of pure love for Lord Syama, Who is decorated with a belt, ankle-bells, necklaces, bracelets, jewel earrings, hair-ornaments, armllets, rings, and a beautiful glistening pearl set at the tip of Her nose, Who wears Her hair in a large braid decorated with a bunch of beautiful flowers at its tip, which swings about Her beautiful broad hips, Who wears splendid jewel ornaments in the part of Her hair, Who wears a beautiful chaplet of flowers at the place where Her braid begins, the golden moon of whose beautiful forehead is decorated with glistening sindura dots, the waves of whose moving eyebrows again and again create limitless missions of passionate desires in Her lover, the gracefully playing khanjana birds of whose eyes stun Her lover, the sharpened arrows of whose playful, restless, amorous sidelong glances again and again overwhelm Her lover, Who enchants the heart with both the wonderful moonlight of Her shy smile and Her conversation as sweet as a cool stream of nectar, whose limitlessly sweet lips are splendid as a glistening pomegranate flower,

he wished to see the erstwhile Dukhi Krsna dasa.

Syamananda came and offered his prostrated obeisances at his gurudeva's lotus feet. Seeing his disciple's tilaka, Hrdaya Caitanya Prabhu was enraged and exclaimed, "Your conduct towards me is completely abominable. " He continued to chastise him and eventually even began beating him. The Vaisnavas finally managed to restrain and pacify him by offering various explanations on Syamananda's behalf. Shyamananda simply tolerated it all with an unfaded countenance and continued to serve his *gurudeva* faithfully.

That night, Sri Hrdaya Caitanya Prabhu had a dream in which Sri Radha Thakurani appeared in a very severe mood. She rebuked him by saying, "I am the one who, being very satisfied by Dukhi Krsna dasa's service, changed his *tilaka* and his name. What do you or anyone else have to say about it?"

Hrdaya Caitanya Prabhu prayed for forgiveness at the lotus feet of Sri Vrajesvari and considered what an offender he had become. The next morning he called for Syamananda. Taking him in his lap, he embraced him again and again in great affection. With his eyes brimming with tears he repeated, "You are so fortunate. " Sri Hrdaya Caitanya Prabhu remained at Vrajadhama for a while and then, after instructing Syamananda to remain with Sri Jiva Gosvami for some more days, he returned to Gaudadesa.

Whose chin is a nectar ocean of beauty ornamented with a single beautiful black musk- dot, Whose splendid, delicate cheeks are glistening golden mirrors fashioned from the great ocean of transcendental beauty, Whose incomparably beautiful teeth stained from chewing betelnuts are like beautiful pearls and beautiful, glistening, perfectly ripe pomegranate seeds, Whose beautiful nose, as lovely as a sesame flower, is decorated with a beautiful pearl studded with splendid jewels and gold, Whose beautiful nostrils are like Kamadeva's two wonderful golden quivers, Whose charming lips, more red than roses, are marked with both the stain of betelnuts, and a wound left by the teeth of the charming master of Her life, Whose very splendid conchshell neck is decorated with a wonderful graiveyaka necklace, beautiful kanthika necklaces, and padaka lockets glistening with various jewels, Who is decorated with many glistening hara necklaces resting on the splendid bodice that covers Her breasts, which are like two mountain peaks of nectarean beauty, or two fully blossomed flowers grown from the jewel mine of transcendental beauty. , Whose charmingly beautiful slender abdomen is marked with three folds of skin that are three waves in the ocean of transcendental beauty, Whose very beautiful hips are dressed in glistening red silk, Whose splendid golden-plantain-tree thighs are filled with the great wonder of a great flood of glistening waves of the nectar of pure transcendental sweetness, Whose splendid knees and ankles are like beautiful lotus stems, Whose lotus feet display limitless beauty and sweetness, on each limb of Whose transcendental form is a very wonderful monsoon shower of wonderful beauty, auspiciousness, great sweetness, splendor, and the transcendental symptoms of pure ecstatic love for dark complexioned Lord Krsna, Who the hairs on all Her limbs standing erect in ecstasy, Her beautiful limbs now moving languidly because of having tasted the bliss of unrestrained, uninterrupted, passionate transcendental amorous pastimes with dark complexioned Lord Krsna, Her words overwhelmed with emotion, and Her every feature showering a great monsoon of transcendental sweetness, by presenting in this way a very unusual appearance, has deeply worried and upset Her gopi friends, and Who, placing the blossoming vine of Her languid transcendental form on the dark complexioned transcendental form of Lord Krsna, and served by Her maidservants, Who affectionately massage Her lotus feet, fan Her, give Her betelnuts, and render other services, and playfully taking the chewed betelnuts from the moon that is the mouth of the Lord of Her life, placing them in the moon of Her own mouth, laughs, gives them back to Her lover, and playfully repeats this game again and again, with Her, Sri Radha, (in that Vrndavana forest) a certain dark young moon, wealthy with many skills in the arts of amorous pastimes, limitlessly wonderful with a great wealth of love for Sri Radha and a great flood of handsomeness and charm and overcome with eternal amorous passion, enjoys transcendental pastimes. (SVM 4. 3-17)

When in my heart will I properly worship Sri Radha, who is fair as molten gold, Whose limbs are flowering vines, Who is a shoreless flood of beauty, playfulness, and fresh youthfulness, Whose swinging braids play about Her broad hips, Whose beautiful breasts are two wonderful golden mountains, Whose pleasantly smiling face is sweet with ever-new nectar, Whose eyes are two khanjana birds playing in the ever-new nectar of transcendental mellows, Whose smooth vinelike arms are filled with beauty and luster and are splendid with glistening armlets and beautiful bracelets, Whose ears are decorated with glistening transcendental jewel earrings, the tip of Whose nose is decorated with a splendid pearl set in jewels and gold, Whose conchshell neck glistens with various kinds of golden necklaces, whose hair is decorated with many jewel ornaments, Whose fingers are decorated with beautiful, glistening jewel rings, Who wears a bodice that holds the flood of splendor from Her breasts, Whose exquisitely beautiful waist is so slender it can be encircled by a single

hand, Who wears a splendid jewel belt on Her hips, Who wears beautiful anklets, Who, furtively glancing at Her lover, trembles with very sweet feelings of love, shyly smiles, and playfully covers Her breast with the edge of Her sari, the rising moon of Whose face creates waves of gentle smiles of ever-new bliss, the haris of Whose body stand erect with transcendental love, Who smiles as She speaks some words with a gopi friend, Whose restless eyes move here and there, and Whose vinelike arms tremble with ecstatic love? (SVM 4. 40-45)

Radha hid in the forest of golden lotus flowers attended by swarms of very sweetly humming bumblebees. Krsna entered that forest, and mistaking one of the golden lotuses for Radha's face, began to kiss it. Radha then emerged from hiding, reassured Her beloved, kissed Him, and laughed. (SVM 4. 113)

Sri Radha, who with floods of splendor from Her beautiful, youthful limbs the color of molten gold, with eternally wonderful graceful waves of very sweet amorous pastimes, and with the faltering of Her voice, Her tears, Her trembling, and other symptoms of ecstatic love for dark complexioned Krsna, fills with wonder Her friends come to Her favorite forest grove and makes the hairs on their bodies stand erect, is my queen. May Sri Radha and Her beloved, Who are flooded with waves of very, very wonderful sweetness, playful transcendental pastimes, splendid beauty, and expert knowledge of the arts of love, who have come to Vrndavana from Vraja, and the wonder of whose beauty increases hundreds and hundreds of times at Radha-kunda, appear in my heart. (SVM 5. 7-8)

The hairs of His body erect in ecstasy, His crown and earrings moving, and His flute placed against the full moon of His lips, Madhava praises the delightful transcendental qualities of Radha-kunda, which is the greatest jewel decorating Sri Govardhana's crown, and which is very dear to the queen who rules the life of the charming lotus-eyed Lord. (SVM 5. 13)

Now, with great devotion, let us meditate on our queen Sri Radha, Whose transcendental form is filled with the nectar of supremely pure love. She is the crest jewel of all beautiful young gopis. All Her beautiful limbs are filled with all transcendental virtues. With Her wonderful beauty She enchants all the universes and makes Mohini, Parvati, Laksmi, Rati, and all other beautiful girls hand down their heads in shame. Her complexion is the color of molten gold. Her glistening beauty is limitless. The rising luster of Her fair complexion fills the ten directions. The rising sweetness of Her transcendental beauty drowns the spiritual and material worlds. She is a splendid, wonderful nectar ocean of pure transcendental love. She performs the arati ritual, offering millions of Her own lives to Lord Krsna. She is filled with the great splendor of unalloyed, pure, transcendental love. Her splendid transcendental form displays the most wonderful ever-fresh youthfulness. She manifests millions of oceans of the nectar of ever-fresh transcendental beauty. At every step Her very wonderful transcendental beauty completely enchants the entire world. Her charming transcendental form is a great flood of transcendental sweetness. She wears a garland of amlli and campaka flowers that greatly agitate swarms of bumblebees. She is decorated with a vine of Her beautiful braided hair which enchants the entire universe. It begins with exquisite beauty at the top of Her head, is seen encircling the area of Her eyes, and finally hangs down to Her broad hips. In its beginning it is decorated with many colorful flowers, in its middle flowers are entwined within it, and at its end it is decorated with clusters of flowers and jewels. Her very dark, long, glistening, very broad, splendidly beautiful braids are like a great snake lurking

behind a vine of campaka flowers. Her face is as splendid as an unlimited golden full moon, or the whorl of a golden lotus glistening in the unlimited moonlight (*SVM 7. 89-101*)

Her face is like the whorl of a charming, blossoming golden lotus flower. Her splendid teeth are like a row of ripe pomegranate seeds. Her splendidly beautiful bimba fruit lips are an ocean of transcendental sweetness. Her very beautiful chin is very enchantingly decorated with a black dot of musk. Her shyly smiling eyes are two restless khandana birds. The playful movements of Her eyebrows have completely defeated the powerful bow of the demigod Cupid. Her beautiful nose is decorated with a splendid pearl set in gold and jewels. Her ears are charmingly decorated with flowers and beautiful jewel earrings. The splendor of a jewel locket beautifies Her new golden conchshell neck. Her beautiful new breasts are two golden flower buds. Her breasts are wonderfully beautiful. They are very charming and they are very full, firm, large, and high. Her bodice is always covered by the edge of Her sari. She is decorated with splendid jewel bracelets and armlets. Her arms are two splendid, graceful vines. Her abdomen marked with three graceful folds of skin is like a glistening, smooth golden flower petal. Her slender waist is very charming and beautiful. Her large, young hips expand the nectar of great beauty. The beautiful and wonderfully colorful flower of Her silken sari reaches down to Her graceful ankles. Her lovely thighs are two glistening and smooth plantain tree trunks. Her knees are very beautiful. Her splendid legs are lotus stems. All moving and non-moving living entities are enchanted by the beauty of Her lotus feet. Her graceful, playful steps enchant most charming Lord Krsna. She wears a splendid sash and tinkling golden ankle-bells. Her toes are adorned with splendid rings and Her feet with golden anklets studded with rubies. Her legs and thighs are very beautiful. Her fingers are splendidly decorated with jewel rings. At every step she is more beautiful. She is a shoreless ocean of expert skill in the performance of very wonderful, endless transcendental pastimes. With Her delicate fair limbs and the nectar waves of very wonderful amorous pastimes, She completely enchants both Lord Krsna and Her gopi friends. (*SVM 8. 1-15*)

Please meditate on the transcendental potency who bears the name Radha, who with a very sweet flood of limitless beauty has washed away all material dualities, who with the graceful motions of Her transcendental limbs enchants all moving and nonmoving living entities, and who with arrows of shyly smiling sweet sidelong glances wounds dark-complexioned Lord Krsna and overwhelms Him with the transformations of ecstatic love. (*SVM 8. 48*)

Day and night may my tongue be filled with the sweet nectar of Sri Radha's glories. May I pray for the position of the maidservant of Her lotus feet in Vrndavana forest. May my peaceful composure be stolen away by the youthful beauty of the golden-complexioned goddess, Sri Radha. By the power of my tears, hairs standing erect, and the other symptoms of my love for Sri Radha, may I cross beyond this world of repeated birth and death. (*SVM 8. 53*)

May Sri Radhika, the enchanting splendor of whose limbs makes the faces of the beautiful vraja-gopis turn pale, and the beauty of whose toenails makes kamadeva, Rati, Narayana, Laksmi, and their followers faint, appear in my heart. (*SVM 8. 56*)

Let us meditate on the very wonderful, sweet melodious tinkling of the anklebells on Sri Radha's lotus feet in Vrndavana. May my queen, Sri Radha, who is decorated by

a circle of smiling and laughing friends playing vinas, mridangas, talas, and other musical instruments, who is served by beautiful maidservants bearing jewelled golden cups, betelnut boxes, fans, and other paraphernalia, whose splendor pervades all spiritual and material worlds, who is filled with limitless sweetness, whose form is like a golden vine, who with splendidly beautiful limbs soft and delicate as sirisa flowers, with wonderful youthful sweetness, beauty, gracefulness, and other virtues, and with flowing waves of a flooding nectar ocean of amorous pastimes, enchants all moving and non-moving living entities in Vrndavana forest, who is decorated with many splendid garlands and ornaments, who is anointed with splendid cosmetics, whose splendid silken bodice is decorated with flowers, whose bodily hairs stand erect in ecstasy as She places the vine of Her beautiful left arm around Lord Krsna's shoulders, whose beautiful left lotus hand plays with a lotus flower, whose maidservants repeatedly and affectionately fan Her with their saris' edges, who chews betelnuts, who gives betelnuts to Her beloved, whose maidservants offer Her golden jewelled goblet filled with delicious, cool nectar scented with camphor and spices, who, gazing again and again at Vrndavana's wonderful beauty, and intently listening again and again to Vrndavana's wonderful sounds, becomes struck with wonder and asks Her lover, "What is this?" who with very sweet, wonderful, graceful, playful steps, with tinkling ankle-bells, with the flooding moonlight of Her toes, and with a heart overwhelmed with beautiful happiness, walks in the very opulent and sweet forest of Vrndavana, who walking here and there in the very wonderful and beautiful forest, sings and makes Her beloved sing, and who eternally enjoys transcendental pastimes, be served day and night by me, whose only home is Vrndavana. (*SVM 8. 65-79*)

When will my heart plunge in the blissful ocean of the beauty, sweetness, and playfulness at Radha's two lotus feet? When, renouncing impersonal liberation and all great material opulences as if they were a clump of grass, will I reside in Vrndavana? My heart is enchanted by Sri Radha, who walks in Her transcendental forest, Her feet beautiful as lotus flowers, Her ankle-bells sweetly tinkling, Her feet flooding the surface of the ground with a golden and reddish sweetness, and Her jeweled anklets and splendid toe-rings brightly glistening. Will I, unmoved by the touch of the Vedic or public opinion, my heart rapt in meditation on the greatest sweetness, and the bumblebee of my heart intoxicated by tasting the great sweetness of the nectar of the lotus flower of Sri Radha's feet, stay here in Vrndavana? Who would not become enchanted by meditating on Sri Radha's youthfulness, beauty, cooling nectar eloquent words, the graceful motions of Her golden limbs, or Her tears, erect bodily hairs, and other symptoms of ecstatic love? Please meditate on Sri Radha's face, which is like the whorl of blossoming golden lotus illumined by a limitless shower of moonlight and filled with very sweet nectar that Lord Hari, whose complexion is like a blue lotus, yearns to taste. Please meditate on the moon of Radha's face, which showers a great monsoon of splendid golden moonlight on the material and spiritual worlds, and which is the life and soul of the cakora bird that is Lord Krsna. I offer respectful obeisances to the eternally youthful queen of Vrndavana, whose beautiful transcendental form is filled with the sweetest nectar of pure transcendental love. Please meditate on the flooding golden oceans of the sweet nectar of Sri Radha's love, which have now covered the spiritual and material worlds. Many charming girls who make even the most beautiful transcendental young girls seem as insignificant as so many blades of grass, place their heads on the forest ground before the feet of my queen, Radha. Please meditate on Sri Radha, who is the most splendidly beautiful of all beautiful girls, and who is worshiped by the most intelligent and beautiful girls in the three worlds. Let me glorify the gopi maidservants who attend Sri Radha's lotus feet, from which flows a nectar ocean of the bliss of unrestrained,

sweet pure love. Even though I have not performed a single pious deed, and even though I have committed every sin, shall I not attain spiritual perfection simply by chanting the two-syllable mantra "Radha"?(SVM 9. 2-13)

May I live in hell millions of times. May I never attain my desires. May the Supreme Personality of Godhead decline to grant me His mercy, but may my yearning to attain the sweetness of Sri Radha's lotus feet never become slackened. Even the eyes and heart of Lord Hari are filled with boundless yearnings to see the beauty of charming Radha's feet, which are decorated with melodiously tinkling ankle-bells as She wanders with graceful steps in the forest of Vrndavana. I pray that beauty may appear in my loving heart. May Sri Radhika, who is plunged in the waves of the ocean of the sweetness of youthful beauty, who is the great Deity of krsna-prema, whose dancing knitted eyebrows contain millions of playful amorous desires, and who is as sweet as nectar, appear in my heart. May my heart, overcome with the sweetness of ecstatic love, become plunged in the eternally increasing ocean of sweetness that moves over Srimati Radharani's beautiful, youthful, transcendental form, the very sweet moonlight of Her face with its shy smiles and crooked sidelong glances, Her wonderful words, graceful motions, and all Her very sweet transcendental pastimes. I pray that Srimati Radharani's youthful, charming, sweet, and wonderful transcendental limbs, wonderful crooked sidelong glances, sweet shyness, enchanting gentle smile, beauty, luster, graceful motions, and the first symptoms of Her blossoming love for dark-complexioned Lord Krsna, may all appear before me. May my queen, Radha, Her unlimitedly beautiful fair limbs anointed with kunkuma, decorated with jewels and gold, and showering unlimited oceans of very sweet transcendental splendor, and Her transcendental form bearing the wonderful symptoms of the sweet nectar of Her passionate transcendental love for dark-complexioned Lord Krsna, appear in my heart, which is now astonished by the wonderful sweetness of Her every act. Above the highest transcendental abode is the blissful kingdom of Vrndavana, where the wonderful youthful divine couple are splendidly manifest. I offer my respectful obeisances to that person who, situated in his own desired spiritual form, sweetly carries out the orders of Lalita and the other gopis, who love the divine couple more than their own life's breath. May I pass the moments of my life in the land of Vrndavana, always meditating on the beauty of Sri Radha's lotus feet, which are decorated with sweetly tinkling jeweled ankle bells. I pray that Sri Radha's lotus feet, which are decorated with sweetly tinkling ankle-bells, and are filled with limitless beauty, delicate softness, sweet fragrance, a flood of transcendental splendor, and a host of other transcendental virtues, may appear before me. May my heart chant the glories of Sri Radha's very beautiful lotus feet, which are golden above their reddish soles, and which steal away the heart of Lord Hari with their sweet transcendental splendor. On Sri Radha's lotus feet I gaze at the waves of jewel splendor flowing from Her anklets and toe-rings and shining in the splendid jewel moonlight of Her toenails. I meditate on the very fragrant lotus flower of Sri Radha's feet, which is filled with the thick, sweet honey of transcendental bliss, which the black bee of Lord Krsna yearns to attain, and which even the goddess of fortune cannot attain. I pray that Sri Radha's charming feet, which are beautifully decorated with jewel ankle-bells, and which shine with a series of toenail moons set on a line of newly sprouted very delicate flower toes, may appear before me. Everyone please meditate on Lord Krsna's flute, which is now completely silenced by the tinkling jewel ankle-bells on Radha's feet. All its hissing is now useless. Now it is simply an object of laughter for all of Radha's friends. Because Lord Krsna again and again smells them and presses them to His face, eyes, and heart, Sri Radha's fragrant and pleasantly cooling lotus feet now shine with a dark splendor. When, in this forest of Vrndavana, will the flooding ocean of the great sweetness of Sri

Radha's lotus feet devastate my heart and fill it with unrestrained devotional love. I meditate on Radha's lotus feet, their jewel toenails shining with great splendor, and their charming ankle-bells tinkling during the very sweet and wonderful pastimes in Vrndavana forest. (SVM 9. 17-33)

A certain teen-age girl, whose transcendental form is situated in the topmost limit of beauty, and the splendor of whose golden limbs fills the forest of Vrndavana, has stolen the heart of dark-complexioned Lord Krsna. In a grove of Vrndavana forest a golden vine, filled with buds like golden lotus flowers, its face like a golden full moon, its waist very slender, and its limitless transcendental beauty filling all directions is now embracing a passionate, dark, transcendental tamala tree. (SVM 9. 38-39)

All glories to the beautiful young girl whose complexion is splendid as gold, who is the great sweetness of the nectar ocean of love, who is served by many beautiful girls expert in many arts and skills, and who is the thief that has stolen the heart of dark-complexioned Lord Krsna. (SVM 9. 41)

May She who splashes all directions with great waves from the flooding ocean of golden luster, who is enchanting with beauty, new youth, and skill in the arts of passionate love, who is the personification of the blissful nectar of pure love, who is the life of Lord Shyama, who is the Deity of transcendental knowledge, and who is the ornament of Vrndavana, eternally shine in my heart. Glory, glory to Radha, a fathomless ocean of pure love! Glory, glory to Krsna, who eternally thirsts to drink nectar with Her! Glory, glory to the friends that bring Them together! Glory, glory to Vrndavana, Their splendid abode! (SVM 9. 44-45)

Eternally meditating on Sri Radha, taking shelter of the shade of Her lotus feet, always filling his tongue with the nectar of Her holy name, staying far away from women and men attached to women, considering their company poison, and performing austerities, a saintly devotee resides here in Vrndavana. His great devotion and renunciation increasing day by day, a fortunate person will take shelter of Sri Radha's feet and reside in Vrndavana. Thinking all scriptures that ignore Sri Sri Radha-Krsna a useless waste of time, glowing with love for Sri Radha's lotus feet, performing severe austerities, unconcerned about his material body, and friendly to everyone, a saintly devotee resides in the transcendental abode of Sri Vrndavana. (SVM 9. 65-67)

Chanting the glories of the very sweet transcendental form and pastimes of Sri Radha, I happily live in Vrndavana without the slightest care or anxiety. (SVM 9. 87)

Here in this forest of Vrndavana my heart has become enchanted by the youthfulness, expert skill in the art of transcendental amorous pastimes, ever new and splendid beauty, shyness, playful smiles, playful crooked sidelong glances, playful graceful motions, very beautiful and splendid fair complexion that makes the beholder become overwhelmed with transcendental bliss, and charming transcendental sweetness of Sri Radha. When, because of seeing the forest of Vrndavana with perfect clearness, will my heart, jubilant with the sweet nectar of transcendental bliss and overwhelmed with ecstatic pure love, become plunged in the golden, shoreless ocean of the sweetness and beauty of Sri Radhika's transcendental form and pastimes, which is filled with gracefulness, youthfulness, and charm, and which is the thief that has stolen the heart of Sri Krsna. (SVM 10. 8-9)

When will I become completely charmed by Sri Radha's transcendental form and qualities? When will the graceful dancer of devotional service to Sri Radha's lotus feet enter my heart? Sometimes his hairs standing erect, sometimes chanting the holy name of Radha in a broken voice, sometimes rolling about on the ground, and sometimes fainting a devotee overwhelmed with ecstatic love wanders in the forest of Vrndavana. (SVM 10. 36-37)

All glories to a certain young goddess, who is filled with the ultimate sweetness of krsna-prema, and the waves of the glistening ocean of the splendor of whose transcendental limbs has broken the differences of the directions in Vrndavana. (SVM 10. 44)

Filling all spiritual and material worlds with the splendor of Her transcendental limbs, and flooding every place with the sweetness of Her transcendental pastimes, a very beautiful teen-age girl, whose form is like a golden vine agitated with pure love for Lord Shyama, is splendidly manifest in Vrndavana's forest. Sainly theologians teach the graceful dance known as pure devotional service to the lotus feet of Sri Radha. By this dancing, whether a materialist like me, sinful or pious, blamed or praised, one may take shelter of Vrndavana, where Sri Radha is splendidly manifest. May I perform millions of wicked deeds. May I be filled with millions of wicked thoughts and millions of horrible, senseless material desires in the forest of Vrndavana, but may I never forget the holy name of Sri Radha. His heart fatally pierced by volleys of terrible poisoned cupid's arrows shot by the sweetness of Sri Radha's shy smiles and the pastimes of Her dancing sidelong glances and the sweetly graceful movements of Her transcendental body, a certain dark complexioned youth now staggers about in the forest of Vrndavana. May Sri Radhika's youthfulness, charm, virtues, talents, gracefully moving limbs, and beauty that floods all directions, appear in our hearts. (SVM 10. 46-50)

Not associating with women or men attached to women, taking shelter of this holy place, remaining indifferent to all the dualities of material existence, and maintaining the body by eating only a few roots or whatever simple food is easily available, please place Sri Radha's lotus feet in your heart sweetened with splendid ecstatic love, and please pass your days and nights always chanting Her holy names in the forest of Vrndavana. (SVM 10. 55)

All glories to the youthful splendor named Radha, which rests on th lap of a dark youth in Vrndavana forest, which has a glistening golden form plunged in the flooding ocean of transcendental beauty, and which with the nectar of ever-new transcendental love eclipses the glory of spiritual and material worlds. (SVM 10. 72)

Sri Radha is the supreme goddess of love. She is supreme in all spiritual and material worlds. Her lotus eyes fill Laksmi and all the goddesses with wonder. They pray for Her merciful glance. Lord Krsna is the supreme god of love. His amorous passion has no limit. He is supreme over all. A single ray of His splendor floods Lord Narayana in an ocean of happiness. (SVM 11. 46)

One who is very fortunate worships Sri Radha's lotus feet, which are plunged in the great ocean of transcendental beauty, plunged in the great ocean of intense transcendental sweetness, plunged in the great ocean of golden splendor, and filled with the wonderful tinkling of colorful anklets and the great auspiciousness of the chest of the dark moon of Lord Krsna Go ahead and attain material or spiritual

happiness! Attain all the kinds of liberation! Attain devotion to Lord Visnu! What is the value of these things? What are they in comparison to a tiny fragment of the happiness of serving Sri Radha's feet? (*SVM 11. 84-85*)

A vine of pearls splendidly decorates the waterpot-breasts of Sri Radha. It is Her touch that gives these pearls their beauty. O beautiful-faced girl, your crooked dark eyes are now plunged into the crooked dark form of Lord Hari. The friendship of similar things is natural in this world. (*SVM 11. 92-93*)

Vrndavana is the home of boundlessly wonderful and powerful transcendental pastimes. Vrndavana is filled with limitless mercy. No happiness is superior to happiness in Vrndavana. Without the merciful sidelong glance of Sri Radha no one has the power to do anything. I am the perfect example. I know that I suffer grievously because I have not attained Her mercy. Although Vrndavana is the source of transcendental bliss, my heart cannot find any happiness within it. O beautiful girl, I cannot for a moment look at Your beautiful smiling face. How can a kumuda flower find happiness without the moon? Are there not many very beautiful intelligent gopis here in Vrndavana? O Radha, I see only You. Where can a cakkora bird go if he turns from the moon? O Sri Radhika, if you are not merciful, then my mind and body will become racked with pain and I will quickly die of grief. For this reason please always cast Your glance of mercy on this person in Vrndavana. The girl named Sri Radha is the most exalted form of the goddess of fortune. Her lover is the most exalted form of the Supreme Personality of godhead. May the charming youthful divine couple, which enjoys the nectar of transcendental amorous pastimes in Vrndavana without beginning or end, be the object of my worship. With charming devotional service please eternally worship charming Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, Who eternally enjoy charming transcendental pastimes in the charming groves of charming Vrndavana forest. In a splendid transcendental body suitable for Radha's service, acting as a servant of Radha's feet, and pleasing the heart of Radha's lover, eternally reside in Radha's forest. O beautiful-faced Radha, gazing into Your face makes my eyes blossom with happiness. The moon, which is the friend of the kumuda flowers, brings only happiness to the kumudas. (*SVM 11. 109-117*)

I have firm faith in the worship of Sri Radha. My heart burns with pain and can find no peace. Except for the land of Vrndavana, what medicine is there to cure me? (*SVM 12. 1*)

A certain young, golden, and sweet lotus-flower girl is splendid with charming and wonderful playfulness in the forest of Vrndavana. Wandering above that lotus the black-bee Krsna has now become intoxicated by drinking its nectar. I have now also become a bee and I have now landed on that flower's red lotus feet. O lotus-eyed Radha, why do You anxiously gaze to the east? Go to Your lover and remove His anxiety. O charming girl, is Your face not as splendid as millions of moons? O Radha, now that You have rejected Him with harsh words, Your charming lover, dressed in a disguise, has come outside Your place and with the voice of a cuckoo, sings Your glories. In your heart please see the splendor of Vrndavana's god of love, which Sri Sri Radhika-Madhava drink with the cupped hands of Their restless eyes. (*SVM 12. 21-24*)

"Radha, why do You not show Me Your beautiful golden lotus face so charming with its knitted eyebrows? Why do You not show Me Your breasts which are the abode of the most wonderful beauty?" May Lord Hari who, in the forest of Vrndavana placed

Radha on His lap, held Her chin, and gazed at Her face smiling with these jokes of love, appear before me. Sri Krsna said: "O Radha, I think of Your breasts and Your angry face with its knitted eyebrows as two golden lotus flowers above which hovers a swarm of black bees. " Please meditate on the black stag Sri Radha has caught in the trap of love, and with whom She plays day and night in the forest of Vrndavana. Sri Radha is intoxicated by the sweetness of Vrndavana. She is intoxicated with extraordinary love. The sound of the name 'Krsna' makes Her wild with thirst to enjoy transcendental amorous pastimes. She is expert in the battlefield of love. I offer my respectful obeisances to the splendid dark parrot that stays on the unreachable top branches of the tall mango tree of the Upanisads, that pleases the gopis, and that with the wonderful ropes of intense love Sri Radha binds, forces to bow down, and pushes into the cage of Her feet. Please meditate on the wonderful, handsome, restless, dark parrot who, thinking them to be bimba fruits, bit the very sweet lips of Sri Radha. Let me take shelter of the walking tamala tree embraced by an amorous golden vine in the land of Vrndavana. O Radha, deep in Vrndavana forest You have stolen the jewel of my heart. Please give to me the sweetness of Your smile. I am your servant. She with face, eyes, breasts, hips, navel, feet, hands, and other limbs very wonderful, it filled with new blossoms, splendid lotuses, playing deer, mountains, and riverbank beaches all very beautiful, She with a transcendental form restless with passion, it filled with flowering golden vines, She decorated with tinkling ornaments, it charming with the sweet warbling of many birds, She with a splendid face framed by beautifully glistening black braids, it the place where the beautiful Yamuna flows, She with lips very beautiful and words filled with currents of transcendental bliss, and it filled with swift and cooling streams, may Sri Radha and the forest of Vrndavana simultaneously and affectionately appear in my heart. (*SVM 12. 28-38*)

This bumble bee will not fly to the beautiful blossoming malli flowers. He will not fly to the charming kalivalli flowers. He will not fly to the blossoming lotus flowers. He is not eager to taste the sweet fragrance of the malati flowers. He will not look at the smiling vasanti flowers. O Radha, in this forest of Vrndavana He only flies to the lotus flower of Your feet. (*SVM 12. 53*)

On Sri Radha, whose lips are beautiful even when not decorated with cosmetics, whose hands are like lotus flowers even when not anointed with kunkuma, whose glistening dark lotus eyes are very beautiful even when not anointed with mascara, whose long, smooth, glossy hair is very beautiful even when not combed or tied, and who, even without wearing any ornaments, is ornamented in the most beautiful way, please always meditate in this land of Vrndavana. When the fortunate devotees consider that Vrndavana is more dear to them than life itself, then Vrndavana is not difficult for them to attain. If, by the mercy of the great devotees in Vrndavana, they attain pure love, then the queen of Vrndavana will at once be easily attained by them. (*SVM 13. 5-6*)

Exhausted by enjoying many pastimes in Vrndavana Forest, covered with drops of perspiration, and like a full moon if the moon could be decorated with beautiful strands of pearls, may Sri Radhika's lotus face protect you all. If a blossoming golded lotus flower illumined by the light of numberless hosts of splendid moons were to kill a black bumble bee, then I would compare that sight to the face of Sri Radha in Vrndavana. Lord Hari takes in His fingers the red cosmetics touching Sri Radha's colorful jewel anklets and with awe and reverence places it over His heart. Please

worship Vrndavana, where Sri Radha gracefully walks with Her soft and delicate feet. (SVM 13. 23-25)

A great wonder shines in Vrndavana. It is two blossoming lotus flowers. It is two moons. It is two persons thirsting to taste sweet nectar in the other. One is the splendor of gold, and the other the glory of sapphire. Is this the crest-jewel of honey-drinking black bees staring at a golden lotus bud? At that moment Sri Radha smiled and shyly covered Her breasts. Please meditate on Her in Vrndavana in this way. (SVM 13. 26-27)

Meditate on Sri Radha's beautiful face, which would be like the whorl of a golden lotus if the lotus had a row of pomegranate seeds, were splendid as millions of full moons (SVM 13. 29)

Her hand waving away the bees greedy after the very wonderful sweet fragrance of Her beautiful transcendental form, and Her eyes blossoming with eagerness and bliss, Sri Radha walks along the paths in Vrndavana forest and enjoys transcendental pastimes with Her beloved. When my queen Radha becomes filled with jealous anger, and Her friends tell Her to refuse to talk with Him, stunned Lord Hari pleases Her by offering Her many flowers, fruits, and other gifts from Vrndavana forest. Let me glorify Vrndavana forest. When Sri Radha, the hairs on Her transcendental body erect in transcendental bliss, describes the many glories of Vrndavana forest, then the bumblebees stop singing, the female cuckoos no longer sound the fifth note, the parrot stops tracing his melody, the peacock dancer no longer calls out "keka", the embarrassed lute makes no sound, and the flute does not sing. Every day the parrots and then the gopi-maidservants happily recite Sri Radha's virut-poem splendidly glorifying Sri Vrndavana. When my queen made Her lover hear it, He became overwhelmed with bliss and love. I pray that my mind be always rapt in meditation on Sri Vrndavana. (SVM 13. 38-41)

May playful Sri Radha, whose kind and gentle smile reveals beautiful jasmine-bud teeth, who wears an exquisite blue silk garment decorated with splendidly colorful spots, and who is glorious in the charming forest groves filled with gunja and bumblebees, eternally reside in my heart. May Sri Radha, who wears a string of splendid black *gunja* that once rested on Lord Krsna's neck, who has stolen the great treasure that is the heart of Lord Krsna who continually thirsts to enjoy transcendental pastimes with Her, who enjoys many loving transcendental pastimes in the charming forest groves, and who removes the host of sufferings sprung from the lack of devotion to Her, become manifest in my heart. May Sri Radha, whose face is moonlight drunk by the cakora birds of Lord Krsnacandra's eyes, who is the personified Deity of transcendental love, who is maddened with amorous passion, who wears a garland of splendid golden campaka flowers that attract swarms of restless bees, and who shines with transcendental splendor, bring peace to my suffering heart. (SVM 13. 72-74)

In my heart I meditate on Sri Radhika, who, as the autumn moon shines brilliantly, Her form camouflaged with sandal paste, a necklace of pearls, and newly washed white garments, is very eager to meet Her lover in Her own forest garden of jasmine flowers. May Srimati Radhika who, passionately yearning to meet Lord Madanamohana in the newly blossoming forest of Vrndavana, saw the wonderfully colorful forest, became at once stunned, Her feet unable to walk on the path, and

had to be carried along by Her dear companion, appear in my heart. (SVM 13. 96-97)

I pray that my mind may become a singing bumblebee in the dust of Sri Radhika's feet in the land of Vrndavana, where Lord Krsna eternally enjoys transcendental amorous pastimes. (SVM 14. 14)

If Radha lifts Her head and gently smiles, then of what use are the rising of the full moon or the forests of blossoming lotus flowers? If, pretending to wish to see the forest, She goes there, taking the hand of a gopi friend, then the night in beautiful Vrndavana forest becomes filled with nectar. This bumblebee is now drinking the honey of that blossoming golden lotus moving to and fro in the waves of the Yamuna. Radha, why do You smile? Should a great bumblebee not boldly take this honey in Vrndavana forest? O Radha, seeing this khanjana bird on the broad banks of the Yamuna, the khanjana bird of My eyes now wishes to go to the shore of Your thighs. Now that the handsome black bees are drinking the honey of the lotus flowers in Vrndavana, I have become filled with the desire to drink the honey of Your beautiful lotus face. Wonderfully decorated with colorful flowers, Sri Radha enjoys passionate amorous pastimes with a great bumblebee in the beautiful newly-blossoming groves of Vrndavana, which are filled with swarms of buzzing bees. (SVM 14. 23-26)

"When you simply wish for Sri Radhika's protection, illusion at once flees in fear. " O wretched heart, from where have you gotten these hundred feigned symptoms of ecstatic love, as real as a host of flowers imagined to float in the sky? (SVM 14. 41)

I worship Radha who, hastily dressed, garments and ornaments in the wrong places, earrings swinging on Her cheeks, eyes moving restlessly, and flower ornaments falling from Her braided hair, not doubting Her friends, runs to drink the nectar of seeing Her beloved in glorious Vrndavana. When a gopi praises Vrndavana forest, Radha becomes overwhelmed. Dropping Her vina, not tying Her hair and belt, and not telling Her friends, She eagerly begins to run there, happily followed by the other gopis. (SVM 14. 72-73)

I meditate on Sri Radha's splendid reddish lotus feet, which with melodiously tinkling anklebells walk on the golden pavements of Vrndavana. (SVM 14. 97)

Because of ceaseless offences to Sri Radha one falls into the ocean of suffering without hope of rescue. Only Vrndavana's merciful glance can rescue him. (SVM 14. 100)

Please worship Sri Radha who, at first filled with jealous anger by the cruel words of Her friends, and then worshiped with sweet words Her lover sent through a messenger, now runs to Her lover's place in Vrndavana forest. The girl names Radha, who is the goddess of amorous weapons able to wound the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the goddess of beautiful, sweet, ecstatic transcendental love, who is the goddess of sweet transcendental pastimes, and who is the goddess that rules the life-breath of the prince of Vraja, awakens in Vrndavana forest. With the movements of Her eyebrows She creates millions of millions of Kamadevas. With Her playful words She creates millions of nectars. With the splendor of Her smiling face She creates millions of moons. With the splendor of Her transcendental limbs She creates millions of great oceans of the nectar of love. This

is Sri Radhika, who enjoys transcendental pastimes with Her lover. She is the controller of my life. (SVM 15. 5-7)

Making a crown of jewels and wonderful flowers, placing it and garlands, earrings, other ornaments, and a new peacock feather on the newly-arriving glistening monsoon cloud Krsna, some of Her friends told to stay far away and some initiated into a vow of silence, She runs, embraces Vrndavana's moon Krsna, and cries. May Sri Radha shine in my heart. May the most beautiful gopi, Sri Radha, who when the Lord of Her life arrived decorated with flowers from Candravali's forest garden, would not walk to embrace Him or move a finger or eye to recognize Him, protect us. I meditate on Sri Radha who, when Krsna said: "All of Vrndavana has attained the kindness of Your feet. Only with Your permission will I ever go to Candravali's house," wept, and when Her forcibly embraced Her, called out "No! No!" in a flood of distressed words. Even as the moon faded, the sun shone brightly, the tumultuous sounds of the birds filled all directions, and Her friends gathered in the doorway, trembling, shy Sri Radhika did not retreat from Lord Krsna's passionate embrace in the cottage of vines in Vrndavana forest. (SVM 15. 10-12)

Dressed in wonderful garments and ornaments, dancing with wonderful grace, Her small golden bells jingling, Her bracelets and anklets tinkling, and Her graceful gestures full of charm, Srimati Radhika fills her friends, Lord Hari, and the entire forest of Vrndavana with wonder. I meditate on Sri Radhika who, wonderfully dressed, wonderfully decorated with wonderful jewels and wonderful rings and necklaces, and Her braided hair set with wonderful and splendid lotus garlands, with wonderful grace and charm dances with Her partner, who is wonderfully decorated with a peacock-feather crown, in the circle of the rasa dance. (SVM 15. 14-15)

In Vrndavana forest a sweet and inconceivably glorious goddess is hidden. Please humbly bow before Her with folded hands. Worship Her with splendid and fragrant blue flowers. Circumambulate Her and bow down before Her. In with love in your heart you carefully keep the blissful treasure of pure devotional service, then I will tell you the truth: sometimes when Krsna sweetly places the vine of His arm around Radha's neck, She responds with "No! No!" I shall tell you a mantra that is hidden from all the Vedas and not manifested anywhere in the most confidential scriptures. When a person chants this mantra the great spiritual perfections come before his feet and the opulences of the Supreme Personality of Godhead stand in his hand. For a person who chants this mantra there are no orders or prohibitions. A person who understands the dust of this mantra's lotus feet purifies they who know the rules of the Vedas. This mantra is the sweetest nectar. It is the auspiciousness of all auspiciousness. It is filled with all limitless wonderful glory. It is the attainment of all attainments. It is the ultimate goal of all goals. It is the wild bliss of all wild blisses. They say it is the secret of all secrets. Without thinking of anything else, day and night chant this mantra: Radha. This mantra is a flood of sweetness churned from the sweetest nectars. It is a precious flood of the wild sweetness of the bliss of pure love. O fortunate one, who understands us? Who understands the meaning of this mantra that is a flood of bliss flowing into the heart? (SVM 15. 71-76)

Carefully instructing Her friends, as a practical joke She hid. Then, in the dear middle of the night, passionate Lord Hari ran here and there looking for Her as She laughed. All glories to Radha's outrageous, playful, wonderful, amorous joke! In a dream You see Yourself in Vrndavana forest enjoyed by the crown of heroes. Now Your body is troubled with desire for that rare Deity. Although You do not notice Him, the

Supreme Personality of Godhead of whom You ask now stands before You. "My arrogant friends are now staring through the window in this forest-cottage. O beloved, O master of all heroes, act quickly! Put out all the jeweled lamps! Draw the curtains! If You have not lost all Your powers, do it!" May these words of Srimati Radha protect your ears. "O Radha, O generous one, please sprinkle on Me the gift of Our amorous pastimes. Let Your friends say: Now let us leave this forest. " I meditate on these requests Lord Murari spoke to Srimati Radha as She leaned against His chest in the groves of limitless Vrndavana. My lover is always tormented with amorous desires. Lalita, her friends, and many other girls have given their instructions. O My virtuous maidservant, you tell Me: What should I do? All glories to the advice she gave Srimati Radha on the forest-path! (SVM 15. 79-80)

"A proud and jealous girl is glorious in this world. O friend, girls that are not proud before their lover are wretched. " When these proud words from Her dear friends entered Her ears, they pierced Her heart and made it tremble. (SVM 15. 89)

### **Brahma-Samhita**

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who resides in His own realm, Goloka, with Radha, who resembles His own spiritual figure and who embodies the ecstatic potency [hladini]. Their companions are Her confidantes, who embody extensions of Her bodily form and who are imbued and permeated with ever-blissful spiritual rasa. " B. S. 5. 37

### **Sri Caitanya Caritamrita** of Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami

C. C. *Adi* 1. 6 Desiring to understand the glory of Radharani's love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She relishes the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appears from the womb of Srimati Sacideve, as the moon appears from the ocean.

The essence of the hladini potency is love of God, the essence of love of God is emotion [bhava], and the ultimate development of emotion is mahabhava.

Sri Radha Thakurani is the embodiment of mahabhava. She is the repository of all good qualities and the crest jewel among all the lovely consorts of Lord Krsna.

Of these two gopis [Radharani and Candravali], Srimati Radharani is superior in all respects. She is the embodiment of mahabhava, and She surpasses all in good qualities. (*Ujjvala-nilamani* 2)

Her mind, senses and body are steeped in love for Krsna. She is Krsna's own energy, and She helps Him in His pastimes. [*Adi* 4. 68-71]

Lord Krsna made Srimati Radharani close Her eyes in shame before Her friends by His words relating Their amorous activities on the previous night. Then He showed the highest limit of cleverness in drawing pictures of dolphins in various playful sports on Her breasts. In this way Lord Hari made His youth successful by performing pastimes in the bushes with Sri Radha and Her friends. [*B. r. s. 2. 1. 231*] (*CC Adi* 4. 117)

*Adi 4. 214-221*

Among the gopis, Srimati Radhika is the foremost. She surpasses all in beauty, in good qualities, in good fortune, and above all, in love.

Just as Radha is dear to Lord Krsna, so Her bathing place [Radha-kunda] is dear to Him. She alone is His most beloved of all gopis. (*Padma Purana*)

O Partha, in all the three planetary systems, this earth is especially fortunate, for on earth is the town of Vrndavana. And there the gopis are especially glorious because among them is My Srimati Radharani. (*Adi Purana-Krsna to Arjuna*)

All the other gopis help increase the joy of Krsna's pastimes with Radharani. The gopis act as instruments of Their mutual enjoyment.

Radha is the beloved consort of Krsna, and She is the wealth of His life. Without Her, the gopis cannot give Him pleasure.

Lord Krsna, the enemy of Kamsa, left aside the other gopis during the rasa dance and took Srimati Radharani to His heart, for She is the helper of the Lord in realizing the essence of His desires. (*Gita-Govinda 3. 1* - Krsna leaves rasa lila to search for Radha)

Lord Caitanya appeared with the sentiment of Radha. He preached the dharma of this age-the chanting of the holy name and pure love of God.

In the mood of Srimati Radharani, He also fulfilled His own desires. This is the principal reason for His appearance.

*C. C. Adi 4. 238-272*

Once Lord Krsna considered with His heart: "Everyone says that I am complete bliss, full of all rasas. All the world derives pleasure from Me. Is there anyone who can give Me pleasure? One who has a hundred times more qualities than Me could give pleasure to My mind. One more qualified than Me is impossible to find in the world. But in Radha alone I feel the presence of one who can give Me pleasure. Although My beauty defeats the beauty of ten million cupids, although it is unequalled and unsurpassed and although it gives pleasure to the three worlds, seeing Radharani gives pleasure to My eyes. The vibration of My transcendental flute attracts the three worlds, but My ears are enchanted by the worlds of Srimati Radharani. Although My body lends fragrance to the entire creation, the scent of Radharani's limbs captivates My mind and heart. Although the entire creation is full of different tastes because of Me, I am charmed by the nectarean taste of the lips of Srimati Radharani. And although My touch is cooler than ten million moons, I am refreshed by the touch of Srimati Radhika. Thus although, I am the source of happiness for the entire world, the beauty and attributes of Sri Radhika are My life and soul. In this way My affectionate feelings for Srimati Radharani may be understood, but on analysis I find them contradictory. My eyes are fully satisfied when I look upon Srimati Radharani but by looking upon Me, She becomes even more advanced in satisfaction. The flutelike murmur of the bamboos rubbing against one another steals Radharani's consciousness, for She thinks it to be the sound of My flute. And She embraces a

tamala tree, mistaking it for Me. 'I have gotten the embrace of Sri Krsna,' She thinks, 'so now My life is fulfilled. ; Thus She remains immersed in pleasing Krsna, taking the tree in Her arms. When a favorable breeze carries to Her the fragrance of My body, She is blinded by love and tries to fly into that breeze. When She tastes the betel chewed by Me, She merges in an ocean of joy and forgets everything else. Even with hundreds of mouths I could not express the transcendental pleasure She derives from My association. Seeing the luster of Her complexion after Our pastimes together, I forget My own identity in happiness. The sage Bharata has said that the mellows of lover and beloved are equal. But he does not know the mellows of My Vrndavana. The happiness I feel when meeting Radharani is a hundred times greater than the happiness I get from meeting others

My dear auspicious Radharani, Your body is the source of all beauty. Your red lips are softer than the sense of immortal sweetness, Your face bears the aroma of a lotus flower, Your sweet words defeat the vibrations of the cuckoo, and Your limbs are cooler than the pulp of sandalwood. All My transcendental senses are overwhelmed in ecstatic pleasure by tasting You, who are completely decorated by beautiful qualities. (spoken by Lord Krsna to Radha, *Lalita-Madhava* 9. 9 by Rupa Goswami)

Her eyes are enchanted by the beauty of Lord Krsna, the enemy of Kamsa. Her body thrills in pleasure at His touch. Her ears are always attracted to His sweet voice, Her nostrils are enchanted by His fragrance, and Her tongue hankers for the nectar of His soft lips. She hangs down her lotuslike face, exercising self-control only by pretense, but She cannot help showing the external signs of Her spontaneous love for Lord Krsna. (Rupa Goswami thus describes the countenance of Srimati Radharani)

Considering this, I can understand that some unknown mellow in Me controls the entire existence of My captivator, Srimati Radharani. I am always eager to taste the joy that Radharani derives from Me. In spite of various efforts, I have not been able to taste it. But My desire to relish that pleasure increases as I smell its sweetness. I have appeared in the world to taste mellows. I shall taste the mellows of pure love in various ways. I shall teach devotional service, which springs from the spontaneous love of the devotees, by demonstrating it Myself with My pastimes. But these three desires have not been satisfied, for one cannot enjoy them in a contrary position. Unless I accept the luster of the ecstatic love of Sri Radhika, these three desires cannot be fulfilled. Therefore, assuming Radharani's sentiments and bodily complexion, I shall descend to fulfill these three desires. In this way Lord Krsna came to a decision. Simultaneously, the time came for the incarnation of the age. At that time Sri Advaita was earnestly worshiping Him. Advaita attracted Him with His loud calls. First Lord Krsna made His parents and elders appear. Then Krsna Himself, with the sentiments and complexion of Radhika, appeared in Navadvipa, like the full moon, from the womb of mother Saci, which is like an ocean of pure milk.

Lord Krsna desired to taste the limitless nectarean mellows of the love of one of His multitude of loving damsels [Sri Radha], and so He assumed the form of Lord Caitanya. He has tasted that love while hiding His own dark complexion with Her effulgent yellow color. May that Lord Caitanya confer upon us His grace. (Caitanyastaka 2. 3 of Rupa Goswami) (*C. C. Adi 4. 275*)

*New Delhi, India  
8 December 2003*

### **Names of Srimati Radharani**

Sri Radha Radhika - Lord Krsna's greatest worshiper  
Krsna-Vallabha - Lord Krsna's beloved  
Krsna-Samyuta - Lord Krsna's constant companion  
Vrndavanesvari - queen of Vrndavana  
Krsna-Priya - beloved of Lord Krsna  
Madana-Mohini - more charming than Kamadeva  
Srimati - beautiful  
Krsna-Kanta - Lord Krsna beloved  
Krsnananda-Pradayini - the giver of bliss to Lord Krsna  
Yasavini yasogamya - famous  
Yasodananana-Vallabha - beloved of Yasoda's son  
Damodara-Priya - dear to Lord Damodara  
Gopi - cowherd girl  
Gopananda-Kari - giver of happiness to the gopas  
Krsnanga-Vasini - Her residence is on Lord Krsna's limbs  
Hrdya - She is charming  
Hari-kanta Hari-Priya - Lord Hari's beloved  
Pradhana-Gopika - the most important gopi  
Gopa-Kanya - the daughter of a gopa  
Trailokya-Sundari - the most beautiful girl in the 3 worlds  
Vrndavana-Vihari - She enjoys pastimes in Vrndavana  
Vikasita-Mukhambuja - Her face is a blossoming lotus  
Gokulananda-Kartri Gokulananda-Dayini - She brings happiness to Gokula  
Gati-Prada - She gives the goal of life  
Gita-Gamya - She is approached by chanting Her holy names  
Gamanagamana-Priya - She is the beloved of the omnipresent Supreme personality of Godhead  
Visnu-Priya Visnu-Kanta - Lord Visnu's beloved  
Visnur Anga-Nivasini - resides on Lord Visnu's limbs  
Yasodananda-Patni Yasodananda-Gehini - wife of Yasoda's son  
Kamari-Kanta - the beloved of lust's enemy  
Kamesi - Lord Krsna's amorous queen  
Kama-Lalasa-Vigraha - Lord Krsna's passionate lover  
Jaya-Prada - giver of victory  
Jaya - She is victory itself  
Jiva - She is life  
Jivananda - Pradayini - giver of happiness to the living entities  
Nandanandana-PatVedatita - beyond the Vedas  
Vid-Uttama - the wisest philosopher  
Niti-Sastra-Priya - She is an eager student of the scriptures describing ethics  
Niti-Gati - the perfect moralist

Mati - the most thoughtful philosopher  
 Abhistada - the fulfiller of desires  
 Veda-Priya - an eager student of the Vedas  
 Veda-Garbha - the mother of the Vedas  
 Veda-Marga-Pravardhini - the teacher of the Veda's path  
 Veda-Gamya - She is approached by Vedic study  
 Veda-Para - She is the supreme goal described in the Vedas  
 Vicitra-Kanakojjvala - splendid with wonderful golden ornaments  
 Ujjvala-Prada - glorious  
 Nitya - eternal  
 Ujjvala-Gatrika - Her limbs are filled with glory  
 Nanda-Priya - dear to Maharaja Nanda  
 Nanda-Sutaradhya - worshiped by Nanda's son  
 Ananda-Prada - delightful  
 Subha - beautiful  
 Subhangi - with beautiful limbs  
 Vimalangi - with splendid limbs  
 Vilasini - playful  
 Aparajita - unconquerable  
 Janani - She is the mother of all  
 Janma-Sunya - without birth  
 Janma-Mrtyu-Jarapaha - the remover of birth death and old age  
 Gatir Gatimatam - the supreme goal of the aspiring devotees  
 Dhatri - the mother of all  
 Dhatrananda - Pradayini - the giver of bliss to the Supreme creator  
 Jagannatha-Priya - dear to the Lord of the universe  
 Saila-Vasini - She resides on a hill  
 Hema-Sundari - She is beautiful and golden  
 Kisorī - She is youthful  
 Kamala Padma - like a lotus flower  
 Padma-Hasta - Her hands are lotuses  
 Payoda-Da - She is buxom  
 Payasvini Paya-Datri - She is buxom  
 Pavitra - pure  
 Sarva-Mangala - all auspicious  
 Maha-Jiva-Prada - the great giver of life  
 Krsna-Kanta - Lord Krsna's beloved  
 Kamala-Sundari - Beautiful as a lotus  
 Vicitra-Vasini Citra-Vasini - She is wonderfully fragrant  
 Citra-Rupini - wonderfully beautiful  
 Nirguna - free of the modes of material nature  
 Sri Kulina - born in a pious family  
 Niskulina - not born in any family of the material world  
 Nirakula - free from all distress  
 Gokulantara-Geha - Her home is in Gokula  
 Yogananda-Kari - delights Lord Krsna when She meets Him  
 Venu-Vadya - She plays the flute  
 Venu-Rati - She enjoys playing the flute  
 Venu-Vadhya-Parayana - fond of playing the flute  
 Gopalasya Priya - Lord Gopala's beloved  
 Saumya-Rupa - She is gentle and noble  
 Saumya-Kulodvaha - born in an exalted family  
 Moha Vimoha - charming

Amoha - free from bewilderment  
 Gati-Nistha Gati -Prada - She gives the goal of life  
 Girbana-Vandya - the demigods offer obeisances to Her  
 Girbana - She is divine  
 Girbana-gana-Sevita - served by the demigods  
 Lalita - playful and charming  
 Visoka - free from lamentation  
 Visakha - the star Visakha  
 citra-Malini - decorated with wonderful garlands  
 Jitendria - She has conquered Her senses  
 Suddha-Sattva - situated in pure goodness  
 Kulina - born in a noble family  
 Kulina-Dipika - the lamp illuminating Her family  
 Dipa-Priya - fond of lamps  
 Dipa-Datri - the giver of the lamp  
 Vimala - pure  
 Vimalodaka - the sacred river  
 Kantara-Vasini - She lives in a forest  
 Krsna Krsncandra-Priya - Lord Krsna's beloved  
 Mati - She is thoughtfulness  
 Anuttara - unsurpassed  
 Duhkha-Hantri - the remover of suffering  
 Duhkha-Kartri - the creator of suffering  
 Kuladvaha - the noblest in Her family  
 Mati - She is thoughtfulness  
 Laksmi - Goddess Laksmi  
 Dhrti - perseverance  
 Lajja - modesty  
 Kanti - beauty  
 Pusti - fulfillment  
 Smrti - memory  
 Ksama - patience  
 Ksirodasayini - She who lies down on the ocean of milk  
 Devi - the Goddess  
 Devari-Kula-Mardini - the crusher of Lord Krsna's enemies  
 Vaisnavi - She is Visnu's consort  
 Maha-Laksmi - Goddess Maha-Laksmi  
 Kula-Pujya - worshipped by Her family  
 Kula-Priya - Dear to Her family  
 Samhartri Sarva-Daityanam - the destroyer of all demons  
 Savitri- the gayatri mantra  
 Veda-Gamini - Follower of the vedas  
 Vedatita - beyond the Vedas  
 Niralamba - liberated  
 Niralamba-Gana-Priya - dear to the liberated  
 Niralamba-Janaih-Pujya - worshiped by the liberated  
 Niraloka - unseen by conditioned souls  
 Nirasraya - Independent  
 Ekanga - She has one form  
 Sarvaga - She is all-pervading  
 Sevyā - the supreme object of worship  
 Brahma-Patni - Brahma's wife  
 Sarasvati - Goddess Sarasvati

Rasa-Priya - fond of the rasa dance  
 Rasa-Gamya - the girl Lord Krsna approached in the rasa dance  
 Rasadhishtr-Devata - the predominating Deity of the rasa dance  
 Rasika - She enjoys the transcendental mellows  
 Rasikananda - tastes the bliss of the transcendental mellows  
 Svayam Rasesvari - the queen of the rasa dance  
 Para - transcendental  
 Rasa-Mandala-Madhystha - the girl who stays in the middle of the rasa dance circle  
 Rasa-Mandala-Sobhita - the girl who beautifies the rasa dance circle  
 Rasa-Mandala-Sevya - She is served in the rasa dance circle  
 Rasa-krida - She enjoys the pastimes of the rasa dance  
 Manohara - She is beautiful  
 Pundarikaksa-Nilaya - Her dark eyes are lotus flowers  
 Pundarikaksa-Gehini - She is the wife of lotus-eyed Krsna  
 Pundarikaksa-Sevya - She is served by lotus eyed Krsna  
 Pundarikaksa-Vallabha - dear to lotus-eyed Krsna  
 Sarva-Jivesvari - the queen of all living entities  
 Sarva-Jiva-Vandya - worshiped  
 Parat-Para - greater than the greatest  
 Prakrti - the Goddess of material nature  
 Sambhu-Kanta, Sadasiva-Manohara - the beautiful wife of Lord Siva  
 Ksut - She is hunger  
 Pipasa - She is thirst  
 Daya - She is mercy  
 Nidra - She is sleep  
 Bhranti - bewilderment  
 Sranti - exhaustion  
 Ksamakula - patience  
 Vadhu-Rupa - She is a young girl  
 Gopa-Patni - a wife of a Gopa  
 Bharati - the Goddess of eloquence  
 Siddha-Yogini - perfect in the science of yoga  
 Satya-Rupa Nitya-Rupa Nityangi - Her form is eternal  
 Nitya-Gehini - She is Lord Krsna's wife eternally  
 Sthana-Datri - She gives Her devotees their homes  
 Dhatri - She is the mother  
 Maha-Laksmi - Goddess Maha-Laksmi  
 Svayam-Prabha - Self effulgent  
 Sindhu-Kanya - the daughter of the milk ocean  
 Dvaraka-Vasini - She who resides in Dvaraka  
 Buddhi - intelligence  
 Sthiti Sthana-Rupa - steadiness  
 Sarva-Karana-Karana - the cause of all causes  
 Bhakti-Priya - fond of serving Krsna  
 Bhakti-Gamya - approached by devotional service  
 bhaktananda-Pradayini - the giver of bliss to the devotees  
 Bhakta-Kalpa-Drumatita - She is more than a kalpa-vrksa tree for the devotees  
 Atita-Guna - the possessor of the greatest transcendental virtues  
 Mano-'Dhishtratri-Devi - the predominating Deity of the heart  
 Krsna-Prema-Parayana - the girl completely in love with Lord Krsna  
 Niramaya - free from all disease  
 Saumya-Datri - the most gentle, kind and generous  
 Madana-Mohini - more charming than Kamadeva

Eka Anamsa - one without a second  
 Siva Durga - the wife of Lord Siva  
 Ksema - happiness and auspiciousness personified  
 Durgati-Nasini - the person who destroys all calamities  
 Isvari - She is the supreme controller  
 Sarva-Vandya - worshiped by all  
 Gopaniya - reclusive  
 Subhankari - the giver of auspiciousness  
 Palini Sarva-Bhutanam - the protectress of all living entities  
 Kamanga-Harini - the wife of Lord Siva who destroyed Kamadeva's body  
 Sadya-Mukti-Prada - She is the person who quickly gives liberation  
 Devi - the Goddess  
 Veda-Sara - the essence of the Vedas  
 Parat Para - greater than the greatest  
 Himalaya-Suta Sarva Parvati Girija Sati - She is Goddess Parvati  
 Daksa-Kanya - She is Daksa's daughter  
 Deva-Mata - the demigod's mother  
 Manda-Lajja - bold  
 Hares-Tanuh - Lord Hari's own transcendental form  
 Vrndaranya-Priya - fond of Vrndavana  
 Vrnda - Goddess Vrnda  
 Vrndavana-Vilasini - The girl who enjoys pastimes in Vrndavana  
 Vilasini - She is playful  
 Vaisnavi - Lord Visnu's companion  
 Brahmaloaka-Pratisthita - the predominating goddess of the spiritual world  
 Rukmini - She is Rukmini  
 Revati - She is Revati  
 Satyabhama - She is Satyabhama  
 Jambavati - She is Jambavati  
 Sulaksmata - She is Sulaksmata  
 Mitravinda - She is Mitravinda  
 Kalindi - She is Kalindi  
 Jahnu-Kanya - she is Jahnavi  
 Paripurna Purnatara - most perfect  
 Hainaveti - Goddess Parvati  
 Gati - the supreme goal of life  
 Apurva - She is unprecedented  
 Brahma-Rupa - She is spiritual  
 Brahmanda-Paripalini - the protectress of the universe  
 Brahnanda-Bhanda-Madhyastha - the goddess who enters the material universe  
 Brahmanda-Bhanda-Rupini - the goddess who Herself is material universe  
 Anda-Rupa - She is the goddess who is the material universe  
 Anda-Madhyastha - the goddess who has entered the material universe  
 Anda-Paripalini - the protectress of the material universe  
 Anda-bahya -the goddess who is beyond the material universe  
 Anda-Samhartri - the destroyer of material universe  
 Siva-Brahma-Hari-Priya - She who is dear to Siva, Brahma and Visnu  
 Maha-Visnu-Priya - She is Lord Maha-Visnu's beloved  
 Kalpa-Vrksa-Rupa - a Kalpa-Vrksa tree  
 Nirantara Sthira - eternal  
 Sara-Bhuta - the best  
 Gauri Gaurangi - fair  
 Sasi-Sekhara - Lord Siva's wife

Sveta-Campaka-Varnabha - She is fair as a Sveta Camapaka flower  
Sasi-Koti-Sama-Prabha-splendid as millions of moons  
Malati-Malya-Bhusadhya Malati-Malya-Dharini - decorated with jasmine garlands  
Krsna-Stuta - She is praised by Krsna  
Krsna-Kanta - loved by krsna  
Vrndavana-Vilasini - She enjoys pastimes inVrndavana  
Tulasi-Adhithatri-Devi - She is Goddess Tulasi  
Samsaravana-Para-Da - She carries one to the farther shore of the ocean of birth  
and death  
Sarada - She gives what is the best  
Aharada - She gives food  
Ambhoda - She gives water  
Yasoda - She gives fame  
Gopa-Nandini - She is a gopa's daughter  
Atita-Gamana - very graceful  
Gauri - fair  
Paranugraha-Karini - kind to others  
Karunarnava-Sampurna Karunarnava-Dharini - She is a flooding oceanof mercy  
Madhavi Syama-Vallabha - She is Lord Krsna's beloved  
Madhava-Manoharini - She charms Lord Krsna's heart  
Andhakara-Bhaya-Dhvasta - She removes the fear of dardness  
Mangalya - She is auspicious  
Mangala-Prada - the giver of auspiciousness  
Sri-Garbha - the mother of all beauty  
Sri-Prada - the giver of beauty  
Srisa - the queen of beauty  
Sri-Nivasa - the abode of beauty  
Acyutapriya - the beloved of the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead  
Sri-Rupa Sri-Svarupini - She is the form of beauty  
Sri-Hara - the remover of beauty  
Srida - the giver of beauty  
Sri-Kama - the desire for beauty  
Sridamesvara-Vallabha - dear to Sridama's master  
Sri-Nitamba - She has beautiful hips  
Sri-Ganesa - She is the beautiful queen of the gopis  
Sri-Svarupasrita Srila - She is beautiful  
Sruti - She is the Vedas  
Sri-Kriya-Rupini - She is the activities of devotional service  
Sri-Krnsa-Bhajanavita - She devotedly worships Sri Krsna  
Sri Radha - She worships Lord Krsna

*New Delhi, India  
9 December 2003*

**Sri Naradasya Radha-Krsnaylor Vrndavane Darsana-purvaka-mahatmya-  
varnanam**

Sri Narada Sees Sri Sri Radha-Krsna in Vrndavana, from *Padma Purana*

Texts 1 and 2

sri-devy uvaca

bhagavan sarva-bhutesa

sarvatman sarva-sambhava

devesvara maha-deva

sarvajna karuna-kara

tvayanukampitaivaham

bhuyo 'py ahanukampaya

trailokya-mohana mantras

tvaya me kathitah prabho

sri-devy uvaca - Goddess Parvati said; bhagavan - O Lord; sarva-bhutesa - O master of all living beings; sarvatman - O soul of all; sarva-sambhava - O creator of all; devesvara - O master of the deigods; maha-deva - O Siva; sarvajna - all knowing; karuna-kara - merciful; tvaya - by you; anumampita - an object of mercy; eva - indeed; aham - I; bhuyo - greatly; api - also; aha - said; anumampaya - kindly; trailokya-mohana - describing Lord Krsna, who enchants the three worlds; mantras - mantras; tvaya - by you; me - to me; kathitah - told; prabho - O Lord.

Goddess Parvati said: O merciful, all-knowing Lord Siva, O master of all living beings, O soul of all, O creator of all, O master of the demigods, you have very kindly described to me the mantras that glorify Lord Krsna, who enchants the three worlds.

Text 3

tena devena gopibhir

maha-mohana-rupina

kena kena visesena

cikride tad vadasva me

tena - by Him; devena - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; gopibhir - with the gopis; maha-mohana-rupina - with a very enchanting form; kena - by which; kena - by which?; visesena - specifically; cikride - enjoyed pastimes; tad - that; vadasva - please tell; me - me.

What pastimes did the Lord enjoy with the gopis? Please tell that to me.

Text 4

sri-mahadeva uvaca

ekada vadayan vinam

narado muni-pungavah

krsnavataram ajnaya

prayayau nanda-gokulam

sri-mahadeva uvaca - Lord Siva said; ekada - one day; vadayan - playing; vinam - the vina; narado - Narada; muni- pungavah - the best of sages; krsnavataram - the incarnation of Lord Krsna; ajnaya - knowing; prayayau - went; nanda-gokulam - to Nanda's Gokula.

Lord Siva said:

Aware that Lord Krsna had descended to the earth, Sri Narada, the best of sages, went one day, playing his vina, to Nanda's Gokula.

Text 5

gatva tatra maha-yoga-

mayesam vibhum acyutam

bala-natya-dharam devam

adraksin nanda-vesmani

gatva - going; tatra - there; maha-yoga-mayesam - the master of Yogamaya; vibhum - all-powerful; acyutam - infallible; bala - of a child; natya - a drama; dharam - manifesting; devam - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; adraksit - saw; nanda-vesmani - in nanda's home.

Arriving at Nanda's home, Narada saw there the all-powerful and infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of Yogamaya, and who was then acting the role of a tiny infant as an actor acts in a play.

Text 6

su-komala-patastirna-

hema-paryankikopari

sayanam gopa-kanyabhih

preksamanam sada muda

su-komala - very soft; pata - cloth; astirna - covered; hema - golden; paryankika - cradle; upari - over; sayanam - sleeping; gopa-kanyabhih - by the gopis; preksamanam - seen; sada - always; muda - happily.

Many gopis happily gazed at the infant Krsna as He slept in soft blankets in a golden cradle, . . .

Text 7

ativa-sukumarangam

mugdham mugdha-vilokanam

visrasta-nila-kutilla-

kuntalavali-mandalam

ativa - very; sukumara - delicate; angam - limbs; mugdham - charming; mugdha-vilokanam - with charming eyes; visrasta - in disarray; nila - dark; kutilla - curly; kuntalavali-mandalam - hair.

. . . Krsna whose limbs were very soft and delicate, who was charming, whose eyes were charming, whose curly black hairs were in disarray, . . .

Text 8

kincit smitankura-vyanjad-

eka-dvi-rada-kudmalam

sva-prabhabhir bhasyantam

samantad bhavanodaram

kincit - somewhat; smita - of smile; ankura - a sprout; vyanjad - manifesting; eka - one; dvi - or two; rada - teeth; kudmalam - bud; sva-prabhabhir - with His own splendor; bhasyantam - illuminating; samantad - completely; bhavanodaram - the room.

. . . from whose gentle smile came the buds of one or two teeth, and whose bodily splendor illuminated the entire room.

Text 9

dig-vasasam samalokya

so 'ti-harsam avapa ha

sambhasya go-patim nandam

aha sarva-parbhu-priyah

dis - with the directions; vasasam - garments; samalokya - seeing; so - he; ati-harsam - great joy; avapa - attained; ha - indeed; sambhasya - speaking; go-patim - to the master of the cows; nandam - nanda; aha - said; sarva-parbhu-priyah - dear to the master of all.

Seeing infant Krsna, who was clothed only by the four directions, Narada, who was very dear to the Lord, spoke the following words to the gopa Nanda:

Text 10

narayana-paranam tu

jivanam hy ati-durlabham

asya prabhavam atulam

na janantiha kecana

narayana-paranam - of they who are devoted to Lord Narayana; tu - indeed; jivanam - life; hy - indeed; ati-durlabham - very rare; asya - of him; prabhavam - glory; atulam - peerless; na - not; jananti - know; iha - here; kecana - anyone.

The devotees of Lord Narayana are very rarely seen in this world. No one in this world can understand their true glory, which has no equal anywhere.

Text 11

brahma-bhavadayo 'py asmin

ratim vanchanti sasvatim

caritam casya balasya

sarvesam eva harsanam

brahma-bhavadayo - beginning with Brahma and Siva; api - also; asmin - for Him; ratim - love; vanchanti - desire; sasvatim - eternal; caritam - the pastimes; ca - also; asya - of this; balasya - boy; sarvesam - of all; eva - indeed; harsanam - delight.

Brahma, Siva, and all the demigods aspire to attain love and devotion for this boy. This boy's activities bring happiness to everyone.

Text 12

muda gayanti srnvanti

cabhinandanti tadsah

asmims tava sute 'cintya-

prabhava snigdha-manasah

muda - happily; gayanti - sing; srnvanti - hear; ca - and; abhinandanti - offer prayers; tadsah - like this; asmin - to Him; tava - your; sute - son; acintya - inconceivable; prabhava - power and glory; snigdha-manasah - their hearts filled with love.

Happily and with great love in their hearts, the demigods sing songs glorifying your son, offer prayers to Him, and hear the descriptions of His glories. Your son's glory and power are beyond conception.

Text 13

narah santi na tesam vai

bhava-badha bhavisyati

munceha para-lokecchah

sarva ballava-sattama

narah - human beings; santi - are; na - not; tesam - of them; vai - indeed; bhava-badha - imprisoned in the material world; bhavisyati - will be; munca - free; iha - here; para-lokecchah - desiring the transcendental world; sarva - all; ballava-sattama - O best of the gopas.

They who hear and chant your son's glories do not remained imprisoned in the material world. O best of the gopas, you should renounce all material desires, either for this world or the next.

Text 14

ekantenaika-bhavana

bale 'smin pritim acara

ity uktva nanda-bhavanan

niskranto muni-pungavah

ekantenaika-bhavana - with undivided attention; bale - boy; asmin - for this; pritim - love; acara - do; ity - thus; uktva - saying; nanda-bhavanat - from Nanda's home; niskranto - departed; muni-pungavah - the best of sages.

You should give all your love to this boy.

After speaking these words, Narada, the best of sages, left Nanda's home.

Text 15

tenarcito visnu-buddhya

pranamyā ca visarjitah

athasau cintayam asa

maha-bhagavato munih

tena - by him; arcito - worshiped; visnu-buddhya - with the conception of Lord Visnu; pranamyā - bowing; ca - and; visarjitah - departed; atha - then; asau - he; cintayam asa - thought; maha-bhagavato - the great devotee; munih - the sage.

Nanda bowed down and worshiped Narada as if the sage were Lord Visnu Himself. After he had left the home, the great devotee sage Narada thought:

Text 16

asya kanta bhagavati

laksmir narayane harau

vidhaya gopika-rupam

kridartham sarnga-dhanvanah

asya - of Him; kanta - the beloved; bhagavati - the supreme goddess of fortune; laksmir - laksmi; narayane - Narayan; harau - Hari; vidhaya - placing; gopika-rupam - the form of a gopi; kridartham - for transcendental pastimes; sarnga-dhanvanah - with the holder of the Sarnga bow.

His beloved is the Supreme Goddess of Fortune. She appeared as Laksmi when He appeared as Narayana, but now, to enjoy pastimes with Him, She has manifested Her original form as a gopi.

Text 17

avasyam avatirna sa

bhavisyati na samsayah

tam aham vicinomy adya

gehe gehe vrajaukasam

avasyam - inevitably; avatirna - descended; sa - She; bhavisyati - will be; na - no; samsayah - doubt; tam - Her; aham - I; vicinomy - will find; adya - now; gehe - in home; gehe - after home; vrajaukasam - of they who have homes in Vraja.

When He descends to this world, She always comes with Him. Of this there is no doubt. I will search for Her in all the homes of Vraja until I find Her.

Text 18

vimrsyaivam muni-varo

gehani vraja-vasinam

pravivesatithir bhutva

visnu-buddhya su-pujitah

vimrsya - thinking; evam - in this way; muni-varo - the best of sages; gehani - the homes; vraja-vasinam - of the residents of Vraja; pravivesa - entered; atithir - a

guest; bhutva - becoming; visnu- buddhya - with the idea of Lord Visnu; su-pujitah - worshiped.

Thinking in this way, the best of sages visited the homes of Vraja. Wherever he went he was worshiped as if he were Lord Visnu Himself.

Text 19

sarvesam ballavadinam

ratim nanda-sute param

drstva muni-varah sarvan

manasa praninama ha

sarvesam - of all; ballavadinam - beginning with the gopas; ratim - love; nanda-sute - for the son of Nanda; param - great; drstva - seeing; muni-varah - the best of sages; sarvan - all; manasa - in his mind; praninama - bowed down; ha - indeed.

Within his mind, Narada bowed down before all of them, for he saw that all the gopas and everyone else in Vraja had great love for Nanda's son.

Text 20

gopalanam grhe balam

dadarsa sveta-rupinim

sa drstva tarkayam asa

rama hy esa na samsayah

gopalanam - of the gopas; grhe - in the home; balam - child; dadarsa - saw; sveta-  
rupinim - with a white form; sa - he; drstva - seeing; tarkayam asa - guessed; rama  
- the goddess of fortune; hy - indeed; esa - She; na - no; samsayah - doubt.

When he saw a beautiful and very fair infant girl in one gopa's home, Narada could understand that this infant must be the goddess of fortune. Of this he had no doubt.

#### Text 21

pravivesa tato dhiman

nanda-sakhyur mahatmanah

kasyacid gopa-varyasya

bhanu-namno grham mahat

pravivesa - entered; tato - then; dhiman - intelligent; nanda- sakhyur - of Nanda's  
friend; mahatmanah - the great soul; kasyacid - of someone; gopa-varyasya - the  
best of gopas; bhanu-namno - named Bhanu; grham - the home; mahat - great.

Then learned and intelligent Narada entered the great palace of one of Nanda's  
friends, a noble-hearted gopa named Bhanu.

#### Text 22

arcito vidhivat tena

so 'py aprcchan maha-manah

sadho tvam asi vikhyato

dharma-nisthataya bhuvi

arcito - worshiped; vidhivat - properly; tena - by him; so - he; api - also; aprcchat - asked; maha-manah - noble-hearted; sadho - O saintly one; tvam - you; asi - are; vikhyato - famous; dharma-nisthataya - for faith in religion; bhuvī - in the world.

After properly worshipping him, noble-hearted Bhanu asked Narada: O saintly one, in this world you are famous as a very religious person.

Text 23

tavaḥam dhana-dhanyādi-  
samrddhim samvibhavaye  
kaccit te yogyaḥ putro 'sti  
kanya va subha-lakṣaṇa

tava - of you; aham - I; dhana - wealth; dhanya - good fortune; adi - beginning with; samrddhim - opulence; samvibhavaye - I am opulent; kaccit - somehow; te - of you; yogyaḥ - worthy; putro - son; asti - is; kanya - daughter; va - or; subha-lakṣaṇa - beautiful and virtuous.

By your grace I have wealth and many opences. By your grace I have a worthy son and a beautiful and virtuous daughter.

Text 24

yatas te kirtir akhilaṃ  
lokaṃ vyāpya bhaviṣyati  
ity ukto muni-varyeṇa  
bhanur anīya putrakam

yatas - because; te - of you; kirtir - the fame; akhilam - all; lokam - the world; vyapya - pervading; bhavisyati - will be; ity - thus; ukto - saying; muni-varyena - by the great sage; bhanur - Bhanu; aniya - brought; putrakam - to the son.

This is so because Your fame is spread throughout the entire world.

After speaking these words, Bhanu brought Narada to the son.

Text 25

maha-tejasvinam drptam

naradayabhyavadayat

drstva muni-varas tam tu

rupenapratimam bhuvi

maha-tejasvinam - very effulgent and powerful; drptam - glorious; naradaya - to Narada; abhyavadayat - greeted with respect; drstva - seeing; muni-varas - the great sage; tam - him; tu - indeed; rupena - with with form; apratimam - without equal; bhuvi - in the world.

When he saw him, Narada offered respectful obeisances to that glorious and powerful boy, who was handsome without equal in this world.

Text 26

padma-patra-visalaksam

sugrivam sundara-bhruvam

caru-dantam caru-karnam

sarvavayava-sundaram

padma - lotus; patra - petal; visala - large; aksam - eyes; sugrivam - handsome neck; sundara-bhruvam - handsome eyebrows; caru - beautiful; dantam - teeth; caru - handsome; karnam - ears; sarvavayava-sundaram - with all limbs handsome.

His eyes were lotus petals. His neck, eyebrows, teeth, ears, and all his limbs were graceful and handsome.

Text 27

tam samaslisya bahubhyam

snehasruni vimucya ca

tatah sa-gadgadam praha

pranayena maha-munih

tam - him; samaslisya - embracing; bahubhyam - with both arms; sneha - of affection; asruni - tears; vimucya - releasing; ca - and; tatah - then; sa-gadgadam - with a faltering voice; praha - spoke; pranayena - with love; maha-munih - the great sage.

Shedding tears of love as he embraced him with both arms, the great sage spoke affectionate words in a faltering voice.

Text 28

sri-narada uvaca

ayam sisus te bhavita

su-sakha rama-krsnayoh

viharisyati tabhyam ca

ratrin-divam atandritah

sri-narada uvaca - Sri Narada said; ayam - this; sisus - boy; te - of yours; bhavita - will be; su-sakha - a close friend; rama - of Balarama; krsnayoh - and Krsna; viharisyati - will enjoy pastimes; tabhyam - with Them; ca - and; ratrin-divam - day and night; atandritah - without fatigue.

Sri Narada said: Your boy will be a close friend of Krsna and Balarama. Without becoming fatigued, he will enjoy pastimes with Them day and night.

Text 29

tata abhasya tam gopa-

pravaram muni-pungavah

yada gantum manas cakre

tatraivam bhanur abravat

tatas - then; abhasya - speaking; tam - to him; gopa - of gopas; pravaram - the best; muni-pungavah - the great sage; yada - when; gantum - to go; manas - the mind; cakre - does; tatra - there; evam - thus; bhanur - Bhanu; abravat - said.

Narada spoke to that exalted cowherd boy for some time. When in his heart Narada decided to leave, Bhanu said to him:

Text 30

ekasti putrika deva

deva-patny-upama mama

kaniyasi sisor asya

jadandha-badhirakrtih

eka - one; asti - is; putrika - daughter; deva - O lord; deva-patny- upama - like a demigoddess; mama - of me; kaniyasi - younger; sisor - boy; asya - than this; jada - mute; andha - blind; badhira - deaf; akrtih - form.

O lord, I also have a daughter beautiful like a demigoddess. She is younger than this boy. She is blind, deaf, and mute.

Text 31

utsahad vrddhaye yace

tvam varam bhagavattama

prasanna-drsti-matrena

su-sthiram kuru balikam

utsahad - eagerly; vrddhaye - to increase; yace - I beg; tvam - you; varam - boon; bhagavattama - O most exalted one; prasanna - easily; drsti - sight; matrena - only; su-sthiram - steady; kuru - please make; balikam - the girl.

O most exalted one, I earnestly beg this boon from you: Please cure this girl. At least give Her the power to see.

Text 32

srutvaivam narado vakyam

kautukakrsta-manasah

atha pravisya bhavanam

luthantim bhu-tale sutam

srutva - hearing; evam - thus; narado - Narada; vakyam - words; kautuka - by curiosity; akrsta - attracted; manasah - the mind; atha - then; pravisya - entering; bhavanam - the room; luthantim - rolling about; bhu-tale - on the floor; sutam - the girl.

Hearing these words, Narada became curious. Entering the room, he saw the girl rolling about on the floor.

Text 33

utthapyanke nidhayati-

sneha-vihvala-manasah

bhanur apy ayayau bhakti-

namro muni-varantikam

utthapya - placing; anke - on the lap; nidhaya - placing; ati - great; sneha - with affection; vihvala - overwhelmed; manasah - heart; bhanur - Bhanu; apy - also; ayayau - came; bhakti - with devotion; namro - bowing; muni-varantikam - to the great sage.

Picking up the infant girl, Narada placed Her on his lap. His heart was overcome with spiritual love. Then Bhanu approached and devotedly bowed down before the sage.

Text 34

atha bhagavata-sresthah

krsnasyati-priyo munih

drstva tasyah param rupam

adrstasrutam adbhutam

atha - then; bhagavata-sresthah - the best devotee; krsnasya - to Lord Krsna; atipriyo - very dear; munih - the sage; drstva - seeing; tasyah - of Her; param - transcendental; rupam - beauty; adrsta - unseen; asrutam - unheard; adbhutam - wonderful.

Then Narada Muni, who is a great devotee and who is very dear to Lord Krsna, gazed at the wonderful transcendental beauty of that infant girl, a beauty that had never been seen or heard of before.

Text 35

abhut purva-samam mugdho

hari-prema maha-munih

vigahya paramananda-

snigdham eka-rasayanam

abhut - was; purva - previously; samam - equal; mugdho - bewildered; hari-prema - love for Lord Krsna; maha-munih - the great sage; vigahya - plunging; parama - transcendental; ananda - bliss; snigdham - and love; eka-rasayanam - nectar.

Overcome with love for Lord Krsna, the great sage Narada became plunged in the nectar of transcendental bliss.

Text 36

muhurta-dvitayam tatra

munir asic chilopamah

munindrah pratibuddhas tu

sanair unmilya locane

muhurta-dvitayam - two muhurtas; tatra - there; munir - the sage; asit - was; silopamah - like a stone; munindrah - th king of sages; pratibuddhas - conscious; tu - indeed; sanair - gradully; unmilya - opening; locane - eyes.

For almost two hours Narada was stunned and motionless. He was like a stone statue. Gradually he became conscious again and slowly opened his eyes.

Text 37

maha-vismayam apannas

tusnim eva sthito 'bhavat

antar hrdis maha-buddhir

evam eva vyacintayat

maha - great; vismayam - wonder; apannas - attained; tusnim - silence; eva - indeed; sthito - situated; abhavit - was; antar - within; hrdis - the heart; maha-buddhir - very intelligent; evam - thus; eva - indeed; vyacintayat - thought.

Silent and filled with wonder, intelligent Narada thought within his heart:

Text 38

bhrantam sarvesu lokesu

maya svacchanda-carina

asya rupena sadrsi

drsta naiva ca kutracit

bhrantam - wandered; sarvesu - in all; lokesu - worlds; maya - by me; svacchanda-carina - moving as I wish; asyas - of Her; rupena - with the beauty; sadrsi - like this; drsta - seen; na - not; eva - indeed; ca - and; kutracit - anywhere.

I have wandered through all the worlds, going wherever I wish. Still, I have never seen any girl beautiful like Her.

Text 39

brahmaloke rudraloka

indraloke ca me gatih

na ko 'pi sobha-koty-amsah

kuytrapy asya vilokitah

brahmaloke - in Brahmaloaka; rudraloka - in Rudraloka; indraloke - in Indraloka; ca - and; me - of me; gatih - going; na - not; ko 'pi - anything; sobha - of beauty; koty - a tne millionth; amsah - part; kuytrapy - anywhere; asyas - of Her; vilokitah - seen.

Traveling in Brahmaloaka, Rudraloka, and Indraloka, I have not seen even a ten-millionth part of Her beauty.

Text 40

maha-maya bhagavati

drsta sailendra-nandini

yasya rupena sakalam

muhyate sa-caracaram

maha-maya - Maha-maya; bhagavati - the goddess; drsta - seen; sailendra-nandini - the daughter of the Himalayas; yasya - of whom; rupena - with the beauty; sakalam - all; muhyate - is bewildered; sa-caracaram - moving and unmoving beings.

I have seen Goddess Maha-maya, who is the daughter of the king of the Himalayas and whose beauty enchants all moving and unmoving beings.

Text 41

sapy asyah sukumarangi-

laksmim napnoti karhicit

laksmih sarasvati kanti-

vidyadyas ca vara-striyah

sa - she; apy - also; asyah - of Her; sukumarangi - delicate limbs; laksmim - beauty; na - not; apnoti - attains; karhicit - at all; laksmih - Laksmi; sarasvati - Sarasvati; kanti - Kanti; vidya - Vidya; adyas - beginnign with; ca - and; vara-striyah - beautiful women.

Neither Laksmi, Sarasvati, Kanti, Vidya, nor any other beautiful woman has anything like the beauty of this girl's delicate limbs.

Text 42

chayam api sprsanty asyah

kadacin naiva drsyate

visnor yan-mohini-rupam

haro yena vimohitah

chayam - shadow; api - even; sprsanty - touch; asyah - of Her; kadacit - ever; na - not; eva - indeed; drsyate - is seen; visnor - of Lord Visnu; yat - of whom; mohini-rupam - the form of Mohini; haro - Siva; yena - by which; vimohitah - was bewildered.

These girls cannot even touch Her shadow. Her beauty has never been seen before. Even Lord Visnu in His form as Mohini, a form that bewildered even the demigod Siva, isn't as beautiful as Her.

Text 43

maya drstam ca tad api

kuto 'syah sadrsam bhavet

tato 'syas tattvam ajnatum

na me saktih kathancana

maya - by me; drstam - seen; ca - and; tad api - still; kuto - where?; asyah - of Her; sadrsam - the like; bhavet - may be; tato - then; asyas - of Her; tattvam - the truth; ajnatum - to understand; na - not; me - of me; saktih - the power; kathancana - at all.

Still, I have seen Her. Where is anyone beautiful like Her? I have not the slightest power to understand Her.

Text 44

anye capi na jananti

prayenainam hareh priyam

asyah sandarsanad eva

govinda-caranambuje

anye - others; ca - and; api - also; na - not; jananti - understand; prayena - generally; enam - Her; hareh - of Lord Krsna; priyam - beloved; asyah - of Her; sandarsanad - by the sight; eva - indeed; govinda-caranambuje - at Lord Krsna's lotus feet.

Then others certainly cannot understand Her either, this girl who is so dear to Lord Hari. Even when they see Her at Lord Govinda's lotus feet they still cannot understand Her.

Text 45

ya premarddhir abhut sa me

bhuta-purvena karhicit

ekante naumi bhavatim

darsayitvati-vaibhavam

ya - which; prema - of love; rddhir - increase; abhut - was; sa - that; me - of me; bhuta-purvena - previously; karhicit - sometime; ekante - one; naumi - I praise; bhavatim - You; darsayitva - seeing; ati- vaibhavam - great glory.

Because of past pious deeds I was somehow eligible to feel this spiritual love. Seeing You, O goddess, I praise Your glories.

Text 46

krsnasya sambhavaty asya

rupam parama-tustaye

vimrsyaivam munir gopa-

pravaram presya kutracit

krsnasya - of Lord Krsna; sambhavaty - is; asya - of Her; rupam - the form; parama-tustaye - for the great pleasure; vimrsya - thinking; evam - thus; munir - the sage; gopa - of gopas; pravaram - to the best; presya - sending; kutracit - somewhere.

She manifests this form to bring great pleasure to Lord Krsna.

Thinking in this way, Narada Muni sent the exalted gopa Bhanu to another place.

Text 47

nibhrte paritustava

balikam divya-rupinim

api devi maha-yoga-

mayesvari maha-prabhe

nibhrte - in a secluded place; paritustava - offered prayers; balikam - to the infant girl; divya-rupinim - with the splendid transcendental form; api - also; devi - O Goddess; maha-yoga-mayesvari - O controller of Maha-yogamaya; maha-prabhe - O glorious one.

Now alone in that place, Narada offered prayers to the infant girl, whose transcendental form was filled with glory. He said: O goddess, O most glorious controller of Maha-yogamaya, . . .

Text 48

maha-mohana-divyangi

maha-madhurya-varsini

mahadbhuta-rasananda-

sathili-krta-manase

maha-mohana-divyangi - whose limbs are charming and splendid; maha-madhurya-varsini - who are a shower of transcendental sweetness; mahadbhuta - great wonder; rasa - of nectar; ananda - bliss; asathili-krta - overcome; manase - heart.

. . . O goddess whose splendid limbs are enchanting, O shower of transcendental sweetness, O Goddess whose heart is filled with the most wonderful nectarean bliss, . . .

Text 49

maha-bhagyena kenapi

gatasi mama drk-patham

nityam antar-mukha drstis

tava devi vibhavyate

maha-bhagyena - by great good fortune; kenapi - somehow; gata - gone; asi - You are; mama - of me; drk-patham - on the pathway of the eyes; nityam - always; antar-mukha - within; drstis - sight; tava - of You; devi - O goddess; vibhavyate - is considered.

. . . somehow I have become very fortunate and You are now walking on the pathway of my eyes. May I always see You within my heart.

Text 50

antar eva mahananda-

paritrptaiva laksyase

prasannam madhuram saumyam

idam sumukha-mandanam

antar - within; eva - indeed; mahananda - great bliss; paritrpta - pleased; eva - indeed; laksyase - is seen; prasannam - happy; madhuram - sweet; saumyam - gentle; idam - this; sumukha-mandanam - the ornament of favorable persons.

Within my heart I see that You are filled with bliss. I see You decorated with virtues, with happiness, sweetness, and gentleness.

Text 51

vyanakti paramascaryam

kam apy antah sukhodayam

rajah-sambandhi-kalika-

saktis tattvati-sobhane

vyanakti - manifests; paramascaryam - great wonder; kam apy - something; antah - within; sukhodayam - the manifestation of happiness; rajah - pollen; sambandhi - in relation to; kalika - of a bud; saktis - power; tattva-truth; ati-sobhane - ijn great beauty.

A great wonder of transcendental bliss has now entered my heart. It is like a bud that has the power to bring glorious pollen.

Text 52

srsti-sthiti-samahara-

rupini tvam adhisthita

tat tvam visuddha-sattvasu-

sakti-vidyatmika para

srsti - creation; sthiti - maintenance; samahara - and destruction; rupini - in the form of; tvam - You; adhisthita - the controller; tat - that; tvam - You; visuddha-sattva - transcendental goodness; asu - quickly; sakti - potency; vidya - knowledge; atmika - self; para - transcendental.

You are the creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the worlds. You are transcendental goodness and transcendental knowledge.

Text 53

paramananda-sandoham

dadhati vaisnavam param

ka tvayascarya-vibhave

brahma-rudradi-durgame

paramananda-sandoham - great transcendental bliss; dadhati - gives; vaisnavam - Vaisnava; param - transcendental; ka - indeed; tvaya - by You; ascarya - wonderful; vibhave - power and glory; brahma-rudradi-durgame - difficult for Brahma, Siva, and the demigods to attain.

Your power is wonderful. You bring great transcendental bliss to the devotees. Even Brahma, Siva, and the demigods cannot attain You.

Text 54

yogindranam dhyana-patham

na tvam spryasi karhicit

iccha-saktir jnana-saktih

kriya-saktis tvayesituh

yogindranam - of the kings of the yogis; dhyana-patham - the path of meditation; na - not; tvam - You; spryasi - touch; karhicit - ever; iccha-saktir - the potency of desire; jnana-saktih - the potency of knowledge; kriya-saktis - the potency of action; tvaya - by You; esituh - the controller.

You never touch the path of meditation traversed by the kings of the yogis. You control the potencies of desire, knowledge, and action.

Text 55

tavamsa-matram ity evam

manisa me pravartate

maya-vibhutayo 'cintyas

tan-mayarbhaka-mayinah

tava - of You; amsa - a part; matram - only; ity - thus; evam - thus; manisa - considering; me - of me; pravartate - does; maya- vibhutayo - the potencies; acintyas - inconceivable; tan- mayarbhaka - an ordinary child; mayinah - creating the illusion.

All these potencies are parts and parcels of You. That is what I think. Your inconceivable mystic powers create the illusion that You are only an ordinary child.

Text 56

paresasya maha-visnos

tah sarvas te kala-kalah

ananda-rupini saktis

tvam isvari na samsayah

paresasya - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; maha- visnos - Lord Maha-Visnu; tah - they; sarvas - all; te - of You; kala- kalah - parts of the parts; ananda - of bliss; rupini - the form; saktis - potency; tvam - You; isvari - the Goddess; na - no; samsayah - doubt.

You are the blissful supreme Goddess, the original potency of Lord Maha-Visnu. All other goddesses are part and parcel of You. Of this there is no doubt.

Text 57

tvaya ca kridate krsno

nunam vrndavane vane

kaumarenaiva rupena

tvam visvasya ca mohini

tvaya - with You; ca - and; kridate - enjoys pastimes; krsno - Lord Krsna; nunam - indeed; vrndavane - in Vrndavana; vane - forest; kaumarena - with a youthful; eva - indeed; rupena - form; tvam - You; visvasya - of the universes; ca - and; mohini - enchanting.

Lord Krsna enjoys pastimes with You in Vrndavana forest. Your youthful form is the most charming in the entire world.

Text 58

tarunya-vaya-samsprstam

kidrk te rupam adbhutam

kidsam tava lavanyam

lila-haseksananvitam

tarunya-vaya - by youth; samsprstam - touched; kidrk - like what?; te - of You; rupam - the form; adbhutam - wonderful; kidsam - like what?; tava - of You; lavanyam - the beauty; lila - playful; hasa - laughter and joking; iksana - eyes; anvitam - with.

What is Your form like? It is embraced by youthfulness. What is Your beauty like? It has playful, smiling glances.

Text 59

hari-manusa-lobhena

vapur ascarya-manditam

drastum tad aham icchami

rupam te hari-vallabhe

hari - of Lord Krsna; manusa - human; lobhena - with desire; vapur - form; ascarya-manditam - decorated with wonder; drastum - to see; tad - that; aham - I ; icchami - wish; rupam - form; te - of You; hari- vallabhe - dear to Lord Krsna.

O beloved of Lord Hari, I wish to see the wonderfully decorated form in which You enjoy humanlike pastimes with Lord Hari.

Text 60

yena nanda-sutah krsno

moham samupayasyati

idanim mama karunyan

nijam rupam mahesvari

pranataya prapannaya

prakasayitum arhasi

yena - by whom; nanda-sutah - the son of Nanda; krsno - Krsna; moham - bewilderment; samupayasyati - will attain; idanim - now; mama - of me; karunyat - because of mercy; nijam - own; rupam - form; mahesvari - O great goddess; pranataya - bowing down; prapannaya - surrendered; prakasayitum - to show; arhasi - You deserve.

O great goddess, out of kindness to me please show to this surrendered soul bowing down before You the form that Nanda's son, Lord Krsna, finds so enchanting.

Text 61

ity ukta muni-varyena

tad-anuvrata-cetasa

maha-mahesvarim natva

mahananda-mayim param

ity - thus; ukta - addressed; muni-varyena - by the great sage; tad-anuvrata-cetasa - his heart filled with devotion; maha- mahesvarim - to the great goddess; natva - bowing; mahananda- mayim - filled with transcendental bliss; param - transcendental.

After speaking these words, the great sage, his heart filled with devotion, bowed down before the blissful Supreme Goddess.

Text 62

maha-prematarotkantham

vyakulangim subheksanam

iksamanena govindam

evam varnāyatasthitam

maha-prematarotkantham - filled with the longings of transcendental love; vyakulangim - agitated limbs; subheksanam - beautiful eyes; iksamanena - seeing; govindam - Lord Krsna; evam - thus; varnāyata - describing; asthitam - situated.

Seeing that the beautiful-eyed Goddess was overwhelmed with love for Lord Krsna, the great sage began to describe the Lord.

Text 63

jaya krsna mano-harin

jaya vrndavana-priya

jaya bhru-bhanga-lalita

jaya venu-ravakula

jaya - glory; krsna - O Krsna; mano-harin - charming to the heart; jaya - glory; vrndavana-priya - dear to Vrndavana; jaya - glory; bhru- bhanga-lalita - with graceful and playful bent eyebrows; jaya - glory; venu-ravakula - who plays the flute.

Glory to You, O Lord Krsna, who charm the heart! Glory to You, who are dear to Vrndavana! Glory to You, whose graceful eyebrows are playfully arched! Glory to You, who sweetly play the flute!

Text 64

jaya barha-krtottamsa

jaya gopi-vimohana

jaya kunkuma-liptanga

jaya ratna-vibhusana

jaya - glory; barha-krtottamsa - with a peacock-feather crown; jaya - glory; gopi-vimohana - enchanting the gopis; jaya - glory; kunkuma - with kunkuma; lipta - anointed; anga - limbs; jaya - glory; ratna-vibhusana - decorated with jewel ornaments.

Glory to You, decorated with a peacock-feather crown! Glory to You, who enchant the gopis! Glory to You, whose limbs are anointed with kunkuma! Glory to You, decorated with jewel ornaments!

Texts 65 and 66

kadaham tvat-prasadena

anaya divya-rupaya

sahitam nava-tarunīya-

mano-hari-vapuh-sriya

vilokayisye kaisore

mohanam tvam jagat-pate

kada - when?; aham - I; tvat-prasadena - by Your mercy; anaya - Her; divya-rupaya - with a splendid transcendental form; sahitam - with; nava-tarunya - new youthfulness; mano-hari - charming the heart; vapuh - of the form; sriya - with the handsomeness and glory; vilokayisye - I will see; kaisore - in youth; mohanam - charm; tvam - You; jagat-pate - O master of the universes.

When, O Lord of the universes, by Your mercy will I see Your charming youthful form with this splendid goddess by Your side?

Text 67

evam kirtayatas tasya

tat-ksanīad eva sa punah

babhuva dadhati divyam

rupam atyanta-mohanam

evam - thus; kirtayatas - chanting the glories; tasya - of Him; tat-ksanad - in a moment; eva - indeed; sa - He; punah - again; babhuva - was; dadhati - giving; divyam - splendid; rupam - form; atyanta-mohanam - very charming.

Being praised in this way, Lord Krsna suddenly manifested His very charming and splendid transcendental form.

Texts 68 and 69

caturdasabda-vayasa

sammitam lalitam param

samana-vayasas canyas

tadaiva vraja-balikah

agatya vestayam asur

divya-bhusambara-srajah

munindrah sa tu niscesto

babhuvascarya-mohitah

caturdasa - 14; abda - years; vayasa - age; sammitam - with; lalitam - graceful; param - transcendental; samana-vayasas - the same age; ca - and; anyas - other; tada - then; eva - indeed; vraja-balikah - girls of Vraja; agatya - approaching; vestayam asur - surrounded; divya-bhusambara-srajah - with splendid garments, ornaments, and flower garlands; munindrah - the king of sages; sa - he; tu - indeed; niscesto - stunned; babhuva - was; ascarya - with wonder; mohitah - overcome.

Very charming and graceful, Lord Krsna was fourteen years old. He was surrounded by many girls of Vraja, all the same age as He, and all decorated with splendid garments, ornaments, and flower garlands. Seeing this, Narada, the king of sages, became unconscious. He was stunned with wonder.

Text 70

balayas tas tada sakhyas

caranambu-kanair munim

nisicya bodhayam asur

ucus ca krpayanvitah

balayas - of the girl; tas - they; tada - then; sakhyas - friends; carana - of the feet; ambu - of water; kanair - with drops; munim - the sage; nisicya - sprinkling; bodhayam asur - brought back to consciousness; ucus - said; ca - and; krpaya - mercy; anvitah - with.

Sprinkling on him some drops of water that had touched their feet, these girls, all friends of the girl Radha, mercifully brought the sage back to consciousness and said to him:

Texts 71-74

muni-varya maha-bhaga

maha-yogesvaresvara

tvayaiva paraya bhaktya

bhagavan harir isvarah

nunam aradhito devo

bhaktanam kama-purakah

yad iyam brahma-rudradyair

devaih siddha-munisvaraih

maha-bhagavatais canyair

durdasa durgamapi ca

aty-adbhuta-vayo-rupa-

mohini hari-vallabha

kenapy acintya-bhagyena

tava drsti-patham gata

uttisthottistha viprarse

dhairyam alambya sa-tvaram

muni-varya - O best of sages; maha-bhaga - O fortunate one; maha-yogesvaresvara - O king of the kings of yoga; tvaya - by you; eva - indeed; paraya - with great; bhaktya - brahmanā; bhagavan - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; harir - Lord Hari; isvarah - the supreme controller; nunam - indeed; aradhito - worshiped; devo - th Lord; bhaktanam - of the devotees; kama-purakah - fulfilling the desires; yad - what; iyam - this; brahma-rudradyair - headed by Brahma and Siva; devaih - by the demigods; siddha-munisvaraih; - by the siddhas and the kings of the sages; maha-bhagavatais - by great devotees; ca - and; anyair - others; durdasa - difficult to see; durgama - difficult to approach; api - also; ca - and; aty-adbhuta-vayo- rupa-mohini - charming with wonderful youthful beauty; hari-vallabha - Lord Krsna's beloved; kenapy - by some; acintya- bhagyena - inconceivable good fortune; tava - of You; drsti-patham - the path of the eyes; gata - attained; uttistha - rise; uttistha - rise; viprarse - O brahmana sage; dhairyam - consciousness; alambya - attaining; sa-tvaram - quickly.

O very fortunate best of sages, O king of the kings of yoga, with great devotion you have worshiped Lord Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who fulfills His devotees' desires. By your inconceivable good fortune, Lord Hari's beloved, whose youthful beauty is very wonderful and enchanting, and whom even Brahma, Siva, the demigods, the siddhas, the kings of the sages, the great devotees, and many other exalted souls cannot approach or see, now walks on the pathway of Your eyes. O great brahmanā sage, please become conscious at once. Stand up! Stand up!

Text 75

enam pradaksini-krtya

namaskuru punah punah

kim na pasyasi carv-angim

atyanta-vyakulam iva

enam - Her; pradaksini-krtya - circumambulating; namaskuru - offer obeisances; punah - again; punah - and again; kim - why?; na - not; pasyasi - you see; carv-angim - beautiful limbs; atyanta- vyakulam - very agitated; iva - like.

You should circumambulate Sri Radha and bow down before Her again and again. Why do you not gaze upon beautiful and agitated Radha?

Text 76

asminn eva ksane nunam

antardhanam gamisyati

nanaya saha samlapah

kathancit te bhavisyati

asmin - in this; eva - indeed; ksane - in a moment; nunam - indeed; antardhanam - disappearance; gamisyati - will be; na - not; anaya - Her; saha - with; samlapah - conversation; kathancit - somehow; te - of you; bhavisyati - will be.

In a moment She will disappear. Then you will no longer be able to speak with Her.

Text 77

darsanam ca punar nasyah

prapsyasi brahma-vittama

kintu vrndavane kapi

bhaty asoka-lata subha

darsanam - the sight; ca - and; punar - again; na - not; asyah - of Her; prapsyasi - you will attain; brahma-vittama - O best of the knowers of Brahman; kintu - however; vrndavane - in Vrndavana; kapi - a certain; bhaty - is; asoka-lata - an asoka vine; subha - beautiful.

O best of they who know the Supreme, then you will not see Her again. Still, in Vrndavana forest there is a beautiful asoka vine.

Text 78

sarva-kale 'pi puspadhya

sarva-dig-vyapi-saurabha

govardhanad adurena

kusumakhya-saras-tate

sarva-kale - at all times; api - even; puspadhya - rich with flowers; sarva-dig-vyapi-saurabha - with a sweet fragrance that fills all the directions; govardhanad - from Govardhana; adurena - not far; kusumakhya-saras-tate - on the shore of the lake named Kusuma-sarovara.

That vine grows on the lake of Kusuma-sarovara lake, which is not far from Govardhana Hill. Its sweet fragrance filling all directions, that vine is always rich with many flowers.

Texts 79 and 80

tan-mule hy ardha-ratre ca

draksyasy asman asesatah

srutvaivam vacanam tasam

sneha-vihvala-cetasam

yavat pradaksini-krtya

pranamed dandavan munih

muhurta-dvitayam balam

nana-nirmana-sobhanam

tan-mule - at the root of that vine; hy - indeed; ardha-ratre - in the middle of the night; ca - and; draksyasy - you will see; asman - them; asesatah - completely; srutva - hearing; evam - thus; vacanam - words; tasam - of them; sneha-vihvala-cetasam - their hearts overcome with affection; yavat - as long as; pradaksini- krtya - circumambulating; pranamed - offers obeisances; dandavat - dandavat; munih - the sage; muhurta-dvitayam - for almost two hours; balam - to the girl; nana-nirmana-sobhanam - beautiful in many ways.

Under that vine, in the middle of the night, you will see all this again.

Hearing these words from the affectionate gopis, Narada spent the next almost two hours circumambulating and offering dandavat obeisances to the beautiful girl Sri Radha.

Text 81

ahuya bhanum provaca

naradah sarva-sobhana

evam prabhava baleyam

na sadhya daivatair api

ahuya - calling; bhanum - Bhanu; provaca - said; naradah - Narada; sarva-sobhana - all beautiful; evam - thus; prabhava - glorious; bala - girl; iyam - this; na - not; sadhya - attainable; daivatair - by the demigods; api - even.

Calling Bhanu, Narada said: Even the great demigods cannot approach your beautiful and glorious daughter.

Text 82

kintu yad-grham etasyah

pada-cihna-vibhusitam

tatra narayano devah

svayam vasati madhavah

laksmis ca vasate nityam

sarvabhiih sarva-siddhibhih

kintu - however; yad-grham - in whose home; etasyah - of Her; pada- cihna-vibhusitam - decorated with the footprints; tatra - there; narayano devah - Lord Narayana; svayam - Himself; vasati - resides; madhavah - the husband of the goddess of fortune; laksmis - the goddess of fortune; ca - and; vasate - resides; nityam - always; sarvabhiih - with all; sarva-siddhibhih - perfections.

Lord Narayana, the husband of the goddess of fortune, resides in any home decorated with your daughter's footprints. Accompanied by all mystic perfections, the goddess of fortune also resides always in that home.

Text 83

adya enam vararoham

sarvabharana-bhusanam

devim iva param gehe

raksa yatnena sattama

adya - now; enam - Her; vararoham - the girl with beautiful thighs; sarvabharana-bhusanam - decorated with all ornaments; devim - goddess; iva - like; param - great; gehe - at home; raksa - protect; yatnena - with care; sattama - O great one.

O great one, therefore please carefully protect your daughter, who is beautiful like a goddess and who is decorated with all ornaments.

Texts 84 and 85

ity uktva manasaivainam

maha-bhagavatottamah

tad-rupam eva samsmrtya

pravisto gahanam vanam

asoka-latika-mulam

asadya muni-sattamah

ity - thus; uktva - speaking; manasa - with the mind; eva - indeed; enam - Her; maha-bhagavatottamah - the best of devotees; tad-rupam - Her form; eva - thus; samsmrtya - remembering; pravisto - entered; gahanam - deep; vanam - into the forest; asoka-latika-mulam - the root of the asoka vine; asadya - attaining; muni-sattamah - the best of sages.

After speaking these words, the great devotee Narada Muni began to meditate on Sri Radha's transcendental form. Going deep into the forest, he found the place under the asoka vine.

Text 86

pratiksamano devim tam

tatraivagamanam nisi

sthito 'tra prema-vikalas

cintayan krsna-vallabham

pratiksamano - waiting; devim - the goddess; tam - Her; tatra - there; eva - indeed; agamanam - arrival; nisi - at night; sthito - staying; atra - there; prema-vikalas - overcome with spiritual love; cintayan - meditating; krsna-vallabham - on Lord Krsna's beloved.

There Narada waited for Goddess Radha to arrive in the middle of the night. Overcome with spiritual love, he stayed there, meditating on Lord Krsna's beloved.

Text 87

atha madhya-nisa-bhage

yuvatyah paramadbhutih

purva-drstas tathanyas ca

vicitrabharana-srajah

atha - then; madhya-nisa-bhage - in the middle of the night; yuvatyah - young girls; paramadbhutih - very wonderful; purva-drstas - seen before; tatha - so; anyas - others; ca - and; vicitrabharana-srajah - decorated with wonderful ornaments and flower garlands.

Then, in the middle of the night, Narada saw, decorated with wonderful ornaments and flower garlands, the same very wonderful girls he had seen before, and many other girls also.

Text 88

drstva manasi sambhranto

dandavat patito bhuvih

parivarya munim sarvas

tas tah pravivisuh subhah

drstva - seeing them; manasi - in his heart; sambhranto - reverent; dandavat - like a stick; patito - fell; bhuvih - to the ground; parivarya - surrounding; munim - the sage; sarvas - all; tah tah - they; pravivisuh - entered; subhah - beautiful.

With a reverential heart, Narada fell like a stick before them. The beautiful girls at once surrounded the sage.

Text 89

prastu-kamo 'pi sa munih

kincit svabhimatam priyam

nasakat prema-lavanya-

priya-bhasa-pradharsitah

prastu-kamo - desiring to stand; api - even; sa - he; munih - the sage; kincit - something; svabhimatam - dear; priyam - dear; na - not; asakat - was able; prema - of love; lavanya - beauty; priya - dear; bhasa - words; pradharsitah - overcome.

Although he desired to stand, he could not. He was overcome with devotion and the wish to speak graceful words of praise.

Texts 90 and 91

athagata muni-srestham

krtanjalim avasthitam

bhakti-bhara-nata-grivam

sa-vismayam sa-sambhramam

su-vinitatamam praha

tatraiva karunanvita

asoka-malini namna

asoka-vana-devata

atha - then; agata - approached; muni-srestham - the best of sages; krtanjalim - with folded hands; avasthitam - staying; bhakti-bhara-nata-grivam - he neck bowed with devotion; sa- vismayam - with wonder; sa-sambhramam - with respect; su-vinitatamam - very humble; praha - spoke; tatra - there; eva - indeed; karunanvita - merciful; asoka-malini - Asoka-malini; namna - by name; asoka-vana-devata - the goddess of that asoka grove.

Then the goddess of that asoka grove, a girl named Asoka- malini, mercifully approached the sage, his head bowed with awe and wonder, and his hands humbly folded. She spoke to him the following words.

Text 92

sri-asoka-maliny uvaca

asoka-kalikayam tu

vasamy asyam maha-mune

raktambara-dhara nityam

rakta-malanulepana

sri-asoka-maliny uvaca - Sri Asoka-malini said; asoka- kalikayam - in an asoka bud; tu - indeed; vasamy - I reside; asyam - in this; maha-mune - O great sage; raktambara-dhara - wearign red garments; nityam - always; rakta-malanulepana - with red flower garlands and red sandal paste.

Sri Asoka-malini said; O great sage, dressed in red garments, decorated with red flower garlands, and anointed with red sandal pastimes, I always stay in this asoka grove.

Text 93

rakta-sindura-kalika

raktotpala-vatamsini

rakta-manikya-keyura-

mukutadi-vibhusita

rakta-sindura-kalika - decorated with red sindura; raktotpala-vatamsini - wearing a garland of red lotuses; rakta- manikya-keyura-mukutadi-vibhusita - decorated with ruby bracelets, crown, and other ornaments.

I am decorated with red sindura, garlands of red lotuses, ruby bracelets, ruby crown, and other ruby ornaments.

Text 94

ekada priyaya sardham

viharantyo madhutsave

tatraiva milita gopa-

balikas citra-vasasah

ekada - one day; priyaya - His beloved; sardham - with; viharantyo - enjoying pastimes; madhutsave - in a springtime festival; tatra - there; eva - indeed; milita - met; gopa-balikas - gopis; citra- vasasah - dressed in wonderful and colorful garments.

One day Lord Krsna enjoyed springtime-festival pastimes with His beloved and with many gopis dressed in wonderful and colorful garments.

Text 95

aham casoka-malabhir

gopa-vesa-dharam harim

rama-rupas ca tah sarva

bhaktya samyag apujayam

aham - I; ca - and; asoka - of asoka flowers; malabhir - with garlands; gopa-vesa-  
dharam - dressed as a gopa; harim - Krsna; rama- rupas - teh forms of the  
goddesses of fortune; ca - and; tah - they; sarva - all; bhaktya - with devotion;  
samyag - completely; apujayam - worshiped.

Giving Them many garlands of asoka flowers, I worshiped Lord Krsna, who was  
dressed as a gopa, and the many goddesses of fortune.

Text 96

tatah prabhrti caitasam

madhye tisthami sarvada

bhusabhir vividhabhis ca

tosayitva rama-patim

tatah - then; prabhrti - beginning; ca - also; etasam - of them; madhye - in the  
middle; tisthami - I stand; sarvada - always; bhusabhir - with ornaments;  
vividhabhis - various; ca - and; tosayitva - pleasing; rama-patim - the husband of  
the goddess of fortune.

I always stay among these gopis. Offering Him many different ornaments, I please  
the goddess of fortune's husband.

Text 97

parat param aham sarvam

vijanamiha sarvatah

go-gopa-gopikadinam

rahasyam capi vedmy aham

parat param - greater than the greatest; aham - I; sarvam - all; vijanami - know; iha - here; sarvatah - completely; go-gopa- gopikadinam - beginning with the cows, gopas, and gopis; rahasyam - secret; ca - and; api - also; vedmy - know; aham - I.

I know everything about Lord Krsna, who is greater than the greatest, and I also know all the secrets of the cows, gopas, gopis, and everyone else in Vrndavana.

Texts 98 and 99

tava jijnasitam sarvam

hrdi pratyabhibhasitam

tam devam adbhutakaram

adbhutananda-dayinim

hareh priyam hiranyabham

hirakojjvala-mudrikam

katham pasyami lolaksim

katham va tat-padambujam

tava - of you; jijnasitam - desiring to know; sarvam - all; hrdis - in the heart; pratyabhibhasitam - spoken; tam - Her; devam - goddess; adbhuta-akaram - whose form is wonderful; adbhutananda-dayinim - giving wonderful bliss; hareh - of Lord Krsna; priyam - the beloved; hiranyabham - splendid like gold; hirakojjvala-mudrikam - wearing diamond rings; katham - how; pasyami - I may see; lolaksim - with restless eyes; katham - how?; va - or; tat- padambujam - Her lotus feet.

I desire to know what is in your heart also.

Then Narada asked: How may I see Lord Hari's beloved, who is splendid like gold, whose form is wonderful, whose eyes are restless, who is a goddess, who wears splendid diamond rings, and who gives wonderful transcendental bliss? How may I see Her lotus feet?

Text 100

aradhyate 'ti-bhaktyeti

tvaya brahman vimarsitam

tatra te kathayisyami

vrttantam su-mahatmanam

aradhyate - is worshiped; ati - with great; bhaktya - devotion; iti - thus; tvaya - by you; brahman - O brahmana; vimarsitam - considered; tatra - there; te - of you; kathayisyami - I will tell; vrttantam - a story; su-mahatmanam - of the great souls.

O Brahman, you should worship Her with great devotion. I will tell you a story of some great devotees.

Texts 101 and 102

manase sarasi sthitva

tapas tivram upeyusam

japatam siddha-mantrams ca

dhyayatam harim isvaram

muninam kanksatam nityam

tasya eva padambujam

eka-saptati-sahasra-

sankhyatanam mahaujasam

manase sarasi - in Manasa-sarovara; sthitva - staying; tapas - austerities; tivram - severe; upeyusam - engaged; japatam - chanting japa; siddha-mantran - siddha-mantras; ca - and; dhyayatam - meditating; harim - on Lord Krsna; isvaram - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; muninam - of the sages; kanksatam - desiring; nityam - always; tasya - of Her; eva - indeed; padambujam - the lotus feet; eka-saptati-sahasra-sankhyatanam - seventy-one-thousand; mahaujasam - very powerful.

Staying at Manasa-sarovara, seventy-one-thousand very powerful sages repeatedly performed severe austerities, chanted siddha-mantras, and meditated on Lord Hari so they could attain Sri Radha's lotus feet.

*New Delhi, India  
10 December 2003*

On the afternoon of 6 December I landed in Delhi after flying from Auckland with stopovers at Brisbane (Australia) and Bangkok (Thailand). Here in Delhi I've been staying at 62 Sant Nagar, the former office building of the Srila Prabhupada Centennial, which from the early 'nineties through 1996 was directed by HH Lokanatha Maharaja and managed by HG Gaura Sundara Prabhu, my Godbrothers. Since then Gaura Sundara Prabhu, who is Lokanatha Maharaja's cousin-brother, retained several floors in this building, which is ten minutes walk from the ISKCON temple in Delhi. At present Gaura Sundara Prabhu is in the USA. His nephew Haridas is overseeing the place. I am staying in a room on the fifth floor; my disciple Rasalila lives in the rooftop apartment.

"Rasaji" or "Rasinkaji" as she is affectionately known comes from Bulgaria, where she joined ISKCON at age 15. But since 1997 she has lived in Delhi where she learns and performs Indian dance. She received a B.A. in Bharat Natyam studies from Delhi's Ganesh Natyalayam school and is now enrolled in a different school to learn Katak.

Rasaji is the perfect "independent woman." She is not married and has no plans to be, she earns her own bread by a private business in photography, she serves her lovely Deities Sri Sri Radhika-Vrajabihari (which she sculpted herself, as she is an artist), and she is quite happy living by herself in a big Indian city, especially one that is so close to Sri Vrindaban Dhama. She's become something of a celebrity in Delhi, often having her picture in the newspaper; yet her reputation is spotless. The Indian people respect her as "the beautiful nun" because she firmly abstains from the four pillars of sinful life, yet she is popular because of her talent and her vivacious, outgoing personality.

Rasaji and her older sister Abhaya-mudra dd (who is an artist working under the direction of my Godbrother Nara-narayana Prabhu in California) are daughters of a (now-retired) principal of a Bulgarian school for gifted children. Their upbringing was exceptionally intellectual and cultural. Not only is Rasaji a naturally talented dancer (in Bulgaria she graduated from an elite academy for Bulgaria folk dance), she is also thoughtful and philosophical and often voices startling insights into *tattva*.

A couple of days ago Rasaji and I had quite an involved talk about consciousness and language. The first thing we considered was a rainbow. Everyone considers a rainbow to be a real thing for the reason that many people are able to see a rainbow at once. (If out of a group of people only *one* person sees something that he claims is real, a thing that remains undetected by the others, the doubt of the others will fall on this one person that he is deluded, hallucinating, etc. The requirement that a thing be perceivable by the mass of people in order to be considered real is called *consensus reality*.)

Yet while we accept a rainbow as real, we do not consider it as real as, for example, a tree. Why? Because when we see a rainbow, we know that our consciousness is playing a major role in the rainbow's appearance. If human consciousness is subtracted, then all that is left of a rainbow is sunlight streaming through water droplets in the air. The rainbow's colorful shape appears in the human mind; if humans are not there to view it, then it isn't "there", is it? We can't argue that birds flying by also see it because nobody knows if a rainbow appears in the minds of non-human observers.

A tree, on the other hand, is "there" all the time, whether humans are around to see it or not. Birds nest in the tree. Its existence obviously isn't limited to human perception. This is called *objective reality*.

But when the findings of modern physics are brought into the discussion, the tree also fades into the same "half-real" state as the rainbow! A tree is made of molecules. Molecules are made of atoms. Atoms are made of subatomic particles. Subatomic particles are, simultaneously, "waves" and "points" in space. In the final analysis of modern physics, the true characteristics of subatomic particles are revealed by mathematical formulas. Where do mathematical formulas exist? In the human mind! The inescapable conclusion: to argue a tree is more substantial than a rainbow is "naive realism." Bring in science, and we are forced to admit that, like with the rainbow, the human mind contributes a great deal to the "existence" of a tree.

This contribution of the mind to the existence of things around us is called *participatory reality*. It is not a concept of reality that is yet widely admitted in the Western world. In the West we are conditioned to think of reality as either "consensus" (as per the rainbow) or "objective" (as per the "naive" understanding of a tree). Typically we suppose consensus reality presides over the "humanistic" side of life while objective reality presides over the "factual" side of life.

But as Rasaji pointed out in our talk, in *either* case--consensus or objective--the starting point is the presentation of "something" (either a rainbow or a tree) to us by the mind. It is actually a re-presentation. The mind "represents" sunlight, air and water droplets to us as a rainbow. The mind "represents" subatomic particles, atoms and molecules to us as a tree.

Here is where language comes in. Representation is metaphorical. This is how the dictionary defines the word *metaphor*:

1. A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an implicit comparison, as in *a sea of troubles* or *All the world's a stage* (Shakespeare).
2. One thing conceived as representing another; a symbol: *The high-rise garbage repository is a metaphor for both accomplishment and failure* (Richard Sever).

Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy informs us that the whole material world is a metaphor. It is a "perverted reflection" (Srila Prabhupada's phrase) of the spiritual world. Reflection means representation. Moreover, Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy informs us that the representation of the world, appearing in our consciousness as feelings, visible forms, tastes and smells, begins with the input of *sabda* (Vedic sound, i.e. the original language). Thus this representation is *literally* metaphorical! In ancient Greek philosophy also, the background of the world was understood to be *logos*, "the word." This philosophy carried over into Christian theology: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God..."

That's religion, but what about science? Werner Heisenberg, a famous German physicist, wrote: "What we observe is not nature in itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning." This simply means that *we cannot go beyond words and thoughts in our understanding of the world*. The world presents itself to us in accordance with our interest in the world, or "in other words" (metaphor!), according to *our philosophy of the world*. If our interest, our philosophy, is that the world exists to be controlled and enjoyed, then the world presents itself to us as if it can be controlled and enjoyed. But that is *not* the world itself!

The Vedic sound from which the world arises is the emanation of the breathing of Maha-Visnu. That sound is itself a re-presentation of the sound that fills the eternal Spiritual Sky--the transcendental sound of the glorious, unlimited names, forms, qualities, activities and loving relationships of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Quite apart from the Vedic re-presentation of the glories of the Lord as *sabda-brahma*, the original transcendental sound of His glories *directly appears* in the material world in its own unrepresented, unmetaphorical form...as the *mahamantra* Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare; and as the sound incarnation of the Lord known as *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (*pravistah karna-randhrena svanam bhava-saroruham--Bhag. 2.8.5*).

"In other words" (metaphor again!), the material world is a symbolic representation of the spiritual world. In the most fundamental way, that world is represented in consciousness by language. Consciousness participates in language; as the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein stated, "Words are the vehicles of thoughts." Indeed, words *are* thoughts. Thus the Wittgensteinians say their *acarya's* aphorism is best understood as "Words are the vehicles of words." And I, Suhotra Swami, say "Words are the vehicles of the world." Words carry our thoughts of the world, and words carry the world itself.

Although what I've related above *is* the Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy, I find that most ISKCON devotees are not comfortable with it. They prefer to conduct themselves as per consensus reality and objective reality...which are not "really"

realities at all! Of course, the consensus reality in ISKCON is that you just have to put a *tilaka* stamp on the foreheads of these realities, then *voila!* They are transformed into "Vaisnava concerns" and thus become valid realities that devotees have an obligation to spend their lives grappling with: ISKCON social and political issues, for example. (Yawn.)

From their lingering preoccupation with consensus and objective realities, ISKCON devotees are troubled by so many "difficult questions." These questions are simple impotent thoughts...thoughts that are impotent because they do not move with the vehicles of 1) the all-powerful Vedic language (all-powerful because that language *alone*, the *sabda-brahma* or *brahma-vac*, is source of creation), and 2) the all-blissful language of the Holy Names and the *Bhagavatam* (all-blissful because the Name and the *Bhagavatam* are the transcendent Lord Himself, even higher than His *vac-sakti* by which the world is created, maintained and destroyed). Impotent thoughts means impotent words. Impotent words are words that are not *mantras*. Such impotent words and thoughts represent a world that is not real...hence it baffles us.

A significant percentage of the ISKCON population does not *understand* (although I think most at least *believe*) that the answer to all doubts is

1) Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare (see *Kalisantarana Upanisad* verse 6--"no other remedy is to be found in all the Vedic *sastras*); and

2) "The *Bhagavatam* is the Answer to All Questions" (see *Bhag.* Canto 2 Chapter 10).

When I was in Wellington, New Zealand, a devotee repeatedly asked me "how can we understand the tremendous difference between the modern scientific account of the world, and the account of the Vedic scriptures?"

I gave him a simple answer, as I usually do when I get questions from persons who are very "reality challenged." I told him that modern science stands on a most uncertain and contradictory idea of what is real. (I spent a little time describing Newtonian "reality", Einsteinian "reality" and quantum "reality", and pointed out that these three *together* form the basis of the scientific view of the world, although *each is profoundly incompatible with one another*, as admitted by scientists themselves.) I concluded by saying that devotees who are not educated in the deep contradictions of the scientific worldview sometimes allow themselves to be over-awed by scientific propaganda. They think that science is a monolith of facts written in stone. But that massive front of stone is only an empty shell. Look inside the shell, you'll find there is nothing but speculation. The only thing "hard" about science is technology. Technology began (and still begins today) as the effort to "re-present" theories of the world in mechanical models. For example: the famous "clockwork" mechanical model of the solar system built by Sir Isaac Newton. But here again is the problem: a mechanical model is designed according to fundamental theories of time, space, mass, energy and relationship. What if there are different schools of such fundamental theories, and what if between these schools there is an unbridgeable "reality gap"? That is exactly the case today in modern science. The fundamental theories of Newtonian classical physics are incongruent with Einstein's theory of relativity; and both of these are incongruent with the theories of quantum physics. Yet all are useful in different, albeit *limited*, areas of application. What we must

never forget is that scientists have no overarching TOE (Theory Of Everything), although they are quick to claim credit for "working on it."

Do you know that Darwin's theory of evolution is derived from the Newtonian worldview? Do you know that from the standpoint of the quantum physical worldview, Darwinian evolution stands upon no scientific foundation whatsoever?

Because Rasaji has such an interesting brain, I was able, in my talk with her, to go deeper into the question "how can we understand the tremendous difference between the modern scientific account of the world, and the account of the Vedic scriptures?"

Now, we have already seen that science takes us beyond "naive realism", the assumption that a tree exists all by itself, as opposed to a rainbow that exists with a good deal of help from human consciousness. Speaking scientifically, a tree looks and feels like a tree because our minds participate with nature in representing "tree-ness" out of "not-tree" ("not-tree, not-tree" i.e. *neti-neti*) elemental ingredients (molecules, atoms, etc.). That is science, no?

Yes.

But science proposes to tell us what the world was like before human beings lived in it...like what it was like back in the Jurassic Age, for example, more than a hundred million years ago. (Keep in mind that right now, for argument's sake, we are embracing the chronology of science: there were no *Homo whatever*s before 500 thousand years ago.) Untold millions of modern people have seen Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* movies and believe that's the way the world was before mankind walked the earth. Furthermore, science proposes to tell us how the world began, with the Big Bang. Science even proposes to tell us what existed *before* the Big Bang!

All this telling about a world before man existed means *what*, at the bottom line?

"Uh..."

What does it *fundamentally* mean, you ISKCON version of Rodin's statue, *The Thinker*?

"Oh, ummm, well, er, ha-ha, I guess it means...well, I'm not sure..."

It means *language!*

"Oh, yes, of course..."

The scientists use language to describe a world that (according to them) existed when there was no language.

The scientists talk about "giant prehistoric reptiles." They talk about "a landscape rent by violent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions." They talk about "an original land mass thrusting up above the waves from the ocean bottom." They talk about "protoplasmic life emerging from the chemical soup that once covered the entire

surface of the Earth." They talk about "a gigantic fiery globe that spun off the Sun to be caught by gravity in a heliocentric orbit, which then shrank and cooled to form Planet Earth."

What the scientists describe is what we would have seen had we been there to see it. The problem is, if (according to them) there was no consciousness in the prehistoric world, then how would visible forms exist? How would audible sounds exist? How would tactile feelings exist? How would flavors of smell and taste exist?

How would what their words describe exist?

There may have been an invisible menagerie of unrepresented elemental particles floating in empty space--the same menagerie that is calculated to exist *right now* in the so-called "microworld" (the world that is too small for us to see, the world where atoms, protons, neutrons, electrons, photons and so on are envisioned at quantum play). But these particles would have existed like water droplets in air pervaded by solar rays, *without human minds to participate in the process of representing the droplets, air and sunshine as a rainbow*. Imagine a whole world manifest from the "stuff" of a rainbow. Then subtract one of the necessary ingredients: consciousness.

How could such a rainbow world *without consciousness* be represented in language?

Yet that is what scientists propose to do when they talk about "the world before Man."

"Humbug!" Srila Prabhupada would say.

And why are *you* listening to such humbug, and thinking about it, and getting worried about it, and then asking, "how can we understand the tremendous difference between the modern scientific account of the world, and the account of the Vedic scriptures?"

YOU CAN ONLY UNDERSTAND THE WORLD THROUGH THE VEDIC SCRIPTURES.

Why?

BECAUSE THE VEDIC ACCOUNT IS AN ACCOUNT OF ETERNAL LANGUAGE AND ETERNAL CONSCIOUSNESS. THE SCIENTISTS DO NOT ACCEPT THE ETERNITY OF EITHER. AT THE SAME TIME, BY THEIR OWN EXPLANATION OF HOW THE THINGS OF THE WORLD ARE REPRESENTED TO US, THEY ARE HAMPERED FROM DESCRIBING THE WORLD APART FROM CONSCIOUSNESS AND LANGUAGE. YET STILL THEY OFFER SUCH A DESCRIPTION. THIS IS CLASSICAL WORD JUGGLERY. THIS IS NONSENSE.

Why are you still listening to their nonsense, and thinking about it, and worrying about it, and asking "how can we understand the tremendous difference between the modern scientific account of the world, and the account of the Vedic scriptures?"

Do you even understand the problem?

When I discuss this problem with many ISKCON devotees, I find they don't. Or if they do, they "understand" for as long as the discussion lasts, then they forget it.

At least Rasaji understands. Hope!

If you want to really understand the world and its history from beginning to end, you have to give submissive oral reception to the language that reveals the world and its history from beginning to end. That is the metaphysical language of the *sruti* and *smṛti*, and the pure devotional language of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, transmitted by the *tattvadarśis* who have realized that language in their hearts.



New Delhi, India  
11 December 2003

### Beta Chanting

Yesterday I had a talk with one devotee about consciousness and language. That talk was based upon reading that I've been doing into the ideas of Owen Barfield, who died in 1997 at the age of ninety-nine. He was a member of the Oxford Literary Group which included C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Charles Williams.

The example of the rainbow and the tree is Barfield's. It comes from a book he published in 1957 entitled *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry*. The idol of the title is the material world; from the standpoint of Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy, Barfield's notion of the material world as an idol is most interesting, given that we find this in Srila Prabhupada's purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 6. 4:

The *virat-rupa* or *visva-rupa*, the gigantic universal form of the Lord, which is very much appreciated by the impersonalist, is not an eternal form of the Lord. It is manifested by the supreme will of the Lord after the ingredients of material creation. Lord Krsna exhibited this *virat* or *visva-rupa* to Arjuna just to convince the impersonalists that He is the original Personality of Godhead. Krsna exhibited the *virat-rupa*; it is not that Krsna was exhibited by the *virat-rupa*. The *virat-rupa* is not, therefore, an eternal form of the Lord exhibited in the spiritual sky; it is a material manifestation of the Lord. The *arca-vigraha*, or the worshipable Deity in the temple, is a similar manifestation of the Lord for the neophytes. But in spite of their material touch, such forms of the Lord as the *virat* and *arca* are all nondifferent from His eternal form as Lord Krsna.

Barfield has a term for the appearance in our mind of a rainbow, tree, or whatever we perceive of the material world. His term is *figuration*. Figuration is the result of participatory reality. I mentioned in yesterday's entry that participatory reality is the state of affairs in which the mind participates with nature to give figure to the world. The *Srimad-Bhagavatam* offers us a most complete explanation of participatory reality. Srila Prabhupada summarizes that explanation in his purport to *Bhag.* 3. 10. 17.

The demigods, or controlling deities, are entrusted with departmental management of all the different functions of the material world. For example, one of our sense organs, the eye, is controlled by light, light is distributed by the sun rays, and their controlling deity is the sun. Similarly, mind is controlled by the moon. All other senses, both for working and for acquiring knowledge, are controlled by the different demigods.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* Canto 2, Chapter 10, explains this in great detail. Figuration--the appearance of the world within consciousness in terms of hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling--is managed by the demigods. The ultimate causal factor is the Supersoul. The demigods are His empowered agents (*amsas*). He gives names, forms, qualities and activities to the material creation by expanding these agents from His own transcendental body.

In his purport to *Bhag.* 2. 10. 9, Srila Prabhupada describes participatory reality, but does not use that term. His Divine Grace's term is *interdependence*.

For example, the sun controls the power of our vision, we can see the sun because the sun has its body, and the sunlight is useful only because we have eyes. Without our having eyes, the sunlight is useless, and without sunlight the eyes are useless. Thus they are interdependent, and none of them is independent. Therefore the natural question arises concerning who made them interdependent. The one who has made such a relationship of interdependence must be ultimately completely independent. As stated in the beginning of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the ultimate source of all interdependent objectives is the complete independent subject. This

ultimate source of all interdependence is the Supreme Truth or Paramatma, the Supersoul, who is not dependent on anything else.

Barfield and a number of other deep thinkers of the West believed that mankind of ancient times understood the world as a participatory process. In short, the reality of ancient man was very different from the "reality" of mankind today. We can detect this difference by comparing the words (thoughts) of then and now. In ancient Greek, *pneuma* was a word for "indwelling soul." Nowadays we still construct modern words from that old Greek word. *Pneumatic* is in use today as one such word. But most modern people make no link between the "pneuma-" of pneumatic (which refers to air) and the idea conveyed by the word "soul". Readers of Srila Prabhupada's books ought to be able to make that link. From the purport to *Sri Isopanisad* Mantra 17:

The living being's activities are performed within the body through the movements of different kinds of air, known in summary as *prana-vayu*. The *yogis* generally study to control the airs of the body. The soul is supposed to rise from one circle of air to another until it rises to the *brahma-randhra*, the highest circle. From that point the perfect *yogi* can transfer himself to any desired planet.

Here Srila Prabhupada deftly reveals the science of space travel employed by the ancients. No metal-clad space ship housing the gross physical body was involved; rather, the soul itself would ride to other planets on the *prana-vayu*, the life airs by which the living entity participates in bodily movement. Sanskrit *prana* is obviously related to Greek *pneuma*; *vayu* is the name of the demigod who has authority over *prana*.

Writing in *Saving the Appearances*, Barfield tries to convey what we would know reality to be if we had the consciousness of the ancients.

We do not see it as an empty space. . . if it is daytime, we see the air filled with light proceeding from a living sun, rather as our own flesh is filled with blood proceeding from a living heart. If it is night-time, we do not merely see a plain, homogenous vault pricked with separate points of light, but a regional qualitative sky, from which first of all the different sections of the great zodiacal belt, and secondly the planets and the moon. . . are raying down their complex influences upon the earth. . . We know very well that growing things are specially beholden to the moon, that gold and silver draw their virtue from the sun and moon respectively, copper from Venus, iron from Mars, lead from Saturn. And that our own health and temperament are joined by invisible threads to these heavenly bodies we are looking at.

From a 1973 book entitled *The Origin and History of Consciousness* by Erich Neumann is a word, *uroboric*, which denotes the cosmic intimacy shared by ancient man and the universe. Srila Prabhupada indicates that uroboric state in his purport to *Bhag.* 2. 9. 36.

Indirectly it is said that the whole Vedic social construction of human society is so made that everyone acts as a part and parcel of the complete body of the Lord. The intelligent class of men, or the *brahmanas*, are situated on the face of the Lord; the administrative class of men, the *ksatriyas*, are situated on the arms of the Lord; the productive class of men, the *vaisyas*, are situated on the belt of the Lord; and the laborer class of men, the *sudras*, are situated on the legs of the Lord. Therefore the

complete social construction is the body of the Lord, and all the parts of the body, namely the *brahmanas*, the *ksatriyas*, the *vaisyas* and the *sudras*, are meant to serve the Lord's whole body conjointly; otherwise the parts become unfit to be coordinated with the supreme consciousness of oneness. Universal consciousness is factually achieved by coordinated service of all concerned to the Supreme personality of Godhead, and that alone can insure total perfection.

In ISKCON, we do have our proponents of *varnasrama-dharma* who argue why our Society must conform to the system of four social and spiritual orders. But from what I've heard, their arguments mostly revolve around human concerns: stable occupation, economics, law and order, prosperous family life, etc. I would say *sudras* are very concerned with stable occupation (that's what communism is basically about, and communism is a social order invented by and for *sudras*). *Vaisyas* are clearly very concerned about economics, and *ksatriyas* about law and order. In general, all people in bodily consciousness are concerned with prosperous family life. But these concerns fall short of what Srila Prabhupada is stressing in the purport above: the uroboric concern, the God-centered concern, which insures the complete perfection of life.

The uroboric consciousness of intimate participation in the universal form of the Lord is contrasted by modern consciousness. As I presented yesterday, and explained even more elaborately in the In2-MeC entry of 24 October, modern "reality" is said to be of two kinds, consensus and objective. The difference between the two is not as substantial as modern man would like to think.

Owen Barfield has nicely accounted for modern consciousness in his writings on what he terms "alpha-thinking." Scientists do alpha-thinking to a much more acute and disciplined degree than does the common man, but everybody educated in the modern way is stuck in the alpha headspace. *It is thinking that is limited to the representations of the world* that figure in consciousness out of the participation of our mind and senses with material nature. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 11. 9 includes this type of thinking within *vr̥tti*. *Vr̥tti* means the mind's material engagement. There are eleven *vr̥ttis* that are divided into three categories. When the mind is absorbed in hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling, it is engaged in sense objects. When the mind is absorbed in grasping, walking, talking, urination/defecation and sexual intercourse, it is engaged in organic activities. When the mind is absorbed in mental concoction and self-importance, it is engaged in *abhimana* (false egoism).

In alpha-thinking, we take the mental representations of the sense objects at face value. We understand them to be independent things in a world that is external to us. The underlying assumption of the alpha thought process is that the mind is a *tabula rasa*, a "blank slate." Nowadays we might say "an empty CD". The external world "writes" to our mind's empty CD, and we view the representations of that data within consciousness. The world so seen is impersonal and mechanical, like the images seen on a computer or TV screen. TV images hypnotize their "couch potato" viewers. So does the world-image hypnotize the modern mind. That mind less participates in what it observes; rather, it is more controlled by what it observes.

Again, modern reality is said to be of two types. In consensus reality, the data is represented in our minds is somewhat ambiguous. Remember the rainbow, which seems not as real as a tree. Walk from a distance toward a tree, you get closer; walk from a distance toward a rainbow, you get no closer. But we agree that the rainbow

is over there, that it is a beautiful sight, and that it signifies the end of a storm. In In2-MeC of 24 October, I mentioned justice as an item of consensus reality. Grind up the universe into fine powder. . . will you find justice? It does not exist as a physical object external to ourselves. Justice is a human ideal. Still, society could not stand without justice. Daily in the courtrooms of the world, judges and lawyers cite innumerable examples of justice. We agree that justice is a real thing. That is consensus reality. Objective reality pertains to physically measurable things we figure are unambiguously external to ourselves: a tree, another human being, a city, the moon. Consensus reality is not measurable in the same way. Its rule of measure has more to do with public opinion than physics.

Modern man deems consensus and objective realities as "real" by distinguishing them from "mental rubbish" like dreams, visions, and hallucinations, which alpha-thinkers believe have no objective reality at all. Alpha-thinking is the rationalist-mechanistic viewpoint. It views human destiny as the result of the pushes and pulls of objective, outside forces. At the end of the day even items of consensus reality are considered by alpha-thinkers to be forces that are outside us. Take history for example. Have you ever bumped into a history while walking down the street? History is not a physical "him," some person you met on the street; it is "his story." Or it is the story of a community, nation, race. Still, the consensus of modern materialists is that history is a factual objective force that shapes human events. This is a central tenet of Darwinian evolution and Marxist communism. In these philosophies, history is all-powerful. Human beings are less participants in history, rather they are more pawns of history.

Above and beyond alpha-thinking, Barfield says, is beta-thinking. It is thinking about the representations of the world (both the consensus world and objective world) as representations. In short, beta-thinking is the cognition of participatory reality, or interdependence, as Srila Prabhupada would say. When developed to perfection, beta-thinking is Krsna consciousness.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 11. 24. 20 presents the ultimate truth of participatory reality: that the interdependent variegatedness of the material world exists only due to the perception of the independent Supreme Personality of Godhead.

As long as the Supreme Personality of Godhead continues to glance upon nature, the material world continues to exist, perpetually manifesting through procreation the great and variegated flow of universal creation.

The Supreme Lord's standard of perception is the standard of reality itself. This is real knowledge, or Krsna consciousness, as confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam 4. 29. 69.

Krsna consciousness means constantly associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in such a mental state that the devotee can observe the cosmic manifestation exactly as the Supreme Personality of Godhead does. Such observation is not always possible, but it becomes manifest exactly like the dark planet known as Rahu, which is observed in the presence of the full moon.

To perfect beta-thinking, we must constantly associate with the Lord by constant chanting of His holy names. Beta-thinking without chanting is *jnana-yoga*, not *bhakti-yoga*, and *jnanis* who rely merely on their own intelligence fall down (see

*Bhag.* 10. 2. 32). Chanting cleanses the mirror of the mind. Caution: that mind-mirror is not the *tabula rasa* of the modernist thinker. The *real* mind-mirror, the one that partakes in participatory reality, reaches into nature to seize imagery according to its desire. The real mind-mirror is a place of mental chain reactions, in which one thought triggers another thought and then another. The real mind-mirror goes out of its way to find new and unusual things to reflect. The real-mind mirror contains more than just the image in front of it. For example, the real mind-mirror reflects on why it reflects the world. It even shows more than it reflects. It can produce its own images. It is not merely a blank, shiny surface waiting for something to stand in front of it. Moved by deep undercurrents of emotion, the mind (or heart) "is a lonely hunter" in the great forest of nature.

Because the mind's involvement with nature is participatory, our chanting should be participatory too. We should not be "alpha-chanters" who mechanically impress the syllables of the Hare Krsna *mahamantra* into an inert mind. An inert mind is an impersonal mind. It is impersonal because it is dull: *abuddhaya* (see *Bg* 7. 24).

*Nama-kara bahir haya nama nahi haya*, states Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. "Merely reciting the external syllables of the holy name does not mean that one is actually chanting the holy name. " When we chant, our minds should be *engaged* in the Lord's internal potency--the divine, ever-fully-enlivened nature of transcendence.

In *Sri Sanmodana-bhasyam*, Thakura Bhaktivinoda writes:

In this way, the soul's consciousness is like a mirror: just as it is impossible to see one's face in a dusty mirror, it is similarly impossible to see the real self in the mirror of consciousness when it is covered by the dust of ignorance. But if one begins to render loving devotional service (particularly hearing and chanting the holy names and pastimes of Sri Krsna) under the influence of the Lord's *hladini* pleasure potency, the material contamination of nescience is completely eradicated.

Then jiva's pure consciousness, which is a function of his pure ego, manifests itself. He sees reflected on the mirror of his pure ego the five principles of the Supreme Lord, the *jiva*, *prakriti* (nature), *kala* (time), and *karma* (action), with absolute clarity. He sees the reflection of his original identity without any distortion, and this helps him to know his inherent nature as an eternal servant of the Lord. When one becomes truly expert in serving the Lord, the propensity to enjoy material life is converted into a loving devotional mood of service.

. . . . .

As it is said, "devotion gives birth to devotion": the sincere and faithful devotee must therefore follow the principles of elementary *bhakti* by regularly hearing and chanting the holy name until the first light of pure devotion begins to dawn in the heart. The closed lotus flower touched by the moon's rays awakens in full bloom, and similarly, when the congregational chanting of the holy name spreads the rays of *bhava* (the essence of *hladini*) and impregnates the soul's heart, *rati* (conjugal love for Sri Krsna) then lights up his consciousness, bestowing the highest benediction. This is what is meant by the "rays of the benediction moon. "

When does a person, having attained this level of pure devotion, acquire his pure spiritual identity? Lord Caitanya answers this question by saying, *vidya-vadhu-*

*jivanam*, "the life of all transcendental knowledge." The Supreme Lord's *sakti* has two aspects, *vidya* (knowledge) and *avidya* (ignorance). Yogamaya, the *svarupa-sakti*, is the Lord's internal spiritual potency. This potency is called *vidya*, whereas *mahamaya*, His external energy, is *avidya*; it is the latter that creates the material universe and covers the soul's *svarupa*.

When, by his sincerely following the process of hearing and chanting, the first rays of pure devotion finally appear on the horizon of the *sadhaka's* heart, then the Bhakti-devi, the eradicator of all unwanted material desires detrimental to the Lord's service, eclipses the *avidya* potency. By suffusing the soul with spiritual knowledge, Bhakti-devi destroys both the gross and subtle coverings of the soul. Simultaneously, the *jiva's* original spiritual form becomes manifest so that he acquires the form of a *gopi*, for example, if his pure devotional propensities are steeped in the conjugal mood. Thus it stands proven that Krsna's holy name is the life and the soul of all transcendental knowledge (*vidya-vadhu-jivanam*.) *Svarupa-sakti* is therefore often said to be Krsna's wife.

When the gross and subtle material bodies of the *jiva* are completely destroyed, the infinitesimal soul regains his original pristine purity. Although the *jiva* is *anu* or minutely small, his capacity for spiritual happiness is not minute. To remove any doubt about this fact, Lord Caitanya adds, *anandambudhi-varohana*, "It is an ever increasing ocean of bliss."

The Holy Name of the Lord, through the *hladini* potency, endlessly expands the natural bliss inherent in the soul; thus his happiness increases by leaps and bounds, fixing the soul eternally in one of the spiritual mellows (of *dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya* or *madhurya*). When thus established in his eternal spiritual mellow, he continues to relish the limitless nectar at every step of the exchange of loving emotions in his transcendental relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Lord Krsna's enchanting beauty, His divine qualities, and His sublime pastimes are eternal and ever-fresh in ecstasy. Inebriated with divine *prema*, the pure *jiva* continuously drinks that ecstatic nectar, yet still the Lord's captivating beauty is forever new.

What Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura describes above is no dry, rationalist-mechanistic, stereotyped process. One does not chant Hare Krsna like one watches TV. The Thakura tells us that in pure chanting, the mind participates in the transcendental nature of the Lord: His *hladini-sakti*, His *svarupa-sakti*, His Yogamaya potency. Of course, as Srila Prabhupada points out, the full-blown symptoms of spiritual ecstasy are later developments, not to be imitated. But the bliss of chanting--if done properly--is immediately experienced within the mind.

And enjoy the transcendental bliss within the mind by chanting and dancing. Unless you become blissful, very happy, you cannot dance. It is not. . . Artificially, you cannot dance. These dances, they are not artificial. They feel some transcendental bliss. Therefore they dance. It is not they are dancing dog. No. They dance from the spiritual platform. *Vaditra-madyan manaso rasena. Romanca-kampasrutaranga-bhajo*. And there are sometimes transformation of the body with spiritual symptoms. Sometimes crying, sometimes there is, I mean to. . . swelling on the end of the hairs. There are so many symptoms. These are later. These are not to be imitated. [Lecture on 9 September 1973 in Uppsala, Sweden]

New Delhi, India  
12 December 2003

### **A Selection from the *Sabha Parva* of *Mahabharata***

Sisupala Blasphemes Lord Krsna at the *Rajasuya* Sacrifice

All the kings who came to see Maharaja Yudhisthira perform the *Rajasuya* sacrifice presented lavish gifts to him. Indeed, they brought everything in such great quantity that no one gave less than 1000 of any particular item. Each king brought so much wealth, that every one of them thought, "It is only due to my generosity that Maharaja Yudhisthira is able to perform this sacrifice so opulently. "

In return, Maharaja Yudhisthira highly gratified everyone by giving them presents of immeasurable value and supplying them with every sort of royal comfort for the duration of their stay. Thereafter, when the *Rajasuya* sacrifice commenced, all of the demigods filled the sky with their celestial chariots, to witness the historic event. The sacrifice was then performed to everyone's complete satisfaction, for not even a tiny detail, nor a single person was neglected.

On the last day of the sacrifice, there was an intermission and so all of the rishis and kings who were seated in the arena began to discuss among themselves about various topics of religious understanding. At this time, Narada Muni, who is the leader of all the rishis, thought to himself as follows: "Although Lord Krishna is acting just like an ordinary human being, He is actually the One who is worshiped by all such sacrificial performances. "

Indeed, Narada Muni was astonished just to think about how the Lord of all sacrifices, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, had personally appeared in the sacrificial arena of Maharaja Yudhisthira.

Just then, Bhishma said to Maharaja Yudhisthira, "O King, I think that *arghya* should now be presented, to honor all the sages and kings that are present here. Let the first presentation be given to the foremost personality in the assembly. "

Maharaja Yudhisthira asked, "O grandfather, who do you consider to be the greatest personality in the assembly?"

Bhishma confidently declared, "There is no doubt that Krishna is not only the foremost person present here, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead as well, having descended upon the Earth to execute the mission of the demigods, who are all His obedient servants. Krishna is the Supreme Lord of all creatures. He possesses all opulence to an unlimited degree, and He is the origin of everything. "

After saying this, Bhishma ordered Sahadeva to present *arghya* to Lord Krishna. However, when the Lord graciously accepted the offering, Sishupala could not tolerate it, and so he began to shout at Bhishma and Yudhisthira, just like a

madman. Sishupala said, "Bhishma, how could you mislead Sahadeva, who is but a child? On what basis did you select Krishna, passing by other, more important personalities?"

"O son of Pandu, if seniority has been the criterion for selection, then certainly Krishna's father, Vasudeva, is elderly. If you consider that one's guru should be given preference, then why was not Drona or Kripa chosen instead of Krishna? Then again, if the distinction is to be given to a saintly personality, how could you choose Krishna, instead of Vyasadeva, Narada or one of the other great rishis present here?"

"O King, if your choice was intended to honor your allies, then is not Drupada a great supporter of the Pandavas and senior as well? Krishna is neither a preceptor, a priest, nor even a king. Indeed, He is not even pious, and so what to speak of saintly, for He acts immorally without even a sense of shame, as in the deceitful killing of Jarasandha. O Yudhisthira, if you had intended to offer the first worship to Krishna, then why did you invite all of these exalted kings to come here and be insulted?"

Then, turning to Krishna, Sishupala said, "O Vasudeva, even if it is granted that the others had foolishly acted out of ignorance by choosing You, still, how could You dare to accept the first offering of arghya? At least You should be enlightened enough to understand that You are unworthy of such worship. Instead, by shamelessly accepting the honor, You have acted no better than a dog that licks up the sacrificial ghee in a secluded place!"

After saying this, Sishupala got up from his seat and stormed out of the assembly, followed by many other kings. Maharaja Yudhisthira got up from his throne and hastily ran after Sishupala, while trying to pacify him with sweet words. However, as Yudhisthira begged Sishupala to refrain from insulting Lord Krishna, Bhishma restrained him by saying, "O King, anyone who does not approve of the worship of Lord Krishna does not deserve words of conciliation. "

Then, addressing the entire assembly, Bhishma declared, "It is not only I, but all of the great authorities who confirm that Lord Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and is thus should be worshiped by all. Krishna is not merely the wisest person present here and also the strongest. He is the origin of the entire universe, and the refuge of everyone and everything. Therefore, I advise all of you not to make the grave mistake of considering Lord Krishna undeserving of the highest respect. Even as a child, Krishna acted in a superhuman manner that is possible only for the Supreme Lord, and no one else. This Sishupala is a mere child and so he cannot understand the transcendental glories of Lord Krishna. "

Sahadeva then announced, in a very grave voice, "If there is anyone in this assembly who objects to the worship of Lord Krishna, then I am prepared to place my foot upon his head. I challenge everyone present to give me a reply if you feel that my words are faulty. "

After saying this, Sahadeva actually lifted up his foot and pointed it toward the assembly. However, no one dared to say anything by way of objection. Then, suddenly, flowers showered down upon Saha-deva's head, while an unseen voice in the sky declared, "This excellent speech is just suitable as a response to persons who blaspheme the Supreme Lord, or His pure devotees!"

Narada Muni then stood up and loudly declared, "Anyone who does not worship Lord Krishna should be considered a dead body, even though moving, and he should never be seen nor talked to on any occasion, for that is the injunction of shastra. "

After this, the assembly settled down, so that Sahadeva was able to peacefully complete the offering of arghya to Lord Krishna. Sishupala was observing everything from a distance, and when he saw Lord Krishna receiving the foremost worship, he became actually mad with rage. After rushing into the assembly, Sishupala once again addressed the kings with great agitation: "Why should we tolerate the Pandavas' insults, and passively accept this rascal, Krishna? Let us take up our weapons and fight with the Pandavas and Vrishnis! Accept me as your commander-in-chief, so that we can disrupt this sacrifice before the final rituals are successfully completed. "

After hearing this envious talk, a wave of agitation spread throughout the assembly. Since the kings were already very proud of their strength and influence, their minds became further polluted when Sishupala led them to believe that Maharaja Yudhisthira was insulting them.

When he saw that the assembled kings had come under Sishupala's sway, and were discussing among themselves how to disrupt the sacrifice, Maharaja Yudhisthira inquired from Bhishma, "Grandfather, it appears as if the great kings have lost all reason and are about to attack us. What can be done to save the situation?"

Bhishma replied, "My dear Yudhisthira, do not fear, for a dog can never kill a lion. Lord Krishna, who is acting just like a sleeping lion, will give you all protection from these kings, who are no better than barking dogs. "

Sishupala could hear Bhishma's remarks, and so he replied with very harsh words, "This Krishna is a mere cowherd boy, and so it is very painful to hear how His insignificant achievements are being glorified completely out of proportion. So what if He killed a duck (Bakasura) when He was a child? So what if Krishna kicked over a dilapidated old handcart (while killing Shankachuda)? So what if He lifted up an anthill called Govardhana, and defeated a little water snake (Kaliya) in the River Yamuna? Krishna is a most sinful wretch who killed a poor innocent woman (Putana) and then ruthlessly killed the ruler of His own kingdom (Kamsa). "

"Bhishma, you are also a despicable person. Not only are you glorifying Krishna falsely, but you have yourself performed many sinful acts. For example, you cruelly tried to force Amba, the daughter of Kashiraja, to marry Vichitravirya, even though she was unwilling. Due to either impotency or ignorance, you have vowed to live a life of celibacy. However, this act is simply vain and futile, for the austerities performed by a childless person never bear fruit. Thus, all in all, you are simply a senile propounder of false morality, and I predict that you will die at the hands of your relatives, just as the swan did in the following historical incident. "

There was once an old swan that lived by the sea. This swan used to preach the principles of morality to the other birds, but he himself did not act accordingly. The other birds innocently regarded him as being virtuous, however, and they used to bring him offerings of food. In fact, the birds foolishly placed their faith in the old swan to such an extent that they would entrust their eggs to him when they went fishing. This sinful old swan would eat the eggs to his heart's content. Finally, when

the older and wiser birds saw how the number of eggs was steadily decreasing, they became suspicious. One day, these wise birds hid themselves so that they could witness the activities of the old swan. In this way, they saw with their own eyes how the swan ate their eggs, and thus they sorrowfully went and informed the other birds of the situation. Upon hearing of the old swans' wicked behavior, the birds became so enraged that they immediately went and killed the false preacher of morality. "

Sishupala then declared, "Bhishma, you are just like this old swan. Therefore, you should be killed by the assembled kings for acting sinfully while simultaneously preaching morality to them!"

When Bhima heard this blasphemy, his eyes became as red as copper and he began to grind his teeth in anger. Indeed, everyone in the assembly saw that Bhishma's face resembled that of Death personified at the end of the millenium when he engages in devouring all creatures. Then, just as Bhima was about to impetuously rush at Sishupala, Bhishma went and restrained him, while pacifying him with words of reason. Astonishingly, even in the face of Bhima's terrifying wrath, Sishupala did not tremble with fear. To the contrary, since he was foolishly confident of his own strength, Sishupala simply laughed and declared, "My dear kings, just wait here a moment so that you can see Bhima scorched by my superior prowess, as if he were a moth falling into the fire!"

Then, as Sishupala continued raving like a madman, Bhishma narrated to Bhima the history of the Chedi ruler's birth, as follows. Sishupala was born with four arms and three eyes, and immediately upon coming out of his mother's womb, he began to bray like an ass. Being very afraid of these inauspicious signs, the parents wanted to abandon their newborn baby, but then, a voice from the sky announced, "This son of Damaghosha will become very fortunate and he will be endowed with superior strength. Although the killer of this child has also been born elsewhere, he should be raised without any fear or regret. "

The mother then inquired, "Who is it that will kill my child?"

In response, the voice from the sky explained, "That person who, while placing your son upon his lap, witnesses the fall of the child's superfluous arms, and the disappearance of his third eye, will later become his killer. "

When news of this wonderful prophecy spread, all the kings of the Earth came to see the little baby Sishupala. And yet, even though thousands of men placed the child on their laps, one after another, that which had been predicted did not occur. Krishna and Balarama also heard the news, and so They left Dvaraka, desiring to see Sishupala's mother, who happened to be Their paternal aunt. After Krishna and Balarama arrived at Maharaja Damaghosha's palace and were comfortably seated, the mother came and happily placed baby Sishupala on Lord Krishna's lap. As soon as this was done, Sishupala's two extra arms fell to the floor, and the eye on his forehead disappeared. At this, the Queen became highly alarmed and so she begged, "O Krishna, please favor me by always pardoning any offenses that my son may commit in the future. "

Lord Krishna replied, "My dear aunt, I can assure you that even if Sishupala deserves to be killed, I will nonetheless pardon up to one hundred of his offenses. "

Bhishma then said, "Bhima, I can assure you that Sishupala's audacity in challenging us is actually inspired from within by the will of Lord Krishna. Therefore, please be patient, knowing that his death will soon be accomplished. "

When Sishupala heard this, his anger once again flared up, and like a deranged man, he continued to speak. Sishupala said, "Bhishma, how dare you pass over the heads of such great heroes as Ashvattama, Kama, Duryodhana and Jayadratha, in order to praise this cowherd boy as being the Lord of the universe? You are like the Bhulinga bird that lives north of the Himalayas. On the one hand, this foolish creature always advises the lion to be cautious. But, at the same time, the Bhulinga bird picks out pieces of flesh that stick between the lion's teeth as it eats. In the same way, you are advising these lion-like kings, upon whose mercy you depend, to worship someone else who is not at all worthy. "

Bhishma retorted, "I do not consider the kings present here to be any better than straw in the street!"

At this, pandemonium broke out as all the assembled kings began to heatedly discuss among themselves about how Bhishma should be chastised. Bhishma then challenged, "There is no need for further discussion because words can endlessly be countered by more words. Whether I am killed by you, or you are killed by me, I am ready to end all talks by placing my foot upon your heads. However, if you desire more speedy deaths, then I advise you to pass me by and directly fight with Lord Krishna. "

Upon hearing this, Sishupala challenged, "O Krishna, let us end our battle of words! I am ready to kill You and Your foolish admirers, the Pandavas!"

After saying this, Sishupala paused, and so Krishna took the opportunity of addressing the entire assembly in a soft and calm voice. The Lord said, "O Kings, because Sishupala's mother is my father's sister, I have always treated him with extreme tolerance, in spite of his enmity toward the Yadu dynasty. Now, please hear from Me some of the sinful acts that Sishupala has committed. "

"Once, when I was away at Pragjyotishpura, Sishupala attacked Dvaraka and managed to burn down a portion of the city. Then, later on, as my father was engaged in performing an ashvamedha-yagya, Sishupala came and stole the horse in order to obstruct the sacrifice. On another occasion, he raped Akrura's wife while she was traveling from Dvaraka to Sauvira. Then again, Sishupala disguised himself as the King of Karusha in order to rape the King's intended bride, Bhadra, the princess of Vishala. "

"And yet, in spite of Sishupala's having performed so many acts of aggression against My dynasty, I overlooked them all, because of the boon that I had granted his mother. Indeed, Sishupala has always been My enemy, and he even tried to marry Rukmini, just to give Me pain. Now, it is very fortunate that all of you assembled here can see Sishupala's real character, because I want to kill him without incurring public censure. "

After hearing Krishna's speech, all the kings began to harshly reproach Sishupala. However, Sishupala simply laughed and then asked, "Krishna, how could You be so shameless as to mention in public that your wife was actually intended for another?"

Sishupala foolishly thought that he was so powerful that Krishna could do nothing in retaliation. Nonetheless, as Sishupala stood before Him, Lord Krishna thought of His Sudarshana chakra and thus that blazing weapon immediately appeared in His hand. Lord Krishna then announced, "Sishupala, up to now I have always excused you because I had promised your mother that I would overlook one hundred of your offenses. But, now you have exceeded that limit and so I am going to kill you without further delay!"

After saying this, Lord Krishna released His effulgent disc, and within a second, Sishupala's severed head fell to the floor. Then, as all those present looked in astonishment, a dazzling spark of light came out of Sishupala's body. While stationed in the air, that purified soul worshiped Lord Krishna, and then suddenly entered into His transcendental body. Everyone was struck with wonder to see this, and at this time, even though the sky had been cloudless, rain began to fall profusely. As lightning flashed and thunder boomed, the entire Earth trembled, so that the combined effect was awesome.

Some of the assembled kings were pleased that Sishupala had been killed, but others were outraged, considering Krishna's act to be an atrocity. Still other kings became mediators between the opposing parties, but all of the brahmanas and rishis were highly delighted, without reservation. Maharaja Yudhisthira then commanded his brothers to perform Sishupala's funeral ceremony with great respect, and thereafter, Sishupala's son was installed as the king of Chedi. With all impediments now removed, the Rajasuya sacrifice was successfully completed under the protection of Lord Krishna, who stood guard with His Sharnga bow and Sudarshana chakra in hand. Maharaja Yudhisthira then took his avabhrita bath, and thereafter, all the kings came and congratulated him.

At last, when the assembled kings and brahmanas desired to return home, the Pandavas accompanied them up to the border of Indraprastha. Lord Krishna then approached Maharaja Yudhisthira, to take permission to depart, and at this time the King lovingly acknowledged the great mercy that the Lord had bestowed upon him so that the Rajasuya sacrifice could be successfully performed. After Maharaja Yudhisthira very reluctantly granted permission for Krishna to depart, the Lord went to take leave of Kuntidevi, Draupadi and Subhadra. Finally, after mounting the chariot that bore the flag of Garuda, Lord Krishna set out for Dvaraka, followed by the Pandavas. Then, after going some distance, Krishna stopped his chariot and very affectionately made His unalloyed devotees turn back.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
13 December 2003*

*prema vrddhi-krame nama--sneha, mana, pranaya  
raga, anuraga, bhava, mahabhava haya*

The basic aspects of *prema*, when gradually increasing to different states, are affection, abhorrence, love, attachment, further attachment, ecstasy and great ecstasy.

*yaiche bija, iksu, rasa, guda, khanda-sara  
sarkara, sita, michari, uttama-michari ara*

The gradual development of love may be compared to different states of sugar. First there is the seed of the sugarcane, then sugarcane and then the juice extracted from the cane. When this juice is boiled, it forms a liquid molasses, then a solid molasses, then sugar, candy, rock candy and finally lozenges. [Cc *Madhya* 19. 178,9]

*Prema* (transcendental attraction) is to be compared to *bija*, the seed of the sugarcane. *Sneha* (transcendental affection) is like *iksu*, the sugarcane itself; *mana* (transcendental abhorrence) is like *rasa*, the sugarcane juice; *pranaya* (transcendental love) is like *guda* (molasses); *raga* (transcendental attachment) is like *khandā-sara*, solid molasses; *anuraga* (further transcendental attachment) is like *sarkara* (sugar); *bhava* (transcendental ecstasy) is like *sita* (rock candy); and *mahabhava* (great transcendental ecstasy) is like *sitopala*, refined candy lozenges.

*Prema* develops in three stages: *manda* (slight), *madhya* (medium), and *praudha* (mature). When mature *prema* results in the melting of the heart, *sneha* makes its appearance. *Sneha* is of two types: *ghrta*, like ghee, and *madhu*, like honey. The first is full of respect, the second is full of sweet excitement. Ghee may require the touch of heat to liquify, but honey is always liquid. Among the *nayikas* (heroines of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes), the two types of *sneha* manifest in three stages. The *kanistha-nayikas* are satisfied to hear about their Lord. The *madhyama-nayikas* are satisfied by seeing Him. The *srestha-nayikas* must have direct sensual contact with Him to be satisfied.

The two types of *sneha* mature into two kinds of *mana*. *Mana* can be nicely rendered into English by the word pique, which means "a state of vexation caused by a perceived slight or indignity; a feeling of wounded pride." In *mana*, the molten *sneha*-heart is provoked by the Lord to boil and spit fiery emotions. The two kinds of *mana* are *udatta* (controlling) and *lalita* (attractive).

When *mana* gives way to unreserved confidence in Lord Kṛṣṇa's love for the *nayika*, *pranaya* (love) manifests in her heart. At this stage Kṛṣṇa becomes the life and soul of the heroine. From two kinds of *mana*, two kinds of *pranaya* develop: *maitra* (friendly) and *sakhya* (intimate).

Love is not only sweet. It is painful too. When the heroine finds happiness even in the pain of her love for her Hero, *raga* (attachment) appears. *Raga* appears in two colors, *nilima* (blue) and *raktima* (blood red). *Nilima* may be of two shades, deep and soft. *Raktima* may be like *kusumbha* (saffron), which quickly spreads through the emotion of love to reflect all varieties of *raga*. Or *raktima* may be like *manjistha* (madder, a southwest Asian flower denoted as *Rubia tinctorum*, the roots of which yield a red dye). This hue of *raktima* is independent and full of exotic glamour. *Manjistha-raktima* is the color of the loving affairs of Sri-Sri Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

When *raga* is flooded by a sensation of ceaseless novelty, an emotional surge that is rich with newer and newer feelings, it is known as *anuraga*. It is characterized by *paraspara-vasi-bhava*, the mutual self-surrender of the Hero and the heroine. Along with this is the forboding of separation (*prema-vaicitṭya*, translated by Srīla Prabhupada as "love anxieties.") In *anuraga* the *nayika* desires to be born as an object dear to Kṛṣṇa (*aprāni-janma*). During separation from Kṛṣṇa, the heroine pines for Him (*vipralambha-visphurati*).

When *anuraga* heightens to a state of *svasamvedya-dasa* (or in Latin, *sui juris*, "capable of managing its own affairs"), it is called *bhava* (ecstasy). When in turn *bhava* transcends its footing upon *anuraga*, *raga*, *pranaya* and so on, it becomes the supremely independent *mahabhava*. The queens of Dvaraka rarely achieve *mahabhava*; it is really the emotional province of the *gopis* of Vraja. *Mahabhava* is of two types: *rudha* and *adhirudha*.

In *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* Chapter 14, Srila Prabhupada writes:

The situations known as *rudha* and *adhirudha* are possible in the conjugal love relationship. Conjugal love exhibited by the queens at Dvaraka is called *rudha*, and conjugal love exhibited at Vrndavana by the damsels of Vraja is called *adhirudha*. The highest perfection of *adhirudha* affection in conjugal love involve meeting (*madana*) and separation (*mohana*). In the ecstasy of *madana*, meeting, there is kissing, and in the ecstasy of *mohana*, separation, there is *udghurna* and *citrajalpa*. As far as *citrajalpa* is concerned, in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, there is a portion known as *Bhramara-gita* in which various kinds of *citrajalpa* are mentioned. *Udghurna* is a symptom of separation, and there is also a symptom called transcendental insanity. In that transcendental insanity one thinks that he himself has become the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In such an ecstasy, he imitates the symptoms of Krsna in different ways.

The characteristics of *rudha-mahabhava* are 1) intolerance of separation, 2) capacity to stir the hearts of all present, 3) the appearance of an age as a moment, and a moment as an age, 4) extreme depression even within the greatest happiness, 5) being oblivious of everything, even though one is fully conscious (*mohadya bhavepi*).

The passion of *rudha-mahabhava* is compared to a raging fire, but the passion of *adhirudha-mahabhava* is indescribable. *Madana* is particularly manifest in the *yutha* (group of *gopis*) headed by Srimati Radharani; and *mohana* is really manifest only in Srimati Radharani Herself. By Her feelings of separation from Krsna, sorrow spreads over the whole world. Even the animals weep. In that condition, *divyonmada* (divine madness) erupts in Srimati Radharani as *udghurna* (irrational acts) and *citrajalpa* (mad talks, of which there are ten types).

In *mahabhava* there is apparent separation from Krsna, but in truth the Lord is "captured" within the heroine's heart, in His *bhava-rupa* (form of ecstatic emotions). Krsna thus manifests as the madness of the *nayika's* yearnings for her Lord. As Srila Prabhupada points out above, the heroine even thinks she has become the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
14 December 2003

**Habit is Second Nature**

Therefore habit is second nature. It is very difficult. The example that *yasya hi yasya bhavasya tasya sa duratikramah. Svabhava*, one who has his habit, one who is habituated to do something, it is very difficult for him to give it up. The example is given: *sva yadi kriyate raja svakim nasnotapanam*. You can keep one dog in a royal position, but as soon as it will see one shoe there, immediately bite. Because he's a dog. The doggish quality's there. You may put him on the throne. That's doesn't matter. But the doggish quality, you cannot change. Similarly this *svabhava*, *svabhava* means the material nature, material nature. We have acquired so many material nature, by association of the three modes of material nature, *sattva guna, raja guna, tamo guna*. So our habits are formed on account of our association with the three different qualities of material nature. But if we can disassociate ourself from the three modes of material nature, then our real nature, means spiritual nature, becomes invoked. That is the process of Krsna consciousness. If you remain Krsna conscious, then there is no chance of your associating with the three material modes of nature. That is the secret. [*Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture in New York on 24 July 1971]

Another British writer, who like Owen Barfield was primarily concerned with consciousness, is Colin Wilson. In 1956, when he was twenty-four, he came to prominence with the publication of his first book, *The Outsider*. The books he wrote after that were not nearly as popular, no doubt because his subject matter is very challenging for modern sleepwalking man. Wilson has what I believe is a very useful insight into this "second nature" of habit that Srila Prabhupada spoke of above.

Wilson termed second nature "the robot. " It is that part of the mind that performs functions unconsciously. In the In2-MeC entry for 11 December I wrote:

Vrtti means the mind's material engagement. There are eleven *vrttis* that are divided into three categories. When the mind is absorbed in hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling, it is engaged in sense objects. When the mind is absorbed in grasping, walking, talking, urination/defecation and sexual intercourse, it is engaged in organic activities. When the mind is absorbed in mental concoction and self-importance, it is engaged in *abhimana* (false egoism).

Wilson's "robot" is in *Bhagavatam* terms the organic activity of the mind. It is a kind of automatic pilot. This psychological robot is useful and necessary in human life. Human beings are blessed with a robot superior to that of the animals: after a learning period, we can automatically perform such intricate activities as typing, driving a car, playing a musical instrument, or speaking a foreign language. Such activities involve the *karmendriyas*, the motor senses; like the *jnanindriyas* (knowledge-acquiring senses) that feed sense impressions into the mind, the *karmendriyas* are managed by demigods. The functions of these two groups of senses and their controlling deities are outlined in the In2-MeC entry for 24 June 2003.

Developing habits, or *svabhava*, is a process of turning over our organic activities to the management of the demigods. As per our liking for different modes of activities, the demigods manage the affairs of our senses accordingly. A person with a taste for *tamasic* activity like drinking alcohol will be conducted by the demigods as per the mode of ignorance. Acting in terms of ignorance and passion is, of course, not at all helpful in spiritual life; thus devotees are advised to act in the mode of goodness.

But there are two kinds of goodness: ordinary *sattva-guna* which is still under material management, and *suddha-sattva* or *Vasudeva-sattva* which is *turiya*, above the material modes altogether. What is the essential difference? Let me simply repeat the last part of Srila Prabhupada's quotation given above.

If we can disassociate ourself from the three modes of material nature, then our real nature, means spiritual nature, becomes invoked. That is the process of Krsna consciousness. If you remain Krsna conscious, then there is no chance of your associating with the three material modes of nature. That is the secret.

"Remain Krsna conscious", Srila Prabhupada says. Krsna *conscious*. CONSCIOUS.  
"That is the secret. "

From the point of view of Krsna consciousness, material consciousness is *unconsciousness*. The whole material creation with all of its so-called wakeful activities is summarized by Srila Prabhupada thusly in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 29. 83:

This material creation is the spirit soul's dream. Actually all existence in the material world is a dream of Maha-Visnu, as the *Brahma-samhita* describes:

*yah karanarnava jale bhajati sma yoga-  
nidram ananta jagad-anda-saroma-kupah*

This material world is created by the dreaming of Maha-Visnu. The real, factual platform is the spiritual world, but when the spirit soul wants to imitate the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he is put into this dreamland of material creation.

Don't forget that Colin Wilson's "robot" is at work in the material mode of goodness, too. If a devotee is not careful to remain Krsna conscious in his *sattvik* life, the robot will overtake his devotional activities. On page 172 of *Unspoken Obstacles on the Path of Bhakti* by my Godbrother Purnacandra Prabhu, a picture brilliantly illustrates the correlation of an "unconscious" devotional activity and ordinary material activities. The picture (an artist's drawing) is divided in half, top and bottom. In the top half we see a *karmi* ensconced upon a sofa, a drink of liquor in his left hand and a telephone held to his ear in his right hand. Between the fingers holding the telephone is a cigarette. As this fellow talks and drinks and smokes, he watches a TV set on a table front of him. In the bottom half we see a devotee driving a car and chanting his rounds at the same time.

Purnacandra Prabhu writes on page 171:

Devotees sometimes act similarly due to their Western conditioning: gazing at a video while tasting *prasadam*, or flipping through a magazine while chanting *japa*. We know that chanting *japa* while driving a car is not quite the same as when one is sitting peacefully at home or in a temple. When one, however, learns to concentrate on one activity, the mind becomes peaceful and one's ability to chant *japa* is improved.

The devotee who drives while chanting is probably hoping that his psychological robot will attend to the car while "he" (the soul) attends to the holy names. The

robot is a wonderful facility of nature in that it allows the human being to "multitask" (to borrow a term from computer-speak). This multitasking of organic functions permits us to concentrate on one effort while other activities proceed according to *svabhava* (second nature, or habit). A concert pianist lets second nature run his fingers over the keyboard while he concentrates on interpreting the music. As we chant *japa*, we do multitask even if we are not driving a car at the same time. While sitting peacefully in the temple during *brahma-muhurta* hour, we don't pay much attention to the passing of the beads, one by one, through our fingers. Our chosen area of concentration is (or should be) the sound of the holy names.

Purnacandra Prabhu points out:

One popular Western trait is that people are accustomed to engaging many senses at the same time. Due to the usual prominence of the mode of passion, Westerners often feel the need to overwhelm their senses.

The material mode of goodness is different from pure Vasudeva-*sattva* goodness in that it is impregnated with *rajo-guna* and *tamo-guna*. There is a joke about a father who hears a rumor that his young unmarried daughter is pregnant. He can't tell by looking at her, as her figure is just as slim as always. So he asks her, "Are you pregnant?" She bashfully replies, "A little bit. " Even though a girl is just a little bit pregnant, in time she will become a great deal pregnant: that is, her abdomen will swell, showing the world her condition. And so it is with the material mode of goodness. It is a little bit pregnant with the modes of passion and ignorance. That condition may go unnoticed for a while, but in time it becomes obvious.

The point is this: in time, activities governed by the robot of the material mode of goodness will gradually be overwhelmed by the modes of passion and ignorance. When one drives a car and chants his rounds at the same time, he is already slipping into the mode of passion. He may argue, "No, I am just multitasking, like we do *anyway* when we chant; I am just multitasking a little more than normal. " Well, Prabhu. . . do you think a concert pianist would agree to do a command performance while driving a car? He couldn't possibly concentrate on interpreting the music nicely. Just imagine that situation: a famous pianist dress in tuxedo at the wheel of a Rolls Royce, a baby grand piano crammed into the seat next to him. He steers the car with one hand, plays piano with the other. . . it's mad! And that is the mode of passion: a maddened state in which people "overwhelm their senses," as Purnacandra Prabhu puts it.

In this way the mind is completely taken over by the *vr̥tti* of material engagement in organic activities.

Even when chanting *japa* in the temple, if one neglects to concentrate on the sound of the holy name, the mind will be taken over by *abhimana-vr̥tti*, mental concoction and self-importance. This is also due to the impregnation of passion and ignorance within the material mode of goodness. In the mode of passion, one becomes excessively enamored by efficiency. "Gotta get them 16 rounds done in an hour and a half, 'cause afterwards I've got *important* things to do. " We thus permit the robot to take over duties that "we" (the spirit souls) should attend to ourselves. . . like chanting *japa*. Chanting becomes automatic and mechanical, while "we" drift with the unfocused mind into concoction and complacency. . . in other words, into the mode of ignorance.

In Chapter Eighteen of a book I wrote years ago entitled *Dimensions of Good and Evil*, I said this about efficiency, which is supposedly the more effective way to do things:

"Progress" translates. . . as a more effective way of doing things. Almost daily more effective solutions arrive for how things can be done, incarnated as man-made machinery. The more effective way to cook incarnated as the microwave oven; the more effective way to reckon incarnated as the computer; the more effective way to travel incarnated as the airplane. The appearance of these mechanical deities is jubilantly hailed by millions of people. But it is as if these deities emanate an opiate fog that deadens inquiry into the purpose of increased effectivity--why is such machinery good.

The machine that is closest to us is the *yantra* of this gross and subtle body (see *Bg* 18. 61 for an explanation). If in our thoughts and actions we are not very careful to remain Krsna conscious, this body and mind emanate an opiate fog that deadens inquiry into what real goodness is. The body and mind can help us to achieve Vasudeva-*sattva*, but only if we do not turn off beta-chanting and beta-thinking and so, in turn, surrender to the alpha state of mind. (See In2-Mec for 10 December for an explanation. )

Here is where Colin Wilson's psychological robot links up with Owen Barfield's alpha-thinking; or in *Bhagavatam* terms, where the *vrtti* of organic activities links up with the *vrtais* of sense perception and *abhimana* (self-absorption). To turn *japa* over to the robot is to be passive toward Krsna consciousness. It means to shift out of conscious involvement with the holy names into the inert alpha mind-state. This mind-state is dull and impersonal, and it is the result of the opiation of *maya*. To turn *japa* over to the robot is to say to material nature, "Go ahead and take care of these 16 rounds, they aren't important enough for me to attend to. " Thus a mental dream-screen, like a pane of glass, slides shut between us and the transcendental nature of the holy names of Krsna. Chanting becomes just another phenomenon external to us that we passively observe.

Until Krsna kicks us out of our complacency. This is what happens to the demigods sometimes. In Chapter Seventeen of *DOGE* I wrote:

. . . the demons become a threat particularly at times when the demigods are besotted by their heavenly pomp and circumstance. At one time the monarch of heaven Indra, under the sway of self-importance, offended the sage Durvasa Muni. In return Durvasa cursed the demigods who, as a result, faltered in combat with the demons. Indra and his allies withdrew from battle to humbly follow Brahma in prayers of supplication to Lord Visnu. The Lord was pleased upon the demigods now that they sincerely yearned for the shelter of His lotus feet. By His grace the demigods later defeated the demons.

True, this is also Krsna's mercy. I think, however, that for one aspiring to become a pure devotee, this type of mercy is not the type one should come to depend upon. When by the Lord's grace a crisis reawakens our true will, we should struggle to keep that will awake--by remaining Krsna conscious. Backsliding again and again speaks of addiction to the opiate fog emanating from the body and mind.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
15 December 2003

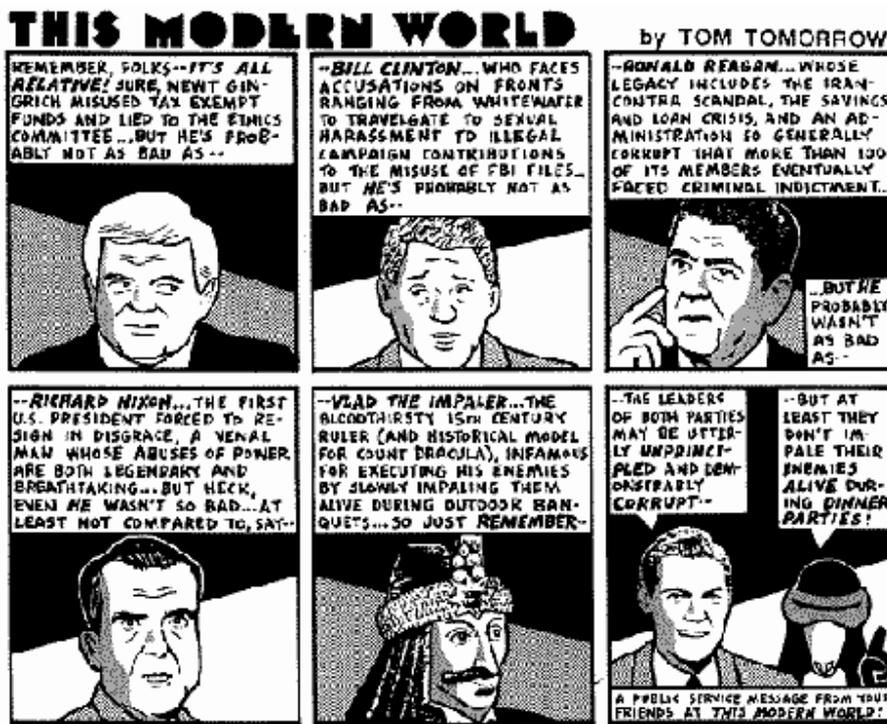
Being in Vrajabhumi is a most humbling experience. I do not deserve to be here, but by the grace of all-merciful Sri Krsna, Srila Prabhupada and the assembled devotees, I have entered the Lord's personal abode on earth.

I'm stunned, so I don't have a lot to say today. Besides that I've got stomach trouble...a bacterial condition, I'm told. I'm taking heavy medicines that my Godbrother Brahmananda Prabhu gave me.

HH Kesava Bharati Maharaja is at IBSA and will be here for another ten days or so. HG Tejiyas Prabhu is departing today for Indonesia.

I have an Internet connection here, but the Govardhana phone network sometimes is down. I don't know if I'll be able to write every day to In2-MeC...

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IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
16 December 2003

Emily Dickenson was a poetess who lived in Amherst, Massachusetts, in the later 1800s. Amherst is very close to Holyoke, where I was born. In a line of one of her

poems, which I unfortunately cannot quote from memory, she wrote to the effect that the weight of the world is equal to the weight of the human brain.

What I think she was meaning is that each of us lives in an "anthroposphere", a realm of human perceptions. We do not see the real world; we see what our brain, our mind and our sense organs permit us to see. The weight of *that* world is the weight of our brain.

It is pointless to look for the origin of the world in the anthroposphere. That would be like looking for the author of a novel within the novel or an artist within his painting. Similarly we *ourselves* are outside the anthroposphere. We are not the brain, the sense organs, the sense objects, nor even the subtle mind. All that we perceive. But we are the perceiver. What is materially perceived can never be the transcendental perceiver. A flashlight can never shine on itself; it can only illuminate the world around it. The attempt to see the self through the anthroposphere leads into what logicians call "infinite regress" or endless intellectual backpedaling: "Ah-hah, yes. . . now I understand I am *this*, the physical body. No, wait. . . I am thinking about the body. That means I'm different from it. *That's* it, I'm the mind. But wait, now I am thinking about the mind. That means I must be different from it also. " *Neti-neti*, "not this, not this. " Infinite regress brings one at last to the concept of absolute impersonality. But even then, the real identity as a transcendental person with spiritual senses and desires remains unseen behind the coldly rational "face" that we use to see the impersonal. Unseen because *it is us*. We try to negate that real identity because our knowledge of how to realize it is lacking. But known or not, the self is always there. In another line of poetry, Emily Dickenson spoke of a worm that gnaws at the soul. That worm is our inner disquiet at not knowing who we really are.

*Ceto darpana marjanam*. Cleanse the mirror of consciousness. That mirror is the reflective power of transcendental knowledge granted us by the Lord in the heart. Due to lust and sloth we have allowed that power, our *svatah-siddha-jnana*, to become covered with dust. When it is cleansed by pure chanting the holy names, then we can see the real self, just as a flashlight will be illuminated if it shines into a mirror. Its rays reflect back from the glass to light up the flashlight itself.

Those brilliant rays of spiritual illumination are the mercy of Krsna. Sri Vrindaban Dhama also can only be seen by the same means. Otherwise we are just groping about in the anthroposphere. In that benighted state, the whole of what we know as the *dhama* weighs only as much as our brain.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India*  
18 December 2003

In the In2-MeC entry for 11 December I wrote:

From a 1973 book entitled *The Origin and History of Consciousness* by Erich Neumann is a word, *uroboric*, which denotes the cosmic intimacy shared by ancient man and the universe.

The word *uroboric* is derived from *Ouroboros*, the name the Gnostics used to denote The All. (The Gnostics--the name comes from *gnosis*, a Greek word related to the Sanskrit *jnana*--were mystic philosophers of the Mediterranean world in the period of

history when Christianity had its beginning. ) The image of Ouroboros is still known today: a serpent turned to form a circle, holding its tail in its own mouth. Ouroboros was associated with The Waters, or the vast ocean in which the cosmos floats. He is also the great cycle of time. Among the Gnostic sects was a cult known as the Ophites. The Ophite doctrine viewed Jehova as a demigod who kept Adam and Eve under the delusion of material happiness in the Garden of Eden. The serpent who convinced Eve to pluck the fruit of knowledge represented the true, transcendental Deity. He desired the liberation of Adam and Eve from ignorance. The Ophites envisioned the universe as a great egg that was partially filled with a procreative liquid they called Okeanos; this world-ocean was associated with Acheloues, the original river which is in the form of a snake. Acheloues in turn was associated with Chronos Aion, the deity of Time.

Obviously there is a correlaton between Ouroboros and Ananta Sesa, who lies in the causal ocean in which the universes float, and within the Garbhodaka ocean that fills the lower half of each universe.

Ananta Sesa is Sankarsana. Srila Prabhupada writes in *Cc Adi* 5. 41p:

Sankarsana, the second expansion, is Vasudeva's personal expansion for pastimes, and since He is the reservoir of all living entities, He is sometimes called *jiva*. The beauty of Sankarsana is more than that of innumerable full moons radiating light beams. He is worshipable as the principle of ego. He has invested Anantadeva with all the potencies of sustenance. For the dissolution of the creation, He also exhibits Himself as the Supersoul in Rudra, irreligiosity, *ahi* (the snake), *antaka* (death) and the demons.

In this purport we find connections to all the associations of Ouroboros: the serpent, the cycles of time, the unity of all living entities, and so on.

The word uroboric pertains to Sankarsana's aspect as *jiva*, the reservoir of all living entities. It is interesting to mention--not that it really means anything--that some proponents of evolutionary theory postulate a "reptilian" part of the human brain, which is a remnant in this body from our long-ago ancestors in the evolutionary chain, the reptiles (snakes, lizards, crocodiles, etc. ). This reptilian part of the brain is supposed to govern that sort of unified, automatic, ritualistic behavior like we see in soldiers marching together in step. This consciousness has been called "tacit knowing" as opposed to "explicit knowing. " Explicit knowing can be learned through words, but tacit knowing can only be learned by doing. For example, you cannot learn to ride a bicycle from a mere verbal explanation. Think about it: so many things in life belong to tacit knowing. Can you learn to play piano from a book alone? Or drive a car? Anyway, the word uroboric indicates the consciousness of an ancient, highly ritualized culture in which human beings surrendered their "cerebral identity" (the logical, word-oriented side of the mind) to a complex behavioral superstructure that was understood to *be* (not merely "symbolize", a word-oriented notion) the very form and purpose of the cosmos itself. In In2-MeC of 11 December I cited Srila Prabhupada's account of *varnasrama-dharma* as the social manifestation of universal consciousness.

Complex, ritualistic behavior is sometimes said to commune with "the magical structure of consciousness. " This means that within consciousness there are different structures, and one such structure, the magical, is accessed through actions

performed in trance. In trance, the cerebral thinking self is ritualistically "sacrificed" so that it dissolves into a Greater Plan. In such entranced activity, magical things do happen. A troupe of dancers, having sacrificed their thinking selves to the tacit knowing of the dance, performs amazingly complex synchronized steps that to the onlooker are magical. The dancers are clearly "taken over" by a higher power. In Indian dance forms like Bharatnatyam, the dancer surrenders herself to the Deity she is portraying. The audience considers the dancer to be a temporary manifestation of the Deity. Even Srila Prabhupada said to his disciple Yogesvara Prabhu that Bharatnatyam performances of Krsna's pastimes are temporary displays of Krsna consciousness.

So the word uroboric indicates a time when all human behavior was entranced, and when magic was the rule, not the exception. By magic we should understand *daivi-sakti*, the powers of the Lord and His representatives, the demigods, by which the cosmic manifestation is "magically" created, maintained and destroyed.

Nowadays people are locked into *thinking about* the world as perceived by the senses, not *thinking with* the greater cosmos. *Thinking about* is alpha-thinking. *Thinking with* is beta- or participatory thinking, the cognizance of the world as a representation within the mind that appears out of the interaction of consciousness with higher powers--the powers of nature, the powerful demigods, and ultimately the Supreme Powerful, the Lord Himself. It is not hard to see that the process of *thinking about* limits our thoughts to the anthroposphere, the "world" of mere human facts. About the world of facts, in *Dimensions of Good and Evil*, Chapter Eighteen, I wrote:

The dictionary defines reductionism as a "procedure or theory that reduces complex data or phenomena to simple terms. " A critic of this method of understanding the world demands to know:

Why should the world be simple? Who made that decision? Who imposed it? There is no answer, for nowhere can we find such a guarantee.

To presuppose that all reality is uniformly simple has less to do with proven knowledge and more to do with a

. . . belief that whatever was real must be subject to the laws which were observed to operate in the physical world--that it must work, in short, like a machine.

As Sir Arthur Eddington has put it, ". . . science was disposed, as soon as it scented a piece of mechanism, to exclaim 'here we are getting to bedrock. This is what things should resolve themselves into. This is ultimate reality. '"

Sniffing out the mechanical simplicity underlying nature is nothing other than sniffing out the prediction and control of events in nature. It is less a way of knowing the purpose of nature itself than a way to impose human will upon nature. We must ask ourselves whether manipulation of material nature really raises human knowledge in any fundamental way beyond the level of lower creatures, many of whom manipulate nature more expertly in some respects than we. Half a century ago, an article published in the *Atlantic Monthly* laid the blame for the death of spiritual vision in the West at the door of the reductionist creed.

. . . inquiry into purposes is useless for what science aims at: namely, the prediction and control of events. To predict an eclipse, what you have to know is not its

purpose but its causes. Hence science from the seventeenth century onward became an exclusively an inquiry into [mechanistic] causes. . . It is this which has killed. . . the essence of the religious vision itself, which is the faith that there is a plan and purpose in the world, that the world is a moral order, that in the end all things are for the best.

The past three hundred years were very good for the reductionists. By their "factual" model of the universe, they managed to capture the popular imagination. That model breaks down to three principles: 1) matter is the only form of reality; 2) the conception of the mechanical is the only kind of law; and 3) evolution is an automatically determined process that, at a certain stage of development, threw up consciousness as an effect of material combination.

The old, "merely religious" model of the universe is widely frowned upon. To hold the fundamental cosmic law to be moral and not mechanical is, the reductionists argue, intolerant. This argument gets color and drama by the invocation of The Horrors of the Past: the Inquisition, for example, or the witch trials of Salem. The supposedly "factual" worldview claims to be value-neutral. It consigns moral judgements to the non-scientific sphere of imperfect human opinion. That is a Good Thing because while it leaves people the individual freedom to choose their own moral menus in life, it does not permit them to impose their beliefs on others. Society as a whole is to be governed by principles of factual knowledge. The more society moves away from the religious model of the world to the factual model, the safer we will all be from theocratic fundamentalism imposed by a narrow-minded priesthood.

The word "factual" comes from the Latin *facio*, "to make or do." Thus a fact is what has been made or done. It is a product of the work of our senses--our seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting. Facts are therefore "practical." Reductionism reduces the whole world to man-made facts: observations made by human senses and calculations made by human minds. In contrast, scriptural revelation about the purpose of the world is God-made.

From the standpoint of facts, religious values seem less practical and thus less real. Why should a certain kind of food--beef, for example--be judged as sinful? Factually beef, like food of any kind, nourishes the body. And so in the modern world the value of practicality (something that works) takes the lead over the values of faith and morality. "Can" supersedes "should." So many cows run loose in India, and beef can be eaten--why should poor Hindus go hungry when the rice crop fails? Contraceptives can prevent pregnancy--why should we fear the consequences of sex? Abortions can be performed, women can do the work of men, aerial bombs can be dropped. Whether these things should happen or not are worries outside factual knowledge. Anyway, goes the argument, whether we like them or not, these things are happening now. That, we are told, is progress.

"Progress" translates into the language of facts as a more effective way of doing things. Almost daily more effective solutions arrive for how things can be done, incarnated as man-made machinery. The more effective way to cook incarnated as the microwave oven; the more effective way to reckon incarnated as the computer; the more effective way to travel incarnated as the airplane. The appearance of these mechanical deities is jubilantly hailed by millions of people. But it is as if these deities emanate an opiate fog that deadens inquiry into the purpose of increased effectivity--why is such machinery good. For modern people, "The supreme

question," as Karl Jaspers wrote, "is what 'the time demands'. " What's the point of asking any other question? Whatever is "factually" needful, time is revealing right now.

Time. . . takes on a specific moral dimension. Future time is good, past time bad. We move from this inadequate past into this bright future. Since progress is seen to be happening and is regarded as a virtue, the past comes to be understood as an underdeveloped realm, an impoverished Africa of memory and the imagination, useful only as a staging post for the future.

Most people who believe in an evolving technological future miss the irony that "factual knowledge" can only be knowledge of the past. When we look up at the night sky, we do not see the stars as they are but as they were. It takes time for their light to reach our eyes. According to modern cosmology, the light of many of the stars we see now may be several thousand years old. Some of them may have exploded centuries ago. Though their light continues to stream to earth, they are no longer really there. The "factual" sun that brightens our eyes is always eight minutes in the past. No one on earth has ever seen the "real" sun. A slight time lag divides us from even the nearest objects of our perception. This "factual" world of human sensory experience is the phenomenal world—a world that has already changed by the time we know it.

Thus the phenomenal world, the world of facts, is a world of secondary, dead information. The world that is, the primary living reality, we never know. Facts, far from being "the whole truth," are just signals conveyed by the network of our senses.

Compare a human being to a spider. A spider has rather limited powers of sight, hearing and smell. But it is blessed with an acute sense of touch. Thus its knowledge of the world comes largely by way of the network of its web. Just by feeling the movement of something in the network, the spider can judge with great accuracy how far off and how big it is. The web cannot, however, inform the spider about the world beyond the network. Even about things caught within the network, the spider receives only a certain quality of information. For example, the web does not convey the color of a thing. Similarly, there are limits to the quantity and quality of information the network of human sense perception can convey. The edge of the universe remains totally outside our informational reach, despite sophisticated modern instrumentation. Even about things near at hand, our senses permit only restricted information. For example, a dog whistle is knowable to human senses only in a limited way. Though we can see it and touch it, it emits a sound outside the perceptual dimension of our ears. According to the Vedic scriptures, there is a higher reality, beyond our human awareness, to every object of our perception.

The uroboric state of mind invites consciousness to rise out of the web of limited and imperfect sense perceptions into the presence of the reality of the cosmic manifestation, The All as the Gnostics called Him. That presence is Lord Sankarsana.

In the 11 December entry I wrote:

In ISKCON, we do have our proponents of *varnasrama-dharma* who argue why our Society must conform to the system of four social and spiritual orders. But from what I've heard, their arguments mostly revolve around human concerns: stable

occupation, economics, law and order, prosperous family life, etc. I would say *sudras* are very concerned with stable occupation (that's what communism is basically about, and communism is a social order invented by and for *sudras*). *Vaisyas* are clearly very concerned about economics, and *ksatriyas* about law and order. In general, all people in bodily consciousness are concerned with prosperous family life. But these concerns fall short of what Srila Prabhupada is stressing in the purport above: the uroboric concern, the God-centered concern, which insures the complete perfection of life.

You see, I seriously doubt that the gap between alpha-thinking and beta-thinking, or *thinking about* and *thinking with*, can be bridged by "thinking about" *varnasrama-dharma*. I don't mean to say thinking about it is entirely useless. After all, Srila Prabhupada has given us so much to "think about" in his books. But the cerebral, explicit-knowing orientation of modern consciousness is not the same as the tacit knowledge that is acquired by sacrificing the cerebral self.

How the gap is bridged, I explained in In2-MeC of 10 December:

From their lingering preoccupation with consensus and objective realities, ISKCON devotees are troubled by so many "difficult questions." These questions are simple impotent thoughts. . . thoughts that are impotent because they do not move with the vehicles of 1) the all-powerful Vedic language (all-powerful because that language *alone*, the *sabda-brahma* or *brahma-vac*, is source of creation), and 2) the all-blissful language of the Holy Names and the *Bhagavatam* (all-blissful because the Name and the *Bhagavatam* are the transcendent Lord Himself, even higher than His *vac-sakti* by which the world is created, maintained and destroyed). Impotent thoughts mean impotent words. Impotent words are words that are not *mantras*. Such impotent words and thoughts represent a world that is not real. . . hence it baffles us.

A significant percentage of the ISKCON population does not *understand* (although I think most at least *believe*) that the answer to all doubts is

1) Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare (see *Kalisantarana Upanisad* verse 6--"no other remedy is to be found in all the Vedic *sastras*); and

2) "The *Bhagavatam* is the Answer to All Questions" (see *Bhag.* Canto 2 Chapter 10).

Transcendental *mantras*--like the *maha-mantra* and the verses of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*--consist of words. But these are not words that are mere representations; or in other words, these are not the ordinary language (*laukika-bhasa*) of alpha-thinking. Just as the activities within *varnasrama-dharma* are entrancing, so transcendental *mantras* are enchanting. We chant them and are enchanted by them. In that enchantment the presence of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, is revealed.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
19 December 2003

## Apology

Dear Vaisnava readers,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Today I received a letter from my Godbrother HH Devamrta Maharaja. He graciously advised me of something I was not aware of before: that remarks I've made in this journal regarding some Russian devotees and their questions have caused a degree of perplexity among a good number of readers. My immediate response is to apologize and beg forgiveness from all my readers, particularly those from Russia and the CIS.

I was being sarcastic. About sarcasm, especially when it is rendered into written words, we have to be *very* cautious in the Vaisnava community. Vaisnava *aparadha* is so dangerous. Truthfully, after I published those remarks I felt bad about them; but I did get one letter of feedback from the CIS a few days later that caused me to think that my remarks were appreciated. So I let my ill-considered words stand.

With the help of Devamrta Maharaja I see my mistake. I've asked the administrator of this Website to excise the offending remarks immediately. Removal of those words is a great relief, especially to me.

It is true that a few times I have found *some* lines of inquiry from *some* CIS devotees annoying. Some Godbrothers have expressed the same sort of annoyance to me. I do hope that devotees will reflect more on the content of their questions before they ask them, and be more considerate of others before they ask them in public.

Still, it was wrong for me to write sarcastically, and moreover in a way that seemed to generalize about the devotees from Russia and the CIS, who are doing such nice services for Srila Prabhupada.

If you who are reading these words right now are among those who felt personally offended by what I wrote, again I beg your forgiveness. I am sorry, yet I am also grateful to you, for you are helping me provide better service in this journal. Thank you.

In service to Srila Prabhupada and all his servants in ISKCON,

Dasanudasa Suhotra Swami

\* \* \* \* \*

Yesterday I wrote about Ouroboros, the Gnostic image of the world-serpent turned upon itself to form a circle, with its tail in its own mouth. I did not mention why it has its tail in its mouth. It discovers itself that way--thus we get a hint of universal consciousness that links all *jivas* together as a whole. But in discovering itself, it devours itself too. By devouring itself, Ouroboros renews itself. Such is cyclical time. And such is the rule of life in this universe that binds all *jivas* together:

*ahastani saasthanam  
apadani catus-padam  
phalguni tatra mahatam  
jivo jivasya jivanam*

Those who are devoid of hands are prey for those who have hands; those devoid of legs are prey for the four-legged. The weak are the subsistence of the strong, and the general rule holds that one living being is food for another. [*Bhag.* 1. 13. 47]

All *jivas* are food for the ultimate *jiva*, Lord Sankarsana.

As I mentioned yesterday, there is a clear correlation between Ouroboros and Sankarsana (Ananta Sesa). I cited Srila Prabhupada's statement about Sankarsana: "For the dissolution of the creation, He also exhibits Himself as the Supersoul in Rudra, irreligiosity, *ahi* (the snake), *antaka* (death) and the demons. " At the time of *maha-pralaya*, Lord Sesa destroys the universe by emitting flames from His many mouths. Sesa/Sankarsana is called *jiva* since the root of the existence of all *jivas* is Him; at *maha-pralaya* time it appears He consumes them by consuming Himself. Of course, He is not consumed by the flames that devour the universe, because the universe is material while He is transcendental; but it must seem that way to those whose spiritual vision is not perfect.

Sankarsana and His expansions Pradyumna and Aniruddha are the cause of what some philosophers call "the structures of consciousness", which, from the *Bhagavatam* insight, are states of mind influenced by the three modes of material nature. Sankarsana presides over the state Srila Prabhupada called the subconscious (which is often termed the unconscious by modern thinkers). Pradyumna presides over the state of dreams. Aniruddha presides over the waking state of rational thought. This is recounted in detail in In2-MeC of 19 July and 29 June.

The subconscious is known as the *karana-deha*, the causal body. Lord Sankarsana appears to sleep within the *karana-jal*, the Causal Ocean, as Maha-Visnu. The *karana-deha* that expands from Him is submerged in *susupti*, unconsciousness or dreamless sleep. Great *yogis* who achieve the *turiya* realm of consciousness, the fourth state beyond the influence of the three modes, remain transcendently awake even within *susupti*, just as Maha-Visnu is transcendently awake while apparently asleep. This state is *yoga-nidra*. In an In2-MeC entry earlier this month entitled *What is Yogamaya*, Srila Prabhupada is quoted as saying *yoga-nidra* is *yogamaya*, the superior "*maya*" that connects us to Krsna. *Yogis* in the trance of *yoga-nidra* perceive primeval desire hidden at the bottom of the black pool of *susupti*. Primeval desire is the seed of the mind (*linga-sarira*, where dreams appear) and in turn the seed of *virat*, the gross creation, where wakeful awareness appears. Primeval desire is the very essence of the *karana-deha*. By the grace of *yogamaya*, perfect *yogis* perceive the natural relationship of desire to the Supreme Lord.

This transcendental wakefulness within *susupti* is described in *Bhagavad-gita* 2. 69:

*ya nisa sarva-bhutanam  
tasyam jagarti samyami  
yasyam jagrati bhutani  
sa nisa pasyato muneh*

What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.

Great sages headed by Lord Brahma remain awake in *susupti* and commune with Sri Maha-Visnu while the beings in lower consciousness are fast asleep; what these beings believe to be wakeful consciousness (*jagrata*)--the state of mind in which they gratify their senses--the sages remains aloof from, as if they are asleep to it.

In each creation, the living entities are given a chance to close their business as conditioned souls. When they misuse this opportunity and do not go back home, back to Godhead, Lord Sankarsana becomes angry. [*Bhag.* 5. 25. 3p]

The anger of Lord Sankarsana is the origination point of devastation, which is why He is called *tamasi*. The *tamo-guna* is the destructive feature of material nature, and He, Tamasi, is the ultimate shelter of that *tamo-guna*.

Devastation threatens us in the external world. But devastation also lurks within the dark waters of the subconscious. This double threat was portrayed in Greek "mythology" as Scylla and Charybdis. The former was a six-headed monster that lived in a cave overlooking the Strait of Messina that separates the tip of the "boot" of Italy from the island of Sicily. Scylla embodied the threat of external devastation. Charybdis was a gigantic undersea monster that swallowed vast quantities of water three times daily, sweeping down her throat anything that happened to be floating by, including ships. Charybdis embodied devastation that appears from beneath the surface of the mind. Human beings are like the sailors of *The Odyssey* who, passing through the Strait, had to choose one danger or the other. Their leader, Odysseus, chose to sail nearer to Scylla. Some sailors were devoured as a result. We tend to rather face the "visible" dangers of the external world, because we believe we have a better chance than facing invisible terrors from within.

This fact of human nature sheds light on why alpha-thinking has become predominate. People in *Kali-yuga* are asleep to deep truth of Krsna consciousness known by great Vedic sages. The subconscious realm, which covers that truth, cannot be investigated by them *because* they are asleep. Their wakeful perceptions extend only into the outer world. And so it is said, "better the enemy you know than the one you don't. " Alpha-thinking attempts to take away all reality from the subconscious, and from the deep truth that it hides. Alpha-thinking in turn tries to give full reality to the external world as it appears to the senses.

In any event, alpha-thinkers are sunk. Because of their ignorance of the subconscious realm of the mind, they cannot control their desires. And because they cannot control their desires, they are devoured by sinful reactions, both from within and from without.

It must be pointed out that the strict adherence to alpha-thinking is *itself* a sinful reaction that comes from within. Alpha-thinking, or thinking only about the external world, is analytical. Analysis is the process of dividing something into parts in order to understand it better. But analysis is intellectual vivisection: it kills the thing the analyst is trying to understand. One tears bits and pieces away from the world, fragmenting the whole. The so-called "postmodern condition" is the pervasive meaninglessness that has resulted from excessive scientific analysis. The analysts themselves are divided by the island-disciplines upon which they live: the island of

The Humanities, the island of Life Sciences, the island of Physical Sciences, the island of Mathematics, and so on. The communication between these islands of analytical subjects is strained and often nonexistent. In our age of specialized knowledge, the big picture is lost. We can't see the forest for the trees. Modernism analyzed the perceived world into a dead body of information; postmodernism slices that body into disconnected bits and proposes to reassemble them according to whim. The result is entertaining gibberish, like a music video. . . ever-shifting, hallucinatory sounds and symbols with no message to convey, the point being not to inform but to amuse.

In ancient Egypt, the analytical mind was known as the Seth Mind. Seth was the brother of Osiris, who personified the light of consciousness. Seth, who was blind and unregulated, "analyzed" (dismembered) his brother into fourteen pieces. Later Osiris was restored and Seth became his guardian. . . thus there *is* a place for the analytical mind in spiritual life--the cerebral self needs not be an enemy of the spirit self. But it is interesting to note the worth the Egyptians gave to the brain, cherished today as the organ of intelligence. When mummifying the dead bodies of important persons, the Egyptian embalmers would extract the brain through the nose and throw it away. But they would carefully preserve the heart. As in the Vedic understanding, the Egyptians considered the heart to be the seat of consciousness.

The image of Ouroboros eating itself can be said to pertain to the analytical mind, which springs from the deep of the subconscious. The analytical mind attempts to understand the world by devouring it but ends up devouring the refined, sensitive consciousness seated in the heart. In devouring consciousness, the analytical mind devours itself. This is a sinful reaction that befalls those who neglect the opportunity to become Kṛṣṇa conscious in this human form of life.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
19 December 2003*

Human consciousness is capable of being "present" in more than one place at the same time. Someone sits in a chair in his house in modern-day New York as he reads a book about ancient Rome. In terms of the perceptual frame of mind, he is in that chair; in terms of the conceptual frame, he is in Rome of 2100 years ago.

According to Vedic information, a fully-developed human mind can simultaneously work within eight conceptual frames. It is recounted that Vasistha Muni would speak on eight subjects at once in his *gurukula*. He would begin by teaching a short lesson on the first subject. Then he'd move to the next subject, speak briefly about it, and move to the next and the next until he had spoken on the eighth subject; then he'd return again to the first subject, resuming his talk exactly where he had left off. Once more he would proceed from the first to the eighth subject, then return back to the first, again and again, never losing his place. Such a feat requires a fund of *smṛti* (memory) that we do not have in Kali-*yuga*.

But still, anyone who has the intelligence to be able to read these words knows very well that we can pass through a subtle door from "this world" of perception into "another world" of conception. . . and from there, we may pass through yet another door into yet another world. Someone in London remembers last year's visit to India,

then thinks of a trip he took to Africa the year before. After a while he casts his mind back to his childhood in the Yorkshire Dales. Then he contemplates the future. . .

Not long after I became a devotee, Dr. Richard Alpert, an associate of LSD "guru" Timothy Leary, published a book called *Be Here Now* under his spiritual name of Baba Ram Dass. (Alpert had taken initiation from a Mayavadi in India. ) This book was a big hit in its time; but what did it teach, really? Animals know very well how to be here now. In human terms, alpha-thinking strives to be here now. A person dedicated to alpha-thinking accepts the momentary data of the senses as all-in-all.

Mayavadis are less intelligent. Less intelligent persons do not know what to do with the creatively powerful human mind. It disturbs them no end. So they try to dull it, to cripple it and make it stupid, by forcing it to be here now--perhaps by some meditative process or by some ultra-materialistic doctrine that the world of sense perception is the only reality. More likely they do it with the aid of a depressent drug like alcohol.

At the other end of the spectrum are the ultras of imagination--the Romantics, Dadaists, Surrealists, fantasists of all description, indulgers in hallucinogenic drugs. Their program is to let the mind roam where it will, to uncork the subconscious and let it flow like wine. These people flirt with insanity.

Why did Krsna give human beings a bi-locatable (or tri-locatable, quatro-locatable, etc. ) mind? Is such a mind "just *maya*, Prabhu"?

*bahya, antara,--ihara dui ta' sadhana  
bahye sadhaka-dehe kare sravana-kirtana  
mane nija-siddha-deha kariya bhavana  
ratri-dine kare vraje krsnera sevana*

There are two processes by which one may execute this *raganuga bhakti*--external and internal. When self-realized, the advanced devotee externally remains like a neophyte and executes all the *sastric* injunctions, especially hearing and chanting. However, within his mind, in his original purified self-realized position, he serves Krsna in Vrndavana in his particular way. He serves Krsna twenty-four hours, all day and night. [*Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* 1. 2. 292]

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21 December 2003*

I came across two references in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* that tie into the entry on *svabhava* (second nature, habit, "the robot") of a few days ago:

The mouth of the gigantic universal form of the Lord is the source of the speaking power. The director of the fire element is the controlling deity, or the *adhidaiva*. The speeches delivered are *adhyatma*, or bodily functions, and the subject matter of the speeches is material productions, or the *adhibhuta* principle. [*Bhag.* 3. 6. 13]

The *adhibhuta* manifestation entails repetitions of births and deaths with old age and diseases, the *adhyatma* manifestation conditions the spirit soul, and the *adhidaiva* manifestation is the controlling system. [*Bhag* 2. 5. 20p]

Thus Srila Prabhupada writes "The speeches delivered are *adhyatma*, or bodily functions. " Our way of speaking is most certainly a demonstration of our second nature, since language is a habit that once acquired is automatic. Bodily functions, or organic activities, are one of the three categories of *vrtti*, material engagements of the mind. "The *adhyatma* manifestation conditions the spirit soul," Srila Prabhupada points out. We are conditioned by habits pertaining to organic activities.

Oh yes, and in this connection, here is one more quotation from Orson Welles:

"But haven't you heard of something better to follow than your nature?"

\* \* \* \* \*

In *Priti-sandarbha*, Srila Jiva Gosvami states:

*tatra bhagavati paramatmaparabrahmabhavenanandaniyabhimanino nirmana.  
jnanabhakti. . . satypi bhedapagame natha tavaham na mamakinastvam.  
samudra hi tarangah kvacana samudra na taranga.*

There is an intimacy in *premabhakti* that is superior to *mukti*. Because he loves Krsna with all his heart, the devotee feels a sense of *madiyata* (mine-ness) about the Lord: "He is my own in a way that nothing else can ever be. " The *mukta's* mood toward the Lord is *tvadiyata* (Thine-ness): "I am Yours. " Thine-ness leans towards the *santa* sentiment; it is an impersonal tendency when compared to *madiyata*.

Some devotees I've mentioned the above to have remarked that *madiyata* is the advanced platform. Our business is to try to become servants of Krsna. A servant, they say, is more *tvadiyata* than *madiyata*.

But consider this statement Prabhupada made on 25 June 1975 in Melbourne:

Krsna says, *patram puspam phalam toyam yo me bhaktya prayacchati*. "A leaf, a flower, fruit and liquid, milk or water, all these things, within these categories, whatever a devotee offers Me in love and devotion, I eat. " Krsna says. Krsna is not hungry. Neither He is dependent on your supply of foodstuff. No. But still, Krsna has become your guest. Just like you have brought Krsna here. He is very kind. Because you are devotees, you want to serve Krsna, Krsna has come in your temple in a form which you can very easily serve. Krsna does not require your service, but He is so kind that He is accepting your service.

Yes, we are Krsna's servants. But by His mercy Krsna is our guest. There is a "Thine-ness" and a "mine-ness" simultaneously, even at the *sadhana-bhakti* stage.

Other statements from Srila Prabhupada attesting to this could be quoted. And there is no doubt of Srila Prabhupada's *madiyata* mood toward the Deity. It was very strong, as evident in the pastime of his receiving Sri-Sri London Isvara, and his

determination to keep the Juhu land upon which Sri=Sri Radha-Rasabihari are installed.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the entry for 19 December I wrote:

. . . it is interesting to note the worth the Egyptians gave to the brain, cherished today as the organ of intelligence. When mummifying the dead bodies of important persons, the Egyptian embalmers would extract the brain through the nose and throw it away. But they would carefully preserve the heart. As in the Vedic understanding, the Egyptians considered the heart to be the seat of consciousness.

It turns out that in the ancient "Western world" (the world a little to the west of India) there were different opinions about the location of the soul. But none of the very ancient scientists believed it was located in the brain. In contrast to the Egyptians, the Babylonians thought the liver was the seat of human spirit and emotion. The Mesopotamians assigned intellect to the heart, emotions to the liver, and cunning to the stomach. The Greek philosopher Plato (a comparatively modern philosopher when compared to the thinkers of Egypt, Babylonia and Mesopotamia) is apparently the first to place the soul primarily in the brain and only secondarily in the heart. His own disciple Aristotle, however, reversed the emphasis: the heart is the seat of the "vital soul" and the brain is the seat of the less important "rational soul." The French rationalist Rene Descartes, "the father of modern philosophy", thought the soul was located in the pineal gland, which is a small cone-shaped organ *within* the brain (it is not the brain proper, and is considered an organ in its own right). The pineal gland is known today to secrete the hormone melatonin.

Even as late as the 1700s the brain was not the favored place where scientists expected to find consciousness. In those days someone named Redi removed the brain from a tortoise in November. It lived until the following May. But scientists also wondered about the heart: Robert Whytt, personal physician to the King of England in the 1700s, removed the heart of an eel which continued to thrash about for a long time. Well. . . the soul is not material, so removing the heart from a body does not necessarily mean the soul is removed. The soul is really located in the heart of the subtle body. Besides, living entities in lower forms of life tend to be much more attached to their bodies than those in higher species--as I have seen myself, if you cut a poisonous centipede in half, both halves run away. Another thing is that the heart is just one center of vital energy in the subtle body. These centers are known as *cakras*. These are counted as six, or seven, or even thirty-six (such are the numbers given in books I have seen personally. . . I wouldn't be surprised if there are other enumerations of *cakras*).

The subtle body clings to the gross body, and it is "stretchable." Even when the soul is gone from the gross body it may remain connected to the corpse in a ghostly way. An experiment done by Cleve Baxter, who invented the lie detector, and replicated by the U. S. Army Intelligence Command (INSCOM. . . no, not ISKCON, *INSCOM*) in the 1980s, indicates that a small amount of tissue removed from a living person and connected to a lie detector will emanate the same minute electrical impulses as the person himself, who is connected to a lie detector in another room. If that person is subjected to some emotional stimulation, the wave patterns given out by the lie

detector connected to the separated tissue are the same as those given out by the lie detector connected to the stimulated subject.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
22 December 2003*

Do you know that Darwin's theory of evolution is derived from the Newtonian worldview? Do you know that from the standpoint of the quantum physical worldview, Darwinian evolution stands upon no scientific foundation whatsoever?

I thought it might be interesting to consider why this is so.

In *Evolution at a Crossroads*, a book published in 1985, David J. Depew and Bruce H. Weber write on page 254, "Darwin's theory was an explicit extension of the Newtonian paradigm to the biosphere. . . ." Leading quantum theoreticians like Werner Heisenberg were openly doubtful of Darwin's ploy of appealing to Newtonian physics to explain the origin of life.

One of the simplest presentations of the incompatibility of Newtonian Darwinism and quantum physics is offered by the eminent Cambridge physicist Fred Hoyle in Chapter Eight of his 1983 book, *The Intelligent Universe*. The crux of the problem is the boundary between what Hoyle calls the macroworld (the world of everyday experience) and the microworld (the world at the atomic scale). The macroworld, which to some extent is apparent to our senses, is thought by quantum physicists to be sustained by the energy constantly traded back and forth within the vast swarm of invisible subatomic particles that make up the universe.

Hoyle writes that the official line regarding the scientific relationship between macroworld and microworld is that

. . . quantum mechanics leads to essentially the same results as used to be calculated in the days before quantum mechanics, results of a predictable or deterministic kind in which one large-scale event was said to be the cause of another. On an atomic scale things were different, however, because the usual concept of cause and effect dissolved into indeterminacy.

To make this clearer: it is supposed that many quantum events average out in the macroworld as mechanical, and thus predictable, certainties. In the microworld, on the other hand, a singular event like the path an electron takes within a sealed container is decided by the consciousness of the observer.

If you're wondering how *that* works, well, even physicists don't agree; and their conclusion is that it can't really be explained. Anyway, what follows is my own attempt to draw a verbal picture of the role of consciousness in quantum mechanics.

The word "quantum" is employed by scientists to indicate a tiny unit of energy that cannot be directly observed. All matter is reduced by quantum theory down to such quantum units. An example of a quantum unit is a photon, which can be conceived of as a point-particle of light. (Let me interject here that many physicists are hesitant

about declarations that a photon really *is* a point particle. . . however, it is OK to think that way for practicality's sake. ) A photon travels through space and time riding a "probability wave. " The word probability is used to indicate that a photon's movement can only be discussed in potential terms, not certain terms.

Imagine a tropical ocean wave rolling in to a lovely island beach. Riding the wave is a surfer who symbolizes the photon particle. The strange thing here is that quantum theory says that while he rides the wave, the surfer-photon occupies no certain place. He may be considered to be anywhere along the whole wavefront. Then--in the jargon of quantum physicists--"the wavefunction collapses" when the wave touches the beach. The surfer-photon pops into view at one unforeseeable point somewhere on the beach along what was the whole front of the wave. The surfer is a pinpoint but where he lands cannot be predicted with pinpoint accuracy. Therefore photons and all subatomic particles (electrons, protons, neutrons, etc. ) are called wave-particles, since they are particles (or seem to be particles; as I said, some physicists aren't sure) that travel like waves. The beach is the consciousness of the observer. Before light is observed, the most that can be said about it is that it exists in a state of fuzzy uncertainty.

Unobserved light is not there, it is. . . well, somewhere. Only when we see it, is it *there*. Though "facts" such as visible light are supposed to emerge out of the uncertainty of the microworld, it is strange that moment by moment, the facts of the macroworld around us appear stable. Quantum physics says that the point-particles that make up the computer keyboard I am using to type these words are by chance dancing in patterns that somehow cause the form of the keyboard to arise in my consciousness as a solid object of steady reality.

And so it goes that phenomena in the microworld are not predictable with the kind of certainty that says, for example, "Paper will ignite if I touch a burning match to it. " That sort of certainty--which is independent of my observation, in that paper touched by a burning match will ignite whether I see it or not--is limited to the macroworld. Such certainty is called *deterministic*. Microworld events depend upon conscious observation. They are therefore *indeterministic*.

If this difference between the macroworld and microworld was real, it might relieve the tension between the Darwinian and the quantum mechanical positions. Then quantum uncertainty would apply only to subatomic events, with evolution ticking on like clockwork, independent of consciousness, as a regular function of the macroworld. But Hoyle argues that scientists maintain this difference only by deception. Their purpose is to "try to avoid the involvement of consciousness. "

He offers a thought-experiment to show how it might be impossible to distinguish a macroworld event from a microworld event:

It would easily be possible for an experimental physicist to arrange that the explosion of a huge bomb was triggered by just one quantum event--a single electron tripping a switch, for example. So enormous events in the macroworld could be dependent on the outcome of an individual quantum event. How then was one to decide the outcome of such a link between the microworld and the macroworld? Unless one were to ignore quantum mechanics, the outcome of even enormous events like a bomb destroying a whole city could not be decided by calculation. The decision about whether the explosion happened or not would have to come from the

actual act of observation, through one's consciousness. It could therefore be that events of overwhelming practical importance were actually quite unpredictable, outside the usual chain of cause and effect.

Perhaps you find it difficult to follow Hoyle's explanation. It boils down to this question: How much does the macroworld--the world in which the Darwinists say evolution occurs as a mechanical series of natural events--actually depend on conscious supervision? Keep in mind that the orthodox Darwinian position is that the events of nature give rise to consciousness. Hence consciousness depends upon nature, not vice versa. But quantum mechanics, when understood free of the deception tagged by Hoyle, may point to the opposite conclusion: the events of nature are completely dependent upon consciousness. Indeed, this is the Vedic conclusion.

A close look at the arguments of the evolutionists reveals that they confuse the issue of whether natural events direct consciousness or consciousness directs natural events. This confusion is evident in the arguments for natural selection. According to Charles Darwin, natural selection is the process by which nature organizes and improves life forms. Note the language Darwin himself used to explain it:

Natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing throughout the world, the slightest variations, rejecting those that are bad, preserving and adding up all that are good, silently and insensibly working. . .

On the one hand, Darwin wrote that natural selection is "scrutinizing. " The act of scrutinizing requires consciousness. On the other hand, he used the word "insensibly" to depict the way natural selection works. The dictionary lists "unconscious" as a synonym for the word insensible.

As Hoyle explains in Chapter Ten of *The Intelligent Universe*, the term "natural selection" was coined in 1831 by Patrick Matthew to distinguish it from "artificial selection" directed by the intelligence of man. If natural selection is indeed an unintelligent function of blind Newtonian physics, there is no sense in describing it as an act of scrutiny. But Darwinists seem unable to shake themselves free of the language of consciousness. That is because their theory is meant to explain the appearance of sentient life forms, which are by definition conscious and intelligent. Logic (the law of thought and speech) works against the notion of something unconscious and unintelligent giving rise to something that is conscious and intelligent.

And so the arguments of the evolutionists are pervaded by a profound contradiction. This is abundantly evident in a 1997 essay entitled "Can Science Reassure?" by Dr. Geoff Watts, a science reporter for a British television channel. Here he tells of a computer program devised by two Swedish scientists, Nilsson and Pelger, that simulates the evolution of the eye. Excerpts:

As would happen naturally in successive generations of a real organism, Nilsson and Pelger allowed their model to deform itself at random, but within fixed limits. Playing the part of Nature red in tooth and claw, they programmed the computer to select only those of the random changes that improved the "fitness" of the system. . .

Step by step-unscripted, unrehearsed, and with no pre-ordained goal-the patch of light-sensitive cells modelled within the computer will turn itself into a perfectly "designed" eye.

Dr. Watts is playing a game in which he reserves for himself the right to move the goalposts whenever he likes. He maintains the difference between "natural" and "artificial" selection only by a transparent trick of word-jugglery. Casting two human scientists in the role of nature, he tells us they programmed a computer (clearly an act of consciousness and intelligence) to duplicate natural selection. Then he breezily reports how their computer will run without a script, rehearsal or goal to model an eye. Regrettably, Dr. Watts on computer technology needs a Sherlock to set him straight. A computer program is most definitely a script. . . a script that is debugged in the course of many rehearsals. . . a script that is devised by intelligent programmers to reach a particular goal they have in mind from the start.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
23 December 2003*

### **Some Observations on Esoteric Buddhism**

It's the Christmas season, so I am thinking about Lord Buddhadeva. Whenever I think of Jesus Christ, I think of Buddha; whenever I think of Buddha, I think of Christ.

Srila Jayadeva Gosvami celebrates Buddha as an incarnation of Kesava, Sri Krsna:

*nindasi yajna-vidher ahaha sruti jatam  
sadaya-hrdaya-darsita-pasu-ghatam  
kesava dhrta-buddha-sarira jaya jagad-isa hare*

Srila Prabhupada comments on this verse in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 8. 19:

The mission of Lord Buddha was to save people from the abominable activity of animal killing and to save the poor animals from being unnecessarily killed. When *pasandis* were cheating by killing animals on the plea of sacrificing them in Vedic yajnas, the Lord said, "If the Vedic injunctions allow animal killing, I do not accept the Vedic principles. " Thus he actually saved people who acted according to Vedic principles. One should therefore surrender to Lord Buddha so that he can help one avoid misusing the injunctions of the Vedas.

In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 15. 10, Srila Prabhupada has this to say about the mission of Jesus Christ:

Animal sacrifice in the name of religion is current practically all over the world in every established religion. It is said that Lord Jesus Christ, when twelve years old, was shocked to see the Jews sacrificing birds and animals in the synagogues and that he therefore rejected the Jewish system of religion and started the religious

system of Christianity, adhering to the Old Testament commandment "Thou shalt not kill. "

A few days ago I mentioned the Gnostics, who formed different sects of mystical Christianity soon after the time of Jesus. One such group was the Nazarenes. It may be incorrect to lump their beliefs in with Gnosticism; but in any case mainstream Christianity considers the Nazarenes to have been heretics--which is the same verdict the mainstream passed on the Gnostics. The Nazarenes were Jews of Palastine who accepted Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. They spoke Aramaic, the language Christ preached in. The Nazarenes held that Jesus prohibited animal slaughter and meat-eating. From the Internet [www.uncc.edu/jdtabor/ebionites.html](http://www.uncc.edu/jdtabor/ebionites.html)) I copied this, which is one of four main tenets of the Nazarene doctrine:

Disdain for eating meat and even the Temple slaughter of animals, preferring the ideals of the pre-Flood diet and what they took to be the original ideal of worship (see Gen 9:1-5; Jer 7:21-22; Isa 11:9; 66:1-4).

Fragments of a Nazarene scripture still exist (in a German university, I believe), written in Aramaic, called the *Gospel According to the Hebrews*. This text is credited to Christ's disciple Matthew. In it, Christ declares that his mission is to stop Jewish animal sacrifice. Establishment Christianity ("churchianity") holds the *Gospel According to the Hebrews* to be *apocrypha* ("not bona fide"). But it is interesting to note that the canonical Gospels, the four that are included in the standard Christian Bible, were all originally written in Greek. Jesus Christ did not preach in Greek.

Jesus and Buddha appeared in the beginning of Kali-*yuga* and their missions were identical. The difference is that Buddha spread his mission in the context of Indian culture and Christ spread his mission in the context of Middle Eastern culture. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada accepted Jesus and Buddha as *saktyavesa-avatars* (empowered incarnations) of the Supreme Lord.

In a magazine interview of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta that is published by the Gaudiya Math, a reporter asked him about Buddhism. He replied that he views the Buddhists to be Vaisnavas. Srila Prabhupada spoke similarly of the Christians (though he repeatedly said that if they really followed Christ they would stop eating meat).

A question can be raised. Jesus taught a theology that is monotheistic, personal, and devotional. In this way a strong congruency can be found with Vaisnavism. But Buddhism is known in the world to be "an atheistic religion. " For many who claim to be Buddhists, a key to their attraction to Buddhism is that the doctrine enshrines no God. So the question is, doesn't the atheism of Buddhism consign this religion to the category of non-Vaisnavism?

Before I became a devotee of Krsna I was quite interested in Buddhism. In fact I considered myself a Buddhist. But in truth I had no qualification to call myself such. The point I'm making is, please don't mistake me for an expert in Buddhism.

On the other hand, I've practiced Krsna consciousness for 33 years. I've spent a lot of time in India, the homeland of Buddhism. In my research on Vaisnava Vedanta, I've been able to compare Buddhist philosophy with Vaisnava philosophy. In these

ways I've come to know quite a bit more about Buddhism than I did when I thought I was a Buddhist.

For the Christmas season, then, I'll write a few words about Esoteric Buddhism in reply to the question I raised three paragraphs ago.

There is a Japanese text entitled *Benkenmitsu nikyo ron*, which means *The Difference Between Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism*. It was written in AD 814 or 815 by the Buddhist *acarya* Kukai. Known by his honorific title Kobo Daishi ("the great teacher who widely spread Buddhism"), Kukai (774-835) is one of Japan's greatest religious figures. A disciple of the Chinese Buddhist master Hui-Kuo, he was initiated in 805 at Ch'ang-an, the capital of China in the time of the T'ang dynasty. Hui-Kuo was the disciple of Pu-k'ung (Amoghavajra), who studied Buddhism in South India and was initiated by the Indian Buddhist *guru* Vajrabodhi. Kukai returned to Japan after Hui-Kuo left this world. At Kyoto he founded *Shingon-shu* or the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism, which in 823 was formally recognized by Emperor Jun'na. To this day Shingon is one of the most important schools of Buddhist doctrine in Japan; those who follow it strictly keep the same four regulative principles as do the Vaisnavas.

Kukai explained the difference between Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism thus:

The doctrine revealed by the *nirmanakaya* Buddha [Gautama Buddha, the Buddha of history] is called Exoteric; it is apparent, simplified, and adapted to the needs of the time and to the capacity of the listeners. The doctrine expounded by the *dharmakaya* Buddha [Mahavairocana] is called esoteric; it is secret and profound and contains the final truth.

This needs explaining. Mahavairocana means "the great luminous One" or "the Great Sun Buddha." In a scripture called *Mahavairocana Sutra*, this Great Sun Buddha declares,

I am the origin of all. I am the One on whom the world depends. My teachings are peerless.

The notions of *nirmanakaya* and *dharmakaya* are essential to the Mahayana (Great Vehicle) tradition of Buddhism, which Shingon subscribes to. Mahayana encompasses most Buddhist sects in Japan, China and Tibet. It holds that there are three *kayas* (bodies, forms) of the Buddha: his earthly form (*nirmanakaya*), his heavenly form (*sambhogakaya*) and his essential form (*dharmakaya*). Buddhism in Ceylon and Indochina (Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam) is of a different tradition, the Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle); in this, the doctrine of *tri-kaya* is not acknowledged.

The Indian scholar K. N. Upadhyaya has this to say about a description of the *dharmakaya* Buddha given in *Saddharma Pundarika*, a Mahayana scripture:

In striking resemblance to *Bhagavad-gita*, the very form and atmosphere in which the Buddha appears in the *Saddharma Pundarika* is astonishingly supernatural. Like the cosmic form of Krishna in the *Bhagavad-gita*, he is depicted as shedding resplendent light, dazzling the enormous space from hell to the 18,000 regions of Buddhas. (*Studies in the History of Buddhism*)

The Japanese scholar Yoshito S. Hakeda states in *Kukai: Major Works* that Mahavairocana is "a pantheistic-monotheistic Supreme Being with personality. "

The rising sun is the symbol of the Japanese nation. The "mythological" founder of Japan is Amaterasu, the sun goddess; this demigod is understood to be an incarnation of Mahavairocana. In India the demigod of the sun, Surya, is the bearer of the fiery potency of the Personality of Godhead Sri Visnu in the form of the three Vedas (Rg, Yajus and Sama). The three Vedas are manifestations of the Lord's *parasakti*, His divine consort, Goddess Laksmi. The light and heat of the Sun is Her energy. That power destroys all the sins in the world. Thus the demigod Surya is an incarnation of Surya-Narayana, the Lord of Laksmi; and the solar energy that the Lord entrusts to Surya is His own feminine *sakti*.

Furthermore, the sun is the eye of the universal form of Krsna.

Kukai taught that anyone could be liberated by the *kaji* (Japanese for grace) of Mahavairocana. *Kaji* is a translation of the Sanskrit *adhithana*. This word appears in *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila* 20. 25:

*uttama hana vaisnava habe nirabhimana  
jive sammana dibe jani' krsna-adhithana*

Although a Vaisnava is the most exalted person, he is prideless and gives all respect to everyone, knowing everyone to be the resting place of Krsna.

*Krsna-adhithana* means that by the Lord's grace He resides within the heart of every living being, no matter how great or small. Indeed, the Lord resides in every atom; therefore a Vaisnava sees His presence everywhere.

Kukai wrote:

In Exoteric Buddhist teachings, the four great elements (earth, water, fire and wind) are considered to be nonsentient beings, but in Esoteric Buddhist teaching they are regarded as the *samaya*-body (i. e. the representational form, or Deity incarnation) of the Tathagata (Lord Buddhadeva).

Though the whole material world is pervaded by the Great Sun Buddha Mahavairocana, he is untouched by it. Kukai prayed:

I take refuge in that One Who is the adamant life of all beings--transcendental, immaculate, causeless and infinite.

Kukai taught that Mahavairocana exists in four states simultaneously:

*jisho hosshin*--in the absolute state  
*juyo hosshin*--in bliss or participation  
*henge hosshin*--in transformation  
*toru hosshin*--in emanation.

All Vaisnava *sampradayas* accept the four *catur-vyuha* manifestations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vasudeva exists in absolute goodness. Sankarsana

is the first manifestation to participate with the material energy in the *lila* of creation; as Maha-Visnu He is absorbed in the bliss of *yoganidra*. Pradyumna transforms the *avyakta-mahat-tattva* into its *vyakta* (manifest) state of 24 ingredients. From Aniruddha (Ksirodakasayi Visnu) emanates the gross material creation (*virat*).

The school of Buddhism founded by Kukai is, as mentioned before, called Shingon ("true word"). This is a translation into Japanese of the Sanskrit *mantrayana* ("the *mantra* vehicle"). Kukai's teaching centered on the chanting of *mantras*. In a poem he wrote:

A *mantra* is suprarational It eliminates ignorance when meditated upon and chanted  
A single word contains a thousand truths One can realize Suchness here and now  
Walk on and on until perfect quiescence is reached; Go on and on until the primordial  
Source is penetrated.

In a work called *Sango shiki*, Kukai admonished the ignorant sense-gratifier thusly:

Your mind is filled with thoughts of holding a glass of wine in one hand and a piece of crab in the other. . . You are ignorant of the fact that to recite even once the name of the Buddha and to meditate on him may result in your attaining enlightenment.

Kukai stressed *sokushin jobutsu*, "attaining enlightenment in this very existence" and declared that this was possible for everyone because *bongaku*, "man is originally enlightened. " You see, in Buddhism there is a debate rather equivalent to the debate among some Gaudiya Vaisnavas about "the origin of the *jiva*. " Kukai held Esoteric Buddhism to be superior to Exoteric Buddhism because the former offers enlightenment to every human being in this very life, whereas in the latter enlightenment is thought to take many lifetimes to achieve. Yoshito S. Hakeda writes:

His insistence that one can attain enlightenment here and now was grounded on this belief [*bongaku*], a belief derived from the simple insight that unless a man is enlightened from the very beginning he has no way to reach enlightenment.

The doctrine of *bongaku* in turn is the natural consequence of *kaji* or *adhithana*, that living entities are ever inseparable from Mahavairocana. Kukai wrote:

The compassion of the Buddha pouring forth on the heart of sentient beings, like the rays of the sun on water, is called *ka* (adding), and the heart of sentient beings which keeps hold of the compassion of the Buddha, as water retains the rays of the sun, is called *ji* (retaining).

"In other words," notes Hakeda, "it is the basic homogeneity of man with Mahavairocana which makes faith possible. " He quotes Kukai as stating, "The Buddha Dharma is nowhere remote. It is in our mind; it is close to us. Suchness is nowhere external. "

On a hilltop near Kathmandu in Nepal is the world-renowned Svayambhu Caitya (temple of Svayambhu). The centerpiece of the Caitya is a four-sided *stupa* (tower), each side of which is adorned with the eyes of Buddha. The Svayambhu Caitya is

said to have been founded in ancient times by the Chinese saint Manjushri, who was present at that place when Adi-Buddha (the Original Buddha) appeared there as a flame burning in the center of a great lotus. The name Svayambhu ("self-born") is given in the *Mahavira Samadhi* chapter of the *Mahavairocana Sutra*. Another esoteric Buddhist scripture called *Pancakrama* states that Adi-Buddha is the self-originated Svayambhu Bhagavat and is the essence of the Supreme Self.

Adi-Buddha is accompanied by a divine female consort named Adi-Devi or Adi-Prajna. Among his names are Mahavairocana, Visvarupa, Niranjana and Jagannatha. He is free from both existence and nonexistence and yet surcharged with the potency of all forms; he himself is the embodiment of loveliness. His nature is *mahasukha*, infinite bliss.

From a footnote in a book called *Adi-Buddha* by Kanai Lal Hazra:

All classes of theistic Buddhists believe in the individual existence of the human soul. They consider that the soul was originally an emanation from Adi-Buddha and that after a longer or shorter period of transmigration in this and other worlds, it will return to Him again. . .

A bit later in this footnote, the difference between Esoteric and Exoteric Buddhism is taken up. Esoteric Buddhists are termed Theists and Exoteric Buddhists are termed Materialists.

What the Theists consider as a cause the Materialists consider as an effect. The Theists worship Adi-Buddha as the Great First Cause of All. The Materialists practically deify the powers of matter, and worship them personified as Nature, whom they look upon as supreme. . .

Adi-Buddhi is depicted in Nepal and Tibet as having bluish or golden bodily hue. He is dressed and ornamented like a prince. Five *dhyani* Buddhas are worshiped in conjunction with the Adi-Buddha; they are said to appear from his mind as personifications of his own transcendental attributes.

In conclusion, there is definitely a theistic tradition within Buddhism that is long-standing and influential even today. However, Buddhism in all its forms seems to retain a fascination for voidism and impersonalism. Thus one reads that Adi-Buddha and Mahavairocana are of the nature of the great void; that in the end, the perfected Buddhist merges into Adi-Buddha; that the devotee of Adi-Buddha is himself Adi-Buddha. The consciousness cultivated in Buddhism is much occupied with speculation and meditation. In a 1969 lecture, Srila Prabhupada remarked:

Brahman realization is more or less realized by philosophical speculation. And Paramatma realization is achieved more or less by meditation. But Bhagavan realization is transcendental devotion. That is beyond the philosophical speculation and mental meditation, beyond.

The Buddhist conception of a personal Deity--Mahavairocana, Adi-Buddha--has a marked similarity to Paramatma. He is the source of the world but does not create by doing, like the demigods; he creates by contemplation (*dhyana*). He simply *is*,

and his Suchness is the reality of the universe. He is oneness personified. He is realized by perfect meditation. His own *lila*, as it were, is eternal meditation.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
24 December 2003*

### **Christians Should Chant**

If you stop killing animals and chant the holy name Christ, everything will be perfect. I have not come to teach you, but only to request you to please chant the name of God. The Bible also demands this of you. So let's kindly cooperate and chant, and if you have a prejudice against chanting the name Krsna, then chant "Christos" or "Krsta"--there is no difference. Sri Caitanya said: *namnam akari bahudha nija-sarva-saktih*. "God has millions and millions of names, and because there is no difference between God's name and Himself, each one of these names has the same potency as God." Therefore, even if you accept designations like "Hindu," "Christian," or "Muhammadan," if you simply chant the name of God found in your own scriptures, you will attain the spiritual platform. Human life is meant for self-realization--to learn how to love God. That is the actual beauty of man. Whether you discharge this duty as a Hindu, a Christian, or a Muhammadan, it doesn't matter--but discharge it!  
[*Science of Self-Realization* Chapter Four]

### **On the Jesus Prayer**

from *The Way of the Ascetics* by Tito Colliander  
(original title *Asketernas Vaeg*, first published in 1952;  
translated from Swedish in 1960 by Katherine Ferre)

The saintly Abbot Isaiah, the Egyptian hermit, says of the Jesus Prayer that it is a mirror for the mind and a lantern for the conscience. Someone has also likened it to a constant sounding, quite voice in the house; all thieves that sneak in take hasty flight when they hear someone is awake there. The house is the heart, the thieves, evil impulses. Prayer is the voice of one who keeps watch. But the one who keeps watch is no longer I, but Christ.

Spiritual activity embodies Christ in our soul. This involves continual remembrance of the Lord: you hide Him within, in your soul, your heart, your consciousness. *I sleep, but my heart waketh* (*Song of Solomon* 5:2): I myself sleep, withdraw, but the heart stays steadfast in prayer, that is, in eternal life, in the Kingdom of Heaven, in Christ. The tree-roots of my being stand fast in their source.

The means of attaining this is the prayer: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner*. Repeat it aloud, or only in thought; slowly, lingeringly, but with attention, and from a heart freed as much as possible from all that is inappropriate to it. Not only worldly interests are inappropriate, but also such things as every kind of expectation or thought of answer, or inner visions, testings, all kinds of romantic dreams, curious questions and imaginings. Simplicity is an inescapable condition as humility, abstemiousness of body and soul, and in general everything that pertains to the invisible warfare.

\* \* \* \* \*

I've given a seminar a few times in the past year on Vedic psychology, or more properly the Vedic philosophy of mind. One of the questions that has come up from attendees is about the psychological phenomena known as *deja vu*, which means "already seen" in French.

I have to admit that until very recently I really did not know much about *deja vu*. I've never experienced it myself, nor do I recall anyone else convincing me that he or she experienced *deja vu*. Thus I've never had an inclination to take it seriously. Still, devotees ask about it. Is it because some have had the experience themselves? Or is it just one of those things we've heard about somewhere, wondered a little about, and when we attend a seminar on the philosophy of mind, we think it might be interesting to ask about it?

My guess is the latter motivation is most often behind such questions: idle curiosity. That is why I question such questions, and sometimes I become annoyed with those asking such questions. Imagine that a devotee, an expert cook, has come to teach a seminar on cooking for the Deity. In one of the sessions he demonstrates how to make carrot halavah. At the end of the demonstration he asks for questions. A hand goes up.

"Yes?"

"Prabhu, I've heard that carrots improve eyesight. What do you have to say about that?"

It's not really on the point. If the devotee-cook would ask back, "Why do you want to know this?", what would be the reply? I'm sure it would have to be, "Oh, I'm just curious. "

I personally think this is inquiry without discrimination.

Anyway, back to *deja vu*.

It is also known as *fausse reconnaissance* (false recognition). That indicates that the opinion of researchers is that *deja vu* is a kind of delusion. It is the sudden, powerful conviction that something that has happened before is happening again. There is a compelling sense of familiarity. There is a persuasion that one knows what is going to happen next. It seems, from what I've read of serious psychological studies into *deja vu*, that the awaited next event, in almost all cases, turns out to be something that did not happen before. So *deja vu* is not really the cognizance of "a repeat occurrence"--like a realization of Nietzsche's theory of eternal return, in that I suddenly see myself doing again what I did in my previous life. It is not a specific happenstance that is being relived. *Deja vu* has less to do with what is going on outside as it does with what is being felt inside a person. In healthy people *deja vu* is a very fleeting experience. It is stimulated by external impressions: something seen, heard, smelled, tasted or felt; or a combination of these impressions. It especially affects young people and seems related to states of stress, tiredness, or heightened sensitivity due to anxiety, etc.

Above I wrote, "in healthy people *deja vu* is. . . very fleeting"; in people with certain neurological disorders like epilepsy, *deja vu* may continue for hours and days. Such patients have major problems in dealing with reality. This is why many psychologists conclude *deja vu* to be delusional.

Psychologists of the Freudian persuasion offer the explanation that *deja vu* is the recall of a repressed dream or fantasy. But the repression scenario--that a person pushes unmanageable psychological experiences away from himself into some closed compartment of mind, from which they may in future suddenly escape as startling revelations--is open to doubt.

For a time in the 1980s to the 1990s, misuse of the repression theory reached sensational proportions. At least one popular book published by a psychologist claimed--on the basis of a patient's "hidden memories"--that many children were being subject to SRA: Satanic Ritual Abuse. It was a vision right out of a Hollywood horror movie; soon other books and media coverage were beating the same drum. Thousands of outwardly normal parents were supposed to be involving their very young children in unspeakable demonic rituals so shocking that the children's minds immediately repressed them. Only years later, in therapy conducted by expert Freudian consultants, could such horrible memories be brought to light. Naturally the police were obliged to investigate. After much publicized excitement, the SRA "boom" proved, under the scrutiny of authorities, to have arisen out of the psychodynamics of therapy, not out of the past experiences of the patients.

This shows that a conviction that something happened before is manipulatable. *Deja vu* can be induced by hypnosis. The Freudians use that fact as a defense of their repressed memory theory. A hypnotized patient is shown a photograph, then told to forget it. He is brought out of hypnosis. A stack of photos is put before him; unknown to him, the one he saw under hypnosis is within the stack. He is asked to look at the photos. When he sees again the one he saw under hypnosis, often he'll have a startling sense of familiarity about it, without realizing that he saw the same photo a few moments before. Such demonstrations, the Freudians argue, indicate that a sleeping memory can be stirred up by reconnecting the patient to the object of the memory. But experiments also show that false memories can be implanted in a patient's mind by hypnosis and other manipulations. In short: the mind is not to be trusted.

The French psychologist Pierre Janet was one of the first researchers to investigate *deja vu* thoroughly. His findings brought him to the conclusion that *deja vu* is not an affirmation of the past at all, rather it is a negation of the present.

There is an theory about *deja vu* from cognitive psychology that is congruent with Srila Prabhupada's explanation of dreams. When it dreams, the mind freely combines memories, Srila Prabhupada said. We've seen gold and we've seen a mountain; the dreaming mind puts the two together to create the image of a golden mountain. Now, the mind can dream during wakefulness, especially when one is tired, stressed out, and hypersensitive due to nervousness. Cognitive psychologists say that memories are rapidly reconstructed by the present-aware mind which draws components of the remembered image from stored past impressions. This process involves elaborations, errors and omissions. Thus memories change. Another point, according to this theory, is that a memory that is called up into the present-aware mind is returned to the bank of impressions, where it is re-written over the previous

stored impressions. This is quite like retrieving from your hard disk an email you've been working on, writing to the file, and saving it again. The file you save is not the same one you retrieved. I don't much care for computer analogies applied to the mind. But I know from my own experience that memories can change over time. So the cognitive theory applied to *deja vu* is that after a memory is retrieved and stored repeatedly, it changes enough so that its key components may seem to fit a new experience. Thus the sense of strong familiarity is awakened even though the new experience is not a repeat of the actual previous experience, which the memory is only approximating.

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25 December 2003*

### **How Kant's Philosophy of Transcendence Degraded into Impersonalism, Voidism and Social Issues**

The period of approximately 1780 to 1860 was the age of so-called German Idealism. The German Idealists started out as philosophers who aimed to find God through pure reason. How they defined God we shall see. First we must give attention to the man who set the stage in Germany for the Idealist movement. He was Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), whose own doctrine goes by the name Critical Philosophy.

Kant, a learned scholar in the east Prussian city of Koenigsberg, was a pious Christian of the rationalist tradition of European philosophy. As a rationalist his desire was to render God's order of the world reasonable to the human mind, without contradicting Christian theology. He proposed critical thinking as the means to that end.

"Critical" did not mean fault-finding; rather it was a careful, exact evaluation. Kant argued that critical thinking was how mankind could experience transcendence. By transcendence he meant a level of knowledge beyond practicality, theory, and aesthetics. A level beyond them, yet a level that was engaged only with them. To practicality, critical thinking brought moral order. To theory, it brought truth. To aesthetics, it brought beauty.

Critical thinking did this by engaging *a priori* laws, or the first principles innate to reality itself. Without these principles we could find no order in sensations or ideas. Relation, quantity, quality, causality--these were *a priori*, transcendental, and they were detectable by pure intuition or sensibility (*Anschauung*), the innermost frame of critical thinking.

Once so detected, *a priori* principles became the equipment of pure judgement (*Verstand*), a larger frame of critical thinking, one that encompassed intuition. Judgement worked out the operative relationship between the principles. The largest frame of critical thinking, which included the two before, was pure reason (*Vernunft*). Reason engaged the *a priori* principles. "Reason prescribes its laws to the sensible universe," Kant wrote. "It is reason which makes the cosmos." And because it included intuition and judgement, pure reason so engaged was critical thinking.

It is important to note that reason for Kant was not God. He personally believed in a realm beyond pure reason, a realm of *noumena* or inconceivable realities. Reason was the limit of man's access to transcendence. Reason flowed from above toward below. Its object was the material world. Therefore Kant strongly argued that reason didn't equip mankind with the power to peek into the noumenal realm which was, necessarily, above and beyond reason.

In short, Kant was an agnostic with pious grounds for being so. Without intending to, he rendered reason *independent of above and predominate over below*. Kant was clear that he meant *human* reason. Above human reason was the absolute, the noumenal; below human reason was the relative, the phenomenal. Unfortunately, either Kant didn't take enough care to emphasize the marginal position of human reason; or perhaps the German Idealists who came after him didn't take enough care to understand reason's marginal position.

There was a further danger-point in Kant's doctrine. This was his explanation of *Ding-an-sich*, "the thing in itself." A thing in itself belonged to *noumena*, the inconceivable realities, which are: the absolute, the total universe, the soul and God. It turned out that the phenomenal world we perceived with our senses *was* that noumenal Truth. The noumenal appeared phenomenal because of the way intuition, judgement and reason worked with our senses.

Intuition detected *a priori* principles, yes, but it detected these transcendental realities *not as things in themselves* but as principles of the characteristics of phenomena. An infant, Kant argued, spontaneously moved away from disagreeable sense objects and moved toward agreeable sense objects. Thus the infant, with no education of spatial measurements and relationships, intuitively knew the difference between *nearer* and *farther*, *beside* and *beyond*. Such were intuitions of space. For Kant, space was an *a priori* principle outside of us. Time was also *a priori*, but inside us. And so an infant intuitively knew the difference between *before* and *after*. Kant supposed that a person's sense of space and time were the purest intuitions that he or she could have. Yet still these purest of intuitions were no use to us when separated from the phenomena they defined.

By critical thinking we could know that space and time were *transcendental within phenomena*, but we could not know them *as they were in their own noumenal nature*. On top of that, without the *a priori* conditions set by space and time, we could perceive nothing else that existed in space and time. Thus there was no phenomena in this world, at any time, in any place, that could be *Ding-an-sich* (the thing in itself), the noumenal Truth. But phenomena was not utterly severed from *noumena*; it was all that our senses could grasp of *noumena*.

Kant had suggested that the mysterious unknown concealed behind the phenomena of sense perception might be identical with the unknown within ourselves. To him, it was just a thought; to the German Idealists who came after him, it was the seed of a new philosophy. The main philosophers of the German Idealist movement were Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1765-1814), Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854), Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). Of these four, Hegel was most influential.

Kant's speculation about the possible oneness of ego (the inner man) and non-ego (the outer world) was developed by Fichte into the central tenet of his doctrine: that

the self produced the world by an unconscious and involuntary act of creation, and then overcame his creation by free and conscious effort. Schelling thought ego and non-ego were rooted in something else, a primitive will or a desire to be, which was transcendent, mysterious and impenetrable. Like Schelling, Schopenhauer stressed the will as the starting point of the world that appears to be made up of mind and nature. But Schopenhauer, a professed pantheist, thought the world was really only a representation of the will. It was not a happy representation either, pervaded as it was by suffering; we might say the representation was a perverted reflection of what the will desires. Schopenhauer concluded that the will should turn back upon itself, negate its so-called life of enjoyment, and enter impersonal monism. Hegel argued that ego and non-ego, or mind and nature, are modes of the absolute.

In his purport to *Sri Brahma-samhita* 5. 62, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura writes:

Certain thinkers conclude that the nondifferentiated Brahman is the ultimate entity and by undergoing self-delusion (*vivarta*) exhibits the consciousness of differentiation; or, the limiting principle itself (Maya), when it is limited, is the phenomenal world and is itself the Brahman, in its unlimited position; or, the Brahman is the substance and this phenomenal world is the reflection; or, everything is an illusion of the *jiva*.

Fichte's notion that the ego unconsciously produced the world that restrained it, and then struggled to get free of its own creation, is akin to the fourth idea mentioned by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta: that everything is an illusion of the *jiva*.

Schelling acquired his conception of primitive will as the source of ego and non-ego from the mystic Jakob Boehme, whose teachings are still respected by the Quaker sect of Christianity. I have seen that some Quakers themselves draw parallels between their theology and *advaita-vedanta*. And so it would seem the closest match for Schelling's doctrine is the idea that nondifferentiated Brahman is the ultimate entity, and by undergoing self-delusion (*vivarta*) exhibits the consciousness of differentiation.

Schopenhauer's philosophy resembles the third idea: Brahman is substance and this phenomenal world is the reflection.

I find that Hegel's philosophy has much in common with the second idea outlined by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta--the limiting principle Maya itself is the world and Brahman. Hegel's use of the word "absolute" may give the impression that he intended to mean something like the impersonal Brahman. No, for him nature and consciousness were the absolute. They were not in opposition, like Brahman and Maya are thought to be by *advaita-vedantists*. Hegel saw nature and consciousness to be functions of the same dynamic that was immanent in both. One could say that nature acts as consciousness and consciousness acts as nature, and that activity, that movement, that change, that succession, is what Hegel meant by the absolute. The key to knowing his definition of this term is that his absolute was most definitely not transcendental. It was immanent, and as such it did not exceed the world nor the capacity of the human intellect. It evolved toward freedom; hence it gradually progressed from the limited to the unlimited. *Hegel's absolute was the limiting and unlimiting principle itself.*

In its worldly consequences, the philosophy of Hegel far surpassed Fichte's, Schelling's and Schopenhauer's. One wonders: how did it become so influential? Because there seemed to be a flaw at its very ground. If the absolute was immanent, not transcendental, and this absolute was everything, then why did things change? Hegel's answer was: things change due to their inherent contradictions. Being everything, the absolute was full of contradiction.

Hegel's logic displayed skillful word-jugglery and so had a hypnotic effect on the minds of his submissive students. He proposed that it was not difficult to understand the absolute, because it is Being, and Being is simple. Being is pure. In fact Being is so simple and pure it is equal to Non-being. Thus Being is both itself and its opposite. One is thesis. The other is antithesis. By their mutual contradiction, or dialectic, a synthesis appears. From this threefold dynamic of contradiction and resolution (thesis, antithesis and synthesis), the modes of the absolute manifest as quality, quantity, proportion, phenomenon and action.

*Synthetic reason* was a term introduced by Kant to denote a key method of thought within his Critical Philosophy. That method of thought I've already alluded to. It synthesizes, or generates new knowledge, by linking *a priori* first principles with a posteriori experiences of the world. (*A posteriori* simply means "that which follows" first principles. ) For example, Kant thought that the proposition "all bodies are extended into space" is *a priori*. Even an infant perceived the truth of it. Later, as a child gains a posteriori experience, he comes to know that bodies have weight. When this later perception of a body's weight is connected to the *a priori* intuition of a body's spatial dimension, a synthesis appears: mass. Mass is the bulk of a material object: its weight distributed through volume.

Again, Kant's intention was to establish a system of reason that would account for everything within human experience without contradicting the Christian theology. But in that attempt he inadvertently raised reason to the status of the highest method of knowledge. There was no place in his system for a rational account of the revelation of divine knowledge. The same remark that Mark Antony made about Brutus at Caesar's funeral could be made about Kant: "He was an honorable man. " He was a friend to transcendence, just as Brutus was a friend to Caesar.

Hegel seized Kant's sharp weapon--synthetic reason--which Kant forged in defense of Christianity, and used it to attack Christianity. To be sure, Hegel did not profess atheism. He simply had his own idea of God that had little to do with Christian theology. Hegel's God was absolute being that evolved dialectically. How was this God to be seen? In history.

Hegel proposed the gods of ancient Greece to be the thesis of the evolution of man's thought *toward* the world; Greek theology was pantheistic, fully involved with nature. Thus for the Greeks, man was everything, "God" (in the transcendental sense) nothing. The Old Testament God-the-Father, on the other hand, was the antithesis of the nature gods. Here, man's thought had evolved *away* from the world; thus God was everything, man was nothing. Christ represented a synthesis of the two: a being who was both God and man. This notion of the unity of God and man would gain, as we shall see, a unique significance as Hegelian thought developed after Hegel's death.

The Judaeo-Christian God, Hegel argued, had become an inadequate expression of the truth it represented. Dialectical evolution would raise mankind to a higher level of consciousness. On that higher ground of being man and God would appear again in new improved forms. Evolution was leading us all to the self-achievement of the total conscious Being of God. In four words: we are all one.

Hegel's philosophy represents the apex of German Idealism. The downhill trend is evident in the thought of a fervent disciple of Hegel's, Ludwig Feurbach (1804-1872). In his youth he aspired to become a Lutheran minister. But while at the University of Heidelberg he witnessed a student protest against religious authorities. He was shocked at how the churchmen engaged the police to violently suppress the idealistic young rebels. This experience turned Feurbach away from religion and toward philosophy. He enrolled in the University of Berlin where Hegel taught philosophy. He not only attended the professor's classes, he became his friend. Feurbach soon accepted Hegel as a second father.

Hegel had many followers, known as Hegelians; they were divided into two camps, the Left and the Right. Feurbach became a leader of the Left Hegelians. After one has comprehended the basic elements of Hegel's philosophy, the position of the leftists can come as no surprise. If ego (man) and non-ego (nature) are Being, and Being is one, and the one is evolving dialectically to its own perfection, then what is the need of keeping any God at all? Man should declare himself God and be done with Him.

Feurbach proclaimed his mission in these words:

I aim to change the friends of God into friends of man, believers into thinkers, worshipers into workers, candidates for the other world into students of this world, Christians--who on their own confession are half-animal and half-angel--into men, whole men.

It is the essence of man that he is the Supreme Being. . . if the divinity of nature is the basis of all religions, including Christianity, the divinity of man is its final aim. . . the turning point in history will be the moment when man becomes aware that the only God of man is man himself: *Homo homini Deus!* (Mankind is man's God!)

Feurbach soon had his own ardent young followers. One of them wrote:

Then came Feurbach's *Essence of Christianity*. With one blow it pulverized the contradiction [in Hegel's doctrine] in that without circumlocution it placed materialism on the throne again. . . Nothing exists outside man and nature, and the higher beings our religious fantasies have created are only the fantastic reflection of our own essence. . . One must have himself experienced the liberating effect of this book to get an idea of it. Enthusiasm was general; we all at once became Feurbachians. . . With an irresistible force Feurbach is driven to the realization. . . that our consciousness and thinking, however suprasensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is merely the highest product of matter.

This praise of Feurbach was penned by one Friedrich Engels (1820-1895). But Engels and his friend Karl Marx (1818-1883) soon grew dissatisfied with the Feurbachian movement. The deity of man was a dreamy abstraction. Marx and Engels wanted

their humanistic materialism on a solid "scientific" and "social" basis. And so the doctrine of Communism was born.

And the rest is history.

Indeed, if anything was God to the Communists, it was history. Karl Marx was descended from rabbis on both sides of his family. But his father converted the family to Christianity. For whatever reason, it appears that the Marxist theory of history is derived from the Old Testament Book of Daniel and the New Testament Book of Revelations.

Daniel, speaking under divine inspiration, told of four empires that spanned the Jewish world-era called "the Great Year. " He saw periods of disorder marking the transition of one empire to the next. Similarly, Karl Marx divided history into four stages of society separated by periods of social upheaval.

The first stage, "primitive communism," corresponds to the Garden of Eden. The second, "private ownership," corresponds to the Fall. The third, "capitalism and imperialism," corresponds to the Last Days. In this stage, "the proletariat" (the working class) assume the role of the Chosen People, the Jews; or in the Christian version, the faithful saved by the Blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. The fourth and final stage of society according to Karl Marx is "the socialist revolution," which corresponds to the Last Battle (or as per the Christian notion of the end of the world-era, the Second Coming). Marx predicted the final stage would be established by "a dictatorship of the proletariat;" gradually, the dictatorial aspect of the working-class state would wither away into "true communism. " In this formulation of two steps to perfection, Marx paralleled the Book of Revelations. It foresees the Apocalypse in two steps. The first is the return of Christ and his saints, who will rule the earth for one thousand years. The second step is the final defeat of the Antichrist. When all possibility of evil is at last vanquished, a permanent, infallible New Order of Heaven and Earth will be made manifest by God.

It goes without saying that history had its own idea, a little different from those of Marx and Engels.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
26 December 2003*

### **Chant, chant chant. . . Kant, Kant, Kant**

HH Visnujana Maharaja's Radha-Damodara party (including this humble self) visited Los Angeles ISKCON temple in April 1973. In that month Om Visnupada Sri Srimad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada graced the City of Lost Angels with his divine presence. One morning Srila Prabhupada set off a burst of delight among the assembled devotees when he told us:

There was a caricature-picture in some paper. Perhaps you remember. From Montreal or here. I don't remember. One old lady and her husband, sitting, face to face. The lady is requesting the husband: "Chant, chant, chant. " And the husband is

answering: "Can't, can't, can't. " [*Srimad-Bhagavatam* lecture in Los Angeles on 22 April 1973]

Immanuel Kant was a philosopher of that "can't, can't, can't. " He taught that human sense perception and reason are unbridgably severed from the noumenal realm. In the context of his thought, all sound--including the *maha-mantra* Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare--is mundane.

To be fair to "old Kant," as Friedrich Nietzsche sarcastically used to call him, he had an indirect feeling for God in nature and in morality. But Kantian reason dictated that as long as a man is in this world, he could not directly know the Person who is God. Kant's own argument for the existence of God was this:

Granted that the pure moral law inexorably binds every man as a command (not as a rule of prudence), the righteous man may say: I will that there is a God, that my existence in this world be also an existence in a pure world of the understanding, outside the world of natural connections, and finally that my duration be endless.

What I understand Kant to be saying here is that a man obedient to the moral law has a right granted by that law to *will* God into existence. God as an ideal--even if it can't (Kant) be proven--is needed to perfect, to "top off", the inner life of man. Reason aspires to know reality as it is, and getting at that sublime *is-ness* of reality is a reasonable man's bid for eternity. God is the guarantor of eternity. So God must be.

The American philosopher William Barrett, writing in *Death of the Soul*, comments:

"I will that there be a God!" These are fearful words of self-assertion. To be sure, Kant has surrounded them by all the conditions of piety; and the claim can be made only by the individual who has submitted himself or herself to the commands of morality. This morality would not make sense unless there was some divine order in this world, and beyond that, the possibility of immortality to round off the disorders of our mortal lives. Such might be called the argument from morality. . . I am not raising the question whether one accepts or rejects this reasoning. Instead, I am calling attention simply to the quality of his language and what it implies.

"I will that there be a God!" Self-assertion is one of the chief characteristics of the modern mind and indeed of the modern world. And here the language of assertion takes over the language of faith. I will that there be a God!--one can hardly imagine such language from a St. Augustine or a St. Thomas. There the language in approaching God is one of humility and hunger. . .

Indeed, Kant's language here already portends the Nietzschean will to power. Everything turns on the resolute and solitary will of the individual. To be sure, we are still in the world of traditional theism and morality fostered in that world. But we have only to take a small step forward in time and those theistic underpinnings become weakened: God recedes. Then we can imagine the Nietzschean individual expressing himself in words that parallel those of Kantian man: "I will that God *not* exist, that my existence in this world be my own and not subject or subservient to any supposedly higher being. . . " And so on, in mocking parallel to the Kantian *professio* of faith. Kant, in his piety, would have been horrified. . .



Śrī Rāmānujācārya



Śrī Madhvācārya



Śrī Nimbārkaācārya



Śrī Viṣṇuswāmī

There's no point in taking Kant to task for his myopic doctrine. His metaphysics are totally out of date. That argument of his that space and time are the purest intuitions of a human being is laughable, both from the Kṛṣṇa conscious and the scientific points of view.

Now that we're again on the topic of intuition and *a priori* first principles, Sripad Madhvācārya, founder of the Brahma-*sampradaya* in Kali-*yuga*, gives light on this from his Dvaita Vedānta *darsana*. The living entity is blessed by the Lord with different kinds of cognition. One comes via the *jñānendriyas*, the ears, skin, eye, tongue and nose. These senses are the gates of external cognition; *manas* (mind) is a faculty of inner cognition. Cognition comes to us from a third source: the *saksin* (inner witness), which is the power of intuition. *Srīmad-Bhagavatam* 6. 9. 42 declares the Paramatma to be *sarva-pratyaya-saksina*, the witness of all; thus our individual power to know the world around us through the *jñānendriyas*, *manas* and the *saksin* is the ray of His own.

The *indriyas* (senses) are subject to faults like disease; *manas* is subject to faults like passion and attachment. Madhva says the *saksin* is free of such faults and is thus the "transcendental" faculty of cognition. To arrive at nondeceptive knowledge, the senses and mind must be purified. But the *saksin* is always pure. Rāmānujācārya, the founder of the Lakṣmī-*sampradaya* in Kali-*yuga*, calls intuition *divya-pratyakṣa* (divine perception). He states that regulated devotional service and divine grace are the means by which intuition is cultivated to full realization of the Personality of Godhead.

The *saksin*, says Madhva, helps in sensory and mental operations, but there are some things that it perceives alone, with no participation of senses and mind. Remembering Kant's teaching of intuition and first principles, these objects of the *saksin's* sensibility are interesting to note. They are: *ātman* (the "I"), *manas* (the mind), pleasure, pain, *avidyā* (ignorance), *kālā* (time) and *avyākṛta-ākāśa* (unmanifest ether, the subtle conception of space).

The Tattvavadis (philosophical followers of Sripad Madhva) call his philosophy *bhaktisiddhanta*, "the essence of which is *bhakti*." Madhva's way of explaining *tattva* is very categorical (i. e. there are many categories of philosophical entities); in Europe, Kant was one of the most prolific categorists. But the essential conclusion that sweeps like a divine searchlight across Madhva's categorical structures, illuminating every complex turn of thought, is that we can realize Kṛṣṇa in this very lifetime by pure devotional service.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
27 December 2003

*svarah sapta viharena  
bhavanti sma prajapateh*

. . . Brahma's sensual activities were manifested as the seven notes of music [*svaras*].

The musical notes are *sa, ra, ga, ma, dha, and ni*. All these sound vibrations are originally called *sabda-brahma*, or spiritual sound. It is said, therefore, that Brahma was created in the *Maha-kalpa* as the incarnation of spiritual sound. The *Vedas* are spiritual sound, and therefore there is no need of material interpretation as they are, although they are symbolically represented with letters which are known to us materially. In the ultimate issue there is nothing material because everything has its origin in the spiritual world. The material manifestation is therefore called illusion in the proper sense of the term. For those who are realized souls there is nothing but spirit. [From *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 3. 12. 47 and the Purport]

From Krsna, the *srutis* became known in this world. He sang songs that related the *srutis* with His beloved in the Rasa dance. O Srinivasa, in the *rasa-mandala* all the types of music became personified. Krsna most humorously manifested *sruti* from *nada*. *Nada* transformed into 22 *srutis* with the help of air. These 22 *nadis* have taken refuge in the heart. Those *srutis* gradually manifested themselves in in the *vina* and other instruments, because they cannot manifest themselves in voices that are stricken with cold and diseases. . . O Srinivasa, who knows the real entity of *sruti*? It has been expressed only in the songs sung in the Rasa dance, wherein Krsnacandra Himself introduced *sruti*. *Sruti* is accurately vocalized by Sri Radha only; Lalita and the others used to take great pleasure in hearing this. The *srutis* had to thank their own great fortune, for the *devas* used to shower flowers while hearing them appear in this way. Thus *sruti* together with *svara* used to please everyone. That which gives pleasure to the heart is called *svara*, for it is pleasing to all listeners. *Svara* is of seven kinds: *sadaja*, *rishaba*, *gandhara*, *madhyama*, *panchama*, *dhaivata* and *nishada* (*sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha* and *ni*). [From *Bhakti Ratnakara*, Fifth Wave by Narahari Cakravarti]

The most vivid example in this connection is those saintly personalities known as *srutis*, who presented the Upanisads. These *srutis* understand that without serving Krsna and following in the footsteps of the *gopis*, there is no possibility of entering the kingdom of God. Therefore they engage in spontaneous loving service unto Krsna and follow in the footsteps of the *gopis*. [Cc *Madhya* 8. 223p]

Of the *asta-sakhis* (the eight principle *gopis*) Tungavidya is mainly responsible for providing musical background for the pastimes of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna. Tungavidya has hundreds and thousands of *sakhis* and *manjaris* to assist her in her service. Tungavidya's Vedic scholarship is unparalleled. She is a reservoir of wisdom. Thoroughly learned in eighteen branches of knowledge, there is no topic that she is not in full knowledge of. She is the *acarya* of all sciences beginning with the *rasa-sastras niti-sastras, natya-sastra* and *gandharva-vidya*.

Anatomy of Vedic Sound

What is Vedic sound? Srila Prabhupada explains in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2. 4. 22p:

Before the creation the Lord was there (*narayanah paro 'vyaktat*), and therefore the words spoken by the Lord are vibrations of transcendental sound. There is a gulf of difference between the two qualities of sound, namely *prakrta* and *aprakrta*. The physicist can deal only with the *prakrta* sound, or sound vibrated in the material sky, and therefore we must know that the Vedic sounds recorded in symbolic expressions cannot be understood by anyone within the universe unless and until one is inspired by the vibration of supernatural (*aprakrta*) sound, which descends in the chain of disciplic succession from the Lord to Brahma, from Brahma to Narada, from Narada to Vyasa and so on.

Sound, both transcendental and material, have the same source: the Lord Himself. But the effect of *prakrta* sound is material. From that sound, the first *mahabhuta* (gross material element) is generated, *akasa* (ether). The material mind, intelligence and false ego operate within *akasa*. From ether, air develops; from air comes fire; water comes from fire; and earth comes from water. The vibration of *prakrta* sound in ether sustains the subtle body's perceptions and conceptions of the material elements. The vibration of *aprakrta* sound releases consciousness from the effect of *prakrta* sound: the thrall of material perceptions and conceptions.

Sound exists in two ways. As *anahata nada* (unstruck sound), it is everpresent in subtle form, vibrating within ether as the unperceived background of the material manifestation. As *nada* (sound in air or even in grosser mediums like water or earth), it seems to appear and disappear as a sensory experience within the material manifestation. But the only real difference between the two is the medium through which the sound travels.

In the modern world we are all readily familiar with these two types of sound. In a radio broadcast, the announcer speaks the *nada* type of sound into a microphone. His voice is converted electronically into *anahata nada*. It is transmitted a long distance to a man listening to his radio set at home. The radio set reconverts *anahata nada* into the audible *nada* that enters the listener's ears.

Whether it is subtle or gross, sound flows in this world as waves. Even *anahata nada* is conceived of as a "frequency", which is the number of repetitions per second of a waveform in the ether. Such frequency, though subtle, can be made visible to the human eye by a device called an oscilloscope. Gross sound moves as waveforms too, but these appear in terms of atmospheric pressure. The wave of *nada* compresses air and then rarefies it (the opposite of compression is rarefaction). This compression and rarefaction occurs at a certain frequency, which is picked by the physical structures inside the ear as a certain tone. The human ear can hear tones within a range of 20 to 20 000 vibrations per second.

A basic waveform, or ripple of sound-energy, is called an oscillation. The word oscillation is very close in meaning to the word vibration. A vibration, however, is composed of more than one oscillation. For example, the human voice creates a vibration in the air. But that vibration, being made up of a range of oscillations, is complex. Each individual voice is rich with its own specific set of oscillatory waves. Thus we can tell one voice from another. Even when two people vibrate the same sound "ah" at the same pitch (i. e. the same note on the musical scale), their voices sound different from one another. This is due to the individual signature, or complex set, of oscillations within the vibration.

Now, people do not simply speak the same sound at the same pitch all the time. A human voice, while retaining its signature vibration, moves up and down the scale of tones. This is called modulation. In this word, you can see the root word "mode. "

The *tri-guna*, three modes of material nature, are represented as colors. Srila Prabhupada explains in *Life Comes From Life*:

The three modes of material nature are *sattva-guna* [goodness], *rajo-guna* [passion] and *tamo-guna* [ignorance]. With these three qualities, all the different objects of the material world are made, just as one might mix the three primary colors (blue, red and yellow) to make millions of hues.

The modes of nature and the modes of sound are the same.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12. 6. 42:

*tasya hy asams trayo varna  
a-karadya bhr̥gudvaha  
dharyante yais trayo bhava  
guna-namartha-vrttayah*

*Om* exhibited the three original sounds of the alphabet--A, U and M. These three, O most eminent descendant of Bhr̥gu, sustain all the different threefold aspects of material existence, including the three modes of nature, the names of the R̥g, Yajur and Sama Vedas, the goals known as the Bhur, Bhuvar and Svar planetary systems, and the three functional platforms called waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep.

The sound *aum* seems a simple vibration to the ear, but it is actually complex. This vibration carries the potency of all other vibrations. Indeed, it conveys all manifest and unmanifest states of material nature. Similarly, white light seems simple to the eye, but it carries the potency of all other colors. Passing through a prism, clear light divides into a spectrum of seven colors. Similarly, *aum*, the *pranava* that conveys the unitary knowledge of Brahman--the subject of the *sruti*--divides into the *sapta svara*, the seven sounds *sa, ra, ga, ma, dha, ni* and *sa*. And similarly, there are seven *cakras* in the subtle body. Each of these seven--sounds, colors, *cakras*--are multiple modes of the oneness expressed as *aum*.

Thus modulation means the audible manifestation of the potency that is transmitted by a sound. In technical terms, the basic vibration--again, take for example the vibration *aum*--is called the carrier. The modulating vibration--the three modes of nature, for example, or the *sapta-svara*--is the signal. We hear the signal but we do not necessarily hear the carrier.

Going back to the example of radio, the powerful electromagnetic waves emitted by the radio station's transmitter are the carrier. The carrier wave brings with it the signal of the announcer's voice, which is what you hear on your radio. *Sarvam khalv idam brahma*, the Upanisads inform us: "Everything is Brahman. " Hence everything in this world is *aum* and/or the clear *jyoti* of Sri Krsna's *prabha* (effulgence). But what we perceive around us is not the carrier-Brahman as *pranava omkara* and/or *brahmajyoti*. Our set of senses renders evident the three modes of material nature

(and *their* further modulations). The modes are the signal, which is the modulation of the carrier.

Or is it? Does Brahman have modes? The Vedas describe Brahman as *nirguna*. And so it is a fact that something very subtle separates Brahman (the carrier) from the three modes (the signal). This is *pradhana*. Srila Sukadeva Gosvami describes *pradhana* thus:

*na yatra vaco na mano na sattvam  
tamo rajo va mahad-adayo 'mi  
na prana-buddhindriya-devata va  
na sannivesah khalu loka-kalpah  
na svapna-jagran na ca tat susuptam  
na kham jalam bhur anilo 'gnir arkah  
samsupta-vac chunya-vad apratarkyam  
tan mula-bhutam padam amananti*

In the unmanifest stage of material nature, called *pradhana*, there is no expression of words, no mind and no manifestation of the subtle elements beginning from the *mahat*, nor are there the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. There is no life air or intelligence, nor any senses or demigods. There is no definite arrangement of planetary systems, nor are there present the different stages of consciousness--sleep, wakefulness and deep sleep. There is no ether, water, earth, air, fire or sun. The situation is just like that of complete sleep, or of voidness. Indeed, it is indescribable. Authorities in spiritual science explain, however, that since *pradhana* is the original substance, it is the actual basis of material creation. [*Bhag.* 12. 4. 20-21]

The Buddhists are fascinated with *pradhana*. The Mayavadis are fascinated with Brahman. How are these two states to be understood? They are abstractions, or impersonal representations (re-presentations), of Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna. Brahman is *saktiman*, the bearer of potency, and *pradhana* is *sakti*, the potency. But when *sakti* is being carried by *nirguna* Brahman, it is "only" potential. Potential is unmanifest. Radio waves moving through ether are sound in potential, but if we do not have a radio set by which we can tune into these sounds, we remain unaffected by those sounds, even though they pervade everywhere. When potential manifests as potency and affects us, it is known as *guna-prakrti*. Thus *pradhana* and *guna-prakrti* are features of the same *sakti*: Mahamaya. Srila Prabhupada said Mahamaya is "another phase of Srimati Radharani. "

*mayam to prakrtim vidyat  
mayinam tu mahesvaram  
tasyavayavabhutaistu vyaptam  
sarvam idam jagat*

Know then that *prakrti* is *maya* and the wielder of *maya* is the great Lord. The whole universe is pervaded by beings (*jivas*) that are parts and parcels of Him. [*Svetasvatara Upanisad*]

If *guna-prakrti* does not manifest within *nirguna* Brahman, where does it manifest? In the mind of the *jiva*. To return to the radio analogy, the message conveyed by the radio announcer's voice affects us only when it is registered in the mind.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12. 3. 26:

*sattvam rajas tama iti  
drsyante puruse gunah  
kala-sancoditas te vai  
parivartanta atmani*

The material modes--goodness, passion and ignorance--whose permutations are observed within a person's mind, are set into motion by the power of time.

And what is time in the radio analogy? The radio announcer is a man of many different sides to his personality. When he sits before the microphone, a particular side of the man becomes prominent--his "news personality." That side's power is projected into the microphone as his words. It is rendered into electromagnetic waves that are transmitted to our radios. Vibrating from the radio speaker, the power of the announcer's "news personality" manifests in our minds. This sets into motion the effect of his message. If he informs us that our national soccer team won the World Cup, we jump up and shout for joy. If he informs us that a beloved leader of the nation died today, we weep in grief. Kala, time, is a person described in the Vedic scriptures, most famously in Chapter Eleven of *Bhagavad-gita*. Time is Krsna. But he is not *purna-bhagavan* Krsna; time is a specific aspect of Krsna's total personality. Kala's message is that specific vibration that sets into motion the creation, maintenance and destruction of this material world.

*chandamsi yajnah kratavo vratani  
bhutam bhavyam vacca veda vadanti  
asman mayi srjate visvam etat tasmins  
canyo mayaya sanniruddhaha*

The Vedas, the sacrifices, the rituals (*kratu*), the observances (*vrata*), the past, the future and what the Vedas declare, all these the Mayin (wielder of *maya*) creates out of this; in this the other (the *jiva*) is bound by *maya*. [*Svetasvatara Upanisad*]

Krsna tells Arjuna that the Vedas are mainly concerned with the three modes of nature--which in terms of time mean creation (*rajo-guna*), maintenance (*sattva-guna*) and destruction (*tamo-guna*). But just as the news announcer is not limited by his "news personality" nor is radio limited to news broadcasts, in the same way Krsna is not limited to His feature as Kala, nor is the Vedic sound limited to stimulating *pratyaksa* (perceptions) and *anumana* (conceptions) of the material world in the human mind.

*pratyaksanumanabhyam bhagavata  
siddhanta eva gariyan  
vijnanamayatvat sarvasiddhantasrayatvacca*

The *siddhanta* (essential conclusion) of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* surpasses *pratyaksa* and *anumana* because it is scientific and is the shelter of all other Vedic *siddhantas*. [*Sri Tattva-sutram* 48]

We now return where we started from in our discussion of *sruti*, the Vedic scripture. There is an original form of sound that appears in the midst of the *rasa-lila* of Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna. This sound's message is that very *rasa* shared by the Divine Couple.

*nigama-kalpa-taror galitam phalam  
suka-mukhad amrta-drava-samyutam  
pibata bhagavatam rasam alayam  
muhur aho rasika bhuvi bhavukah*

O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls. [*Bhag.* 1. 1. 3]

As Krsna is His holy name, so too is Krsna *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. There are many names of God but the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra* is *madhurya-nama*, the names of transcendental nectar. As the *maha-mantra* manifests, Akhila Rasamrta Murti Himself, Sri Krsna, manifests. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is of the identical *madhurya* nature as the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra*.

Now, it is true that Vedic sound in general is transcendental, but that transcendence manifests in three ways.

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1. 2. 11:

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas  
tattvam yaj jnanam advayam  
brahmeti paramatmeti  
bhagavan iti sabdyate*

*Iti sabdyate*, the verse concludes: "thus it is so sounded" in *sastra* by the learned personalities that nondual Vedic knowledge may be understood as Brahman, Paramatma or Bhagavan.

When transcendental knowledge is understood as Brahman, *sabda* is impersonally re-presenting Krsna as the eternal background of the cycle of time that turns the creation, maintenance and destruction of the material world. When transcendental knowledge is understood as Paramatma, *sabda* is personally re-presenting Krsna as the Lord (*isvara*) who is the eternal background of the same cycle. These re-presentations are relished by *jnanis* and *yogis*. But when Krsna Himself is understood, there is no re-presentation. Then the *rasa* of Bhagavan's own name, form, quality, pastimes and relationships comes to the fore. That is what is relished by the *rasika* transcendentalists, the pure devotees. That relishing of Krsna-*rasa* is the fullest appreciation of Vedic knowledge (*vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedya*), and in this the knowledge of the material world stands in the background.

*vilajjamanaya yasya  
sthatum iksha-pathe 'muya  
vimohita vikatthante  
mamaham iti durdhiyah*

The illusory energy of the Lord cannot take precedence, being ashamed of her position, but those who are bewildered by her always talk nonsense, being absorbed in thoughts of "It is I" and "It is mine. " [Bhag. 2. 5. 12]

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
28 December 2003

*yah sva-prapti-patham devah  
sevanabhasato 'disat  
prapyam ca sva-padam preyan  
mamasau syamasundarah*

I love handsome and dark Lord Krsna, who shows, even to they who have only the dim reflection of devotional service, the path that leads to Him.

### **Krsna Consciousness versus Reductionism**

#### Aristotle's Theory of Everything

More than any other classical Greek philosopher, Aristotle (384-322 BC) laid the foundations of the Western *Weltanschauung* (world-view). His *guru*, Plato (427-347 BC), was a mystic who taught that the material world was an imperfect reflection of an eternal transcendental mindscape of pure forms. (Personally, I think Plato was to some degree Hiranyagarbha-realized). But Aristotle did not agree with his teacher that ideas exist apart from the things of this world. *Eidos* (idea) was the form of *kyle* (matter). The material world was a Becoming that got its shape from an impersonal cosmic mind that was nothing else than Being. The whole *raison d'être* of Becoming was to evolve toward Being. (Recall the doctrine of Hegel described here a few days ago; it's clear that this German Idealist borrowed his fundamental metaphysics from Aristotle. ) If among the hirsute thinkers of ancient Greece Plato was the other-worldly mystic, then Aristotle was the scientist.

But Aristotle was not like a scientist of today, who tests theories from observation. If Aristotle liked a theory, it didn't need testing. For example, he taught that by the law of nature, men are endowed with more teeth than women. Now, this learned philosopher had two wives. Women were more obedient to men in those days, so he could have easily ordered those ladies to open their mouths so as to count their teeth. But such was the science of his time that if an idea appeared elegant to the mind, then it must be Truth. The world, you see, exists in the mind of Being. So, in the main, the philosopher needs to think about Being in order to come to know the true nature of the world.

Aristotle applied his thinking to what today would be called a TOE, a Theory of Everything. In his cosmology, the moon marked the celestial border between the superior (superlunary) and inferior (sublunary) realms of the universe. The superlunary realm was thought to be formed of pure matter and populated by "secondary gods" (demigods) who enjoy a divine, perfect and happy existence. Impure matter formed the sublunary realm populated by imperfect organic creatures like plants, animals and men. Aristotle's writings elaborately described the universe

as a system of fifty-five concentric crystalline spheres whose rotation accounted for the movements of the sun, moon, stars and planets.

Translated into Latin in the Middle Ages, his model of the cosmos had a deep impact upon Church scholars, starved as they were for "cosmic" information. In AD 1266, the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas officially wed Aristotelian philosophy with Catholic theology. It was the Theory of Everything of Medieval Europe--an awesome intellectual monument to both the protoscience of the ancient Greeks and the moral authority of Jesus Christ. The soaring cathedral of Chartres--completed while Aquinas was alive--was a monument to the Church's TOE. Figures of Pythagoras and Aristotle were carved into the stonework.

#### Galileo Galilei and the arrival of Reductionism

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) sparked a crisis in that TOE. After calculating the height of the lunar mountains with the aid of a telescope, he concluded that the moon is a world similar to the earth. But Aristotle had taught that the moon is not like the earth--it is made of the stuff of heaven.

Since the Church allowed only science and philosophy that was *ancilla ecclesiae* (servant to the Church) and *ancilla Aristotelis* (servant to Aristotle), Galileo was forced into public silence in 1632. His reducing celestial "perfection" down to base elements and simple mechanics is now marked as the birth of the modern scientific creed: reductionism. Reductionism is nicely summed up by Bryan Appleyard in his *Understanding the Present--Science and the Soul of Modern Man* (1992) on page 259. Science after Galileo concluded "we could not search for value in the world. We could describe nature but we could do so only objectively and without imposing our notions of good and evil. " Thus not only did science dispense with God--the subject of theology--it dispensed with morality, which is one of the vital issues of philosophy. (Western philosophy has four, or sometimes it is said five, basic areas of investigation: logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics (morality), and, as the possible fifth, aesthetics. )

Aristotle's universe was more than a material universe. Indeed, it was primarily a moral universe. His superlunary and sublunary realms were plotted on a map calibrated to his ideas of moral merit, of pure and impure, good and evil. It was not a "star map" of today, photographed through a telescopic lens.

#### *Bhagavatam* Cosmology

As devotees well know, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* describes the universe as being divided into fourteen regions. The earthly region, wherein human beings dwell, is called Bhurloka. Above this is the Bhuvah-loka, where entities who are *antariksa-sthanah* (denizens of outer space) and *madhyama-sthanah* (denizens of planets between earth and heaven) dwell. Included are the Yaksas, chief of whom is Kuvera, the treasurer of the demigods; the Kinnaras and Kimpurusas, whose looks combine human and animal features; Raksasas, fearsome man-eaters with black magical powers; Vidyadharas, angelic beings who fly in the sky without vehicles; Gandharvas, celestial musicians who subtly inspire earthly musicians; Apsaras, lovely dancing girls who consort with the Gandharvas and other handsome residents of heaven; Caranas and Siddhas, who are naturally endowed with all mystic powers;

ghosts (*pretas, pisacas, bhutaganas*, etc. ); and many other kinds of supernatural entities (Uragas, Patagas, Nisacaras, etc. ).

Above Bhuvah-loka is Svargaloka, the heaven of the *karma-devatas*, or the thirty-three million demigods who were raised to heaven by pious *karma* performed in previous human births. *Sarve purusakarena manusyad devatam gatah*, states *Mahabharata* 13. 6. 14: "all, by human effort, went from human status to demigod status. " And *Mahabharata* 12. 250. 38 asserts: *sarve deva martya sanjna-visistah--* "All these demigods become human beings when the fruit of their good karma is exhausted. "

The regions of Bhur (earth), Bhuvah (outer space) and Svarga (heaven) are tinged by the mode of passion, as Srila Prabhupada explained in a *Bhagavad-gita* lecture in Bombay on 24 March 1974. Above this passionate realm is the realm of goodness, where the great *rsis* (sages) reside. This realm includes the Maharloka (region of the *rsi* Brghu); Janaloka (region of the *manasa-munis*, the mental sons of Brahma); Tapaloka (region of the Vairaja sages); and Satyaloka (region of Brahma, Ksirodakasayi Visnu and Siva, each of whom directs one of the three modes of material nature).

Below the earthly Bhurloka is a sevenfold realm known as Bila-svarga (the underworld heaven), where ignorance predominates and sunlight never penetrates. The first region is Atala. It is ruled by a demonic scientist named Bala who is a master of 96 magical arts. The residents of Atala seek happiness through intoxication and sexual excess. The second region is Vitala, an abode of Hatakesvara--an expansion of Siva--and his consort Bhavanidevi. The third region is Sutala, ruled by Bali. Though born among the demons, he is a pure devotee of the Lord. The fourth region is Talatala, where Maya Danava lives, the preceptor of all black magicians. The fifth region is Mahatala, the abode of the Kadrudevatas, a brood of many-headed serpents born of Kadru, wife of Kasyapa Muni. Despite their extreme ferocity, they always live in fear of Garuda. The sixth region is Rasatala, inhabited by the Daitya and the Danava demons who, being very envious of the demigods, sometimes mount military campaigns against the Svargaloka. At the very bottom is Patala. Here reside the Nagaloka-adhipatis, the lords of all serpentine demons. They bear effulgent jewels in their multiple heads that mysteriously illuminate the entire Bila-svarga realm.

Beneath Bila-svarga is Pitr-loka, the personal abode of Yama. This is a heavenly place associated with Soma, the moon-god. Near Pitr-loka is Narakaloka, where sinners suffer hellish torments. Below this is the cosmic ocean known as Garbhodaka.

*Bhagavatam* cosmology describes a moral universe that is calibrated to the *karma* of the living entities who dwell in its different regions. Bila-svarga is reserved for demons, Svarga-loka is reserved for demigods. . . all this is in accord with *dharma*, the cosmic moral law.

#### Reasoning in Krsna Consciousness

Of course modern scientific observation contradicts the *Bhagavatam* description of the universe. We've seen how the Church-approved, Aristotelian-Thomist model of a moral universe fell by the wayside of history after the telescope "proved" it not

factual. Well, truth be told, the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* locates the earth, moon and sun in positions very different from the astronomical standard. Is this cause to doubt the *Bhagavatam*? If it is, then it is also cause to doubt the moral dimension of the universe taught by the *Bhagavatam*. It is cause to neglect the regulative principles and indulge the whims of the senses.

The Vaisnava scriptures tell us the material energy is Lord Krsna's *adhara-sakti* or all-accommodating energy. She accommodates the lusty desires of the materialistic living entities by presenting herself as exploitable matter. They perceive her as exploitable according to the particular range of their cognitive and motor senses.

In this journal on 18 December I related the example of a spider and its web. The web is actually the sensory network by which the spider understands its world. The *adhara-sakti* accommodates the spider's desires by providing it a "factual world" which the poor creature can perceive and control. If the spider's worldview could be rendered into English, there is little doubt the average person would find it to be bizarre mythology, fiction, or lunacy. Our own world of human facts is no less bizarre to the demigods.

Beyond these worlds of facts populated by creatures lusty for sense gratification, there is the real form of the world. This is the *dharmic* or moral form, seen by those living entities who know nature's primary purpose. That primary purpose is to accommodate the Lord's plan for the reformation of His wayward parts and parcels. The *dharmic* form is presented in *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, which states:

Krsna consciousness means constantly associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in such a mental state that the devotee can observe the cosmic manifestation exactly as the Supreme Personality of Godhead does. Such observation is not always possible, but it becomes manifest exactly like the dark planet known as Rahu, which is observed in the presence of the full moon. (*Bhag.* 4. 29. 69)

At Kuruksetra five thousand years ago, Krsna revealed His *visvarupa* (the form of the entire universe) to His constant companion Arjuna. An opportunity like Arjuna had--to directly observe the universe exactly as Krsna sees it--is very rare. But all of us can take advantage of an indirect method that allies human reason with scriptural revelation. This method is explained by an analogy. During a full lunar eclipse, the halo around the moon allows us an indirect perception of a darkness that blots out the lunar disc. It is indirect because our eyes cannot tell us what is blotting out the moon. At least we can tell from the soft halo that the moon is masked by something passing in front of it. The Vedic scriptures tell us this shadowy mask is Rahu, a planet that otherwise cannot be seen.

Similarly, the moonlike light of reason guided by scripture permits us to indirectly perceive the material universe as a mask of the spiritual world. A mechanistic reductionist will argue that what eclipses the moon is not a mysterious dark planet but the shadow of the earth. The difference between the mechanistic and the Vedic view is a question of what is known as "the scale of observation. " For example, if we are asked to say with the unaided eye what we see when we look at an even mix of two powders--white flour and finely-ground charcoal--we will say we see a gray powder. But if we are able to observe that gray powder through a microscope, we

will suddenly understand it does not exist. The microscopic scale of observation reveals countless white and black particles.

On the mechanist's "factual" (man-made) scale of observation, it is certainly logical to say the darkness eclipsing the moon is just the shadow of the earth. But on the Vedic scale, the scale of God-made observation, mechanistic facts vanish, just as the fact of the gray powder vanishes when it is observed through a microscope. On the Vedic scale, cosmic events are seen to be the interrelation of two potencies (spirit and matter) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. The moral dimension is defined by the three qualities of that interrelation: goodness, passion, and ignorance.

The moral dimension of the cosmos is revealed by purification of consciousness, not by sensory inspection or mental speculation. Purification entails detaching consciousness from the exploitation of matter aimed at physical sense pleasure, and attaching consciousness to the employment of matter in Krsna's service.

#### Two Kinds of Illusion: Natural and Speculative

Someone might object that the example of the gray powder which turns out to really be two powders just demonstrates that the scale of human observation can be improved with the help of a man-made instrument, the microscope. This example comes to the aid of Galileo's reductionist description of the moon. It does not support the religio-philosophical cosmology of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas--or for that matter, the Vedas.

If I may resort to a tired metaphor, this objection confuses apples and oranges by saying they are the same fruit. What we need to understand is the difference between two kinds of illusion. Natural illusion is one thing. Speculative illusion is another.

The powder example shows how the human senses give rise to an illusion, which is the gray color of the mixed black and white powders. That grayness does not actually exist save within the network of our sense perception. *This is a natural illusion.*

It is a different type of illusion than the Aristotelian-Thomist description of the moon that Galileo disproved with his telescope. That description was not a product of sense perception. *It was a speculative illusion*, a product of the mind of Aristotle. A natural illusion and a speculative illusion are not to be equated, as much as an apple and an orange, both fruit, are not to be equated.

The *Bhagavatam* teaches that *prakṛti*, material nature, projects a natural illusion into our minds. Our speculative illusions are the result of our attempts to "figure out" the natural illusion. The Western science of then and now--ancient Greece, Medieval Europe, and today's world--believes in a fundamental mistake. The mistake is the notion that human beings can arrive at the truth by material sense perception. Nowadays, for example, scientists believe that if sense perception is aided by high-tech instrumentation, it becomes empowered to grasp "correct" data. Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas were bereft of such instruments, of course; but they never doubted that if a human being *could* see the moon up close, he would see it as their

philosophy described it. There was no inkling in the Aristotelian-Thomist TOE that human sense perception is *by nature* deluded.

This is why Galileo's telescopic perceptions had such a devastating impact on the Church's TOE. Some churchmen argued that the telescope must somehow generate a delusion that bewildered the eye of anyone who looked through that devilish instrument. They did not dare to point to the human eye behind the telescope and pronounce *it* the culprit. That would have undermined their TOE even more. You see, this is the essence of what the West inherited from Aristotle. His *guru* Plato was of the opinion that sense perception can't be trusted--that is the whole point of the "cave analogy" that is still presented in philosophy courses today as the lesson most representative of all that Plato taught. The form of reality is not *here* in our world of profane matter, which is like a dark cave full of misleading shadows. It is *outside* the world, in the bright, pure World of Ideas. But Aristotle didn't accept this. He thought that the form of the material world as we see it now is directly shaped by the mind of Being. There is no other more perfect form somewhere else. Aristotle was an impersonalist who believed that without matter, there was no form. Being existed in its own right beyond matter, yes, but Being in that state was absolutely monistic. No forms existed therein. What Aristotle kept in common with Plato was the logic that matter proceeded from mind. Thus at the end of the day Aristotle was more of a rationalist than an empiricist. But empiricism had a grip on his philosophy in a way that it did not have on Platonic philosophy .

#### Scientific Instruments Prove that the Senses are Defective

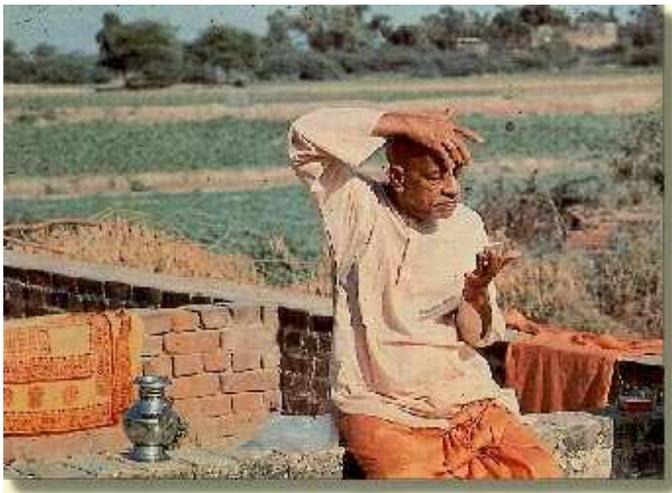
The powder example would contradict my position if I were to admit that scientific instruments like microscopes and telescopes transmit knowledge that is absolutely real. But I do not; even a quantum physicist, when pressed, would be obliged to admit this is not the case. (The standard quantum physical position is that we see with our instruments only what we can see of nature. We do not see what nature is herself. . . the *Ding-an-sicht* of Kant. ) Instruments show that the knowledge we assume we get from our perceptions and thoughts is always defective. That is because our senses and minds are inherently defective. Take what we know about the cosmos from modern-day instruments. Compare that to the instrumental knowledge of just sixty years ago. We can rightly say, "Six decades ago, our knowledge was so defective. " We cannot rightly say, "At last! Now we know the real truth!" Why can't we say this? Sixty years in the future, instruments more powerful than we have now will reveal the defects of our present level of knowledge.

This is the crux of the argument I am making from the gray powder example: that our sense perception is inherently defective. Instruments *can* show us that much. There is always something more to be known about sense data, even if it comes to us through a microscope or telescope. Sense data is never the final answer.

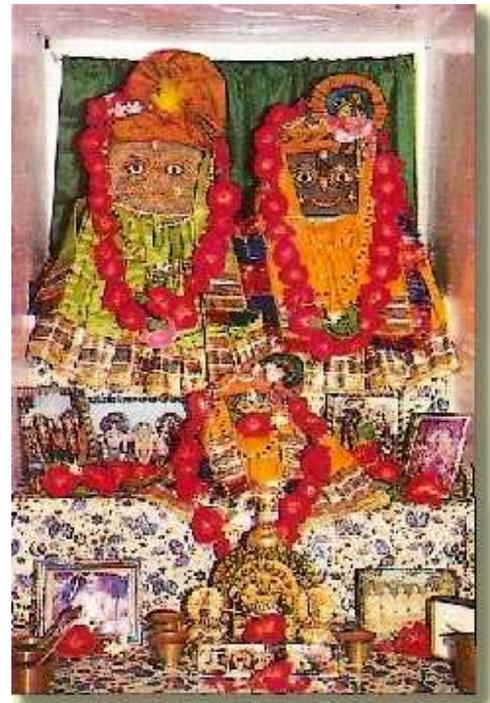
Physical instruments cannot probe the spiritual and moral states of existence. These exist in a different dimension or scale of observation. That dimension controls the physical dimension. The Vedic scriptures tell us the moon is the heavenly station of Candradeva, a morally superior being. He controls the lunar phenomena familiar to our senses. We cannot access his existence by adjusting physical factors like spatial distance or the magnification of visual impressions. By spacecraft, we approach the phenomenal moon. By telescope, we magnify the image of the phenomenal moon. But the moon as a moral entity remains unseen.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
29 December 2003*

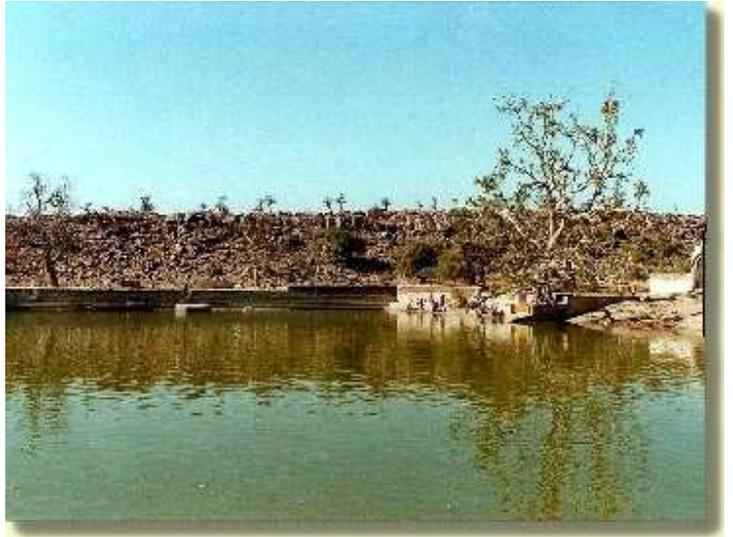
**Govardhana Scenes**



*Srila Prabhupada on Parikrama near Govardhana  
1972*

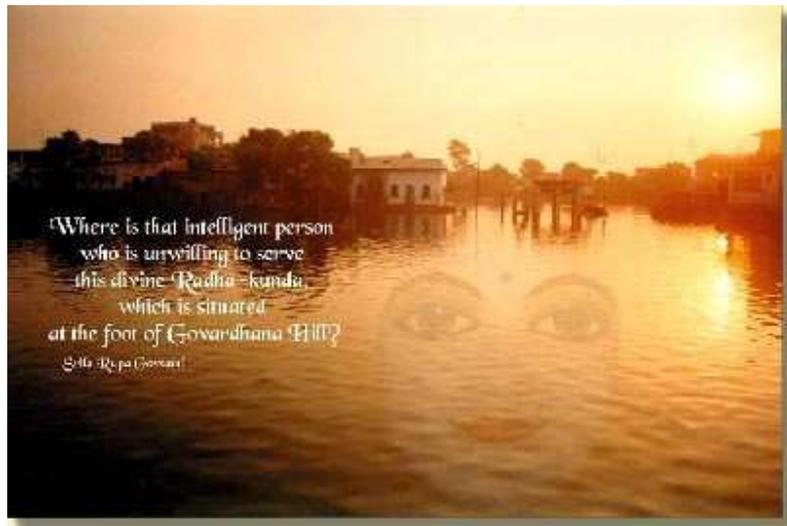


*ISKCON's Deities of Krsna and  
Balarama*



*Sri Gopal, the Deity discovered by Madhavendra Puri at Govardhana*

*Govinda Kund, a sacred pond along the Govardhana parikrama path*



*Radha-Kund, the pond of Srimati Radharani*

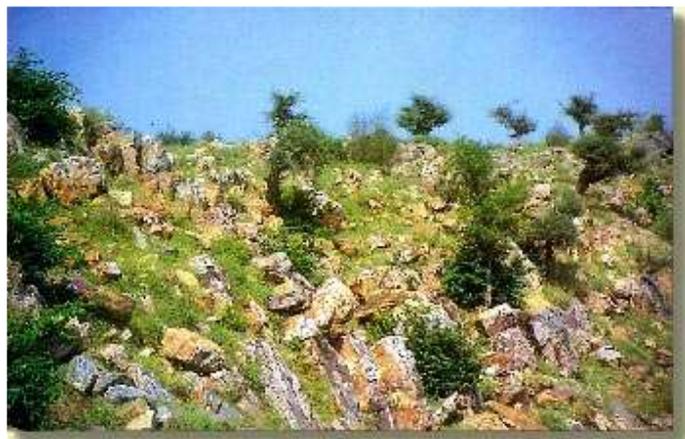
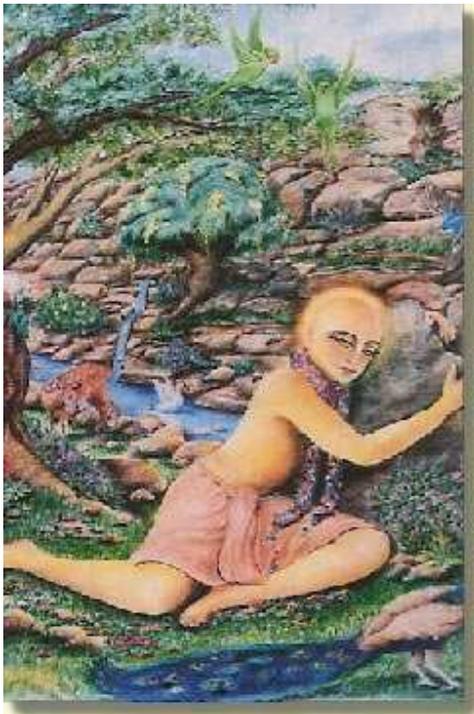
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# THIS MODERN WORLD

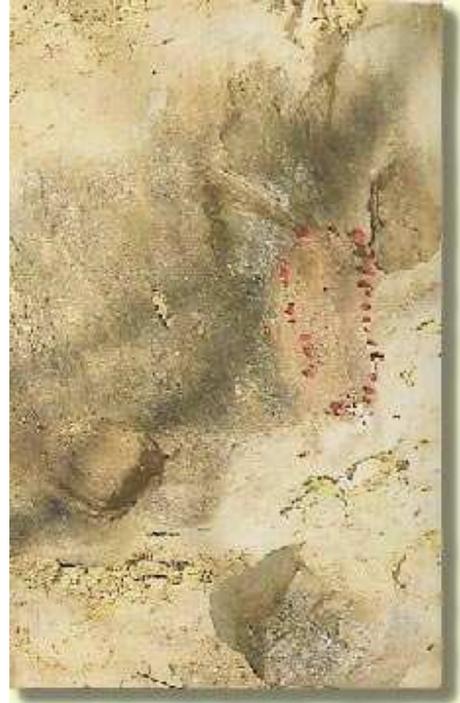
by TOM TOMORROW



IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
30 December 2003

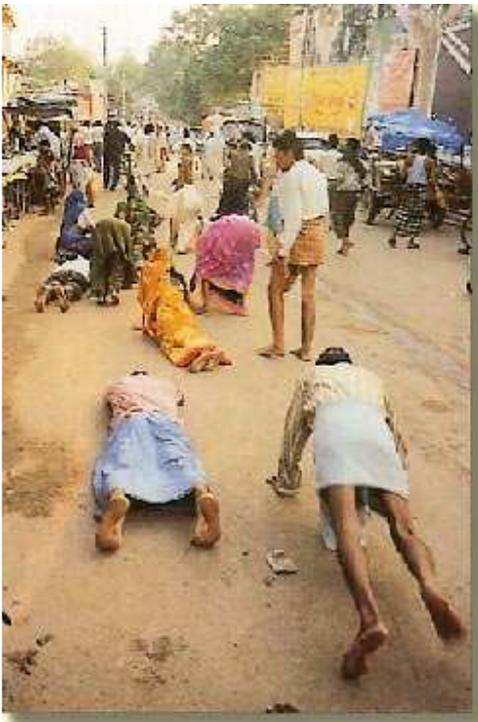


*Lord Caitanya embracing a rock of Govardhana*



*Giriraj*

*Krsna's footprint*

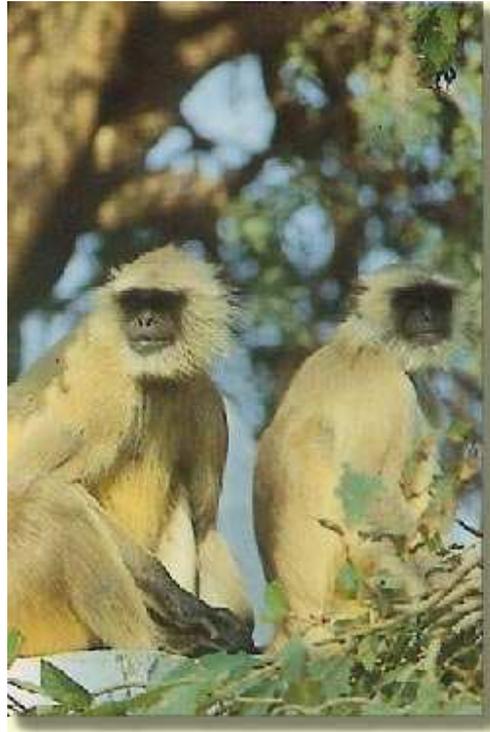


*The parikrama path at Dana Ghati*

*Indra Puja - where Lord Indra offered his obeisances*



*Mukharavinda-sila (front) and the Mukut-sila*



*Langur Monkeys near Govardhana Hill*

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part One**

The *Muktikopanisad* lists the names of 108 Upanisads (see *Cd Adi 7. 108p*). Of these, Srila Prabhupada states that 11 are considered to be the topmost: *Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Brhadaranyaka* and *Svetasvatara*. For the first 10 of these 11, Sankaracarya and Madhvacharya wrote commentaries. Besides these commentaries, in their *bhasyas* on *Vedanta-sutra* they have cited passages from *Svetasvatara Upanisad*, as well as *Subala, Kausitaki* and *Mahanarayana Upanisads*. Ramanujacarya commented on the important passages of 9 of the first 10 Upanisads. Because the first 10 received special attention from the 3 great *bhasyakaras*, they are called *Dasopanisad*. Along with the 11 listed as topmost by Srila Prabhupada, 3 which Sankara and Madhva quoted in their *sutra-bhasyas*--*Subala, Kausitaki* and *Mahanarayana Upanisads*--are considered more important than the remaining 97 Upanisads. That is because these 14 Upanisads are directly referred to by Srila Vyasa-deva himself in *Vedanta-sutra*.

Thus the 14 Upanisads of Vedanta are: *Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Aitareya, Taittiriya, Brhadaranyaka, Chandogya, Svetasvatara, Kausitaki, Subala* and *Mahanarayana*. These 14 belong to various portions of the 4 Vedas--*Rg, Yajus, Sama* and *Atharva*. Of the 14, 8 (*Brhadaranyaka, Chandogya, Taittiriya, Mundaka, Katha, Aitareya, Prasna* and *Svetasvatara*) are employed by Vyasa in *sutras* that are considered especially important.

In the Gaudiya Vaisnava *sampradaya*, Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana shines as an *acarya* of *vedanta-darsana*. Other great Gaudiya *acaryas* were not met with the need to demonstrate the link between Mahaprabhu's *siksa* and the *Upanisads* and *Vedanta-sutra*. Jiva Gosvami, whom Srila Prabhupada said was the greatest scholar and philosopher in the world, wrote his *Sandarbh* to leave no doubt that *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is the natural commentary on Vedanta; the Gaudiya standpoint was that no other commentary is required. But in the 1700s a doctrinal dispute between the Gaudiyas and the Ramanandi sect at the Jaipur court of Jai Singh II obliged Srila Baladeva to compose the *Govinda-bhasya* commentary on *Vedanta-sutra* so as to demonstrate that *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva* is a bona fide Vaisnava Vedanta doctrine distinct from *dvaita*, *vasistadvaita*, *suddhadvaita* and *dvaitadvaita*. Baladeva also wrote commentaries on 10 *upanisads*, like Madhva and Sankara. Unfortunately only his commentary on *Isopanisad* is extant.

The *Upanisads* are *vedasya-antah*, meaning that they express the conclusion of Vedic knowledge. They are to be learned by "sitting close to the spiritual master" (*upa-ni-sad*). The knowledge of the *Upanisads* is *guha-vidya*, secret. The ancient sage Dramida defined *upanisad* as *brahmani upanisanneti upanisat*, "that which is deeply immersed in Brahman. "

All the different schools of Vedanta (*advaita*, *suddhadvaita*, *vasistadvaita*, *dvaita*, *dvaitadvaita* and *acintya-bhedabheda-tattva*) agree that the *Upanisads* cover five topics of instruction:

1. The nature of Brahman
2. The nature of the individual self and its relationship to Brahman
3. The origin and development of the universe and its relationship to Brahman
4. The means of attaining Brahman
5. The nature of the supreme goal of life.

So, starting with topic number 1 we may ask, "What is this word, Brahman?" The Sanskrit word *brahma* is neutral in gender; it does not mean Brahma, the four-faced *rajoguna-avatara* of creation whose name has a long second vowel and is masculine in gender. The literal meaning of *brahma* or Brahman can be found in its root, *brih--* "growth," "expansion," "evolution," and "development. " *Brhanti brhmayati tasmad ucyate para brahma*, states *Atharvasiras Upanisad*: "What is called Brahman grows and causes to grow. " Thus *Vedanta-sutra* 1. 1. 2. defines Brahman as *janmady-asya-yathah*, that from which everything originates.

Again, Brahman is a neutral appellation, like the English word "God. " *Prasnopanisad* says the syllable *aum* is verily that Brahman:

*etad vai satyakama parama ca aparama ca brahma yad aumkara  
tasmad vidvan etenaiva ayatanena ekataram anveti*

That which is the syllable *aum*, O Satyakama, is verily the *parama* and *aparama* Brahman. Therefore, he who meditates attains one or the other through this support alone.

*Isopanisad* addresses Brahman as *Isa*, the supreme controller of the universe. *Mahanarayana Upanisad* declares,

*narayana param brahma tattvam narayanah parah  
narayanaa paro jyotir atma narayanah parah*

Narayana is the Supreme Brahman. Narayana is the Supreme Reality. Narayana is the Supreme Light. Narayana is the Supreme Self.

Other terms often found in the Upanisads for Brahman are *atman, sat, aksara, prana, akasa, jyotis, purusa, isvara* and *paramesvara*.

#### The Nature of Brahman

Vedantists consider the nature of Brahman in two categories: *svarupa* (essence) and *svarupa-nirupaka dharma* (attributes). According to *Taittiriya Upanisad*, Brahman is *satya* (real), *jnana* (knowledge) and *ananta* (endless). The Upanisads themselves apply these three to both the *svarupa* and *svarupa-nirupaka dharma* of Brahman; Mayavadi commentators reserve them only for *svarupa*, considering the attributes (which include the living entities and the material energy) to be unreal, ignorant and limited, thus having no relationship to Brahman whatsoever.

To illustrate how the Upanisads apply *satyam jnanam anantam* to both Brahman in essence and Brahman in attribute, *Chandogya VIII. 3. 4* states *tasya ha va etasya brahmano nama satyamiti*, that *satyam* is a name of Brahman. The next verse explains that *satyam* is composed of 3 syllables: *sat, ti* and *yam*; the first means "immortal," the second means "mortal" and the third means "that which holds the two together" (*yamayati*). Thus Brahman is that which controls both the conscious living entities and the non-conscious material energy, and brings them together to exhibit the universal creation. About the next feature of Brahman's nature, *jnanam* (knowledge), *Aitreya Upanisad III. 1. 3* states *prajnanam brahma*, that Brahman is *prajnana* (great knowledge), and that living entities and non-sentient matter are *prajnana pratisthitam*, sustained by the *prajna* that is Brahman. Regarding the endlessness of Brahman (*ananta*), *Isopanisad 5* states, *tad antarasya sarvasya tad u sarvasyasya bahyatah*, that Brahman is within everything and at the same time outside of everything. Similarly, *Katha Upanisad* teaches that Brahman is at once smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest.

All this is consistent with the basic definition of Brahman as that which expands and causes everything else to expand. If Brahman is essentially *satyam jnanam anantam*, then that which grows from Brahman must share in that nature to some degree. Brahman as the source of expansion is not well-served by the Mayavadi theory that the cosmic manifestation is of a different essence than Brahman, i. e. unreal, ignorant and limited.

To be continued, starting with The Bliss of Brahman.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **Srila Prabhupada in the Early Days**

*With the permission of Mulaprakrti didi, we are providing a series of short excerpts from a soon-to-be released book composed of over 80 interviews of people who knew Srila Prabhupada before he came to America.*

SRILA BHAKTI MADHAVA MAHARAJ (*hari-nama* from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada, *diksa* from Srila Bhaktisaranga Goswami Maharaja) Staying at Caitanya Math in Vrindavana

During the early 1960's Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami sometimes stayed alone in Delhi, at Chhipiwada Ram Mandir. I was in charge of Indraprastha Gaudiya math in Karolabada. I stayed there for forty years. He came to our temple so many times. Swami Maharaja visited for holy days- Janmastami, his Gurudeva's appearance and disappearance--many special festivals. I remember he would often give the lecture on those occasions. After he had taken sannyasa, Swami Maharaja stayed for some extended time in Delhi. He served as editor for my Gurudeva, Bhakti Saranga Maharaja's Sajana Tosani and also the Gaudiya and Bhagavat Patrikas. He didn't stay in the temple because his bhajan was disturbed there; he stayed alone in Chhipiwada and did his own cooking. At that time Narayana Maharaja went there so many times, and Swami Maharaja stayed in Mathura quite often as there was a press in that math.

Swami Maharaja's economic situation was very poor. He used to do madhukari to raise funds for his Back To Godhead magazine in Delhi. I recall how he would type and print it on special Chinese paper that he purchased. There was one Ayurvedic doctor, Dr. Diren Sakar Kaviraj, who gave him money for the paper. I remember that Madhava Maharaj also gave to Swami Maharaja a donation. In many different places in Delhi he collected these donations.

One day when I was coming from the Indraprastha matha on the way to the place called Rupa Nagar, I saw Swami Maharaja standing at the gate to one large house, waiting. I said, "What are you waiting for, Maharaja?" He said, "I am waiting to get five rupees donation from here. " I came back on the cycle after some hours during the hot day and I saw Swami Maharaja still standing there. I told him, "Do you have the five rupees?" He said, "No, the gentleman had not yet arrived--but I will wait. " I said, "Let's go now. I will give you those five rupees. " He said, "Can you give me these five rupees every month?" So I agreed to give him five rupees every month.

I felt moved to ask him, "Is there anything else you need? Are you short of anything?" He seemed to be so poor at that time. "If you need anything I will get it for you. You please come with me. " I forced him to go with me. His clothes were torn so I got him new clothes and brought him to our matha. I told him, "Instead of five rupees I will give you ten rupees. " Later in the evening I took him back to his place. While we were on the street returning I inquired, "How is the success of your preaching?" He told me, "I desire very much to go to the foreign countries, but I still have not gotten the proper opportunity. " His determination and fortitude for his Gurudeva's seva was memorable, even then. It is indeed glorious that after such struggle he was triumphant in his preaching cause.

Several times I saw my Guru Maharaja and Swami Maharaja together at Indraprastha Math. I was engaged in my own service so I didn't hear their conversations. My Gurudeva preached in London in 1937 and opened up a small math there. When he returned I remember him telling Swami Maharaja, "I will tell you everything that I learned about how you might deal with the foreigners--how to talk to them, how to eat with them, and how to drink water there. I know how much you want to preach in the West so I will try to help. "



IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama),  
Govardhana, India  
31 December 2003

## What the Upanisads Teach Part Two

### The Bliss of Brahman

Yesterday we learned that *Taittiriya Upanisad* presents three characteristics that define Brahman: *satyam*, *jnanam* and *anantam*. The same Upanisad expounds the Vedantic doctrine of *panca-kosa* or five levels of Brahman realization. The fifth and ultimate level is *anandamaya* (abundantly blissful). For an explanation of all five, one may refer to *Bhagavad-gita As it Is* 13. 5p and Chapter 86 of *Krsna*, "Prayers by the Personified Vedas." About *anandamaya*, *Taittiriya* II. 6. 1 states, *so akamayata bahusyam prajayeyeti. . . idam sarvam asrjata*, "this willed to become many. . . and created everything." Remembering the definition of Brahman

that was discussed yesterday, we must conclude that *ananda* is intrinsic to Brahman that expands and causes everything else to expand.

In the entry to this journal of 2nd November I related the teaching of the *Brahmavalli* portion of *Taittiriya Upanisad*. Here too the conclusion is that Brahman is the state of incomparable bliss, beyond even the happiness of Prajapati Brahma, what to speak of entities below him. *Vedanta-sutra* 1. 1. 12 makes reference to *Brahmavalli* in Vyasadeva's statement *anandamayo abhyasat* (V-s 1. 1. 12). Srila Prabhupada discusses this *sutra* in his introduction to *Bhagavad-gita As it Is* and in his purport to *Bg* 6. 20-23.

For Gaudiya Vaisnavas, the message of *Taittiriya* II. 7. 1 is most pertinent: *raso vai sah*, "He is *rasa*." The Upanisad explicates *rasa* thusly: *esa hy eva anandayati*, "this verily bestows bliss." If *rasa* bestows *ananda*, and *rasa* is Brahman, then Brahman must be of the nature of bliss.

In *Taittiriya* III. 6. 1, Brghu Maharsi declares, *anando brahmeti vyajanat*: "Brahman is bliss." Yajnavalkya Muni, speaking in *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad* III. 9. 28, says *vijnanam anandam brahma*: "realization, bliss, Brahman." The personified sacrificial fires tell Upakosala Kamalayana in *Chandogya* IV. 10. 4-5 that *prana*, which denotes Brahman, is of the nature of bliss.

### Brahman is Pure

Since the material happiness of the fallen (*ksara*) living entities brings them into contact with many impurities which in turn cause suffering, we must know that the happiness of Brahman is pure. The Upanisads are emphatic that Brahman is *aksara*, infallible, and thus pure beyond reproach. This is discussed by Yajnavalkya Muni and the female sage Gargi, daughter of Vacaknava, in *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad* III. 8. Saunaka and Angirasas speak of the same pure nature of Brahman in *Mundakopanisad* I. The strong statements of these Upanisads on the infallibility of

Brahman are summed up by Srila Vyasadeva in *Vedanta-sutra* I. 2. 21-24, in the *adhikarana* entitled "Brahman is *aksara*. "

Brahman is the Source of All

Varuna, speaking in *Taittiriya* III. 1. 1, says "That from which all these beings are born, that by which they live and that unto which they enter when they depart this world--seek to perceive that! That is Brahman. " Srila Vyasadeva composed *V-s* 1. 1. 2 (*janmady-asya-yatah*) in reference to this statement of Varuna to Brghu. This same Upanisad indicates that ether, air, fire, water, earth and *purusa*, the soul, are emanations of Brahman. *Mundaka Upanisad* employs the term *bhutayoni*, "the womb of all beings," as an appellation of Brahman and mentions the life airs, the sense organs and the five gross elements as taking birth from Brahman. Declaring that *sat* alone existed before creation, *Chandogya* says that by its will, *sat* generated the universe. *Aitareya* states that *atman* existed alone prior to creation; it thought, "Let me create the world. "

To be continued, starting with Brahman is *Adhara*, the Support of Everything.

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Srila Prabhupada told my Godbrother Brahmananda Prabhu that while HH Bon Maharaja, a *sannyasi* disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, was in Europe in the 1930s on the order of his *guru maharaja*, he was granted an audience with Adolf Hitler. Bon Maharaja was told to wait in a room in what I suppose was the Reich's Chancellery in Berlin. (In 1933 Adolf Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany. It was not clear to Brahmananda Prabhu when this meeting took place, but he assumes it was soon after Hitler assumed this post. )

From his seat in the waiting room Bon Maharaja saw Hitler emerge from a room down a hallway, and then enter another room on the opposite side of the hallway. But he did not see Hitler again. Someone came to Maharaja and informed him that Herr Hitler was occupied by some important matter that obliged him to break the appointment.

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**The Tangible Result  
of that Great Heroic Social Experiment  
in Equal Rights and Social Welfare--  
Late-lamented Communism**

(O where are Marx and Lenin now that we need them more than ever before!)

**Shortage of Women in East Germany Causes Turmoil**

By Erik Kirschbaum

LIEBENTHAL, Germany (Reuters) - A steady exodus of educated women is worsening a gender gap among eastern Germany's young and could be sowing the seeds of social upheaval.

There are now more than 130 men for every 100 women in rural parts of the East and demographic researchers fear the surplus will widen as educated young women continue to leave the former communist region.

Depopulation has long been a problem for the East, but the disproportionate number of women leaving has caused concerns that a dearth of females of child-bearing age will speed the decline and worries about what will happen to the men left behind.

Sociologists and demographic experts studying the phenomenon of a "surplus of men" in the East, as some political leaders prefer to call it, say eastern women seem to find jobs or partners in the wealthier West more easily than eastern men.

"Eastern women seem to be more mobile than men, and tend to have more education and skills," said Harald Michel, director of the Institute for Applied Demography in Berlin that has long been studying the flight of the East's "best and the brightest. "

"Eastern women appear more successful in finding jobs or partners in the West. There are few jobs in the East, so large numbers of men and women go west. But the women tend to settle in the West and never come back while most of the men return. The surplus of men in the East is getting wider all the time. "

#### NO LOVE FOR 'LOVE VALLEY'

"Liebenthal" is the German word for "Love Valley," but there appears to be little affinity among young people for the town of 260 people that lies in a region with a 20 percent unemployment rate 50 miles north of Berlin.

"It's deads-ville here," said Dirk Arndt, 19, who grew up in Liebenthal and is training to become a welder in a nearby town. "It's a totally boring place. There's nothing to do and no place to go. Everyone I know is trying to leave. "

Apart from just one small restaurant on Main Street, there is little for Liebenthal youths to do other than plan their escape. Arndt said Liebenthal was dying and would become a ghost town.

He and his friend Tobias Seeger needed only a few seconds to name the three girls their age who still live in town.

"You never see girls hanging out in Liebenthal because there aren't many left," said 17-year-old Seeger.

For girls a good education is the most promising way to get out.

"I'm going to get out of here as soon as I'm finished with school," said Janine Heiner, 17, from nearby Liebenwalde. She plans to spend a year working as an au pair in the United States to learn English and better her chances of escape.

"There are no jobs here, no money to earn and no future. There's nothing left here. " Heiner hopes to end up in France, Russia or the United States -- anywhere but Liebenthal.

Tina Brotzeit, 16, said there were girls in her school but she rarely saw any of them in town.

"You hardly ever see girls hanging around outside," she said. "Only boys, nothing but boys. "

#### GENDER GAP MAY LEAD TO SOCIAL UNREST

A review of data from the Federal Statistics Office in Weisbaden shows that there are 279,626 more men than women between the ages of 15 and 50 in the five eastern German states -- with the biggest surplus of men (69,605) in the 20 to 25 age group, where there are 481,760 men and 412,165 women.

That is a ratio of nearly 120 men to 100 women for all of the east, but Michel said that the gap is 130 to 100 or even higher in depressed rural regions north of Berlin.

"Imagine the consequences of a third of the male population having no chance of finding a partner," said Michel. "Alcoholism, welfare dependency, poverty -- the ingredients are there for more social tension, extremism and even violence. "

Depopulation has plagued hundreds of towns and cities throughout the ex-communist east. Nearly 2 million people have left since German unification in 1990, mainly because there are no jobs. The East's population is now 15 million and there are more than a million vacant apartments.

The net loss slowed in the mid-1990s but has picked up to about 100,000 each year now. About 300,000 easterners leave the region each year, most in search of jobs, while about 200,000 return.

"The first to take off are young women with skills," said Ulf Matthiesen, researcher at the Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning in Erkner. He has published a controversial paper warning the East was turning into a region of "imbeciles" because of the brain drain.

Recent testing by the Defense Ministry of armed forces recruits aged 18 to 22 seemed to confirm his fears, finding that the language, mathematical and logical thinking skills of eastern men was well below the national average.

Matthiesen said there was a danger that rural regions would one day be occupied only by "village fools without a chance of having families or female partners. "

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **A Timingila Fish?**

#### **Tuning in to a deep sea monster**

June 13, 2002

The "monster" sound was heard on a U. S. Navy system to track Soviet subs

LONDON, England -- Scientists have revealed a mysterious recording that they say could be the sound of a giant beast lurking in the depths of the ocean.

Researchers have nicknamed the strange unidentified sound picked up by undersea microphones "Bloop. "

While it bears the varying frequency hallmark of marine animals, it is far more powerful than the calls made by any creature known on Earth, Britain's New Scientist reported on Thursday.

It is too big for a whale and one theory is that it is a deep sea monster, possibly a many-tentacled giant squid.

In 1997, Bloop was detected by U. S. Navy "spy" sensors 3,000 miles apart that had been put there to detect the movement of Soviet submarines, the magazine reports.

The frequency of the sound meant it had to be much louder than any recognized animal noise, including that produced by the largest whales.

So is it a huge octopus? Although dead giant squid have been washed up on beaches, and tell-tale sucker marks have been seen on whales, there has never been a confirmed sighting of one of the elusive cephalopods in the wild.

The largest dead squid on record measured about 60ft including the length of its tentacles, but no one knows how big the creatures might grow.

For years sailors have told tales of monsters of the deep including the huge, many-tentacled kraken that could reach as high as a ship's mainmast and sink the biggest ships.

However Phil Lobel, a marine biologist at Boston University, Massachusetts, doubts that giant squid are the source of Bloop.

"Cephalopods have no gas-filled sac, so they have no way to make that type of noise," he said. "Though you can never rule anything out completely, I doubt it. "

Scientists from the U. S. 's NOAA have been baffled by the "Bloop" sound. Nevertheless he agrees that the sound is most likely to be biological in origin.

The system picking up Bloop and other strange noises from the deep is a military relic of the Cold War.

In the 1960s the U. S. Navy set up an array of underwater microphones, or hydrophones, around the globe to track Soviet submarines. The network was known as SOSUS, short for Sound Surveillance System.

The listening stations lie hundreds of yards below the ocean surface, at a depth where sound waves become trapped in a layer of water known as the "deep sound channel".

Here temperature and pressure cause sound waves to keep traveling without being scattered by the ocean surface or bottom.

Most of the sounds detected obviously emanate from whales, ships or earthquakes, but some very low frequency noises have proved baffling.

Scientist Christopher Fox of the U. S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Acoustic Monitoring Project at Portland, Oregon, has given the signals names such as Train, Whistle, Slowdown, Upsweep and even Gregorian Chant.

He told New Scientist that most can be explained by ocean currents, volcanic activity -- Upsweep was tracked to an undersea South Pacific mountain that had not been identified as "live. "

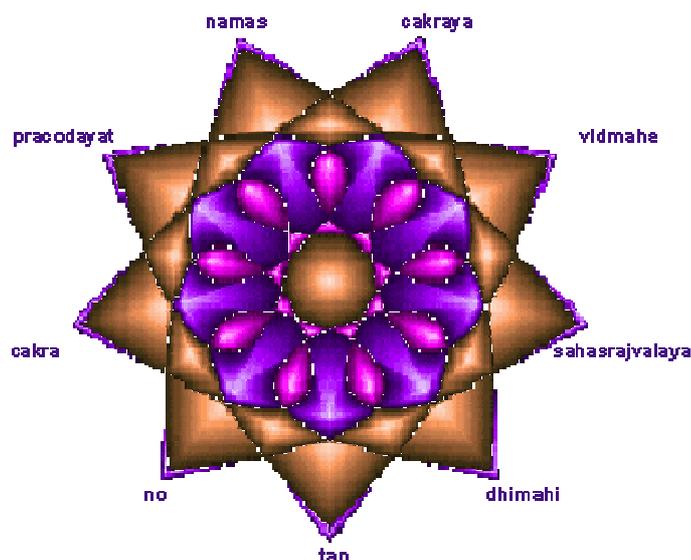
"The sound waves are almost like voice prints. You're able to look at the characteristics of the sound and say: 'There's a blue whale, there's a fin whale, there's a boat, there's a humpback whale and here comes an earthquake,'" he says.

But some sounds remain a mystery he says. Like Bloop -- monster of the deep?

*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 8. 7. 18:

The fish, sharks, tortoises and snakes were most agitated and perturbed. The entire ocean became turbulent, and even the large aquatic animals like whales, water elephants, crocodiles and *timingila* fish [large whales that can swallow small whales] came to the surface. While the ocean was being churned in this way, it first produced a fiercely dangerous poison called *halahala*.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India*  
1 January 2004

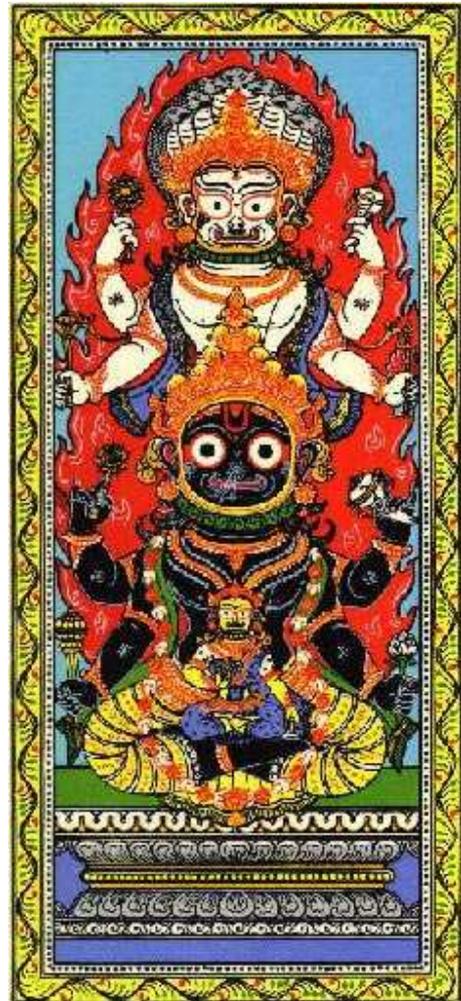


### What the Upanisads Teach Part Three

Brahman is *Adhara*, the Support of Everything.

Uddhalaka Aruni, a *rsi* speaking in the sixth *adhyaya* of *Chandogya Upanisad*, states that all living entities are *san-mulah*, rooted in *sat*, the Supreme Absolute Truth. He furthermore says they are *sadayatanah*, dwelling in *sat*, and they are *satpratisthah*, sheltered in *sat* only.

When Yajnavalkya Muni tells of Brahman as *aksara* in *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*, he says that the sun, moon, heaven and earth are fixed in their positions by the command of *aksara*; the measurements of time like moments, hours, days and so on are fixed by the same command. It is stated in the fourth *adhyaya* of the same *upanisad*, *esa setuh vidharana esam lokanam asambhedaya*: "Brahman is a bridge (*setu*) holding together all the worlds. "



*Jagannath, Baladeva and  
Subhadra in Their Jagat-Narayana*

*Mundaka Upanisad* II. 2. 5 declares: *form*

*yasmin dyauh prthivi catariksam  
otam manah pranasica sarvaih  
tamevaikam janatha atmananam  
anyo vaco vimuncatha  
amrtasy esa setuh*

In Him are woven the sky, the earth and outer space, as well as the mind and all the vital airs; know Him alone as the one *atman* and give up all other talk; He is the bridge to immortality.

It was mentioned in Part One of this series that that *Aitreya Upanisad* states, *prajnanam brahma*, "Brahman is great knowledge. " Furthermore it is said,

*sarvam tat prajna-netram  
prajnane pratisthitam  
prajna netro-lokah  
prajna pratistha*

The great knowledge (of Brahman) is the ground of everything in the universe; it guides the universe; it supports it.

To be continued, starting with Brahman is Antaryami, the Inner Controller

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
2 January 2004*

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Four**

Brahman is Antaryami, the Inner Controller

Chapter 7 of Part III of *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* is called the Antaryami Brahmana. Here Uddhalaka, the son of Aruna, questions Yajnavalkya about the *antaryami*, the inner controller. The sage replies:

This Self of yours who is present within but different from earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body is the earth, and who controls the earth from within--He is the inner controller, the immortal.

The sage then speaks twenty passages that repeat the themes of this one, describing how the Self is the inner controller of water, fire, sky, air, heaven, the sun, the four quarters, the moon and the stars, ether, darkness, light, all living entities, the life-breath, speech, the eye, ear, mind, skin, the individual self, and semen.

These passages of Yajnavalkya Muni are repeated in *Subala Upanisad* with a few changes. One significant addition is that the *antaryami* is referred to as Paramatma. Another addition is this line:

*esa sarvabhutantaratma apahatapapma divyo eko narayanah*

"He is the indwelling Self of all living entities. He is free of all sin. He is the divine One, Narayana. "

*Chandogya Upanisad* proclaims:

*esa ma atma antar-hrdaye*

He is my Self within the heart.

In the second *valli* of *Katha Upanisad*, Yamaraja tells Naciketas:

The Primeval One who is hard to perceive wrapped in mystery, hidden in the cave, residing with the impenetrable depth-- the wise, perceiving Him as God by meditating within, abandon joy and sorrow.

. . . . .

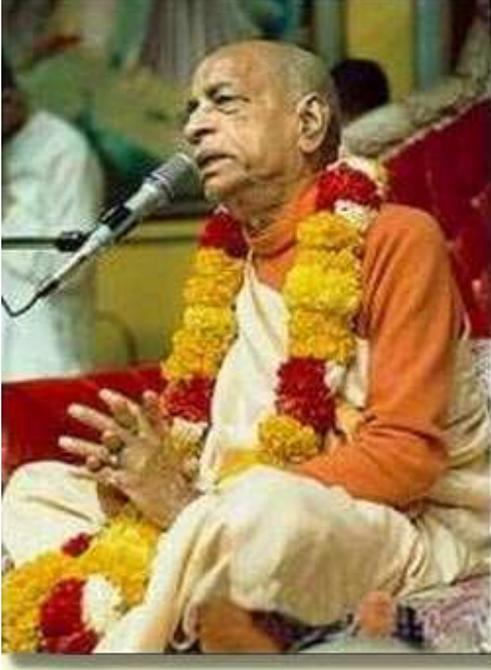
Finer than the finest, larger than the largest, is the Self that lies there hidden in the heart of a living entity. Without desires and free from sorrow, a man perceives by the creator's grace the grandeur of that Self.

This, says the Upanisad, is *sarva-bhuta-antaratma*, the inner Self of all living entities.

*Svetasvatara Upanisad* VI. 11 similarly declares:

*eko devah sarvabhutesu gudhah sarva bhuta antaratma*

The Lord is hidden in all beings as the inner Self of them all.



One might question whether the Upanisads mean to say that the *antaryami* and the individual self are one and the same. The answer is a clear no. Chandogya VI. 3. 2 teaches *anena jivenatmana anupravisya nama rupe vyakaratvani iti*: "Brahman enters into creation *along with the jivatma* in order to manifest material names and forms. " The word *anupravisya* indicates that Brahman associates with matter and the individual souls as their controller. *Taittiriya* III. 29 states, *antah pravistah sasta jananam sarvatma*. In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 8. 79, Srila Prabhupada notes:

In the Vedic hymns also the Supreme Brahman is described as *antah-pravistah sasta*. This indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is controlling everything and entering into everything.

That controller of everything is the *sarvatma*, the Soul of All, distinct from the *jivatama*, the controlled individual soul. Thus when the Upanisads say, "This Self of mine," it is to be understood as meaning the Self residing alongside the soul in the same body Who is the controller of not only that *vyasti* body but all bodies; indeed He is the controller of the *samasti* body of the whole universe. Since the individual self is always controlled by that Supreme Self, he may refer to Him as "this Self of mine," which means "this Self of my self. "

To be continued, starting with Brahman is Isvara

\* \* \* \* \*

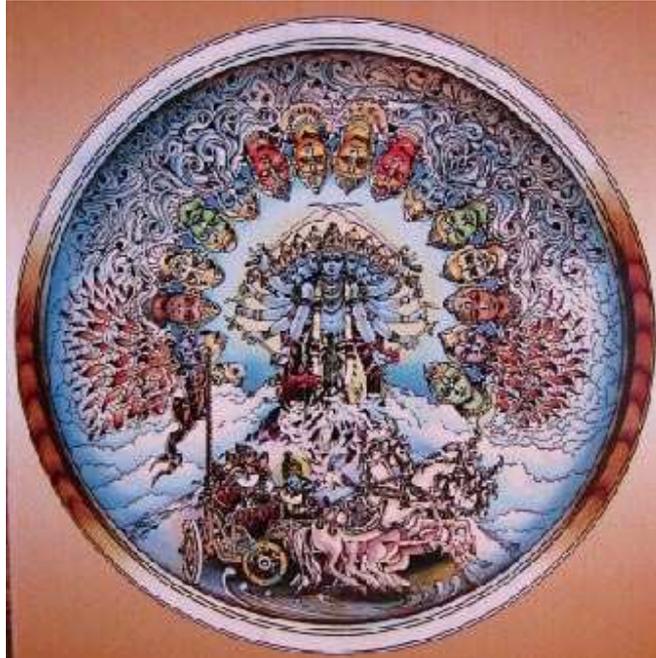
#### A Selection from *Mahabharata Karna Parva*

Maharaja Yudhisthira had been frequently wounded while repeatedly fighting with Karna, and at last, due to feeling severe pain, he retreated to some distance so that he could rest and recuperate. Duryodhana then went to Karna and pleaded, "O commander of my forces, now is the time for you to either defeat the Pandavas once and for all, or else attain heaven by dying on the battlefield!"

Overhearing this, Ashvattama responded to this fervent appeal by vowing, "O King, I hereby pledge to kill Dhrishtadyumna this very day without fail!"

Karna and the others also made heroic speeches, and so the Kaurava warriors became very enlivened and once again prepared to launch an all-out attack on the Pandava army. A very dreadful battle then took place, and at that time, the Apsaras showered celestial flowers, causing the cool breezes to become very fragrantly scented. But, this could hardly detract the warriors' attention from the ghastly battle scene that was permeated with blood and ghastly screams of anguish.

At this time, Arjuna became very anxious about Maharaja Yudhishthira and so he requested Lord Krishna to take him to where the Pandava and Kaurava armies were massacring each other. While going, Lord Krishna very poetically described to Arjuna the vast panorama of the battlefield as follows. The Lord said, "O son of Kunti, just see all of the bow and quiver that have fallen from the hands and shoulders of the slain warriors! Look at how many arrows, ivory-handled swords, and gold-embossed shields are strewn about here and there, as well as innumerable darts, spears, maces and axes. So many slain soldiers are still clutching their weapons, thus giving the appearance that they are still alive. "



"Thousands upon thousands of *Universal Form with Arjuna* men are lying dead here, their heads and limbs having been smashed by heavy maces or else mangled by rampaging elephants. Behold all of the severed arms that are so nicely decorated with sandalwood paste, the fallen heads that are bedecked with costly earrings, and the headless trunks all smeared over with blood. How many chariots are smashed to pieces, and how many horses are killed with hundreds of arrows sticking all over their bodies!"

"Just see the elephants, as huge as hills, lying dead with their tongues hanging out. Some of the whips and goads, bedecked with glittering jewels, are strewn here and there, while others remain in the hands of the slain drivers. "

"Arjuna, the entire Earth is muddied with blood, and from out of the mire stares the faces of the slain soldiers. The ground is spotted with the sparkling of countless jewels that had fallen from the royal crowns and ornaments of slain kings, and thus it gives the appearance of the starry sky at night. Just see how many soldiers are lying wounded, crying out in pain. Many of the dying warriors are surrounded by their bitterly weeping relatives. Some of their kinsmen are running to fetch water to fulfill the dying request of those warriors that are parched with thirst, and still others have died while clutching a water glass in their hands. Some relatives have returned with water, only to find that their loved ones have already left this world for the next. Because of this, they are throwing the water aside as if deprived of their reason on account of unbearable grief. "

After describing the dreadful battlefield scene to Arjuna, Lord Krishna went to where the Pandava warriors were combating with the Kauravas. While fighting an intense duel with Dhrishtadyumna, Karna simultaneously held all of the other Pandava

warriors in check with his continuous shower of arrows. Karna then released a very powerful arrow in the hopes of killing Dhrishtadyumna, but Satyaki broke it as it soared through the air. Highly enraged, Karna turned to fight with Satyaki, and so Ashvattama rushed at Dhrishtadyumna, desiring to avenge the death of his father.

After a frantic duel, Ashvattama broke Dhrishtadyumna's bow and then proceeded to destroy his chariot. Dhrishtadyumna picked up a sword and shield, but Ashvattama smashed them to pieces before he could even dismount. After that, Ashvattama pierced Dhrishtadyumna with many arrows, and yet, even though he was in such a vulnerable position, the Panchala prince remained undisturbed. Ashvattama thus concluded that his foe could not be killed by ordinary arrows and so he put aside his bow and rushed impetuously at him.

When Lord Krishna saw this, He urged on His horses while commanding Arjuna to come to Dhrishtadyumna's rescue. Seeing Arjuna approach, Ashvattama wanted to quickly put an end to Dhrishtadyumna and so he darted forward and grabbed him. Then, as Ashvattama dragged Dhrishtadyumna down from his disabled chariot, Arjuna pierced him with many arrows so that at last he was forced to release his grip. Ashvattama hurriedly remounted his chariot and picked up his bow to face Arjuna. At this time, Sahadeva came and whisked away Dhrishtadyumna, while Arjuna pierced Ashvattama in the shoulder with a very powerful arrow, making him faint onto the floor of his chariot. Then, as Ashvattama's driver took him away to safety, Maharaja Yudhisthira reentered the battlefield.

Seeing this, Duryodhana and the other Kaurava warriors made a great rush at the Pandava King, in the hopes of taking him captive. Numerous warriors then came to Yudhisthira's aid, but Karna drove them all off as he proceeded toward the Pandava King. When Karna attacked Yudhisthira very forcefully, the King soon became severely wounded. While sitting down on his chariot, Maharaja Yudhisthira ordered his driver to beat a hasty retreat. The Dhartarashtras chased Yudhisthira, hoping to capture him, but Bhima intervened to check them.

Then, as Maharaja Yudhisthira proceeded on toward the Pandava camp, accompanied by Nakula and Sahadeva, Karna once again came to attack. The twins rushed to check Karna, but the Suta's son still managed to kill Yudhisthira's horses and knock the crown off his head. Karna then broke Nakula's bow and killed his horses, and so both he and Yudhisthira had to get onto Sahadeva's chariot.

Upon seeing the plight of these three Pandavas, Shalya became compassionate and said, "Karna, why are you unnecessarily wasting your arrows and tiring your horses in this way? It would be better for you to immediately go and fight with Arjuna. "

Karna ignored these words, however, and he continued to pierce Yudhisthira very seriously with his arrows, making him turn away from the fight. In fact, Karna was determined to kill Yudhisthira, but then, just as he was prepared to rush at him, Shalya pointed out how Duryodhana had fallen into great difficulty while fighting with Bhima. When Karna saw that the Kaurava King was really in a precarious position, he gave up fighting with Yudhisthira and quickly proceeded to his rescue.

Maharaja Yudhisthira then continued on, overwhelmed by shame and sorrow, and after arriving at the Pandava camp, he sat down on his bed so that the arrows

sticking in his body could be extracted. Yudhisthira then ordered Nakula and Sahadeva to return to the battlefield to assist Bhima.

Meanwhile, Ashvattama returned to attack Arjuna with renewed enthusiasm, and the fighting that took place was exceedingly dreadful. Ashvattama was able to counter all of Arjuna's celestial weapons. Indeed, even when Arjuna managed to kill his driver, Ashvattama picked up the reins and continued to afflict the two Krishnas while simultaneously guiding his chariot. But, at last, Arjuna cut off the harnesses and reins of Ashvattama's horses, and because of this, the afflicted steeds carried Drona's son far away from the scene of battle. The Pandava army became greatly enlivened upon seeing Arjuna's victory, and so they proceeded to route the Kauravas, despite Karna's attempts to retaliate.

Duryodhana then went to Karna and begged him to do something that would save his faltering forces. After thinking over the matter momentarily, Karna fixed a powerful Bhargava weapon onto his bowstring, and at once, millions of arrows began to flow forth in steady streams. Within moments, thousands of Panchala warriors fell down dead onto the battlefield, while all those that survived fearfully cried out for Bhima and Arjuna to save them.

In response, Arjuna was immediately ready to attack Karna, but Lord Krishna restrained him by saying, "O son of Kunti, Maharaja Yudhisthira has been wounded by Karna and so your first duty is to find him and make sure that he is alright. After doing this, you can fight with Karna. "

Arjuna could not see Maharaja Yudhisthira anywhere on the battlefield, however, and so he went to Bhima and inquired about him. Bhima then said, "My dear brother, after being wounded in battle, Yudhisthira fled from the fight. In fact, because Karna was chasing him, I really do not know if he is still alive or not. "

Arjuna replied, "O Bhima, please go quickly and look for Yudhisthira. Perhaps he has returned to our camp. "

But, Bhima pleaded, "My dear Arjuna, you should go and search for Yudhisthira. If I were to do so, then people would call me a coward for leaving the battlefield. "

Thereafter, when Lord Krishna and Arjuna arrived at the Pandava camp, they found Yudhisthira lying down on his bed. Being overjoyed just to see that he was still alive, Lord Krishna and Arjuna bowed down at the King's feet. Seeing Arjuna before him, Maharaja Yudhisthira assumed that he must have come to tell him of how he had killed Karna. Thus, with great happiness, the King said, "O Arjuna, Karna humiliated me so greatly, right in the presence of my protectors. I am so happy that you have killed the wicked Suta's son at last!"

"My dear brother, for thirteen long years I could not sleep properly at night, nor could I enjoy anything freely during the day, because of great fear of Karna. Indeed, all of these years, my heart continually burned with intense hatred for Karna. Now, tell me exactly how you had managed to kill Karna, so that I can relish every word. "

Arjuna replied, "My dear Yudhisthira, up until now I have been fully engaged in fighting with Ashvattama and so I have had no time for Karna. With your blessings

and permission, however, I will certainly relieve your burning heart by killing him this very day without fail. "

When Maharaja Yudhishthira heard that Karna was still alive, he became almost deranged due to extreme disappointment. Becoming exceedingly agitated, he then chastised Arjuna by saying, "What! How could you be such a coward and leave Bhima all alone to fight with Karna? Now I can see that all of the hopes that we had placed in you during our years of exile were futile because you are too afraid to face Karna in battle. It seems that even demigods speak lies, for on the seventh day after your birth, a voice from the sky had announced that you would perform heroic deeds in the future. "

"O Arjuna, if you are too afraid to fight with Karna, then you should give your Gandiva bow to someone else who can utilize it better. In fact, it would have been better if you had come out of Kunti" womb five months after conception as a miscarriage rather than a coward who has left the battlefield!"

Arjuna heatedly replied, "O Krishna, long ago I made a secret vow to behead anyone who would even suggest that I give away my Gandiva bow. It is for this reason that I will now kill Yudhishthira and thus pay off my debt to Truth. "

Lord Krishna then strongly chastised his friend by saying, "Arjuna, you speak so self-righteously but you actually do not know what is true morality. According to shastra, it is highly virtuous to tell a lie for the purpose of saving a life, especially that of a king or a brahmana. Lying is also meritorious when used to save one's wealth from danger, or for obtaining a woman's hand in marriage. Indeed, if truth is upheld at the cost of someone's life, then it is the greatest untruth and unrighteousness. "

"My dear Arjuna, in this regard I will tell you what had once happened to the learned sage Kaushika. "

Kaushika Rishi lived at a holy place that was situated at the confluence of several rivers. This great sage came to be highly celebrated for having made a vow to speak the truth in all circumstances and at all times.

One day, some people entered the forest where Kaushika lived while fearfully fleeing from a band of dacoits that were chasing them. As they searched for their victims, these criminals came upon Kaushika and so they inquired of their whereabouts from him. The truthful rishi then pointed out the path that these innocent people had taken, and so, as a result, the dacoits were quickly able to find them. After plundering all of their possessions, the dacoits killed these unfortunate people, and for the sin of telling the truth when lying would have been virtuous, Kaushika had to enter the hellish planets after death and suffer there for many years.

Lord Krishna then asked, "Now, my dear Arjuna, what do you think is the proper course of action in this case?"

Arjuna replied, "My dear Krishna, I must admit that if I were to kill my elder brother, then I would not be able to remain living in this world for even a moment longer. Therefore, my dear Lord, I request You to provide a solution to my dilemma. Kindly allow me to keep my vow intact, and at the same time save Yudhishthira's life. "

Lord Krishna then said, "Arjuna, Maharaja Yudhisthira is very tired, aggrieved and pained by his wounds. It is for this reason alone that he had spoken to you so harshly. Actually, he was only trying to provoke you to kill Karna and thus bring this ghastly war to a close. Now, because disrespect is equivalent to death for one that has always been honored, I suggest that you show some slight disregard for Yudhisthira in order to keep your vow intact. This can be accomplished if you simply address him as 'you' instead of the formal 'your honor'. "

But, in response, Arjuna spoke very harshly, saying, "O King, Bhima may have the right to criticize me, for he is an unretreating hero that has killed many, many thousands of warriors in battle. You have not such right, however, especially while lying here on Draupadi's bed after having fearfully fled from the battlefield. "

"Frankly speaking, I am not very enthusiastic to fight for the purpose of regaining the kingdom that you had foolishly lost by gambling. Because of your addiction to dice, you have plunged your entire family into the depths of misery. And yet, you still have the nerve to ask us to fight so that you can take back the kingdom that you had stupidly lost. And, as if this were not enough, you are such an ungrateful wretch that you want to criticize me for no reason. "

Arjuna was very softhearted by nature and thus he was afraid of deviating from the path of virtue. Therefore, after speaking to his elder brother so harshly, Arjuna became horribly depressed. Then, having become plunged into an ocean of despair, Arjuna suddenly unsheathed his sword, and so with great surprise, Lord Krishna asked, "O son of Kunti, what is it that you intend to do?"

Arjuna replied, "I am going to kill myself, for I cannot bear to go on living after having acted so abominably. "

Lord Krishna then said, "My dear Arjuna, by committing suicide, you will sink down into an even lower hell than that which you would have had to go to for killing your elder brother. Instead, I suggest that you kill yourself by boasting of your own glories, for to become too puffed-up with false pride is in itself spiritual suicide. "

Accepting this advice, Arjuna bragged, "O Krishna, I have already single-handedly killed half of the Kaurava army while my impotent brothers and allies have more or less stood aside as spectators. Now, it is my solemn promise that I will kill Karna this very day and thus prove that I am not merely a heroic talker. "

After saying this, Arjuna put his sword back into its sheath. Then, with folded hands and his head hanging down in shame, Arjuna begged forgiveness from Maharaja Yudhisthira and assured him that he would quickly return to the battlefield to fight with Karna. Finally, after touching his elder brother's feet, Arjuna prepared to depart, and at this time, Maharaja Yudhisthira got up from his bed.

While following Arjuna, the King very despondently condemned himself by saying, "My dear brother, I am such a cruel wretch and a coward. I do not deserve the association of such noble persons as you, nor am I qualified to act as the emperor of the world. Therefore, instead of continuing my false show of being a pious ruler, I will retire to the forest. After defeating the Kauravas, Bhima can be installed upon the royal throne and thus rule over the Earth. "

After saying this, Maharaja Yudhisthira actually began to leave for the forest. Lord Krishna then came and bowed down at his feet while pacifying him with sweet words. The Lord said, "O King, Arjuna spoke to you so harshly only because I had instructed him to do so. This was his way of preserving his vow to kill anyone who would even suggest that he give away his Gandiva bow. "

"My dear Yudhisthira, I promise you without a doubt that Arjuna will kill Karna today. Please give up your grief. "

Maharaja Yudhisthira became pacified by Lord Krishna's words. In fact, the Lord had fallen down at his feet and so Maharaja Yudhisthira picked Him up while saying, "My dear Krishna, both Arjuna and I have certainly acted very foolishly. But, You have saved us with Your good advice and thus once again, You have proved that You are our eternal protector. "

Lord Krishna could understand that Arjuna was still depressed on account of his offensive behavior. Therefore, He said, "O son of Kunti, do not give way to despondency. Just think about how you would feel if you had actually killed your elder brother, instead of merely insulting him. Now, go and worship Yudhisthira and then we will fight with Karna and kill him. That will certainly bring the King the greatest joy and satisfaction. "

Arjuna then went and fell onto the ground, touching his head to Maharaja Yudhisthira's feet. While shedding profuse tears, Arjuna remorsefully begged for forgiveness again and again, and in response, Yudhisthira raised him up and embraced him with great affection. Both brothers then cried aloud for some time, and in this way, they were relieved of their excessive grief.

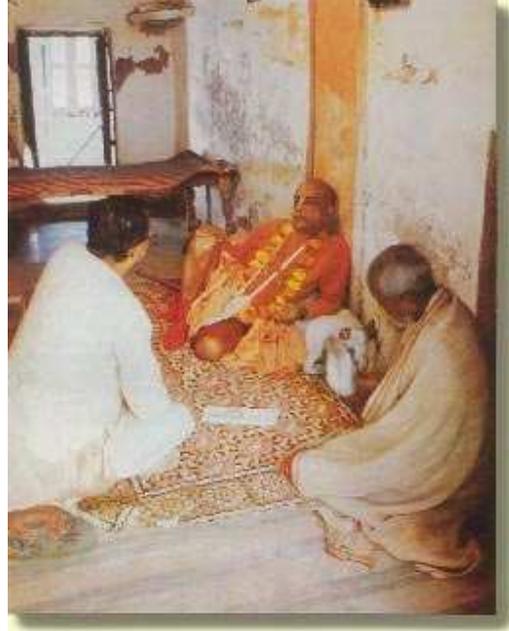
*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
3 January 2004*

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Five**

Brahman is Isvara, the Supreme Controller

Throughout the Upanisads we find names like Isa, Isvara, Isana, Sarvesvara, Mahesvara and Vaisvanara. All confirm that Brahman is the supreme controller. The texts in which these names appear do not assign them to Saguna Brahman only, as opposed to Nirguna Brahman. It is the theory of the impersonalists that Isvara is not Brahman *per se* but rather a personification of the highest grade of the material mode of goodness. That is Saguna Brahman; but the *real* Brahman is *nirguna*, so the Mayavadis say, and it is completely disassociated from the affairs of the universe. But *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*, which is supposed to be the most monistic Upanisad of all, declares *atma* (the Supreme Soul) to be *sarvesam bhutanam adhipatih* (the ruler of all beings) and *sarvesam bhutanam raja* (the king of all beings). (*Br. U. II. 5. 15*) In IV. 4. 22 of the same *upanisad* we find Brahman to be the controller of all (*sarvasya vasi*), the ruler of all (*sarvasya isanah*) and the Lord of all (*sarvasya adhipatih*).

A section of *Chandogya Upanisad* is dedicated to *vaisvanara-vidya*. In it the sage Asvapati Kaikeya instructs five householder sages on how to properly meditate upon Vaisvanara. And what is Vaisvanara? Srila Vyasadeva makes that clear in *sutra* 1. 2. 25 of the Vedanta: *vaisvanarah sadharana sabda visesat*--"The word *vaisvanara* denotes Brahman because of its special properties. " Therefore Vaisnavara cannot possibly refer to the *jiva*. *Chandogya* V. 18 explains that the word is derived from *visvanara*, which means "He who is the ruler of all human beings" (*visvesam naranam netara*) and "He who is the soul of all" (*visvesam ayam narah*). The conclusion is inescapable: Brahman is directly Isvara. The theory that Isvara is only the topmost evolute of matter is not supported by the Upanisads.



*Svetasvatara Upanisad* is most explicit in this regard: *sarvasya prabhu isana; vasi sarvasya lokasya sthavarasya carasya ca*: "Brahman is the Lord and ruler;" "He is the controller of all the moving and non-moving entities in the world. " (*Svet. U* III. 17, 18) Other verses of this Upanisad declare *isvaranam paramam mahesvaram*, "He is the Lord of lords;" *devatanam paramam daivatam*, "He is God among the demigods;" *patinam paramam patim*, "He is the Leader of leaders;" *na tasya kascit patirasti loke no ca isita*, "No one within the universe is master to Him, nor does anyone rule over Him. "

*Srila Prabhupada meeting friends at his bhajana kutira at the Radha Damodara Temple*

Brahman is Purusa, the Personality of Godhead

In Sanskrit, *purusa* means "one who dwells in the body. " Thus it is applied to both soul and Supersoul. When the Upanisads employ this word as an appellation of Brahman, the meaning is that the Supreme is a person and His body is transcendental.

*Brhadaranyaka*, favorite Upanisad of the Mayavadis, states *atmaiva idam agra asit purusavidhah*--"Before creation there was only Brahman in the form of a person. " (*Br. U. I. 4. 1*) *Brahmana* 3 of *adhyaya* II of *Brhadaranyaka* is known as Murta-Amurta Brahmana; here two appearances of Brahman are discussed. *Murta* means corporeal and temporary and *amurta* means incorporeal and eternal. Verses II. 3. 5-6 constitute a description of the *amurta* Brahman. He is called *purusa*, a person. This person appears golden, or white like a white lotus or wool, or iridescent red, or like a flame, or like a flash of lightning.

*Chandogya Upanisad* I. 6. 6 describes Brahman as *hiranmayah purusah*--"the Golden Person. " He has eyes like a red lotus. He is risen above all sin; one who knows Him rises above all sin. That the Purusa has a form, and is sinless, means that His form is not material. *Adhyaya* IV of this *upanisad* instructs the meditation upon *aksipurusa*,

the Person in the eye. He is said there to be the Self (*atma*), immortal (*amrta*), and fearless (*abhaya*). *Etad brahma*: "He is Brahman," the Brahman who is *vamani* (bestower of blessings to all) and who illuminates all the worlds (*bhamani*).

*Sadviya* (knowledge of eternity) is the subject matter of *adhyaya* VI of *Chandogya Upanisad*. Here Uddhalaka Aruni instructs his son Svetaketu about Brahman. He describes that Brahman as *devata*, a Deity possessed of *jnana*, knowledge, and *sakti*, power.

*Mundaka Upanisad adhyaya* II is a glorification of the Purusa. About His abode and He Himself, the *upanisad* sings:

There the sun does not shine  
nor the moon and the stars  
There lightning does not shine  
of the common fire need we speak

Him alone, as He shines, do all things reflect  
this whole world radiates with His light.

The next *adhyaya* of this *upanisad* clearly distinguishes between the Supreme Purusa and the individual soul who is also called *purusa*. The example of two birds in the tree of the body is given. One eats, the other watches.



*The Deity of Dhamesvara Mahaprabhu, the form worshiped by Srimati Visnupriya-devi after He took*

*sannyasa.*

Stuck on that very same tree  
one person grieves, deluded  
by her who is not the Lord;  
But when he sees the other,  
the contented Lord--and His majesty--  
his grief disappears.

When the seer sees that Person  
the golden-colored, the creator, the Lord,  
as the womb of Brahman  
Then, shaking off the good and the bad,  
the wise man becomes spotless  
and attains the highest identity.

*Sri Isopanisad* 16 proclaims:

*pusann ekarse yama surya prajapatya  
vyuha rasmin samuha tejo  
yat te rupam kalyanatamam tat te pasyami  
yo 'sav asau purusah so 'ham asmi*

O my Lord, O primeval philosopher, maintainer of the universe, O regulating principle, destination of the pure devotees, well-wisher of the progenitors of mankind--please remove the effulgence of Your transcendental rays so that I can see Your form of bliss. You are the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead, like unto the sun, as am I.

*Te rupam kalyanatamam* means that the Purusa's form is most auspicious.

*Prasna Upanisad* V. 6-7 distinguishes between Brahman as a Person and the individual soul as a person by referring to the former as *parama purusa*--the Supreme Person. He is *santa*, peaceful; *ajara*, ageless; *amrta*, immortal, and *abhaya*, fearless.

*Svetasvatara Upanisad* presents verses that are quoted by Srila Prabhupada in *Bhagavad-gita As it Is*.

It is stated in the Vedic language (in the *Svetasvatara Upanisad* 1. 12), *bhokta bhogyam preritaram ca matva/sarvam proktam tri vidham-brahmam etat*. There are three Brahman conceptions: *prakrti* is Brahman as the field of activities, and the *jiva* (individual soul) is also Brahman and is trying to control material nature, and the controller of both of them is also Brahman, but He is the factual controller. [Bg 13. 3p]

In the same place this *upanisad* describes the *preritara* (controller-Brahman) as *deva* (Supreme God), *isa* (ruler) and *purusa* (Supreme Person).

In the purport to *Bhagavad-gita* 7. 7 we find this, a quotation of *Svetasvatara Upanisad* 3. 8. 9:

*vedaham etam purusam mahantam  
aditya-varnam tamasah parastat  
tam eva vidvan ati mrtyum eti  
nanyah pantha vidyate 'yanaya  
yasmat param naparam asti kincid  
yasman naniyo no jyayo 'sti kincit  
vrksa iva stabdho divi tisthaty ekas  
tenedam purnam purusena sarvam*

"I know that Supreme Personality of Godhead who is transcendental to all material conceptions of darkness. Only he who knows Him can transcend the bonds of birth and death. There is no way for liberation other than this knowledge of that Supreme Person.

There is no truth superior to that Supreme Person, because He is the supermost. He is smaller than the smallest, and He is greater than the greatest. He is situated as a silent tree, and He illumines the transcendental sky, and as a tree spreads its roots, He spreads His extensive energies. "

*Mahanarayana Upanisad* II. 93 brings all these indications of the personality of Brahman to an unambiguous conclusion:

*narayana parama brahma tattvam narayanah parah  
narayanah paro jyotih atma narayanah parah*

Narayana is the Supreme Brahman. Narayana is the Supreme Truth. Narayana is the Supreme Light. Narayana is the Paramatma.

*Katha Upanisad* affirms that the Purusa is Lord Visnu, in these verses that are quoted by Srila Prabhupada in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 15. 41:

This is confirmed in the *Katha Upanisad* (1. 3. 3-4,9) as follows:

*atmanam rathinam viddhi  
sariram ratham eva ca  
buddhim tu sarathim viddhi  
manah pragraham eva ca  
indriyani hayan ahur  
visayams tesu gocaran  
so 'dhvanah param apnoti  
tad visnoh paramam padam*

The soul is the occupant of the chariot of the body, of which the driver is the intelligence. The mind is the determination to reach the destination, the senses are the horses, and the sense objects are also included in that activity. Thus one can reach the destination, Visnu, who is paramam padam, the supreme goal of life. In conditioned life the consciousness in the body is the cause of bondage, but the same consciousness, when transformed into Krsna consciousness, becomes the cause for one's returning home, back to Godhead.

To be continued, starting with Brahman and its Attributes.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
4 January 2004



*satyam jnanam anantam  
brahma-sivadi-stutam bhajad-  
rupam  
govindam tam acintyam  
hetum adosam namasyamah*

Lord Govinda is the Supreme Brahman, the absolute transcendental reality. He is transcendental knowledge. He is the original cause of all causes. He is limitless and faultless. Lord Siva and all the demigods praise Him. The devotees worship His

transcendental form. We offer our respectful obeisances unto Him.

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Six**

#### Brahman and its Attributes

As we have seen, the Upanisads attribute to Brahman the overarching characteristics of *satyam jnanam anantam*. *Ananda* is a fourth essential attribute. The Upanisads assign further attributes to Brahman according to distinct functions: *jagatkaranatva* (cosmic creativity), *isvaratva* (lordship over all), *antaryamitva* (immanent control), *adharatva* (foundational reality), and so on.

These attributes are discussed within two frames of reference: positive and negative. Terms like *sarvajnah* (all-knowing), *sarvakarmah* (performing all activities), *sarvakamah* (full of desires), *sarvagandhah* (possessing all fragrance), *sarvarasah* (possessing all sweetness) and *satyasankalpah* (whose desires are always fulfilled) are positive affirmations of Brahman's transcendental, personal nature. In the negative frame of reference are terms like *adrseya* (invisible), *asthula* (not gross), *niskriya* (without activities) and *nirguna* (without qualities).

It is important to note that the Upanisads apply such positive and negative attributes to the same one Brahman. The Mayavadi theory is that the positive attributes belong to Saguna Brahman, the negative to a *different* Brahman which is *nirguna* and therefore the "real" Brahman. Unfortunately for this theory, the Upanisads themselves do not speak of a "real" Brahman that is entirely absent of positive attributes. We saw yesterday that even *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad*, the one that the Mayavadis hold tightest to themselves, declares the *amurta* Brahman (incorporeal eternal Brahman) to be a person whose form is golden, or white, or iridescent red, like a flame, or like a flash of lightning.

Many other examples could be given. So as not to lengthen this article unnecessarily, I will limit myself to quoting from Srila Prabhupada's *Caitanya-caritamṛta* class in Gorakhpur on 13 February 1971.

In the *Svetasvatara Upanisad* there is statement, impersonally, but referring to the person, transcendental person. The *mantra* is like this, *apani-pado javano grahita pasyaty acaksuh sa srnoty akarnah, sa vetti vedyam na ca tasyasti vetta tam ahur agryam purusam mahantam. Purusam. Purusam* means person, but the Vedic *mantra* begins, *apani-pada*: "Person, but has no leg and no hand. "

There are two kinds of statements. That He is person, *purusa, mahanta*, the greatest person, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He is a person, but *apani-pada*, but He has no legs and no hands. So how is that? A person has no legs and no hands, and still, He accepts whatever we offer? Just like Krsna says, *tad aham asnami, bhaktya upahrtam asnami*: "Anyone who offers Me anything," *patram puspam phalam toyam*, "with devotion," *bhaktya*. . . The very word is *bhaktya*. That means Krsna is transcendental person, and the Vedic *mantra* confirms.

When the Vedic *mantra* says, *apani-pada*, "no hands, no legs," that is not impersonal. "Person, but His hands and legs are not like us," that is *apani-pada*. Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains that. *Apani-pada sruti varje prakrta pani-carana*: "When the Vedic *mantra* says that 'The Absolute Truth has no legs and no hands,' that means that the Personality of Godhead's hands and legs are not material. " That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's explanation.

*Apani-pada sruti veda-mantra, varje prakrta pani-carana, na kahe sikhra cale kare sarva grahana*. "And although the Vedic *mantra* says that 'The Absolute Truth has no legs, no hands,' still, it confirms, that 'He can accept whatever you offer, and He can walk more speedily than anyone. ' Then He walks. At the same time, He has no legs. And He accepts your offering. He has no hands. "

What does it mean? Apparently it is contradictory. If He has no leg, then how He can walk more speedily than anyone? These are Vedic *mantras*. "Nobody can capture Him. He is walking so speedily. " But if He has no leg, how He is walking? But that, Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains that *varje prakrta pani-carana*: "This means that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has no material body. " In the *Kurma Purana* it is said that the Supreme Personality, the Parabrahman, has no distinction between His body and self. There is no. . . Absolute means there is no duality as we have got duality--I am, the soul, and this body, they are different.

Therefore *sastra* says, *yasyatma-buddhih kunape tri-dhatuke*: "If anyone accepts this body as self. . . " This body is made of three *dhatu*s: *kapha, pitta, vayu*. I am not this. And *Bhagavad-gita* also says, *dehino'smin yatha dehi kaumaram yauvanam jara, tatha dehantara-praptih. So dehi. Dehi* means possessor of this body, the owner of this body. So owner of this body is different from this body. But in case of Krsna or Visnu-*tattva*, there is no such difference, the self and the body, no difference. That is confirmed in the *Kurma Purana*.

Unfortunately the Mayavadis, they, either due to their poor fund of knowledge of the *sastras* or by their whims, they say that "Krsna or Visnu when comes, or the Absolute Truth when He descends, He assumes, He accepts, a material body. " That is not the fact. Krsna says, *sambhavamy atma-mayaya*. It is not that Krsna accepts a material body. No. Krsna has no such distinction, material world. Therefore Krsna says, *avajananti mam mudha manusim tanum asritam*: "Because I present myself, descend Myself as a human being, the *mudhas*, or the rascals, they think of Me or deride at Me. " The Mayavadis, they will never worship the transcendental form of

the Lord. They'll not worship. They will worship the imperson. And Krsna has said, *kleso adhikataras tesam avyaktyasakta-cetasam*. Of course, impersonal, personal, is the same Absolute Truth. But if you try to reach the Absolute Truth through His impersonal attachment, then it will be more troublesome.

To be continued, starting with Brahman is the Absolute Truth



Puri boat pastime

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
5 January 2004*



*visvam bibharti nihsvam yah  
karunyad eva deva-rat  
mamasau paramanando  
govindas tanutam ratim*

I pray that Lord Govinda, the supremely blissful king of the demigods, who mercifully maintains this pathetic material world, may give me pure love for Him.

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Seven**

Brahman is the Absolute Truth

The root of the English word absolute comes from the Latin *absolutus*, meaning "the perfect" or "completed." The term was introduced into Western philosophy in the fifteenth century by Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464). The Absolute is the ultimate, underlying and all-inclusive reality that depends upon nothing else for its existence. All other things depend upon it. At the same time, the Absolute is independent of

and unrelated to anything else.

Five hundred years ago the Absolute was a new idea to Europeans. But in India, thousands of years earlier, it had been taught in Isopanisd 5:

*tad antar asya sarvasya  
tad u sarvasyasya bahyatah*

He is within everything, and yet He is outside of everything.

This means that Brahman, at one and the same time, is both transcendental and immanent. As the Immanent (*antarasya sarvasya*--"within all of this"), He is the underlying reality upon which all other things have their foundation. As the Transcendent (*sarvasyasya bahyatah*--"external to all of this"), He is independent of and unrelated to anything else.

The Mayavadis propose to separate these two interlocking aspects of the Absolute. The Immanent, they argue, is Saguna Brahman, which--as noted in earlier parts of this series--is at the end of the day not really Brahman at all. The Transcendent they would have as the real Absolute Truth: Nirguna Brahman. But by definition--both in the East and the West--the Absolute Truth absent of immanency is not absolute.

*indriyebhyah parah-artha arthebhyasca param manah  
manasastu para buddhih buddheh atma mahan parah*

*mahatah param-avyaktam avyaktat purusah parah  
purusan na param kincit sa katha sa paragatih*

The sense objects are higher than the mind (since the senses are disturbed by the presence of sense objects). The mind is higher than the senses (since even when the senses are detached from objects, the mind can conjure up the objects in thought). Higher than the mind is buddhi, intelligence (because without determination, the mind is helpless). *Mahan-atma* is more important than *buddhi*. [Sripad Ramanujacarya takes *mahan-atma* to mean the individual soul; Sripad Madhvacarya takes it to mean Hiranyagarbha--but besides being a name of Garbhodakasayi Visnu, Hiranyagarbha is a name of Brahma, so in that way too it may refer to the *jiva*. ] Greater than *mahan-atma* is *avyakta*, the unmanifest *prakrti*. Greater than *avyakta* is the Supreme Purusa, the Personality of Godhead. Higher than Him, there is nothing. [*Katha Upanisad* I. 3. 10-11]

In these verses the transcendence of the Supreme Purusa is established. Now, these two verses are repeated in only slightly altered form in the second *adhyaya* of the same *upanisad* (II. 3. 7-8).

*indriyebhyah param mano manasah sattvam uttamam  
sattvad adhi mahan atma mahato 'vyaktam uttamam*

*avyaktat tu parah puruso vyapako 'linga eva ca  
yam jnatva mucyate jantur amrtatvam ca gacchati*

Higher than the senses is the mind, higher than the mind is the mode of goodness. Higher than the mode of goodness is the *mahan-atma*, and higher than that is the unmanifest.

Higher than the unmanifest is the Supreme Purusa who is all-pervading and without a gross or subtle body. Knowing Him, one is liberated and attains immortality.

No doubt the *same* Supreme Purusa is described in each couplet of verses. No doubt He is transcendental to sense objects, senses, mind, intelligence, mode of goodness, individual soul, and the unmanifest. And no doubt the *same* Supreme Purusa is immanent: the word *vyapakah*, seen above, is also found in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (7. 7. 19) translated by Srila Prabhupada as "spreading throughout the body in the form of consciousness. " As the individual soul's consciousness spreads through his own *vyasti* body, so the Supreme Soul's consciousness spreads through the total *samasti* body of the universe.

Here the Mayavadis will jump in to exult, "Yes, this is the correct philosophy! That consciousness spreading through the body of the universe is Saguna Brahman! But because that Brahman accepts a material body, it is not the highest Brahman. " Sadly, that viewpoint is totally contradicted here. *This* Brahman described in *Katha Upanisad* is clearly the highest: "Higher than Him, there is nothing. " Yet He is said to be *vyapakah*, all-pervading. And at the same time--with the *next word* that follows *vyapakah*--He is said to be *alinga*, without a gross or subtle body!

In the third *adhyaya* of *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*, Yajnavalkya Muni discusses Brahman with nine sages. He describes the Immanent thusly:

*yah pranena praniti  
sa ta atma sarvantarah  
yo apanena apaniti  
sa ta atma sarvantarah  
yo vyanena vyaniti  
sa ta atma sarvanatarah  
ya undanena udaniti  
sa ta atma sarvantarah  
esa ta atma sarvantarah*

That which causes one to breathe out with the out-breath--He is the Self of yours that is within all. That which causes one to breath in with the in-breath--He is the Self of yours that is within all. That which causes one to breathe across with the inter-breath--He is the Self of yours that is within all. That which causes one to breathe up with the up-breath--he is the Self of yours which is within all. The Self that is within all is the Self of yours.

The sage to whom Yajnavalkya speaks these verses, Usasta Cakrayana, requests further clarification about this Brahman so described. Yajnavalkya answers:

*na drster-drastaram pasyeh  
na sruter srotaram srunuyah  
na mater mantaram manvithah  
na vijnater vijaniyah*

*esa ta atma sarvantarah  
ato anyat artam*

You can't see the Seer who does the seeing; you can't hear the Hearer who does the hearing; you can't think of the Thinker who does the thinking; and you can't perceive the Perceiver who does the perceiving.

And so these verses establish the Transcendent Who is beyond all mundane power of knowledge. Can there be any doubt that the Immanent and the Transcendent are the same Absolute Truth? Yajnavalkya Muni is telling Usasta Cakrayana that the Absolute is simultaneously one with everything and yet different from it; and that the Truth of this is inconceivable.

The same point is made in *Kenopanisad* I. 5-9.

*yad vaca anabhyuditam yena vag abhyudyate  
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidam upasate  
yan manasa na manute yena ahuh mano matam  
yac-caksuhsa na pasyati yena caksumsi pasyati  
yat srotrena na srnoti yena srotram idam srutam  
yat pranena praniti yena pranah praniyate  
tadeva brahma tvamviddhi nedam yad idam upasate*

That which is not expressed by speech but that by which speech is expressed--that, know for sure, is Brahman, and not that which people worship. That which cannot be apprehended by the mind, but by which mind is apprehended; that which cannot be perceived by the eye, but by which the eye perceives; that which cannot be heard by the ear, but by which the hearing is made possible; that which is not breathed by life but by which life breathes--that, know for sure, is Brahman and not that which people worship.

Many other proofs could be shown, but by now it is clear that the Upanisads teach the Absolute Truth to be transcendental and immanent, simultaneously and inconceivably one and different: *acintya-abhedabheda-tattva*.

Commenting on *Sri Isopanisad* 5, which I referred to in the beginning of this essay, Srila Prabhupada writes:

In this connection the words *saguna* (with qualities) and *nirguna* (without qualities), words occurring often in revealed scriptures, are very important. The word *saguna* does not imply that the Lord becomes subject to the laws of material nature when He appears, although He has perceivable qualities and appears in material form. For Him there is no difference between the material and spiritual energies because He is the source of all energies. As the controller of all energies, He cannot at any time be under their influence as we are. The material energy works according to His direction; therefore He can use that energy for His purpose without ever being influenced by any of the qualities of that energy. Nor does the Lord become a formless entity at any time, for ultimately He is the eternal form, the primeval Lord. His impersonal aspect, or Brahman effulgence, is but the glow of His personal rays, just as the sun's rays are the glow of the sun-god.



Universal Form

. . . . .

In *Brahma-samhita* it is said that Govinda, the primeval Lord, enters everything by His plenary portion. He enters the universe as well as all the atoms of the universe. He is outside of everything in His *virat* form, and He is within everything as *antaryami*. As *antaryami* He witnesses everything that is going on, and He awards us the results of our actions as *karma-phala*. We ourselves may forget what we have done in previous lives, but because the Lord witnesses our actions, the results of our actions are always there, and we have to undergo the reactions nonetheless.

The fact is that there is nothing but God within and without. Everything is manifested by His different energies, just as heat and light emanate from fire, and in this way there is a oneness amongst the diverse energies. Although there is oneness, the Lord in His personal form still enjoys all that is enjoyable to the senses of the minuscule part and parcel living entities.

To be continued, starting with Brahman is Not a Demigod

### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below took place while he was working in a Kerala branch of the TV Sundaram company.*

I now lived across the road from Sundaram Industries, in a spare cottage on a Muslim family's estate. I'd become very ambitious at work, and was moving up the office ranks. Every morning before departing for work I would light a votary candles to a picture of Ayappa in my room. Promptly upon returning in the afternoon I would sit down before the picture and chant Vishnu- sahasra-nama-stotram (the Thousand Names of Vishnu). That was the only Sanskrit prayer I knew; I'd learned it from my father as a youngster. My Muslim landlord was very happy to see my strict daily observances; he considered his home and family blessed by my presence. I became friendly with his son, Ahmad, who was about my age.

At the same time I led the life of 'a man of the world', albeit a tame Hindu version of it. As before, I continued to see movies and mix with the modern boys and girls my age, though now and then I'd muse over someday renouncing these trivial pleasures altogether. But for the moment I strove to find a happy balance between the dual fronts of human experience: the religio-mystical and the mundane.

On the holy day of Shivaratri, the respected sannyasi (monk) His Holiness Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamigal came to Ernakulam to lead the Hindu community's worship of Shiva. Although he was only fifteen years old, his aged guru had appointed him to be the Shankaracharya or leading swami of the Kamakoti Pitham, an important Durga temple in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. His position among the Aiyars (the smarta brahmins of South India) was so powerful that he could be rightly called their Pope. In order to have his audience, I took an early morning bus, accompanied by Ahmad. We arrived in Ernakulam at about 3:00 AM.

Within an hour after that, we were standing before the dormitory hall where Jayendra Saraswathi and his entourage were staying. This building was located on the grounds of the Shiva temple where the religious functions were to be held. A Nepali guard in a khaki uniform was posted at the entrance of the dorm. "Everyone is sleeping," he told us.

"We won't disturb them," I replied. "We've come a long way to see His Holiness. He'll be up at this hour. " With a jerk of his head, the guard indicated where we'd find the swami. We carefully threaded our way through some two dozen sleeping smarta brahmins sprawled across the floor of the common hall to a curtained-off doorway at the other end. A brahmin was slumped in a chair outside it, his head on his chest, snoring. Through the curtain shone the glow of a bare electric lightbulb. From within the room we heard the soft chanting of Sankskrit. Ahmad and I entered.

A young man in deep orange robes sat on a cloth mat reciting mantras. A bamboo staff was propped against the wall behind him. My friend and I offered obeisances by falling flat on the floor (I'd already rehearsed this with Ahmad so that he'd know what to do). The swami gave us each akshada (a pinch of raw rice grains died yellow with turmeric) as a blessing and bade us to sit.

He asked us where we were coming from. I told him we lived in Kalamaserry, and that I worked for TVS. He nodded appreciatively-- TVS carried a lot of weight among the brahmin community. With a boy's smile so simple and open-hearted that it threatened to undermine the gravity of his post, he said, "I'll be conducting the Shivaratri ceremonies here and will lead a procession through town. Would you like to join us?"

I smiled back apologetically. "My job starts at eight. I'll have to be back in Kalamassery by then. That's why I've come so early. " I concluded by citing Nehru's maxim (with a slight, ironic chuckle because I'd always thought it nonsense), "Work is worship. " But Swamiji did not detect the irony and nodded approvingly. "Yes, yes, very good. "

Just then the brahmin who'd been asleep in the chair outside came in. After looking Ahmad and I over curiously, he announced the visit of an elderly brahmin couple. His Holiness consented to see them. The old man and woman entered, fell flat before the swami and received his blessings. In a quavering voice the old man implored, "My daughter's marriage--please help. " Indicating his brahmin aide, Jayendra Saraswathi told the old man, "He'll arrange some gold for your daughter's dowry. " But the old man pressed on. "Besides that, it is not a proper match. Can you advise a better choice of a husband for her?" Swamiji closed his eyes and silently brought his palms together in the pranam mudra. He did not open his eyes until they'd exited with the aide. The instant they'd left, he slapped his forehead. Shaking his head wonderingly, he looked at me.

"I am a sannyasi, but these householders come to me for charity. All right, so the temple has a fund to assist poor brahmins. I can let them have something from that. But then they even want me to pick a groom for the girl. Is it for arranging marriages that I've renounced the world?" Trying to find a pleasanter topic of discussion, he then asked me, "Do you have any questions?"

"Just one, Your Holiness," I replied. "You are awake and chanting your mantras, but all these brahmins with you are sleeping. Why is that?"

His eyes widened. "What, they're still sleeping?"

Ahmad spoke up. "Yes, and they look so funny, their big bellies going up and down. "

By his speech, Ahmad revealed himself to be a Muslim for the first time to Jayendra Saraswathi, who was suddenly at a loss for words--according to the caste rules of the smarta brahmin community, it was unthinkable for a Muslim to enter the Shankaracharya's private quarters.

To assuage the swami's sudden discomfort I said, "My friend has risen very early on this holy day to come and have your darshan while your Brahmins sleep the morning away. Is he not better than they? After all, it is not his fault that he's a Muslim--he had no choice in the matter. Still, he shows respect for Shiva. "

"Anybody who rises before dawn on this day gets the blessings of Shiva," he admitted. Ahmad then asked, "But will Lord Shiva bless a Muslim?" "Shiva is Brahman," His Holiness replied. "For Brahman there is no distinction of Hindu or Muslim. "

"Then why," I asked, "is your procession advertised 'For Hindus'? Why not 'For Human Beings'?" His Holiness smiled and said, "I am trying to make these Hindus into human beings. " The swami's reserve dissolved in boyish mirth as we all laughed heartily at his joke.

He rang a small gong. In a moment the Nepali guard appeared at the door. "Get a bucket of water and throw it over these brahmins," His Holiness ordered. "Just see-- even a Muslim has come here for darshan at this time; why they are still asleep?" The guard promptly bowed and marched out.

Nepalis are famous for unquestioningly following orders. Within a minute's time we heard water splashing the floor outside followed by shouts and groans. After a more joking and laughter, my friend and I paid obeisances to the swami and left.

Every month I made a bus journey to the Guruvayur temple to see the murti of Lord Vasudeva, famous all over India for answering the prayers of the sick and distressed with miraculous intercessions. I got to know the brahmin Anjaam Nambudri, a former Communist who had dedicated his life to reciting the Srimad Bhagavatam in the temple. Srimad Bhagavatam is lengthy Sanskrit philosophical and devotional text held in the highest esteem by the Vaishnavas. Anjaam Nambudri would daily recite hundreds of verses at a time from memory before a large audience of temple visitors. Local people considered him a saint.

On one visit to Guruvayur I sat through his whole recital. He began by a sweet melodious recitation of eight Sanskrit stanzas from the Sikshastakam, a scripture I'd never heard of. Then he translated them into Malayalam. The eighth verse particularly struck me: "I know no one but Krishna as my Lord, and he shall remain so even if he handles me roughly by His embrace or makes me brokenhearted by not being present before me. He is completely free to do anything and everything, for He is always my worshipful Lord unconditionally. "

After Anjaam Nambudri had completed his recital of Srimad Bhagavatam and the crowd had dispersed, I introduced myself. He consented to answer a few questions.

I told him I wanted to know more about the Sikshastakam. His eyes brimmed with tears. In a soft, trembling voice he replied, "I am not the person you should put this question to. I am too hard-hearted to answer you properly. My mind is too polluted with sensual desires and my intellect is too crippled by endless speculations to understand the Sikshastakam. "

At first I misunderstood what he was saying. "Sir, with all due respect, how do you know I am so polluted and crippled that I can't understand the Sikshastakam? Why don't you just begin the explanation and see if I can understand or not? After all, I am an educated. . . "

He held up his hand and stopped me. "No, not you. I mean to say, I am too polluted and crippled to understand Sikshastakam. So how can I explain it to you?"

I was very surprised by his words. I'd never before heard a brahmin present himself as unworthy. He continued.

"All I can tell you is that these eight verses were written by Sri Chaitanya about five hundred years ago. "

"Who is Sri Chaitanya?" I persisted.

Now the tears were gliding down his cheeks. "If I answer you, I'll be condemned, for I cannot answer correctly. My understanding is too shallow. Sri Chaitanya gave humanity the greatest blessing, but it is being kept out of sight by certain saints in Brindaban. You know Brindaban?"

"I've not been there," I answered, "but everybody has heard of Brindaban, where Krishna was born and danced with the cowherd maidens. "

"Yes, yes. That's where you should go to learn about Sri Chaitanya. "

I changed the subject. "How did you come to recite Srimad Bhagavatam in the temple every day?"

"Years ago I was a convinced Marxist and radical activist. I had no faith in God whatsoever. One day I came here to organize a Communist Party march that was to begin outside the Guruvayur temple. We wanted our marchers to meet here because the temple is the most well-known place in the city.

"Now, at that time I had been suffering from a persistent digestive ailment. I was unable to digest solid food--I would always vomit it up. It so happened that a distant uncle of mine was the head priest of the temple. He called me into the temple. Out of family respect I went in to see him. He gave me a plate of paramanna, rice cooked in sweetened milk. I told him, 'I am very sorry, but I cannot take solid food. It makes me ill. ' But my uncle said, 'Don't worry, you can take this. Nothing will happen. '

"I said again, 'No, I can't. If I do I will vomit. ' And he said, 'It is prasadam. Even if you vomit, you'll be spiritually nourished. ' To please my uncle, whom I hadn't seen in years, I ate the paramanna. Then I went back to work outside. Well, I was very surprised because during the whole march I experienced no sickness.

"After the march ended I went back to the temple to talk to my uncle again. I told him, 'You know, that sweet rice I ate here gave me no problem. I wonder why?' And he said, 'You should know why. ' 'Well, why I should know why?' 'Because you are a communist. Communists know everything, don't they?' And he smiled.

"That was his challenge to me: you have a materialistic explanation for everything else, why not for this? So I said, 'Give me more paramanna. ' I ate three, four platefuls more--and nothing happened. The next day I went to the doctor, who examined me by testing my stool. He was as surprised as I. 'It's amazing,' he said, 'but you are digesting again. I suppose it means you are able to eat this particular type of preparation. So find out how they make that paramanna, and make it yourself. '

"I returned to temple and again took a big plate of paramanna along with with four appams (cookies). And I had no problem at all. My uncle said, 'Don't think this has something to do with proper diet. This is the mercy of Guruvayurappan Vasudeva upon you. " 'Look,' I told him, 'I don't believe in miracles. But I'm grateful to you for having shown me what kind of food I am able to eat. '

"I hired a brahmin cook to prepare the paramanna just as it is done in the temple. The cook told me, 'I can do all the same things as the temple cook, but if the paramanna isn't offered to the Deity, it won't be the same. ' I said, 'I'm paying you to cook, not to preach. ' He said, 'You'll see. '

"I ate a plate of the cook's paramanna. It had exactly the same look, smell and taste as the paramanna my uncle gave me. But I immediately vomited it up. Well, that made me doubt all my materialistic convictions. I went straight to the temple and told my uncle all that had happened. He just said, 'Krishna, Guruvayurappan', and went back to his duties on the altar. After he finished his puja he came out and found me still standing there. He could see that I was very perplexed, so he told me, 'You should take a vrat to serve the Deity for forty days. During that time eat only Krishna prasada. At the end you'll be cured. '

"So I did just that. I took up this recitation of Srimad Bhagavatam. And of course my Communist Party friends were angry with me. I just told them, 'Look, without life, there's no politics. Let me live. ' I gave all that up and have stayed here ever since. And now I can eat anything. But only as long as it is offered to the Deity. "

I was impressed with Anjaam Nambudri's humble spirituality, and his story hit home. Until recently, I too had been a jeering critic of all that is religious. But I was not ready to surrender my freedom for whatever peace of mind Anjaam Nambudri had attained by surrendering his. 'Let me sometimes peek behind the blinds of this world to see what lies on the other side,' I thought to myself. 'But I am not going to step over the threshold. What if I get stuck in the other world and can't come back?'

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
6 January 2004*

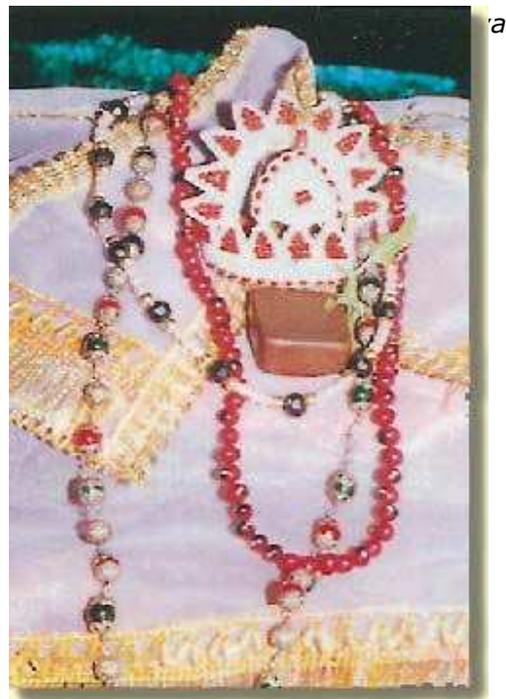
*mukunda murdhna pranipatya yace  
bhavantam ekantam iyantam artham  
avismrtis tvac-caranaravinde  
bhava bhava me 'stu bhavat-prasadat*

O Lord Mukunda! I bow down my head to Your Lordship and respectfully ask You to fulfill this one desire of mine: that in each of my future births I will, by Your Lordship's mercy, always remember and never forget Your lotus feet.

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Eight**

Brahman is Not a Demigod

*Adhyaya II of Brhadaranyaka Upanisad begins with a discussion between a brahmana named Gargya Drpta-Balaki and the King of Kasi, Ajatasatru. The brahmana proposes to give the ksatriya a lesson on Brahman. However, it turns out that the king is the truly Brahman-*



realized soul. Gargya argues that the person in the sun is Brahman; the king refutes him, concluding, "I venerate him only as the most eminent of all beings. " In the same way, the two converse about the personalities of the moon, lightning, outer space, wind, fire, water, a mirror, the sound of walking, the four quarters, the shadow, and the individual *atma*. In each case the king proves to the *brahmana* that Brahman is different. In the end Gargya requests that Ajatasatru accept him as his disciple; politely the king points out that it is not traditional for a *ksatriya* to be *guru* of a *brahmana*. Still, Ajatasatru agrees to reveal the secret of Brahman. He says:

*sa yatha unanabhih tantuna uccaret yatha agneh ksudra visphulinagh vyuccaranti evam eva asmat atmanah sarve pranah sarve lokah sarve devah sarvani bhutani vyuccaranti tasyopanisad satyasya satyam iti prana vai satyam tesam esa satyam*

As a spider sends forth its thread, as tiny sparks spring forth from a fire, so indeed from the *atman* [which means Paramatma, as the individual *atma* was earlier rejected by Ajatasatru as Brahman] comes forth all *pranas* [which means *jivas*], all worlds (*sarve lokah*), all demigods (*sarve devah*), and all living entities (*sarvani bhutani*). The secret name of that Paramatma is *satyasya satyam* (the Truth of truths). Truth means the *jivas* (i. e. the *pranas*). The Truth of that truth is Paramatma.

It is clear that all *jivas*, all *devas* and all living entities are emanations of Brahman but are yet different from Brahman.

In *adhyaya* III, Chapter 6 of the same *upanisad*, Gargi, a female Vedic sage of acute intelligence asks Yajnavalkya Muni that if the element earth is woven from the element water, then what is water woven from. [Here Acarya Madhva comments that the elements and *lokas* (worlds) that Gargi asks about in this passage are designations of the *devatas* that control them. ] Yajnavalkya replies that water is woven from air. Gargi then wants to know what air is woven from. "From the worlds in the *antariksa* or outer space" [meaning such subtle worlds as those on which the *yaksas* and *raksasas* dwell]. She asks out of what are the *antariksalokas* woven; he answers "From the *gandharvalokas*. " In this way their talk progresses through the worlds of the sun, moon, stars, demigods, the worlds of Indra and the worlds Prajapati (*catur-mukha* Brahma). All these, concludes Yajnavalkya, are woven from the worlds of Brahman.

In the ninth chapter of the same *adhyaya*, Vidagdha Sakalya asks Yajnavalkya how many gods there are. The initial answer is three hundred and three, and three thousand and three. But upon further questioning Yajnavalkya asserts there is only one God; the others of various numbers (thirty-three, three, two, one and a half) are powers of the one God. This one God is Brahman.

*Adhyaya* VII of *Chandogya Upanisad* relates a discussion between Narada and Sanat Kumara. Narada informs Sanatkumara that he has studied

the four Vedas  
the histories, which comprise the fifth Veda  
the ancestral rites  
mathematics  
fortune telling  
the art of locating treasures

the dialogues  
the monologues  
the knowledge of the demigods  
the knowledge of ritual  
the knowledge of ghostly entities  
the knowledge of government  
the knowledge of heavenly bodies  
the knowledge of the celestial serpents.

But Narada concludes that he is still suffering due to ignorance.

Sanat Kumara proposes a series of meditations by which Narada will come to know Brahman. The first meditation is upon *nama*--the names that Narada studied in all those scriptures he mentioned. From *nama* he should rise to meditation upon *vak*, speech; then to *manas*, mind; then *sankalpa*, will; *citta*, consciousness; *dhyana*, deep contemplation; *vijnana*, realization; *bala*, strength; *anna*, food; *apa*, water; *tejas*, fire; *akasa*, ether; *smara*, memory; *asa*, hope; and finally *prana*, the life of the individual self. According to Madhvacharya, all these represent various *devatas*. Sanat Kumara connects each of them to a particular success in *karma* and *jnana*. The last, *prana*, he says, makes a man an *ativadi*, one with great power of speech. Then Sanat Kumar raises the question of the appropriate subject that an *ativadi* should speak about: *esa tu va ativadati yah satyena ativadati*:

But in reality one is an *ativadi* who speaks Satya greatly.

Narada declares that he would like to become that kind of *ativadi*.

Sanat Kumar replies that Narada should meditate upon Satya. But to meditate upon Satya, he must gain realization of Satya. And for that he must be constantly mindful of Satya. To be constantly mindful of Satya he must have faith in Satya. To have faith in Satya he must be firmly fixed in Satya. To be firmly fixed in Satya he must perform his prescribed duties nicely. To perform his duties nicely he should know what real bliss is (*sukham tu eva vijijnasitavyam*).

*Sukha* (bliss) is *bhuma* (the Greatest), says Sanat Kumar:

*yo vai bhuma tat sukham  
nalpe sukhamasti  
bhumaiva sukham  
bhuma tu eva vijinasitavya iti*

*Bhuma*, that which is infinitely great and possesses infinite attributes, is bliss. There is no bliss in anything small or trivial. One must desire to know *bhuma*.

Satya--the Supreme Truth--is a name of Krsna. His nature is infinitely blissful. The successes offered by various *devatas* are limited and trivial; hence there is no bliss in them. The *devatas* cannot be equated with the absolutely blissful Truth, the Supreme Brahman, Sri Krsna.

*arjuna uvaca  
param brahma param dhama*

*pavitram paramam bhavan  
purusam sasvatam divyam  
adi-devam ajam vibhum ahus tvam rsayah sarve  
devarsir naradas tatha  
asito devalo vyasah  
svayam caiva bravisi me*

Arjuna said: You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate abode, the purest, the Absolute Truth. You are the eternal, transcendental, original person, the unborn, the greatest. All the great sages such as Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa confirm this truth about You, and now You Yourself are declaring it to me. [Bg 10. 12-13]

That the bliss of Brahman extends beyond that of the *devatas* is confirmed in the Brahnavalli of the *Taittiriya Upanisad*, which has been discussed before in this series. The Brahnavalli begins with this Vedic quotation:

The fear of it makes the wind blow. The fear of it makes the sun rise. The fear of it makes them run-- fire and moon, and death, the fifth.

Wind, sun, fire, moon and death--these five are great Vedic demigods who perform their duties out of fear of the Supreme Brahman. Thus do the Upanisads distinguish between the Supreme Lord and His powerful servants who manage material phenomena.

From several other of the fourteen *upanisads* under discussion, further proofs could be offered. But the case is established beyond reasonable argument just from the *Bṛhadaranyaka*, *Chandogya* and *Taittiriya Upanisads*.

To be continued, starting with *The Jivatama*.



*Krsna Balarama Mandir at night*

## What the Upanisads Teach Part Nine

### The *Jivatma*

When terms *jiva* or *jivatma* appear in the *upanisads*, they unambiguously mean the individual soul. The term *atma* means either the *jiva* or Paramatma. *Jivati iti jivah*: the *jiva* is that which lives or sustains life. *Apnoter atter, atater va*: *atma* means that which obtains, eats, enjoys, and pervades all. *Jivatma* pervades the body, Paramatma pervades the universe. The word *purusa* may refer to either *jiva* or Paramatma. *Puri sete iti purisayah*: that which dwells in the citadel of the heart is *purusa*. *Cetana* and *cit* (consciousness) apply to both also. *Sariratma* (the self encased in a physical body) is a synonym for *jivatma*.



About the individual self encased in the physical body, *Chandogya* VIII. 1. 5 states:

*nasya jaraya jiryati na vadhenasya hanyate etat sarvam brahmapuram asmin kamah samahitah esa atma apahata papma vijiro vimrtyuh visoko vijighitso apipasah satyakamah satyasankalpah*

The body ages, this *atma* does not; the body dies, this *atma* does not. It is eternal. In it, all auspiciousness is contained. It is the self that is free from evil, free from old age, free from death, free from grief, free from hunger, free from thirst, whose desires come true and whose thoughts come true.

In the same *upanisad*, VIII. 12. 1, it is said:

In truth, this body is mortal. It is held by death. It is the abode of the self, which is immortal and incorporeal. This self is the victim of pleasure and pain. There is no cessation of pleasure and pain as long as the self is associated with the body. But when the self is totally dissociated from the body caused by *karma*, it is not touched by pleasure and pain.

Concerning the eternal, conscious nature of the *jiva*, Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to *Bhagavad-gita As it Is* 2. 20:

In the *Katha Upanisad* (1. 2. 18) we also find a similar passage, which reads:

*na jayate mriyate va vipascin  
nayam kutascin na babhuva kascit  
ajo nityah sasvato 'yam purano  
na hanyate hanyamane sarire*

The meaning and purport of this verse is the same as in the *Bhagavad-gita*, but here in this verse there is one special word, *vipascin*, which means learned or with knowledge.

The soul is full of knowledge, or full always with consciousness. Therefore, consciousness is the symptom of the soul.

Sage Yajnavalkya, speaking in *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* IV. 3. 7, says *yo 'yam vijnanamayah pranesu hrady antarjyotih purusah*: "The *purusa* (individual soul dwelling in the heart) consists of knowledge. He is in the midst of the subtle senses (*pranas*). He is the light within the heart. "

The existence of the *jiva* is rooted in Brahman. *Mundakopanisad* II. 1. 1:

*yatha sudiptat pavakad visphulingah sahasrasah prabhavante sarupah  
tatha aksarat vividhah soumya bhavah prajayante tatra caivapi yanti*

As from a blazing fire sparks similar to it arise in thousands, even so many kinds of beings are born from the *aksara* (the infallible Brahman). They return to it again.

Srila Prabhupada's purport to *Bhagavatad-gita As it Is* 2. 17 offers two quotations from *Svetasvatara Upanisad* concerning the size of the *jiva*:

*balagra-sata-bhagasya  
satadha kalpitasya ca  
bhago jivah sa vijneyah  
sa canantyaya kalpate*

"When the upper point of a hair is divided into one hundred parts and again each of such parts is further divided into one hundred parts, each such part is the measurement of the dimension of the spirit soul. "

*kesagra-sata-bhagasya  
satamsah sadrsatmakah  
jivah suksma-svarupo 'yam  
sankhyatito hi cit-kanah*

"There are innumerable particles of spiritual atoms, which are measured as one ten-thousandth of the upper portion of the hair. "

Therefore, the individual particle of spirit soul is a spiritual atom smaller than the material atoms, and such atoms are innumerable. This very small spiritual spark is the basic principle of the material body, and the influence of such a spiritual spark is spread all over the body as the influence of the active principle of some medicine spreads throughout the body. This current of the spirit soul is felt all over the body as consciousness, and that is the proof of the presence of the soul.



In an earlier part of this series, we have seen Srila Prabhupada's quotation (found in the purport to *Bg* 13. 3) of *Svetasvatara Upanisad* in which the *jiva* is described as *bhokta* (the enjoyer). This *jiva* tries to enjoy *bhogya*, the objects of the senses that are presented by *maya*. The Lord, who is *preritara* (the controller), regulates the relationship between enjoyer-souls and the enjoyable sense objects. The same *upanisad* declares the *jivatma* to be

responsible for his actions under the three modes of nature (*gunanvayo yah phalakarma karta*). Thus he is *upabhokta*, the enjoyer or sufferer of the consequences of his actions (*karma*). *Karmanugany anukramena dehi sthanesu rupany abhisamprapadyate*: the *jiva* successively assumes forms in various conditions of life according to his karmic activities.

To be continued, starting with the Relation between *Jivatma* and Brahman

### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below took place while he was working in a Kerala branch of the TV Sundaram company.*

I soon came to be known to the Sundaram Industries management as a bright young star. I'd begun as a junior assistant, handling service records in the personnel department, but soon leaped into the ambitious role of 'office hero' by tackling tasks that others were not able to handle quickly or skillfully. Within a few months of my arrival, my vanity was gratified by a promotion to the post of senior assistant to the chief payroll accountant.

I had also discovered that because of my being the nephew of the Directing Manager, I could ignore the office dress code, which called for white shirt tucked into trousers. My attire was kurta and lungi. The kurta (the traditional collarless North Indian cotton shirt) would be worn long, down to my knees. The lungi (a white sarong worn by South Indian men) I would wrap up to my knees when I walked and let down below my feet when I sat at my desk. To top off my odd appearance, I sported long hair and a handlebar mustache.

One day a spare man with slicked-back hair and a peculiar gleam in his eye strode into the office and went from desk to desk collecting donations. He wore a lungi and a simple cotton cloth draped over his torso. His forehead was marked with a sindhur dot that indicated he was a shakta (a devotee of Devi, the female principle). I

recognized him as a member of the Kerala brahmin caste known as Nambudri, who are sometimes feared for their reputed powers. There was a theatrical, effeminate air about him that I found silly. Still, everyone was giving him a few rupees.

When he saw me in my unusual attire he assumed I'd be a soft touch. Wordlessly smiling with lowered eyelashes, he put out his hand.

"For what?" I demanded irritably.

"I am collecting for the Bhagavati temple here at which I am the priest. I want to hold a great festival of the goddess. "

"I'm not giving you any money. " I turned back to work.

"But I heard you are very religious. "

Though my interest in religious experience was newly awakened, I hadn't lost my dislike for indolent and grasping brahmin priests. I saw no good reason why he deserved my money. "I said I am not giving you anything. "

"Be careful of your attitude," he snapped haughtily.

This only roused my bile. "What are you going to do if I'm not?"

He turned to the other office workers and demanded, "Tell him about me. " They looked at me disapprovingly. "You should give him something," one said with a hint of warning in his voice. "He's a tantric fellow. "

My eyes widened in mock surprise. "Oh," I marvelled in my best stage voice, "a tantric? Well, then . . . of course I won't give you anything. "

He raised a forefinger into the air and glared at me. "I dare you come to my temple on Friday and face my power. "

Sounding as unimpressed as I could, I parried, "Friday, you say? Well, you just might regret your invitation. I've seen power before, and I've also seen powerful silliness. Don't think you can fool me so easily. "

With a dramatic flourish, he stalked out of the office.

"You simply could have given him two rupees and avoided a scene," one of the staff reproved me. "Why this challenging attitude?"

"I just wanted to know what sort of good cause it is that you're all so eager to waste your money on today. "

"Look, youngster, that was a tantric! Be careful!" I made a rude sound and got back to work.

But that Friday I did go to the temple, bringing Ahmad with me. We came expecting at best a magic show, at worst a farce. In either case, we'd be entertained.

Bhagavati, also called Devi, Mahamaya, Durga, Parvati and many other names, is the divine Shakti (potency) known universally as Mother Nature (mulaprakriti). In India she is worshipped by people who seek to enjoy her attributes like rati (the erotic), bhuti (riches and prosperity), tushti (pleasure), pushti (pro- gress) and so on.

Tree temples dedicated to Bhagavati are a common sight in Indian villages, and the temple in Kalamassery was one of these, near the edge of a pond. It consisted of a small brick room built around the tree's base. Inside the room, in a hole in the side of the trunk, was the altar to the goddess.

When Ahmad and I got there, we found a group of local people standing in two lines before either side of the door of the tree temple, praying in unison: "Amme-Narayana, Devi-Narayana, Lakshmi-Narayana, Bhadre-Narayana. . ." These are names of Bhagavati that describe her as the energy of Lord Narayana (Vishnu).

The shakta pujari arrived on a bicycle from his job at a chemical company. Parking his bike next to the pond, he jumped into the water, clothes and all. He climbed out dripping wet, entered the small temple room and closed the door behind him. From within, sounds of a ringing bell and the chanting of mantras could be heard.

The crowd got wilder, singing and clapping to the rhythm of a hand drum. The men were all black-skinned, many with bushy- heads and beards, the younger ones wearing colorfully printed shirts open at the neck. Exchanging fierce looks of some shared inner awakening, their eyes and teeth flashed a fearsome white as their limbs jerked about in an increasingly aggressive display of energy. The women flocked behind the men, swaying in unison, eyes closed, brows furrowed, some with hands clasped or uplifted.

Suddenly the door opened to loud cries from the assembly. The shakta priest did arati, a ceremony in which incense and a brass- handled ceremonial lamp are waved before the murti.

After setting the lamp down he came out of the room and started hopping around on stiff legs with his feet held together, somewhat like a bird. I heard someone shout, "Now he is in trance!" To a non-Indian, all this might seem bizarre, even devilish. But to my friend and I, it was so rustic as to be incredibly funny.

The mad priest hopped through the crowd handing out strands of colored thread to be worn against disease. When he came before me he announced dramatically, "I will show you the spiritual world. Don't doubt what you see. " He bounced over to a row of stones laid out on the ground, and while standing over them, his body bent ninety degrees at the hips and his head swiveled left, right, up and down. He then announced, "I am going to build a great temple on this spot. These stones will transform themsel- ves into worshipable murtis!" He suddenly straightened and demanded money from me for wada-malas (garlands of wadas, or South Indian dumplings) to be offered to these stones when they changed their shapes.

Vainly struggling contain my mirth, I snickered, "I'm sorry, but I won't give you anything. "

He looked me black up and down, trembling with exaggerated scorn. The crowd, now gathered around us, had become ominously quiet. His voice raised to a woman's shriek, the shakta challenged, "Oh, you don't believe me?"

I said no and stood my ground. He asked someone to bring a coconut. Seizing it in both hands, he broke it over his own head.

"This doesn't mean anything to us except that you've got a very hard head," I deadpanned, shrugging. Ahmad laughed out loud. His laughter was shared by the crowd, and that broke the tension, but it did not deter the priest.

"You will yet acknowledge the potency! Wait here. " He went back into the temple room and finished his worship. In the meantime the crowd drifted away, sensing that the show was over. Ahmad also left, his interest spent. I loitered, waiting for the man to finish, curious about his crazed determination to prove something to me. When he came out he brought me into his modest house just a few steps away.

Scattered around the place were all sorts of weird paraphernalia --strange weapons, masks, staring painted eyes, artificial teeth. In one corner was a massive two-foot tall brass floor lamp with five wicks burning in its plate-shaped oil reservoir. Directly over it, about four feet above, another oil lamp hung suspended by a chain from the ceiling. A ceremonial sword lay on a small wooden table before the two lamps.

Picking up the sword, the shakta eyed me through fierce slits. "You still don't believe me?"

More curious than apprehensive about what he would do next, I said, "No, I don't. "

He held the sword upright in the space between the two lamps. After a moment, he let go of it. It remained in mid-air.

"Let me see how you did that," I said, moving in closer. Instead of trying to stop me as I expected he would, he stood by and grinned vengefully. I gripped the sword and tugged with all my might. It didn't budge an inch. I waved a hand above and below the sword. No wires.

He cackled at my growing confusion. "You're having trouble uncovering the method of my magic?"

"Well," I replied as calmly as I could, "swords don't just stand in mid-air. So what's the trick?"

"This is the potency of tantra. It's not a trick. " I didn't say anything, not knowing what to say. Turning to leave the room, he said, "I'll be back in a moment--you're free to study this mystery however you like. "

I checked the lamps and examined the sword from all angles. There were no signs of fakery at all.

He returned. His voice ringing in defiance of all the faithlessness I represented, he declared, "I will put on a festival two weeks time, and if people don't care enough to help, I will have to use tantric power to arrange everything,"

"Let me help you," I heard myself say as I marveled at the sword glinting in the flickering lamplight. "I'll organize this entire festival for you. " Whatever the explanation was, I found this man's sword-magic the most unearthly thing I'd ever seen in my life.

Now that I'd finally accepted his power, the shakta's bluster evaporated. Now truly sorry for my former indiscretions, I made friends with him. He smiled warmly, looking me full in the face. "Let us not only be friends, let us be fellow tantrics. You're a smart young man. You'll learn quickly if you just behave yourself. "

The next day I returned so he could introduce me to his congregation. They held me in great regard, considering me an educated and religious young brahmin come from far-off Tamil Nadu to assist their own local priest. I broke the barrier of caste by mixing with them, visiting their homes, helping them in whatever way I could. Thus I won their support as well as their respect.

A week before the festival I called the young people of the village together and engaged them in decorating the town, cleaning the streets, hiring elephants, buying fireworks, and sending invitations to the local political leaders. The organizational talents I'd learned in the DK came in quite handy.

I printed flyers featuring a photo of the Bhagavati murti. These I had distributed from house to house as part of a fund-raising drive; we collected more money than the shakta pujari had ever seen in his life. The festival lasted four days. Each day, I led a procession around town with two elephants at the front. In a small community like Kalamassery, this was an event that would be talked about for years. After the festival ended, I got the Hindus to donate regularly to the pujari so that he'd not be in need.

Later the Muslims of the village asked me to organize a festival for them at their mosque; this I did likewise with great success. I suppose I could have become a leading political figure among the locals.

Around this time one Mr. Murlidharan Karta came from Calcutta and joined our TVS branch. We became friendly. His hereditary house was in Ernakulam, and once he drove me there to meet his family. Later that evening he took me to Chottanikara Bhagavati Pitha, an important place of Devi worship in the countryside. We arrived for the midnight puja.

The shrine was representative of the cleanly evocative style of Kerala temple architecture, being a simple, compact structure beneath a low, pagoda-style tiled roof. The small courtyard within was illuminated by rows of brass oil lamps hung by chains from the ceiling. The walls were decorated by intricately carved motifs of mystical significance.

I went down a narrow dark stone stairway into a cave beneath the shrine, where I saw rites being performed to a stone that reputedly grows in size each year. In the

dancing orange glow of fiery oil lamps, I saw ceremonial white chalk mandalas drawn on the cave floor and markings of red sindhur on the walls. The ceiling was bedecked with banana bark and leaf trimmings, and there were strange figurines made of white flour positioned here and there. The effect on the mind of this ancient ethnic cultism was palpable. The atmosphere was heavy with the preternatural.

A huge tree grew from out of the cave floor up through the ceiling and into the courtyard of the shrine, where it spread its branches above. I watched as a group of haunted lunatics were brought into the cave, each to have a tuft of hair wrapped tightly around a nail that was then driven into the tree. In their madness they tore their heads away, leaving the hair--and the ghost--on the nail. Their disturbed symptoms immediately vanished.

The experience did much to change my attitude to life. I came away convinced that I should delve as deeply as possible into the secrets of tantra. I went back to the Kalamassery pujari and learned all I could about Devi-worship from him.

The word tantra means 'thread' or 'woven pattern' in Sanskrit; it refers to the underlying order of the universe. This knowledge may be colored by one or a mixture of three types of desire: *tamas* (base desire), *rajas* (desire for material success), and *sattva* (desire for spiritual enlightenment and peace). Usually the term 'tantric' only applies to someone who practices tamasic tantrism.

A soul conditioned by the tamasic quality is obsessed by lust to the point of madness and illusion. He is compulsively drawn to dark, degraded activities that are ruinous to his spiritual progress. The tantric scriptures, spoken by Shiva to Devi, prescribe a code of religion that is attractive to such unfortunate people addicted to sex, intoxication and meat-eating. They are advised to ceremonially engage in these sinful acts as a way of worshiping Shiva and Devi. The goal is to overcome these obsessions and rise to a higher standard of life. As inducements, Shiva and Devi offer material benedictions to faithful followers of tantra.

There are two paths (*margas*) in tantra. The shaktas, like my new friend the Kalamassery pujari, follow the *dakshinamarga* (right-hand path). Shaktas seek communion with Devi through temple worship and trance; from her they get powers of prophecy and healing. The right-hand path of tantra is considered 'clean' because the rituals are confined to symbolism that only suggests the offering of meat, fish, wine and sexual congress. It is rajasic worship.

But the *vamamarga* (left-hand) tantrics practice a most unclean ritualism. Like the voodoo sorcerors of Haiti (who, interestingly, are known as the *bokor*, 'the priests who serve with the left hand'), the left-hand tantrics of India seek to attain black magical powers by methods strange and terrible. This is tamasic.

Strange displays of power were the food of my teenage enthusiasm for the occult, so the pujari recommended I take up studies under a master of the left-hand path. He explained that in *vamamarga* there are two specialties. One is necromancy: the summoning of evil spirits, ghosts, goblins and the like for particular tasks. Ghastly rituals are performed to bring these entities--known by such names as *Yaksha*, *Yakshi*, *Dakini*, *Shakini*, *Mohini*, *Chatan* and *Udumban*--under control. Their home is the underworld, but at the bidding of an expert tantric they rise to the earthly plane and perform wonders.

The other specialty is a kind of short-cut siddha-yoga, a method of gaining magical powers by meditation upon fearsome expansions of Shiva or Devi. The yogi offers some type of vow, sacrifice or ritual to these threatening, lascivious forms. After satisfying them, he receives siddhis (yogic perfections) in return.

A vamamarga master may perfect one or both of these means to power, and he may perform right-hand rituals as well. There are so many intertwining branches within the general divisions of tantra that it is not always possible to make clear distinctions between them.

On the advice of the pujari, I sought out a vamamarga master at a small village close to Chottanikara Pitha. The center of town had just one real building, a temple, surrounded by huts and shanties. When I arrived, there was a competition going on in the marketplace between two tantrics who'd selected an onlooker from the crowd to be their instrument. They had him standing stiff as a board, in trance. One tantric pointed a stick at him and said, "Lie down. " He fell flat. The other pointed and said, "Get up. " He rose up straight without bending a limb.

One of the tantrics placed a figurine made from rice flour and eggs on the ground. It was about six inches long, with two bones stuck in the bottom like legs and a knot of hair stuck on the top. The tantric recited a charm and the doll stood up and started moving towards him, rocking back and forth on the bone- legs.

The crowd grew restless. People edged away from the tantrics, muttering fearfully among themselves. I soon found out why. In their zeal to outdo one another, the tantrics called more people out of the crowd, causing them to perform increasingly dangerous acts. Finally, to the relief of everyone, they ended their duel with a challenge to meet each other again on another date.

The crowd broke up. I walked around the little bazaar where I saw one of the tantrics going from stall to stall demanding goods and receiving them for free. Everyone was deathly afraid of him.

After he left I asked some of the stallkeepers why they allowed this to go on. One man answered, "If I don't give, he'll change all these vegetables into creatures. " Someone else said, "He can make snakes fall from the sky. " A third told me, "He'll change the color of my wife's skin. " Another said, "Anything may happen. This man is heartless. He can do what he likes, and no policeman will dare touch him. He has Chatan working for him. "

The word chatan is derived from the Sanskrit chetana (conscious- ness). Whether or not there is a relationship between this and the Arabic Shaitan or Hebrew Satan is a question for etymologists.

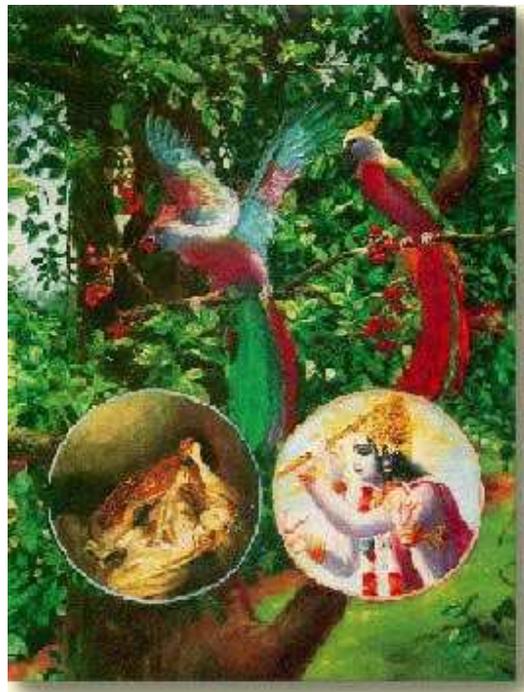


*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
8 January 2004*

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Ten**

#### The Relation between *Jivatma* and Brahman

The Vedas, like the *Mundaka Upanisad*, as well as the *Svetasvatara Upanisad*, compare the soul and the Supersoul to two friendly birds sitting on the same tree. One of the birds (the individual atomic soul) is eating the fruit of the tree, and the other bird (Krsna) is simply watching His friend. Of these two birds--although they are the same in quality--one is captivated by the fruits of the material tree, while the other is simply witnessing the activities of His friend. Krsna is the witnessing bird, and Arjuna is the eating bird. Although they are friends, one is still the master and the other is the servant. Forgetfulness of this relationship by the atomic soul is the cause of one's changing his position from one tree to another, or from one body to another. The *jiva* soul is struggling very hard on the tree of the material body, but as soon as he agrees to accept the other bird as the supreme spiritual master--as Arjuna agreed to do by voluntary surrender



unto Krsna for instruction--the subordinate bird immediately becomes free from all lamentations. Both the *Mundaka Upanisad* (3. 1. 2) and *Svetasvatara Upanisad* (4. 7) confirm this:

*samane vrkse puruso nimagno  
'nisaya socati muhyamanah  
justam yada pasyaty anyam isam  
asya mahimanam iti vita-sokah*

"Although the two birds are in the same tree, the eating bird is fully engrossed with anxiety and moroseness as the enjoyer of the fruits of the tree. But if in some way or other he turns his face to his friend who is the Lord and knows His glories--at once the suffering bird becomes free from all anxieties. " (*Bhagavad-gita As it Is*, 2. 22p)

*Svetasvatara Upanisad* I. 9 states:

*jnajnau dvau ajau isanisau aja hy eka bhoktr-bhogyartha yukta  
anantascatma visvarupo hy akarta trayam yada vindate brahman etat*

There are two unborn ones, one who is omniscient, the other who is ignorant. One is all-powerful, the other powerless. There is yet another (*maya*), also unborn, which is involved with the enjoyer-soul and his sense objects. The infinite Paramatma who is the Self of the universe is the nondoer. When one realizes correctly the distinctions between these three, he is liberated.

Similarly, in *Mundakopanisad* III. 1. 1-2 we find:

*dva suparna sayuja sakhaya samanam vrksam parisavajate  
tayor anyah pippalam svadvatti anasnan anyo abhicakasiti*

*samane vrkse puruso nimagno anisaya socati muhyamanah  
justam yada pasyati anyam isam asya mahimanam iti vita sokah*

Two birds who are always united cling to the same tree. Of these one eats the sweet fruit and the other looks on without eating. On the same tree [of the body], a person is immersed in the sorrows of the world [only because of associating with that body]. When that *jiva* sees the other there with him, the worshipable Lord and His glory, he is freed from his sorrow.

From *Bhagavad-gita As it Is* 2. 12p:

In the Vedas, in the *Katha Upanisad* as well as in the *Svetasvatara Upanisad*, it is said that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the maintainer of innumerable living entities, in terms of their different situations according to individual work and reaction of work. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is also, by His plenary portions, alive in the heart of every living entity. Only saintly persons who can see, within and without, the same Supreme Lord can actually attain to perfect and eternal peace.

*nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam  
eko bahunam yo vidadhati kaman*

*tam atma-stham ye 'nupasyanti dhiras  
tesam santih sasvati netaresam  
(Katha Upanisad 2. 2. 13)*

The verse from *Svetasvarata Upanisad* that Srila Prabhupada refers to above is as follows:

*nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam eko bahunam yo vidadhati kaman  
tat karanam samkhya yogadhigamyam jnatva devam mucyate sarva papaih*

The one eternal Sentient Being [as Srila Ramanujacarya points Him out, *eko nityo cetanah*] grants the desires of many eternal sentient beings. When, through analytical knowledge, one comes to know Him as God, the cause, he is freed from all sin.

*Katha Upanisad* further distinguishes between *jivatma* and Paramatma thus:

They call these two shadow (*chaya*) and light (*atapa*), these two who have entered-- the one in the cave of the heart, the other into the highest region beyond. . . (*Ka. U. 1. 3. 1*)

Similarly, *Aitareya Upanisad* III. 1. 3 asks *koyam atmeti vayam upasmahe? katarah sa atma?*, "Who is He whom we worship as the Paramatma? Which one is that Paramatma?" The question presupposes more than one *atma*; if the Mayavadi theory that there is only one soul (Brahman), not many souls (*jivatmas*) under the control of one Paramatma, was correct, then why would this question be asked?

This *upanisad* is very clear about the answer to that question:

*sa jato bhutany abhivyaikhyat kim ihanyam vivadisad iti  
sa etameva purusam brahma tatmam apasyat imad adarsam iti*

Having entered into the body as *jiva*, he [the individual self] comprehended the material elements. He came to perceive that very Purusa as the all-pervading Brahman. The *jiva* said: "I have seen this. " (*Ait. U I. 3. 13*)

Earlier in this series a declaration of *Chandogya Upanisad* was noted that Brahman enters the material nature along with the *jiva*: *anena jivenatmana anupravisya*. A similar statement is found in *Taittiriya Upanisad* (*tat srstva tadeva anupravisyat*). Let us look at this statement in its context.

The *Brahmavalli* of *Taittiriya Upanisad* opens with an explanation of Brahman in five features. These are *annamaya* (food as self), *pranamaya* (breath--i. e. bodily movement--as self), *manomaya* (thought as self), *vijnanamaya* (discrimination between matter and spirit as self) and *anandamaya* (bliss as self). About the last two, the *upanisad* states:

*tasyaisa eva sarira atma yah purvasya tasmad  
va etasmat vijnanamayat anyontara atma anandamayah*

He who is the self of the preceding one (*vijnanamaya*) is verily the self constituted of bliss (*anandamaya*).

In a long passage beginning with the words *sa akamayata bahu syam prajayeyeti*, the *upanisad* states that He, the *anandamaya* Brahman, desired to become many. Thus He created all this, whatever is that is. Having created it, He entered into it (*tat srstva tadeva anupravisyat*). That which He entered is comprised of the conscious and the unconscious, the defined and the undefined, the founded and the unfounded, the non-inert and the inert, the true and the untrue.

From Ramanujacarya's commentary on *Vedanta-sutra (anandamaya-abhyasat)* we learn that the *jivatma* is the *sarira* (body) of Paramatma. The *vijnanamaya* self is the *jiva*, and the self of that self--the *anandamaya* self--is Paramatma.

There are passages in the Upanisads that assert nondifference between *jivatma* and Paramatma. *Chandogya* VI. 8. 7 expresses a statement that Sankaracarya has taken to be the *maha-vakya* (which means *maha-mantra*; see *Cc Adi* 7. 130) of all Vedanta literature: *tat tvam asi svetaketo*--"Svetaketu, you are that [Brahman]. " From *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* comes another statement oft-quoted by Mayavadis: *aham brahmasmi* (I am Brahman). The same *upanisad* declares *idam sarvam yad ayam atma*, "All this is *atma*. " *Mandukya Upanisad* asserts *sarvam hy etad brahma ayam atma brahma*: "All this is verily Brahman; this *atma* is Brahman. " *Chandogya* equates the universe, and all the *jivas* in it, with Brahman: *sarvam khalv idam brahma*. *Brahmaivedam visvam*, says *Mundakopanisad*: "Brahman is verily the universe. " "The Purusa is everything," states *Svetasvatara Upanisad (purusa eva idam sarvam)*.

In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 28. 63, Srila Prabhupada nicely sums up the Vaisnava understanding of these "nondifference" statements of the Vedic literature.

Vaisnava philosophers conclude that the living entity is simply a small sample of the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. Qualitatively, God and the living entities are one, but quantitatively the living entities are small fragments of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Lord is full, powerful and opulent. In the previous verse, the Lord says, "My dear friend, you and I are not different. " This nondifference refers to qualitative oneness, for it was not necessary for the Paramatma, the Supreme personality, to remind the conditioned soul that he is not one in quantity. The self-realized soul never thinks that he and the Supreme Personality of Godhead are one in every respect. Although he and the Supreme Personality of Godhead are one in quality, the living entity is prone to forget his spiritual identity, whereas the Supreme Personality never forgets. This is the difference between *lipta* and *alipta*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally *alipta*, uncontaminated by the external energy. The conditioned soul, however, being in contact with material nature, forgets his real identity; therefore when he sees himself in the conditioned state, he identifies himself with the body.



It its fullest understanding, the nondifference between *atma* and Paramatma is of the nature of intimate, inseparable personal relationship, not of impersonal monism. As has been noted in this series several times, Mayavadis suppose *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad* to represent the purest account of impersonal monism to be found in any of the Upanisads. Yet in III. 7. 32 of that *upanisad* we find:

*ya atmani tisthan atmanah  
antarah  
yam atma na veda yasya atma  
sariram  
yo atmanam antaro yamayati  
sa ta  
tava atma antaryami amrtah*

He who dwells in the *atman* [the individual self], yet is within [inside and still distinct from] that self, whom that self does not know, whose body is that self, who controls that self from within, he is your Self [the Self of your self], the Inner Controller, the Immortal.

To be continued, starting with the Different States of the *Jivatma*

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9 January 2004*

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Eleven**

#### *The Different States of the Jivatma*

When the tip of a hair is split into a hundred parts, and one of those is split further into a hundred parts--the individual soul (*jiva*), on the one hand, is the size of one such part, and, on the other, it partakes of infinity.

It is neither a woman nor a man, nor even a hermaphrodite; it is ruled over by whichever body it obtains.

The birth and growth of the body takes place through the offerings of intention, touch, and sight, and by means of food, drink, and impregnation; whereas the embodied self assumes successively in different situations the physical appearances that correspond to its actions.

The embodied self assumes numerous physical appearances, both large and small, in accordance with its qualities. One sees also another cause of their union [i. e. the union of body and self] in accordance with the qualities and actions of the body.

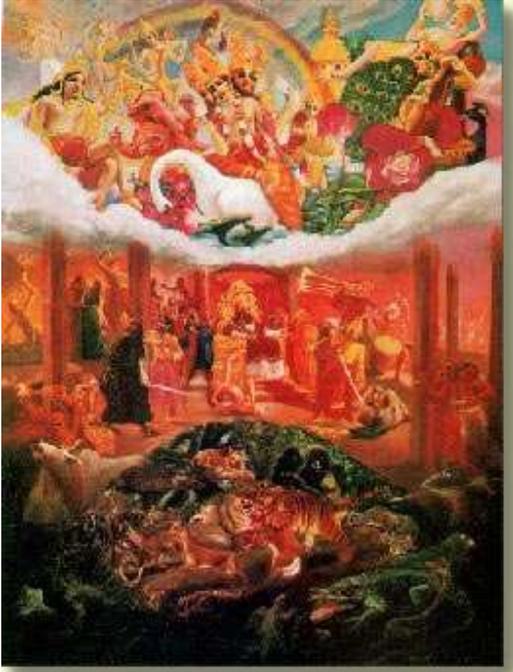
He who is without beginning or end, in the midst of disorder; who is the creator of the universe displaying various forms; who, alone, encompasses the universe--when someone recognizes Him as God, he is freed from bondage. [*Svetasvatara Upanisad* V. 9-13]

"The embodied self assumes numerous physical appearances, both large and small, in accordance with its qualities. " In *adhyaya* IV, the same *upanisad* refers to those qualities in this verse:

*ajam ekam lohitasukla krsnam bahvih prajah srjamanam sarupah  
ajo hy eko jusamanonusete jahaty enam bhukta bhogyam ajonyah*

This one (*prakrti*) is unborn. She is red, white and black. She gives birth to many creatures similar to herself [i. e. colored by her three hues]. The soul is without birth. One such unborn soul lies with her to enjoy her; another unborn soul, having finished such enjoyment, gives her up.

The Sanskrit word for "unborn" is *aja*, which also means "goat. " The verse can be read as comparing *maya* to a she-goat with a red, white and black pelt, and the conditioned soul who comes to enjoy her to a he-goat. Their offspring are colored red, white, and black. These colors represent the three modes of material nature.



*Aitareya Upanisad* I. 3. 12 speaks of three dwellings of the soul, beginning with *nananda*, the heaven of pleasure. *Mundakopanisad* II. 1. 3-9 tells of living entities born as *devas* (demigods), *manusyas* (human beings), and *pasavo vayamsi* (beasts, birds, etc). And so the universe is divided into three worlds--heaven, earth, and hell--by the three modes of nature. These states are experienced by the *jivatma* under the spell of the modes of material nature.

*Prasnopanisad* explains that the soul is unified with the work of the body by means of *prana*, the life force: *ara iva ratha nabhau prane sarvam pratisthitam*--"as spokes are centered at the hub of a wheel, so all bodily activities [e. g. duties prescribed by the Vedas, *yajnas*, *varnasrama-dharma* etc. ] are established in *prana*. " (*Pr. U* II. 6) We saw above that *Svetasvatara Upanisad* declares there is

"another cause to their union--He who is without beginning or end. . . He who, alone, encompasses the universe. . . " *Prasnopanisad* details how the Paramatma brings about the union of body and soul by means of *prana*.

*atmana esa prano jayate yathaisa puruse chayaitasminn etad atatam  
manokrtena ayaty asmin sarire*

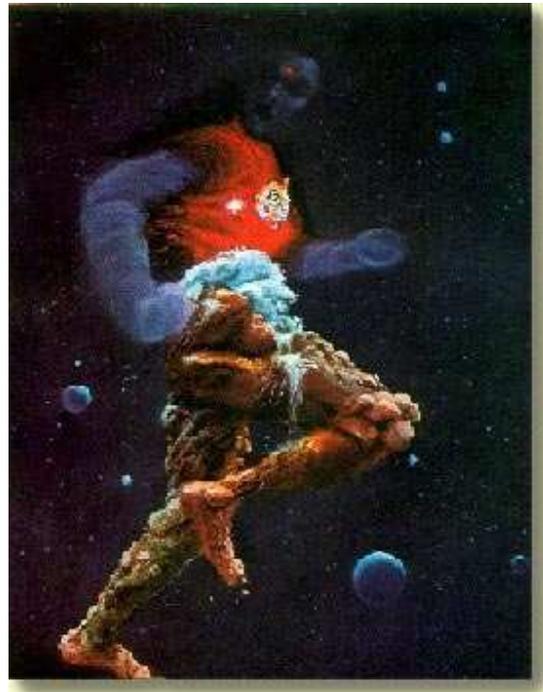
The vital force is born of Paramatma. As a shadow follows a man, so *prana* follows the soul, entering by a path created by the mind [i. e. by the desires of the soul].

This is *Prasnopanisad* III. 3. Verses 6 and 7 of the same *adhyaya* shed light on how the soul and its shadow, *prana*, follow the path created by the mind. *Hrdy hy esa atma*--"the soul resides in the heart," and from this heart radiate a hundred and one *nadis* or channels of *prana*. The soul, following its desires as they are subtly manifest in the mind and grossly manifest in sensory activities, departs the body by way of these *nadis*. If he has done good deeds he goes to a good world. Bad deeds bring him to a bad world. If he has done both good and bad deeds, he goes to the world of men. *Katha Upanisad* II. 3. 16 says that one *nadi*, the *susumna* which runs up to the crown of the head, leads the soul to immortality.

*Adhyaya* IV of *Prasnopanisad* tells of the states of wakefulness, dream and dreamless sleep, which are the effects of the three modes upon the mind. *Bhadaranyaka Upanisad* IV. 3. 9 describes these three states also. *Mundakopanisad* describes a fourth state, *turiya*, beyond the modes of material nature.

About the gross body, *Taittiriya Upanisad* II. 1 explains that it is produced of *anna*, food. Food is produced by the oceans (in the form of rain). The oceans arose from the earth; the element earth arose from water; water arose from fire; fire arose from air; air arose from ether; and ether arose from Brahman. Hence the body consists of all these elements.

To be continued, starting with the Transmigration of the Soul.



### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below took place while he was working in a Kerala branch of the TV Sundaram company. In the previous installment, the narrator had attended a contest of mystic power held by two tantrics in a village bazaar. Now he will go meet one of the tantrics.*

I was eager to get to the bottom of what I'd seen and heard, so without wasting more time in the bazaar I headed for the woods outside the village where the pujari said I'd find the master's residence. After a time-consuming hike through thick foliage I finally reached the place in the afternoon.

It was a small shelter of piled rock walls with a crude woodbeam roof built under a banyan tree. Scattered all around it were animal bones and skulls. There were even a couple of dried severed human hands hanging in the branches.

A very attractive young lady sat inside the doorway of the hut. She was not yet twenty and looked fresh and virginal. Her hair was worn long and loose, and she had on a simple ankle-length maroon red dress. There was a vacant look in her eyes that did not change when I spoke to her.

I asked her about the man I was looking for. She slowly mumbled "Please wait, he said you would come," which didn't really tell me what I wanted to know. I rephrased the question and got the same reply, now repeated over and over. I could see she was under some kind of influence.

I gave up and sat down outside the stone shelter. Soon I heard someone moving through the forest. A man stepped into the clearing, and I recognized him as the tantric I'd seen demanding goods in the village. Now he didn't look so wild-eyed and fearsome. In fact he could have been any common fellow off the streets--a rickshaw driver, for instance. Still, one could see in his face a strange sort of lust: not that of a gross sensualist, but a lust for power. One might say he had the same sort of air about him as a successful businessman, a mixture of ruthless ambition and cocky confidence. But his success was not in business. It was in the black arts.

Wordlessly, he led me into his hut. The far side of its dark, disjointed interior was taken up by a stove that was simply an arrangement of bricks housing a wood fire. Upon that squatted an oversized copper kettle with two ear-shaped handles. Steam spewed out from under the lid, filling my nose with a faintly disgusting odor. Lined up against the opposite wall was a flat stone with a highly polished mirror surface, a small bookcase with thick tattered tomes crowding the shelves, and an old harmonium. In a corner I saw more of the now-familiar rice flour figurines, chilling in their combined morbidity and childishness. As I walked in, stooping, my head brushed against bones tied with knots of hair hanging from the gnarled timber rafters above.

He lit a couple of candles with the stove's fire and we sat down. Nervously, I began explaining myself and my new-found interest in tantra. He gazed at me steadily with a cold thin smile until I faltered. Then he asked in a deadly calm voice that matched his smile, "How far do you want to go?"

I said, "Well, to tell you the truth, my real interest is to develop some faith in spiritual things by actually seeing them. "

"Did you see the show I did today?" he asked, maintaining his reptilian smile.

"Oh yes, and it was very impressive. How do you perform such feats?"

"So, you want to learn something from me?"

"Yes, of course!"

He devised a schedule of appointments based on my days off from work. On the average I would see him once every two weeks, but sometimes he insisted that our meetings be separated by as much as forty days, in deference to his own obligations. He ordered me to keep my relationship with him a strict secret.

During our meetings he taught theory, reading and explaining Sanskrit verses to me from a old book. In the course of these lessons, I learned he had twelve chatans under his control. He engaged these demons in grisly tasks for paying customers, such as frightening or inducing insanity in the customers' rivals, or even killing them.

I also learned that my master had taken up vamamarga in vengeance against people who had used the same methods to hurt his family. He destroyed these enemies and then went into business for himself. In India, vamamarga has always been the last resort of the downtrodden in securing justice and getting respect: 'Dog as a devil deified, deified lived as a god. '

Apart from my master's ruthlessness towards his enemies, I found some things in him that were admirable. One was that he was strictly self-controlled, despite the fact that he used women in many of his rituals. He was a rare man who was motivated not by sensual pleasure but by sheer power.

Another good quality of his, fortunately for me, was that once he was your friend, he would not betray you. Many tantric masters accept disciples simply because they need assistants, not because they want to impart knowledge. Since in tantra today's disciple may become tomorrow's rival, a master's students can find themselves in grave danger when he no longer needs them. But my master accepted me as a friend, knowing that I would not seriously pursue tantra later on. I was only experimenting.

For the last ten years he'd been attempting to get mystic powers by a method known as uttara-kaula: the worship of Shakti in the form of a virgin girl with particularly fine lakshanas (physical qualities). His chatans would search for such beauties as he traveled around Kerala doing his magical exhibitions.

From time to time he would place one of these women under hypnotic control and bring her to a burning ground, where bodies are cremated. There he would bathe her in liquor and invoke the power of the goddess with mantras and mudras (symbolic hand gestures). Yet during all this he had to remain completely unperturbed by sexual desires (he'd been celibate for the last thirty years). After the ceremony he let the girl go home untouched, unharmed and unable to remember what had happened.

Having completed theory, one night I assisted him in a particularly gruesome ritual. He took me to a crematorium where he had the cooperation of the man who burned the bodies. This man had pulled from the fire a smoldering half-burned carcass that we used as a kind of altar. My master sat down near the body in meditation. I had a box containing eight different powders; on signal from my master, I would sprinkle

one of them on the hot, crackling corpse. The other fellow would place burning cinders on the body from time to time to keep it hot.

The powders produced different colors and flavors of smoke. With the rising of each puff from off the carcass my mind would be opened to a particular realm of thought. For instance, one powder caused thoughts of clear skies to flood my mind--the dawn sky, noon sky, sunset sky and night sky. With another I saw different kinds of clouds. Visions of bodies of water were induced by a third. Sometimes the visions were horrible, as when I saw huge piles of stool. Sometimes the visions were very sensual. In all cases, I had to keep my mind under control and not allow it to be overwhelmed by fascination, lust or revulsion.

I was being used by my master as a 'video monitor' for his own meditations. I was to sustain the images in my head undisturbed while he entered them with his mind. Each image was a door to a particular level of consciousness, and at each level he had to propitiate a particular form of Devi.

This ritual meditation went on until about an hour before sunrise. Finally he stood up and embraced me, saying, "With your help, tonight I was successful. What a mind you have!"

He explained that he had long attempted to complete this ceremony, but because of not having a suitable assistant, he'd never seen it through to the end. Now, he told me, he'd attained the power to render objects--including his own body--invisible, as well as reproduce them in multiple forms.

Such powers are called siddhis, and are obtained by yogis after long, arduous austerity and meditation that might stretch over a succession of many lifetimes. Yoga slowly opens by increments the chakras, the hidden power points of the mind.

But the tantric process, when successful, places the mind of the meditator under such intense pressure that the siddhi-chakras can be abruptly wrenched wide by a mighty burst of willpower. This is precisely why tantric ritualism combines such explosively contradictory elements as the vow of celibacy with the bathing of nude girls in liquor. This is also why tantra is so dangerous, for its forcible distortion of the mind often ends in insanity.

Likewise hazardous is the congress the tantrics have with chatans, mohinis and similar evil spirits. As an old saying goes, 'Mahouts die by elephants, snake charmers die by snakes, and tantrics die by the entities they summon and attempt to control. '

After the session in the burning ground, my master told me not to visit him again. "You have seen enough to have faith in the realm beyond the senses. If you are intelligent, you will take up a proper religious life. This path is only for wild men like me. "

And in fact my faith was greatly reinforced by my master's help. I concluded that if such displays of power as he could effect were possible through the dark practices of left-hand tantra, the miracles attributed to the Krishna murti at Guruvayur must be of an infinitely more sublime and pure nature.

During the period I was learning from my master, I visited other tantrics. There were two in particular who became the main reasons why I took heed of my master's warning to abandon vamamarga. I didn't want to become like them.

The first, who directed me to the second, was a woman who was reputed to be the most adept tantric in all of Kerala. She sometimes stayed in a ruined house in a village outside of Trichur. It was only with great difficulty that I managed to find her there as she was very secretive about her movements. It was rumored that she was wanted by the law, so I dared not make open inquiries about her for fear of being arrested as an accomplice.

When I came to the house, I saw nothing indicating recent habitation except for an old ragged quilt flung in a heap on the veranda. After looking around a bit and finding no one, I picked up a corner of the quilt to see what was beneath it. The cloth was snatched from my touch as a voice hissed from under it, "Don't touch my blanket! If you want to see me, come back after sunset!"

I dropped the quilt as if I had just seen a scorpion in its folds. Without a word in reply to the voice under the blanket, I left the house for the village square and had dinner in a small eatery. As the sun sank below the horizon, I returned to the old house.

As I mounted the veranda, the figure under the blanket stirred and sat up. Her face gave me yet another shock, for it was decrepit beyond belief and covered with infected running sores. Her hideous visage reminded me of a reoccurring nightmare I'd had as a child, in which a hag much like her peered from beneath a staircase of an old building.

But fascination for her reputed abilities overrode my loathing. As she was physically unable to stand (she moved about with the help of people over whom she had power), I sat down next to her. In a rheumy, quavering voice she said, "If sunlight touches my skin, I will die. That's why you can only see me after dark. "

I tried to introduce myself, but she cut me off. "I know you and know why you've come, but I do not deal with beginners. You are looking for drastic displays of power that will give you faith in the mystic realm. Very well; I have thousands of tantrics working under me, and I will recommend one to you who will more than satisfy your curiosity. And I guarantee--after you've met him, you will not want to become a tantric yourself. "

She told me to go back to the village and spend the night there. The next morning I would see a line of people boarding a bus. "You give the driver two rupees. Where he tells you to get down, you get down. From this veranda I will direct you the rest of the way. Now go. "

Everything transpired as she said it would. Around noon I got off the bus at a Muslim village where the main business seemed to be the sale of deep-fried plantain chips. From there I walked, following a footpath out of town and through a green field of tall grain. At the end of the field I saw a house perched atop a rocky knoll. Somehow I knew that was the place I was supposed to go.

On the veranda of the house were four young, pretty women in red dresses, each wearing her hair tied in a long pony tail; they were arrayed on either side of a flamboyantly-dressed man sporting a full beard and shoulder-length hair. He looked for all the world like a gangster, and I began to wonder if I'd stumbled upon a house of ill repute. The five sat in chairs as if they were expecting someone. As I came up the front steps to join them, I saw the veranda was also host to a large population of pet animals--cats, dogs, monkeys, and even a jackal.

"So, you've come!" the man welcomed me heartily. "And you want to see something interesting. Well," he gave me a toothy grin from within his beard, "you must see the performance we have planned for this evening. But until then, make yourself comfortable. " He introduced his female companions and hinted that they would be as friendly as I might like them to be. I modestly declined their assistance in passing the time, for I was by now curious to find out what sort of discipline this man was following.

His specialty was spying on people and locating lost objects by means of mystic sight. And to attain his power, he performed the most obscene rituals imaginable. That night I would be witness to one.

He told me that his line of tantra required no vows or austerities like those maintained by my master. In fact, he knew all about my master and his trust in me; this, he said, was the only reason why I'd been permitted to meet the old lady who had directed me to him.

He said more about her. "Her greed for power knows no limit. She has attained levels that no one else can master, and she still wants more. Her physical disabilities are the result of the terrible methods she has used to get where she is now--but that doesn't matter to her, because her satisfaction is not in the pleasures of the body. To be truthful, she cannot be satisfied. The secrets of the universe are unending, and she has set her mind on fathoming them all. Her goal is to swallow the universe. "

Tantrics consider the siddhi they call 'swallowing (internalizing) the universe' to be the summit of attainment: one has access to anything in the cosmos, on any planet, anywhere, simply by thinking about it. Thus all desires are fulfilled by the mind alone.

Yogis who know this mystic process can mentally move through the regions of the universe as easily as someone using an elevator can move from floor to floor in a building. The yogi's elevator shaft is his body's central psychic channel, which runs through the length of his spinal cord. By meditation he can link this channel to the shishumara-chakra, an astral tube coiling from the Pole Star down to the nether regions, and project his subtle mental body through it for an easy journey to other planets. He may even teleport the elements of his physical body through the channel, reassemble them in the place of his choice, and so seem to appear there out of nowhere.

Shortly before midnight, the tantric gave me a battered tin box to carry and led me to a nearby burning ground, where the body of a pregnant woman had been saved from the fire for his use. I watched in growing horror as he stood on the corpse and recited mantras. He opened the box and took out an instrument for removing the foetus from the womb of the dead woman. Then he brought out a large jar half-full

of some liquid chemicals, and finally a razor-sharp knife. What he did next was unspeakable. Aghast and trembling, I fled the scene.

I went to the watchman who had let us into the burning ground. "How can you permit this?" I raged. "That woman's family paid you people to consign her body to the flames, and you're allowing such evil things to be done to her and her baby!"

The watchman cautioned me in a frightened whisper. "Don't say anything more, please! That man knows what you're speaking to me now. Don't make him angry! You must be very careful with him-- he even knows your thoughts. If you don't like what he's doing, why have you come here with him?"

Feeling ashamed of myself, I mumbled, "I only wanted to see the secrets of his power. . . "

The watchman shook his head in pity and said, "Your curiosity will ruin you. You're a young man, you look well-bred and intelligent, why are you getting mixed up in this? Just leave. Don't spoil your life. " But I couldn't leave, as I didn't know where to go. One does not stumble around the Kerala countryside at night, for snakebite is a likely consequence. I settled down near the watchman's campfire and soon dozed off.

Some time later--it could have been one or two hours--the watchman roused me. The tantric had come out of the burning ground carrying the jar under one arm. In the other hand he held the baby's skull. "Why did you leave?" he admonished me, not unkindly. "If you want to do things that other people cannot do, you have to do things that other people cannot do!" He laughed, and his easy manner stupefied me.

"Look at this!" he exulted, thrusting the jar under my nose. I thought he would unscrew the lid, and my gorge rose. But he only wanted to explain that by treating the baby's flesh in the solution he'd made a powerful ointment. He reproved me again for not having stayed and watched how he'd done it.

"Go get the box," he ordered. "We'll go back to my place and tomorrow I'll show you what this preparation can do. " He led me through the fields back to his house. Inside, he went to bed with two of his girls. I slept fitfully on the veranda.

The next morning he set the jar down on a small table between us. Now I could see that the bottom was covered by a pasty substance. With a hand caressing the shoulder of a girl on either side of him, he leaned back in his seat and probed my mind for a moment with a quiet stare. "I think you ought to test the power of this ointment," he said, raising his eyebrows allusively. "There's a problem at your factory that you can solve with it . . . some missing cash?"

He was right. A considerable sum of cash funds had disappeared recently, and suspicion had fallen upon a Mr. Murthi, though no proof could be found against him. The tantric smeared a bit of the ointment on my thumbnail and told me to look carefully at it. As I concentrated, I saw in the nail the image of the office from which the money had been taken. I found I could alter the view with directions given in my mind, just as a TV studio director changes the image on the video screen by telling

the cameraman to pan, zoom in for a close-up, and so on. But my mystic thumbnail scope was incredibly more versatile, for it even showed the past.

I saw that it was not Mr. Murthi, but another man who had entered the office surreptitiously to take the briefcase of money and hide it in his car. I followed him after work; he drove to the place of an accomplice and stashed the briefcase with him. The accomplice spent the money on black-market gold so that the cash could not be traced. And I saw how the thief had his share of the gold made into doorknobs that he placed on the doors in his home, naturally without telling his family what they were really made of.

Later I tipped off a friend at work who wrote an anonymous note to the police. They verified that the doorknobs in the man's home were solid gold. He was arrested and convicted on charges of grand larceny.

From my further discussions with him that day, I learned that when people came to the tantric for the recovery of stolen or lost property, for a fee he had one of his girls trace the missing goods with the mystic thumbnail scope. The existence of the ghastly ointment was kept secret, of course. The customers thought it was the power of the girls themselves.

The thumbnail scope had its limitations. Though it could penetrate any closed door or wall, it could not see above or below a specific height or depth, nor look into powerful holy places or temples and could be baffled by expert singers performing certain melodies. Certain kinds of smoke would likewise render it ineffective.

I asked him about his karma. "You have attained this siddhi by very obnoxious methods. What do you think lies in wait for you in future births?"

On this point he was surprisingly philosophical. "Those who would master this knowledge must be ready to face the consequences without flinching. I will surely have to suffer for all the black deeds I have done. But that's part of the game we play.

"We tantrics view all existence as an ebb and flow of Shakti. We connect with that power, and it sweeps us up to untold heights. Later on, the same power may plunge us into despair. But what else is there? Everything is but a manifestation of Shakti. "

This man's question--'But what else is there?'--for which the tantrics have no answer, bothered me. If there was really nothing else beyond the goddess and her power, then he, and the old witch on the veranda, and my master who poured liquor over women's bodies, and the brahmin who broke coconuts on his head, had attained all there is to attain. I couldn't accept that. There had to be something more.

I was now not interested in going any further with vamamarga. But I thought that the theoretical principles and the basic discipline I'd learnt from my master were of great use to me. I had no inkling that once the lid of the Pandora's box of occult mind power had been pried off, it was not so easy to close again.

## What the Upanisads Teach Part Twelve

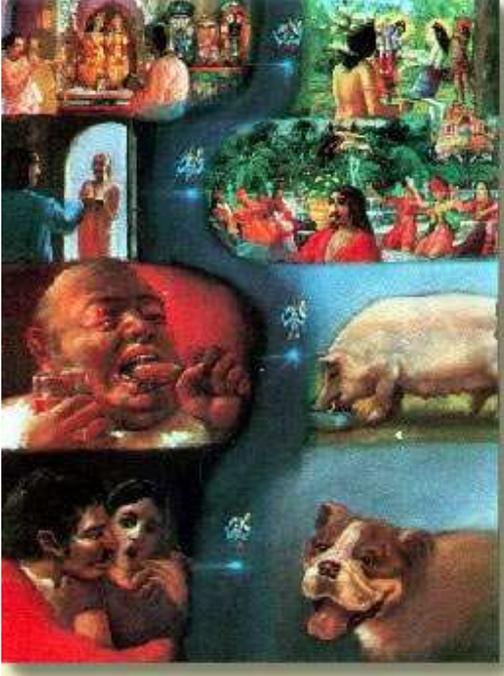
### Transmigration of the Soul

We have already met in recent installments of this series the basic concepts for understanding the transmigration of the soul as it is taught in the *upanisads*. While in conditioned life, the eternal *jivatma* tries to enjoy material nature, which consists of three modes. That soul is responsible for his actions (*karma*), and so has to enjoy or suffer the reactions of his *karma* by taking birth in different grades of material bodies. As long as he does not give up *maya*, the *jivatma* is faced with three possible general destinations at the time of death: heaven (birth among *devatas*), earth (birth among human beings), and hell (birth among lower forms of life). If he renounces *maya*, the soul is freed from repeated birth and death altogether. In this installment, we shall look in more detail at what the *upanisads* teach about the fate of the conditioned soul after death. The question of liberation will be taken up in a later installment.

*Katha Upanisad* relates a discussion between Yamaraja, the judge of men's souls, and Naciketas, the son of a *brahmana* named Vajasravas. Yamaraja teaches Naciketas that the soul is a passenger in the chariot of the body. The intelligence is the driver, the mind is the reins, and the horses are the senses. When the intelligence is weak, the mind is not controlled, and when the mind is uncontrolled, the senses behave badly. The soul in this condition is called impure (*asucih*) and so cannot achieve the ultimate destination of immortality; he must mount the wheel of repeated birth and death. The supreme destination beyond birth and death is clearly pointed out by Yamaraja in *Katha* I. 3. 9: *sodhvanah param apoti tad visnoh paramam padam*--it is the transcendental abode of Lord Visnu.

In describing the process of transmigration, Yajnavalkya, speaking to King Janaka in *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*, gives an example that is also taught by Narada to King Pracinibarhi in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 29. 26-27. I will quote the *Bhagavatam*:

The caterpillar transports itself from one leaf to another by capturing one leaf before giving up the other. Similarly, according to his previous work, the living entity must capture another body before giving up the one he has. This is because the mind is the reservoir of all kinds of desires.



Srila Prabhupada explains in the purport:

The conclusion is that the next body is already determined by superior control. The living entity immediately gives up the present body and enters another. Sometimes in the present body the living entity feels that many of his desires and imaginations are not fulfilled. Those who are overly attracted to their life situation are forced to remain in a ghostly body and are not allowed to accept another gross body. Even in the body of a ghost, they create disturbances for neighbors and relatives. The mind is the prime cause of such a situation. According to one's mind, different types of bodies are generated, and one is forced to accept them.

In another passage Yajnavalkya says, *sadhukari sadhurbhavati papakari papo bhavati punyah punyena karmana bhavati*

*papah papina*--"he who does virtuous acts is born as a *sadhu*; he who does sinful acts is born as a sinner. " *Chandogya Upanisad* V. 10. 7 gives a similar account.

*tadya iha ramaniyacarana abhyaso ha yat te ramaiyam  
yonim apadyera brahmanayonim va ksatriyayonim va  
vaisyayonim yatha ya iha kapuyacarana abhyaso ha yat  
te kapuyam yonim apadyeran svayonim va sukarayonim  
va candalayonim va*

Therefore, they who here are of pleasant conduct, for them there is the prospect of arriving in a pleasant birth: a *brahmana* birth, a *ksatriya* birth or a *vaisya* birth. They who here are of stinking conduct (*kapuyacara*), for them there is the prospect of arriving in a stinking birth: a dog birth, a hog birth or a *candala* (dog-eater, i. e. barbarian) birth.

What, essentially, is stinking conduct?

*tasmad apy adyehadadanam asraddadhanam  
ayajamanam ahur asurovatety*

Therefore, those who even today are uncharitable, who are faithless, who perform no sacrifice, are called demonlike. (*Chandogya Upanisad* VIII. 8. 5)

The *Kausitaki Upanisad* I. 2-3 depicts the paths of upward and downward *karma* in this way:

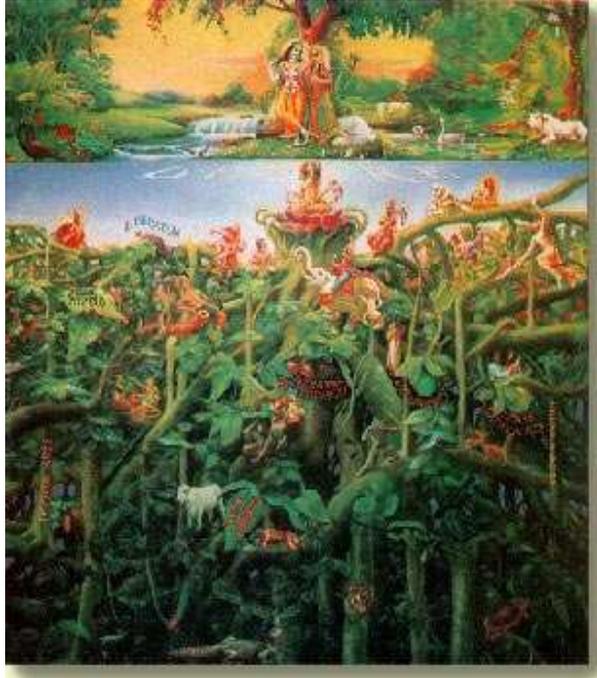
*hovaca ye vai ke casmal lokat prayati  
candramasau eva te sarva gacchanti  
tesam pranaih purvapaksa apyayate*

*tan aparapakse na prajanayati  
etad vai svargasya lokasya dvaram  
yas candramas tam yah pratyana tam  
atisrjate 'tha ya enam na pratyaha  
tam iha vrstir bhutva varstai sa iha kito  
va patango va sakunir va sardulo va simho va  
matsyo va parasva va puruso va 'nyo vaiquesu  
sthanesu pratyajayate yathakarma yathavidyam. . .  
sa etam devayanam panthanamapy agnilokam agacchati  
sa vayulokam sa adityalokam sa varunalokam sa  
indralokam sa prajapatilokam sa brahmalokam. . .*

He [Citra Gangayani] said [to his disciple Aruni]: those who depart from this world go to the moon. He [Candra, the moon deity] thrives in the earlier phase on their *prana* [life force]. In the later phase he does not produce. This is indeed the gate of *svargaloka* [heaven], that is, the moon. Those who answer him [Candra] pass by, and those who do not answer him become rain. They fall down here [to earth] and are born again in one condition or another, as a worm or a moth or a bird or a tiger or a lion or a fish or a snake or a man according to *karma* and according to knowledge. . . . He travels on this *deva-yana* path to Agniloka, to Vayuloka, to Adityaloka, to Varunaloka, to Indraloka, to Prajapatiloka, to Brahmaloaka. . .

Some interpret this to mean that all souls, regardless of their *karma*, approach the moon after death. *Vedanta-sutra* 3. 1. 12-17 bring this passage of *Kausitaka Upanisad* under examination. The conclusion, supported by all *acaryas* of Vedanta including Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana, is that only souls who have performed pious deeds in accordance with the Vedic scriptures rise to the moon. The impious enter the *tritiya-sthanam*, a third realm apart from the *pitr-yana* (the path of the forefathers, which rises to the moon but goes no farther, eventually returning those who follow it back to earth) and the *deva-yana* (the path of the *devas*, which extends beyond the moon, ultimately to Brahmaloaka). The *tritiya-sthanam* is the world of lower creatures who, in previous human lives, were very sinful.

In *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad adhyaya VI*, Jaivali Pravahana tells Gautama that the souls who follow the *pitr-yana* enter the moon after having passed through the smoke (i. e. the realm of a demigod named Dhuma), the night (the realm of Ratri), the dark fortnight (the realm of Apaksyamana-paksa), the six months of Dakshinayana, and Pitr-loka. Having at last reached the moon, these souls become the objects of enjoyment of the higher demigods. When their pious deeds are exhausted, Jaivali says *athena evakasam abhinispadyate*--"these souls become one with the element *akasa* and come down through the ethereal space [which separates the moon from the earth]. " They enter the air and then the rain. In this way they fall to earth, where they become *anna* (food). When that food is eaten by a man, it is transformed into semen by which a woman becomes pregnant. In this way the souls are born again in the human form. Jaivali concludes, *ta evameva anupariyantante atha ya etau pathanau na viduh te kita patangah yadidam dandasukam*--"But those who do not know the two paths (*deva-yana* and *pitr-yana*) are born as insects, moths and as creatures that bite. . . "



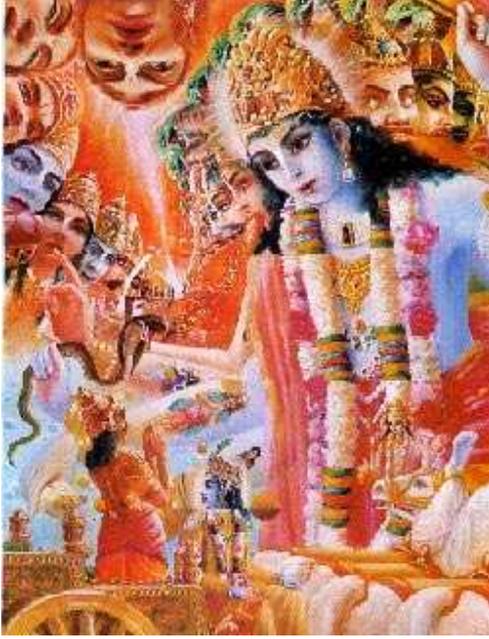
Now, it would be wrong to conclude that the *upanisads* simply encourage the spirit soul to avoid sinful *karma* and perform pious *karma*. *Chandogya Upanisad VIII. 4. 1* dismisses both piety (*sukrta*) and impiety (*duskrtta*) as evil (*papamana*). The *atma* or spiritual self, this verse explains, is distinct from any material condition--day, night, old age, death, suffering, and even good deeds and bad. All of these are inauspicious when viewed from the transcendental position (*naitam setumahoratre tarato na jara na mrtyurna soko na sukrtam na duskrtam papamanah*). *Prasnopanisad I. 9* advises one on the spiritual path to renounce *istapurta*--Vedic sacrifices (*ista*) and charitable work (*purta*)--for it is by *istapurta* that the soul remains bound to the cycle of birth and death.

To be continued, starting with the Universe (*Jagat*)

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
11 January 2004

### What the Upanisads Teach Part Thirteen

The Universe (*Jagat*)



*The Universal Form*

Words used often in the *upanisads* for the cosmic creation are *jagat*, *loka*, *visva*, *prapanca*, *tamas* and *prakrti*. The pronoun *idam* (this) is another very common signifier for the universe.

*isavasyam idam sarvam  
yat kinca jagatyam jagat  
tena tyaktena bhunjitha  
ma grdhah kasya svid dhanam*

Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong. (*Sri Isopanisad, mantra 1*)

With utmost clarity, this verse states that the universe and everything in it is a display of the Supreme Lord's *sakti* or power.

*ya eko avarno bahudo saktiyogat varnan anekan nihitartho dadhati  
vicaiti cante visvam adau sa devah sa no buddhya subhaya samyunaktu*

The one Brahman denoted by the letter "a" (*akara*) creates the many *varnas* [the manifold universe] by His power (*saktiyogat*) without any selfish purpose. At the time of dissolution, the Lord destroys the universe. (*Svetasvatara Upanisad IV. 1*)

The same power by which the universe is created and destroyed keeps the *jiva* in bondage.

*chandamsi yajnah kratavo vratani bhutam bhavyam yacca veda vadanti  
asman mayi srjate visvam etat tasmims canyo mayaya sanniruddhah*

The Vedas, the sacrifices, the rituals, the vows, the past, the future, and what the Vedas declare, all this the Mayina (the wielder of the power known as *maya*) creates out of this; in it, the other (*jiva*) is bound by *maya*. (*Sv. U. IV. 9*)

Now, *maya* means illusion as well as power. Is the universe just a grand illusion? The *upanisads* do not teach such a doctrine. This question will be pursued in greater detail in the next installment; today we are focusing on the universe as the creation of the Lord. Certainly within the limits of the present topic there is no scope for dismissing the cosmos as some kind of Chimera.

Remembering from the first installment how the *upanisads* define Brahman, it makes little sense to argue, as the Mayavadis do, that the universe--which grew up by the power of Brahman--is a mere mirage or figment of the imagination. The *upanisads* urge the soul to put his complete attention and effort into the alleviation of his

material bondage. It makes little sense to argue that the state of bondage--which requires so much dedication to overcome--is just the *jiva's* hallucination or fantasy.

The philosophy of cosmic creation taught in the *upanisads* is *parinama-vada*, the doctrine of transformation. Here is a natural illustration of that teaching: a planted seed, which is one thing, the cause, grows into a tree, which is another thing, the effect. Though cause and effect are no doubt two different things, they are no doubt connected by energy (defined as the capacity for power and vitality). Hence the cause is evident in the effect--the tree produces more seeds, which in turn become the cause of more trees. All this happens by *parinama*--transformation of energy. The Mayavadi version of creation, on the other hand, is called *vivarta-vada*, the theory of illusion. Srila Prabhupada gives this light on the difference between the two doctrines.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura comments that if one does not clearly understand the meaning of *parinama-vada*, or transformation of energy, one is sure to misunderstand the truth regarding this material cosmic manifestation and the living entities. In the *Chandogya Upanisad* it is said, *san-mujah saumyemah prajah sadayatanah sat-pratisthah* (*Cha. U. 6. 8. 4*). The material world and the living entities are separate beings, and they are eternally true, not false. Sankaracarya, however, unnecessarily fearing that by *parinama-vada* (transformation of energy) Brahman would be transformed (*vikari*), has imagined both the material world and the living entities to be false and to have no individuality. (*Cc Adi 7. 122p*)

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains, "In the *Vedanta-sutra* of Srila Vyasadeva it is definitely stated that all cosmic manifestations result from transformations of various energies of the Lord. Sankaracarya, however, not accepting the energy of the Lord, thinks that it is the Lord who is transformed. He has taken many clear statements from the Vedic literature and twisted them to try to prove that if the Lord, or the Absolute Truth, were transformed, His oneness would be disturbed. Thus he has accused Srila Vyasadeva of being mistaken. In developing his philosophy of monism, therefore, he has established *vivarta-vada*, or the Mayavada theory of illusion." (*CC Adi 7. 121p*)

The Gaudiya Vaisnava understanding of *parinama-vada* is one of *sakti-parinama*, not *brahma-parinama*. In other words, it is Brahman's energy (*sakti*) that transforms to give rise to cosmic creation. Brahman Himself, the Lord, is not transformed. He does not Himself become the creation. His personal energy expands from Him to transform herself into the universe as a service to Him. Sankaracarya's fear, mentioned by Srila Prabhupada above--i. e. if *parinama-vada* is accepted, "Brahman would be transformed (*vikari*)"--does not disturb *sakti-parinama-vada*.

Only from the standpoint of *parinama-vada* can we find a logical explanation for such statements as *sadeva saumya idam agra asid ekameva advitiam*, in *Chandogya*; *atma va idam eka eva agra asit*, in *Aitareya*; and *brahma va idam agra asit ekameva*, in *Brhadaranyaka*. These passages declare that before creation, the universe existed in an unmanifest state, without name and form, along with the Lord (Sat, Paramatma, Brahman).

This may sound mysterious, but the mystery is dispelled in *Sri Brahma-samhita*. Here is a quotation of *B-s 5. 47* and its translation, found in the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam 2. 10. 3*:

*yah karanarnava jale bhajati sma yoga-  
nidram ananta jagadanda-saroma-kupah  
adhara-saktim avalambya param sva-murtim  
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

The first *purusa* incarnation of Govinda, Lord Krsna, known as the Maha-Visnu, goes into a *yoga-nidra* mystic sleep, and the innumerable universes are situated in potency in each and every hair hole of His transcendental body.

The example I gave before to illustrate the *parinama* doctrine was that of a seed that transforms into a tree. Here the same example is given, but in an original, metaphysical context. Before creation, each and every universe exists as a seed of potential within one of the pores of the spiritual body of Lord Maha-Visnu. After *maha-pralaya* (the dissolution of the creation), the universes resume their potential state. The essential point is, that as the energy of the Lord, the universes always exist--although sometimes they are unmanifest, exhibiting no name and form.

*Atmaiva idam agra asit purusavidhah*: "In the beginning (prior to creation), this universe was Paramatma in the form of a person. " (*Br. U. I. 4. 1*) *Taddhedam tarhy ayvakrtam asit tan-namarupabhyam eva vyakryata*: "At that time (prior to creation) this universe was undifferentiated and it became differentiated with names and forms. " (*Br. U. I. 4. 7*)

The above translation of *Brahma-samhita* 5. 47 is given by Srila Prabhupada as a purport to this verse:

The elementary creation of sixteen items of matter--namely the five elements [fire, water, land, air and sky], sound, form, taste, smell, touch, and the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind--is known as *sarga*, whereas subsequent resultant interaction of the modes of material nature is called *visarga*.

Two verses earlier, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami explained that *sarga* and *visarga* are the first two of ten topics of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. In his purport to *Bhagavatam* 3. 10. 7, Srila Prabhupada nicely elucidates the difference between *sarga* and *visarga*:

The material world and the living entities were all already generated in seedling forms by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Brahma was to disseminate the same seedlings all over the universe. The real creation is therefore called *sarga*, and, later on, the manifestation by Brahma is called *visarga*.

In the purport to *Bhagavatam* 2. 10. 3, Srila Prabhupada further explains:

[*Sarga*] pertains to the sixteen elementary manifestations of earth, water, etc. , with material ego composed of material intelligence and mind. The subsequent creation [*visarga*] is a result of the reactions of the above-mentioned sixteen energies of the first *purusa*, the Maha-Visnu incarnation of Govinda, as later explained by Brahma. .

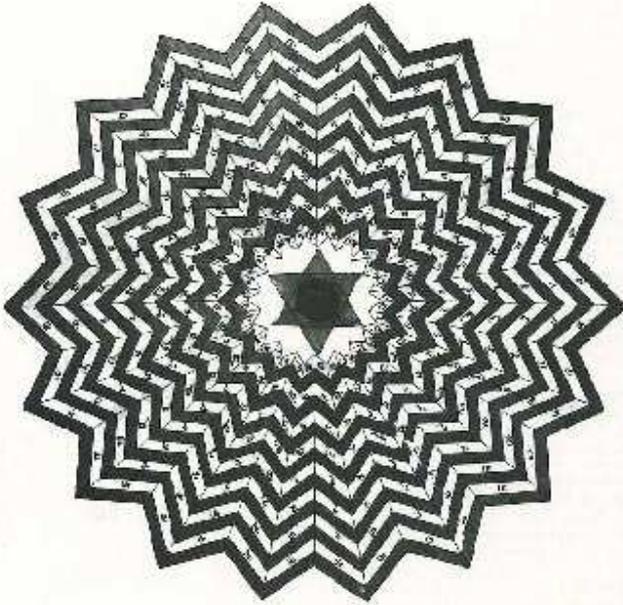
One of Krsna's many names is Sodasa-kala Purna (see Srila Prabhupada's *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* lecture on 13 February 1971 at Gorakhpur). This name means the Lord is the complete repose of sixteen. The term *sodasa* refers to sixteen

energies, elements, *tattvas*, or principles. It is found repeatedly throughout *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (see, for example *Bhag.* 1. 3. 1, 2. 4. 23, 2. 10. 3, 4. 29. 74, 5. 11. 5, 6. 1. 51, etc. ).

A section of *Chandogya Upanisad* is entitled Sodasa-kala Brahmavidya. It consists of the instructions of a bull, a fire, a swan and a diver-bird to Satyakama Jabala. Later the same instructions were repeated to Satyakama by his *guru*, Haridrumata Gautama. Acarya Madhva comments that Sodasa-kala Brahmavidya presents the *catur-vyuha* (the fourfold expansion of Krsna-Narayana as Vasudeva, Sankarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha) along with the energies of these Deities. Indeed, the entire detailed process of creation that is taught in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* can be nicely summarized as the *lila* of the *catur-vyuha*. This *lila* is the Lord's play with His sixteen creative potencies. From out of this *lila* the gross material universe manifests.

*te dhyana yoganugata apasyam devatama saktim svagunair-nirudham  
yah karanani nikhilani tani kalatma yuktani adhitisthatyekah*

The sages on the path of meditation saw the *devatma-sakti*, the potency of the Lord's own Self. This potency is made up of self-existent qualities. The one Lord rules over these qualities, which act as causal agents such as time, the gross and subtle body, and the rest. (*Svetasvatara Upanisad* I. 3)



*Yantra depicting the evolution and involution of the cosmos. The expanding and contracting currents of vibration symbolized by the Sanskrit letters form a web-like image, as the cosmos emanates and returns again to the primordial centre, the Lord. Rajasthan, c. 19th century, gouache on paper.*

The *lila* of the Lord with His *devatma-sakti* involves Him sending the sixteen qualities of that *sakti* forth from Himself. In *Vedanta-sutra* 2. 1. 28, Srila Vyasadeva calls this *vicitra-sakti*, Brahman's power of variation by which He expands the universe from Himself without changing His own *svarupa* (*atmani caivam vicitrasca hi*). Then Brahman enters into the universe along with the *jivas* to give it name and form (*namarupa-vyakarana*). We have seen in earlier installments of this series that *Chandogya* and *Taittiriya Upanisads* are quite specific about this entrance of the Lord into creation along with His parts and parcels. This pastime is termed *anupravisya*.

This two-fold *lila*, *vicitra* and *anupravisya*, is nicely summed up in Srila Prabhupada's purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6. 9. 27:

The *Naradiya Purana* says:

*avikaro 'pi paramah  
praktis tu vikarini  
anupravisya govindah  
praktis cabhidhiyate*

Both the *prakrti* and *purusa*, which are inferior and superior energies, are emanations from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As explained in Bhagavad-gita (*gam avisya*), the Lord enters the *prakrti*, and then the *prakrti* creates different manifestations. The *prakrti* is not independent or beyond His energies. Vasudeva, Lord Sri Krsna, is the original cause of everything.

Now: if the only source of the universe is the Absolute Truth, Brahman, if the universe as potential is eternal, and if Brahman enters the universe at the time of its gross manifestation as the cosmic creation, then how does *maya* (illusion) come about? That discussion is the topic of the next installment.

To be continued, starting with the The Universe, Brahman and Maya

### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below took place after he moved from Kerala to Salem, near his hometown of Coimbatore.*

After a three and a half years in Kerala I was transferred back to Tamil Nadu to work under the rather severe chief accountant of the Salem branch of TVS, Mr. S. Venkata Subrahmanian. In South India, it is common for educated English-speaking gentlemen to be addressed by the first initials of their names. Mr. Subrahmanian was therefore known to one and all as SVS.

Salem is near my place of birth, Coimbatore. I was therefore able to visit my mother frequently. My two good "same-age" friends of this time were co-workers Vaidyanathan, serious, bespectacled and a bit shy, and Shankara Subrahmania, a jolly, big-bodied chap. The first six months I lived alone in a small rented room; after that I shared a place with Shankara until the spring of 1974.

At first my chief, SVS, was very pleased me. As in the Kerala branch of TVS, in Salem I became the star of the accounting office. But by the time 1974 rolled around, SVS was fed up. No wonder.

"If you want to become a high priest of humbug, fine--but you are surely not going to do it on company time!"

SVS surely believed he was speaking for everyone else in the office. He'd had it up to the eyes; it was time to put his foot down.

I continued sketching my picture of six-armed, three-faced Dattatreya as if I hadn't heard him. Muffled snickering obliged SVS to sweep the office with a penetrating

You're Next glare. Then, after a last withering scowl my way, he grumbled: "You'll end up painting that picture on the sidewalk for tossed coins, you--you poppycock dreamer!" He stalked off.

In the past, I'd been his closest assistant and had always compensated for my lapses with bursts of hard work. But today I had pushed his patience to the limit.

The day before yesterday I'd left work early without telling anyone. Yesterday I hadn't come to work at all, and had given no reason. Today I was at my desk, but only to draw pictures of Dattatreya. I was speaking to no one.

A few minutes later Vaidyanathan put his hand on my shoulder. "Chum, the MD (Managing Director) is asking for you. SVS has seen him and raised hell. " Wordlessly, I dropped my pencil, stood up, and ambled into the the MD's office.

He greeted me with a polite smile and invited me to sit down and explain myself. There was a few moment of dead silence while I extracted words from the ether and arranged them in my head. Then I began.

"The day before yesterday I was called from work to the Dattatreya temple in Chendamangalam. . . " He put up his hand to interrupt.

"Who called you?"

"Sri Svayamprakash Brahmendra Saraswati, the mahanta of the temple. "

"Accha. So guruji telephoned you here at the office. "

"No. He calls me through the mind. "

"Yes, quite. Kindly continue. "

"I stayed all night at the temple, because a special abhisheka (bathing ceremony) was held at midnight. " Again he interrupted.

"So guruji was having a special festival and invited you through the mind to come. "

"Yes, but he was not there visibly, because he left the world in 1948. "

"Yes, yes. Please go on. "

"Then, in the early morning hours I left the temple. I came down the hill onto the road. There I met two ghosts. I chanted a Karttikeya mantra and delivered them to the control of Shreshtaraja. The rest of the day I had to take rest. Today I am only thinking of Dattatreya. "

"Only?"

"Yes. "

He gave me that side-to-side nod of the head peculiar to Indians and leaned forward as if to take me in confidence.

After hearing my own voice relate these events, I understood for the first time that I might be losing my mind. I braced myself for what the MD was about to say.

He held up a palm and slightly patted the air above his desk while he spoke, as if my poor head was under it.

"Kannan, listen. Things have changed in India. The time of all the gods and temples is gone. Oh, simple folk may carry on with these quaint forms of Hindu piety, but you are an educated young man. You've got to keep your eyes on tomorrow, not yesterday. "

I thought, "He's just indulging me with his gentle speech and understanding manner. Of course he thinks me mad. " I was beginning to think so myself.

I wanted to open my heart to him. The MD seemed kindly disposed to me, and I really needed someone's help. "Sir," I began, "I sincerely believe in the Hindu religion. After investigating tantra, shakta, Advaita and the other paths, I have come to realize many extraordinary things. . . . " He patted the air, nodding his head patiently from side to side until my voice trailed off.

"That's all right, Kannan. I'm not saying you should give up religion. You've just got to be realistic about it, that's all. "

He opened a drawer and very reverently took out two photographs, laying them on his desk for me to see. One was of a sadhu dressed in white, with long hair and beard. The other was of a smiling woman, perhaps a Western lady, I thought.

"This"--he pointed to the sadhu's picture--"is the avatara of the age. In him all the gods reside. His name is Sri Aurobindo. And this is his shakti, whom we revere as the Mother. Though both have passed on into the realm beyond, they are still very much with us in spirit. Their teachings blend all that you've come to value in Hinduism into one scientific synthesis. "

This wasn't quite what I had expected from the MD. His eyes were positively alight with glory. All my worries of losing my mind and my job faded. I was sure if SVS saw the MD now, he'd think him a far worse high priest of humbug than I. But he must have had something going for him to make it into the upper echelon of TVS management. Could it all be due to Aurobindo? And could Aurobindo help me get my life on the right track?

"I will now give you a mantra, Kannan," he solemnly declared. "I want you to keep these pictures on your desk and offer everything you do to Sri Aurobindo and the Holy Mother. This will bring you back to reality, and you'll attain the goal of all religions. "

I became a zealous convert. Before touching the pencil in the morning, I would do puja to it, offering incense, a flower and prayers. After writing out a bill, I'd hold it

up to the photos, chant the mantra and drop the bill, sanctified, into the 'out' tray. I offered the entries I made in the ledger. And the coffee during the coffee break.

This merely increased the output of the "psychic tube" that had flickered in my head since my association with the tantrics of Kerala. Soon the whole building was awash my visions. I'd buttonhole someone almost every day, in the office or in the factory, and fill his ears with my latest revelations. If he listened long enough, I'd get a resonance going with his mind, like making a gong vibrate by striking another gong of the same pitch. I could then tap into his subconscious and receive hidden memories, or feed my own thoughts into his head. I'd leave quite a few fellow employees amazed and mystified.

But as far as SVS was concerned, I'd become a "balmy round- the-bender, dotty as a loon. " It wasn't long before I was in the MD's office again.

This time he arranged time off for me so that I could journey with Mum to Pondicherry, the site of Auroville, the ashram founded by Aurobindo in 1926. We stayed there fifteen days. I got to know M. T. Pandit, a confidante of the recently deceased Mother, quite well. He was taken by what he thought were my highly developed spiritual powers and asked me to stay permanently. But when I saw meat being served in the dining room, and foreign girls in T-shirts and shorts mixing freely with the men, I declined. Mum, a simple lady who'd never been confronted with loose Western ways before, was scandalized. She couldn't see how there could be any value in Aurobindo's teachings after seeing life in Auroville. "The chicken thief comes sporting a feather," was her way of saying, "Know a tree by the fruits. "

In any case, my visit to Auroville saved me my job for the simple reason that the MD continued to have faith in me. After I returned, he let me do pretty much what I wanted. Once in a while I might actually put in a full day's work. Other days I would work for an hour or two, then drift into idle reverie, leaving the office whenever I felt like it. But I continued collecting full pay, much to SVS's chagrin.

I'd been sharing an apartment for more than a year with Shankara Subrahmanian. He was a jolly fellow who weathered my vagaries well, even when I sometimes flicked on the light at midnight to wake him up and harangue him on some arcane topic for an hour or two.

There was another fellow our age, an oddjobber named Mani, who lived in the same building. He too thought himself a bit of a philosopher, but one of the world, the flesh and the Devil. As long as I only spoke of religion and esoterica, he kept away. But that was not to last.

One evening as I sat wasting Shankara's time with a lecture on palmistry, Mani came to the door, a skinny wolf dressed in what I called a "hero suit", a cheap knock-off of the kind of outfits worn by Bombay cinema heroes. With sly nonchalance he said, "Hey Brahmin, let Shankara get some sleep and come out with me tonight. "

Shankara was only too glad to let me go. Mani and I ended up in what I thought was a hotel. But when Mani began negotiations with the manager, I knew immediately it was not a place where you got a good night's sleep. I took Mani aside.

"Leave me out of whatever you're arranging, okay?"

He chuckled and hit me lightly on the shoulder. "Right, Brahmin, no problem. You just sit yourself down here in the lobby. I've got a little business to take care of upstairs. I'll be with you in about (here he winked) half an hour. "

Two minutes later a servant boy came down to tell me that Mani needed my help. I followed the boy up three flights of stairs and to a room where I found Mani with two heavily made-up girls in tawdry glamour gowns. They were perfect compliments for the would-be hero.

He stood between them, an arm around each one. Flashing a big grin as I entered, he sang out, "Here's the pandit! I've got two beautiful sweeties here and I don't know which one to choose. Tell me who's the best. " The floozies giggled. In jest, I pointed to the one on the left. He steered her over to me.

"You got a real sharp eye for the ladies, panditji. So take her. "

Half-heartedly, I turned to leave. He blocked my way and sneered in my face, "Look, Brahmin, I went through a lot of trouble tonight just to help you out. You want those jinns out of your head? You want your feet back on the ground? Let the girl bring you back to reality. "

I gave in, thinking it my fate. Like the mouse that returned to its kind, I had come back full circle to the sad state I had been in when I'd fallen for a dancing girl years ago, before I'd worked for TVS or had any interest in spiritual pursuits.

In the Panchatantra, there is a story of a female mouse that was seized by a hawk, carried aloft, and dropped over the river Ganges. Below, the great sage Yajnavalkya was performing his ablutions. The mouse fell right into his cupped palms containing holy Ganges water. By contact with the combined spiritual power of the saint and the sacred water, the mouse was transformed into a baby girl.

Yajnavalkya took the child home and gave her to his wife to raise as their daughter. When the child turned twelve years of age, he thought to arrange the most excellent match for her marriage.

He first summoned the sun-god Surya, who appeared at his ashram. But the girl thought him too blazing hot. Yajnavalkya asked the sun if there was one greater than he. Surya recommended the cloud, because the cloud could cover his rays.

When the cloud came, the girl deemed him too black and cold. The cloud was asked if there was anyone greater than he. He suggested the mountain, who alone could stop his progress.

When the mountain came before the sage, the girl said he was too rough and stony. And the mountain, when asked, recommended the king of mice as his superior, because he and the other mice made holes in him.

When the king of mice was called, the mouse-girl immediately agreed, thrilling with ecstasy. She begged Yajnavalkya to make her a mouse again, and it was done.

The Kerala tantrics, Karttikeya, Brahmendra Avadhuta, Aurobindo--these had been my Yajnavalkya, sun, cloud and mountain. The tantrics had transformed me by convincing me there was a power higher than human reason. But in spite of the transformation, I could not be wedded to "a great"--a spiritual master who could lead me out of my material entanglements. Now I was back in the mousehole. I'd been warned this would happen by a friend at the Shivananda Yoga Mission. But my whimsy prevented me from heeding him.

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12 January 2004*

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Fourteen**

The Universe, Brahman and Maya

*Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* IV. 4. 19 states:

*manasaiva anudrastvyaṃ neha nanasti  
kincana  
mrtyoh sa mrtyum apnoti ya iha naneva  
pasyati*

Brahman is to be perceived by the mind purified by knowledge of Truth. This Brahman is not diverse. He who sees diversity in this Brahman goes from death to death.

In the same *upanisad* (II. 4. 14) we find:

*yatra hi dvaitamiya bhavati taditara itaram  
pasyati. . .  
yatra tu asya sarvam atmaivabhut. . . tat kena  
kam pasyet*

In duality, one sees another. Where everything has become the Self, then by what and by whom should one see?

Commenting on the first quotation in his *Sariraka-bhasya*, Sripad Sankaracarya writes, *avidyadhyaropana vyatiriktena nasti paramarthato dvaitm asti. . . asati nanatve nanatvam adhyaropayati avidyaya*--"Other than Brahman, the manifold universe does not really exist. Due to *avidya*, Brahman appears illusorily as the manifold universe. "



*A traditional diagram of the Jagat Purusa, the universe conceived of by mystic yogis as a cosmic person.*

For stalwart Vaisnava Vedantists like Ramanuja and Madhva, *neha nanasti kincana* in the first quotation means there is no other reality than Brahman. To think a thing is

"diverse" from that reality--in other words, to think something exists apart from God, in its own right--is illusion.

In III. 8. 8 of the same *upanisad*, Yajnavalkya tells Gargi that the infallible Brahman (*aksara*) has no material qualities. He says it is *asthulam* (not gross) and *ananu* (not subtle), *ahrasvam* (not short) and *adhirgham* (not long), and so on through a list of twenty-five negations of mundane characteristics. Thus Brahman, the only reality, is not to be perceived through the sensory portals of the impure, ignorance-clouded mind. *Manasaiva anudrastyam*, begins the quotation at the start of this installment: "It is to be perceived by the mind purified by knowledge of Truth. "

Accepting this, it is a *non sequitur* (i. e. it does not follow logically) to arrive at Sankara's conclusion that the universe does not exist. In the very next verse of *Brihadaranyaka Upanisad*, III. 8. 9, Yajnavalkya declares to Gargi:

*tasya va aksarasya prasasane gargi suryacandramasau vidhrtau tisthatah. . .*

Truly, at the command of Aksara Brahman, Gargi, the sun and the moon are held in their positions, heaven and earth are held in their positions, the moments, hours, days and nights, fortnights, months, and seasons stay in their positions.

If, as Sankaracarya claims, the universe is not real, then why is the command of the infallible Brahman involved in holding it together? Actually, Brahman is known as Aksara *because* He holds the universe together. In *Vedanta-sutra* Srila Vyasadeva states, *aksaram ambarantadhrteh*--"Aksara is Brahman because the *upanisads* say He supports the whole universe from the gross element of earth to the subtle element of ether. " Vyasa further states, *sa ca prasasanat*--"Aksara supports all that exists by His supreme command. "

As long the mind and its attendant senses are darkened by ignorance, one knows only mundane sense impressions. Mundane sense impressions--grossness, fineness, length, shortness and so on--are not (to borrow Kant's phrase) *Ding-an-Sich*, "the thing in itself. " They do not constitute Brahman Himself nor even the universe that is the energy of Brahman. They are simply the limited, imperfect data that our organs of perception make available to the limited, imperfect mind.

The ignorance that darkens the mind and the senses is certainly diversity, *but it is diversity as defined by the Vaisnava acaryas*. The impressions the senses present to the mind of an ignorant soul are diverse from Brahman, the source of the universe. *Brahma-vidya*, Vedic knowledge, grants the soul scripturally-opened eyes (*sastra-caksusa*) to see beyond the screen of those impressions to the Absolute Truth, the transcendent and immanent all-powerful Personality of Godhead--*and thus to see the real purpose of sense impressions as creations of the Lord and His energy*. That purpose is devotional sacrifice. This is the method (*vidhi*) ordained in the scriptures by which human beings "make sacred" (in Latin, *sacer facere*, the phrase from which the English word "sacrifice" is derived) the objects of their sense perception.

In comparison to this explanation of how ignorance is banished by Vedic knowledge, Sankaracarya's version is, philosophically speaking, quite primitive. Human ignorance manifests as the diverse qualities of our sense impressions: the different sounds, feelings, forms and colors, tastes and smells that are projected into the mind from "outside. " But this is Sankara's point: there is no outside. There is only

the Self. In Western philosophy, the conception that 1) there is only one self, and 2) this self is me alone, and 3) everything outside me is a creation of my mind, is called solipsism (from Latin *solus*, alone, and *ipse*, self). For two simple reasons, solipsism is considered an inadequate philosophy. While asserting that my consciousness is the only substance of the universe, it fails to explain why I cannot change the universe at will, simply by thought. While asserting that the only reality is that I myself exist, it cannot explain why I am dependent for my life, learning and happiness upon a world full of living entities that refuse to acknowledge this reality. Sankara's solipsism argues that "I" (the Self, Brahman) keep myself in *maya* by concocting diversity in my mind. When "I" negate all such diversity, "I" see that the universe does not really exist, and thus "I" arrive at oneness--my Self alone. That is liberation.

Equipped with this understanding, we now turn to the second quotation that started off this installment. Here the question is raised: if all is the Self, then by what and by whom should one see another? Sankaracarya's take is that Brahman is pure subject. Since Brahman is all there is, there is no object to Brahman's perception. Perception, then, is meaningless. Hence when the Self that is Brahman is at last realized, no relation to anything else remains. The sense of a relation to another beyond that Self is illusion.

The problem with Sankara's interpretation is the same as before. He presupposes "perception, relationship, and the other" to be illusory without exception. He does not factor in the difference between "perception, relationship, and the other" registered within an ignorant living entity's limited and imperfect field of knowledge, and "perception, relationship, and the other" outside that field in the realm of the metaphysical ("beyond physics").

Still, it may be argued that the verse clearly says *yatra tu asya sarvam atmaivabhut-*-"When everything becomes the Self. " That must mean that everything becomes pure subject.

According to the *upanisads*, everything is pure subject, as we see in *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* III. 7. 23 (and in similar passages elsewhere, some of which have been quoted here in earlier installments). These passages make clear that "perception, relationship, and the other" are included within the pure subject, the Lord. Because He sees all that is to be seen, an ultimate standard of reality exists that we can share in. That standard lies outside the power of the material senses.

*adrsto drasta asruteh srotra amanto manta avijnato vijnata  
na 'nyatosti drasta nanyato 'sti srota nanyato 'sti manta nanyato 'sti vijnata  
esa tu atma antaryamy amrtah ato anyad artam*

He is not seen with the eyes but He sees all. He is not heard with the ears but He hears everything. He is not comprehended by the mind but He comprehends everything. He is not perceived by meditation but He perceives everything. There is no other seer but He. There is no other hearer but He. There is no other cognizer but He. He is your Self who controls everything from within. He is immortal; all that seems apart from Him is suffering.



*The Mayina, the Personality of Godhead Maha-Visnu, glances at His energy Maya-devi, and so engenders the material creation.*

Srimad-Bhagavatam 11. 24. 20 confirms that the universe exists only due to the perception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

As long as the Supreme Personality of Godhead continues to glance upon nature, the material world continues to exist, perpetually manifesting through procreation the great and variegated flow of universal creation.

To share in the reality of the Lord's perception of the universe is to be Krsna conscious.

Krsna consciousness means constantly associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead in such a mental state that the devotee can observe the cosmic manifestation exactly as the Supreme Personality of Godhead does. (*Bhag.* 4. 29. 69)

In an earlier installment we have met the statement of *Katha Upanisad* II. 2. 13 that among eternal souls, the Lord is the supreme eternal soul, and among sentient beings, the Lord is the supreme sentient being. Yes, He is the original pure subject whose consciousness encompasses everything (*sarvam atmaivabhut*, in the words of *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*). But that does not mean that there are no other subjects. Nor does it mean that these other subjects cannot be as pure as the original pure subject. Nor does it mean these other subjects cannot perceive reality as the original pure subject does. In their sentient perceptions, all other subjects are always dependent upon the original sentient being. But because some have diverted their perceptions from His standard, they suffer. The solution to suffering is not to extinguish perception, to break all relations, and to negate the other. The solution is to perceive divinely, as does the Lord; to relate divinely, as does the Lord; and in this way to know there is no other than the Lord and His energy.

Still one may quibble, "But *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* asks, *yatra tu asya sarvam atmaivabhut. . . tat kena kam pasyet*--'Where everything has become the Self, then by what and by whom should one see?'" The answer is: by the grace of that Self, one should see. It is a fact established in *Brhadaranyaka* and other *upanisads* that it is only by the grace of that Self, the Paramatma, that the individual *atma* can see anything at all. "Where everything has become the Self" means "Where everything is seen as Paramatma sees." Seeing as Paramatma sees does not change the fact that we see by His grace. It means we are taking full advantage of His grace.

Let us move on.

As a spider sends forth and draws in its thread; as herbs sprout from the earth; as head and body hair grow from a living person; so from the Aksara arises the universe. (*Mundaka Upanisad* I. 1. 7)

Commenting on this, Sankaracarya writes in *Sariraka-bhasya: karanantaram anapeksya svayameva srjate*--"Brahman is the sole cause and does not require any other causal agent. " It is due to this point of doctrine that Mayavadi philosophy is bedeviled by the question

### **Where did *maya* come from?**

If Brahman is the sole cause and takes no assistance from any other agent, then, argues Mayavada, *maya* only appears to be the energy of Brahman. But in truth Brahman is originally one without a second. So did Brahman create *maya*? Mayavada answers no. Is *maya* a *tattva* (ontological truth) independent of Brahman? Mayavada answers no. Then what is *maya*? Mayavada answers that it is *anirvacaniya*, which literally means "inexpressible"--something not to be discussed. But lest it be taken as a fancy "Shut up!", the Mayavadis offer that *anirvacaniya* indicates that *maya* is neither real nor unreal but different from both; and that it is without any cause at all.

We will come back to this curious notion of the Mayavadis. For now, let us see what the *upanisads* have to say about *maya*. Of the 14 *upanisads* that Srila Vyasadeva refers to in his *Vedanta-sutra*, only *Svetasvatara Upanisad* employs the word *maya*.

*mayam tu prakrtim vidyat mayinam tu mahesvaram*

Know then that *prakrti* is *maya* and the wielder of *maya* is the great Lord. (*Sv. U. IV. 10*)

From two other words here--*prakrtim* and *mayinam*--it is quite clear that this line intends the word *maya* to mean "power" more than to mean "illusion. " The word *prakrti* is formed from *pra* (complete) and *krti* (one able to create). Hence *prakrti* means an entity with vast creative potential. The word *mayinam* is a grammatical form of the name Mayina, which according to Srila Prabhupada means "the Supreme Lord who possesses great mystic power" (see *Bhag. 7. 8. 23* in the context of the word *harinorumayina*). The conclusion is that *Svetasvatara Upanisad* equates *maya* with *prakrti* and declares the great Lord (*mahesvaram*) to be the wielder of that *maya*. And so He is called Mayina. From the language of this verse a hint of illusion can be teased out. Srila Prabhupada also translates *mayinam* as referring to jugglers and magicians (see *Bhag 3. 6. 39* and the purport). The *Bhagavatam* even uses the word to indicate the demons (7. 10. 53). Jugglers, magicians and demons are all skilled in illusion. But this only affirms that illusion has its basis in power; jugglers, magicians and demons exhibit powers that astonish the common man.

The demon Maya Danava is called *mayina* in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 10. 51. Here Srila Prabhupada translates the word as "possessing technical knowledge. " Arthur C. Clarke, author of *2001--A Space Odyssey* and the inventor of the telecommunications satellite, is often quoted as saying, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic. " Magic means the conjuration of illusion; but we cannot argue that such illusion just floated up out of nowhere. There is a technique at the back of it. When one comes to know that technique, the illusion of

the magic is banished. One can then appreciate the skill of the magician/technician without being bewildered by him.

What exactly is the illusion of *maya*? *Chandogya Upanisad* VIII. 3. 2 states, *anrtena hi pratyudhah*--"they do not find Brahman, as it is hidden by untruth (*anrta*). " Now, *rta* (truth) is defined by *Katha Upanisad* I. 3. 1 in this way: *rtam pibantau sukrtasya loke*--"the fruits of pious deeds. " Sankaracarya has confirmed this in his *Sariraka-bhasya* with the words *rtam karma phalam*. Bringing this gloss back to the *Chandogya* verse, we see that *anrta* is a synonym for *papa* or sin. In a previous installment it was noted that *Chandogya Upanisad* VIII. 4. 1 clubs together both *sukrta* (pious deeds) and *duskrtta* (impious deeds) under the heading of *papmana*, sinfulness. Why? Because the transcendental nature of *atma* and Paramatma has nothing to do with the material dualities of good and evil.

The engagement of Brahman, the Mayina, with His *prakrti* bewilders those who are sinful--which means those who pursue the good and bad fruits of *karma*. Attachment to these fruits is *anrta*, not the true purpose of the creation. Neither is the true purpose of creation to be found in artificial renunciation, by which one tries to liberate himself from fruitive reactions. Both *bhoga* (enjoyment) and *tyaga* (renunciation) of *karma phala* are symptomatic of a fallen soul's obsession for the temporary sense objects. This obsession, or ignorance, covers the living entity's knowledge of Brahman. That covered state is what is meant by "being in *maya*. "

This is all wonderfully summed up by Srila Prabhupada in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1. 3. 37.

There are two classes of materialists, namely the fruitive workers and the empiric philosophers. The fruitive workers have practically no information of the Absolute Truth, and the mental speculators, after being frustrated in fruitive activities, turn their faces towards the Absolute Truth and try to know Him by mental speculation. And for all these men, the Absolute Truth is a mystery, as the jugglery of the magician is a mystery to children. Being deceived by the jugglery of the Supreme Being, the nondevotees, who may be very dexterous in fruitive work and mental speculation, are always in ignorance. With such limited knowledge, they are unable to penetrate into the mysterious region of transcendence. The mental speculators are a little more progressive than the gross materialists or the fruitive workers, but because they are also within the grip of illusion, they take it for granted that anything which has form, a name and activities is but a product of material energy. For them the Supreme Spirit is formless, nameless and inactive. And because such mental speculators equalize the transcendental name and form of the Lord with mundane names and form, they are in fact in ignorance. With such a poor fund of knowledge, there is no access to the real nature of the Supreme Being.

On that note, we return to the Mayavadi explanation of *maya*. In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 24. 17, Srila Prabhupada writes as follows.

. . . it is stated in the *Padma Purana* that Lord Siva appeared as a *brahmana* in the age of Kali to preach the Mayavada philosophy, which is nothing but a type of Buddhist philosophy. It is stated in *Padma Purana*:

*mayavadam asac-chastram  
pracchannam bauddham ucyate*

*mayaiva vihitam devi  
kalau brahmana-murtina*

Lord Siva, speaking to Parvati-devi, foretold that he would spread the Mayavada philosophy in the guise of a *sannyasi brahmana* just to eradicate Buddhist philosophy. This *sannyasi* was Sripada Sankaracarya. In order to overcome the effects of Buddhist philosophy and spread Vedanta philosophy, Sripada Sankaracarya had to make some compromise with the Buddhist philosophy, and as such he preached the philosophy of monism, for it was required at that time. Otherwise there was no need for his preaching Mayavada philosophy. At the present moment there is no need for Mayavada philosophy or Buddhist philosophy, and Lord Caitanya rejected both of them. This Krsna consciousness movement is spreading the philosophy of Lord Caitanya and rejecting the philosophy of both classes of Mayavadi. Strictly speaking, both Buddhist philosophy and Sankara's philosophy are but different types of Mayavada dealing on the platform of material existence. Neither of these philosophies has spiritual significance. There is spiritual significance only after one accepts the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gita*, which culminates in surrendering unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the first purport cited, Srila Prabhupada informs us that fruitive workers and empiric philosophers (i. e. philosophers whose "bottom line" is the data of the senses) are two kinds of materialists. In the second purport he explains that Buddhism and Sankara's Vedanta philosophy deal on the platform of material existence. Neither has spiritual significance.

Buddhism and Mayavadi Vedanta are empiric. The word empiric comes from the Greek *empeirikos*, "experienced." Mayavadis, Buddhists and all such mental speculators have experienced fruitive activities and are frustrated by them. But rather than transcending sense impressions, they cling to them by trying to negate them. Their logic is: "Name, form, variety, relationship, activity, personality, desire, contact of the senses with their objects--our experience is that all these lead to misery. Liberation from misery must entail an existence absent of name, form, variety, relationship, activity, personality, desire, senses, and sense objects."

Yet name, form, variety and the rest persistently continue to bind human consciousness. Why? Mayavadi Vedantists and Buddhists propose *maya* as the answer. What is *maya*? The explanations of *maya* they give I have drawn from a book that Srila Prabhupada said is "very authoritative", *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* by Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta.

On pages 145-6, in their summary of Buddhist *sunyavada* philosophy, these scholars write:

Things appear to exist, but when we try to understand the real nature of their existence the intellect is baffled. It cannot be called either real or unreal, or both real and unreal, or neither real nor unreal. . . . *Sunyata* or voidness is the name for this indeterminable, indescribable, real nature of things. . . . The conditionality of things which makes their own nature (*svabhava*) unascertainable, either as real or unreal, etc. , may be also regarded as a kind of relativity. Every character of a thing is conditioned by something else and therefore its existence is relative to that condition. *Sunya-vada* can, therefore, also be interpreted as a theory of relativity which declares that no thing, no phenomena experienced, has a fixed, absolute,

independent character of its own (*svabhava*) and, therefore, no description of any phenomenon can be said to be unconditionally true.

This clearly shows that *sunyavada* deals on the material platform of existence. Nothing is certain on that platform. Meanings and explanations are not to be trusted. The whole idea here is that one should not attach oneself to the world of appearances, as it is *sunya* or empty. *Sunya*, in this philosophy, is another way of saying *maya*.

The scholars continue:

But when *nirvana* is attained and the conditions of sense-experience and the appearance of phenomena are controlled, what would be the nature of the resultant experience? To this we cannot apply the conditional characters true of phenomena. The Madhyamikas [i. e. the sect of Buddhists that subscribes to *sunyavada*], therefore, hold that there is a transcendental reality (noumenon) behind the phenomenal one and it is free from change, conditionality and all other phenomenal characters. . . . The truth of the lower order is only a stepping-stone to the attainment of the higher. The nature of the *nirvana* experience which takes one beyond ordinary experience cannot be described. Nagarjuna [the founder of the Madhyamika sect], therefore, describes *nirvana* with a series of negatives, thus: "That which is not known (ordinarily), not acquired anew, not destroyed, not eternal, not suppressed, not generated is called *nirvana*. "

The *sunyavadis* allow that there is an ultimate truth (noumenon) behind the ever-changing illusion of phenomena. But just as we saw with Immanuel Kant (in In2-MeC of 25 December), the *sunyavadis* allow *no link to speak of* between phenomenon and noumenon. The developments in German intellectual life in the century after Kant illustrate that the doctrine of the complete severance of human experience from reality-in-itself represents a downward turn in the progress of knowledge and culture. It is atheism cloaked as piety. At the end of their chapter on *sunyavada*, Chatterjee and Datta have this to say about Mayavadi Vedanta:

It may be noted here that in its conception of twofold truth, its denial of the phenomenal world, its negative description of the transcendental, and its conception of *nirvana* as the attainment of unity with the transcendental self, the Madhyamika approaches very close to Advaita Vedanta as . . . elaborated by Gaudapada and Sankaracarya.

On page 372, the two scholars take special note of an essential difference between the Mayavadi Vedanta of Sankaracarya and the Vaisnava Vedanta of Ramanujacarya. This difference pertains to *maya*.

The difference between Ramanuja and Sankara, then, is that while, according to Ramanuja, the matter or *prakrti* which is an integral part of God really undergoes modification, Sankara holds that God does not undergo any real change, change is only apparent, not real.

And so the Vaisnavas, citing *Padma Purana*, say that Mayavada Vedanta is *pracchanam bauddham*, covered Buddhism. Both *sunyavadis* and Mayavadis speculate that change belongs to phenomena, while transcendence is changeless. "Changeless" in this conception is freighted with negative connotations: no name, no

form, no variety, no relationship, no activity, no personality, no desire, no senses, no sense objects. Hence transcendence, in any practical sense, is unreachable by those who live in the world of change.

But the doctrine of the *upanisads* is, as summarized by Vyasadeva in *Vedanta-sutra*, *sastra-yonitvat*--"Brahman is to be reached through the *sastras*" (V-s 1. 1. 3); *tarkapratishthanat*--"Brahman is neither established nor refuted by logical argument" (V-s 2. 1. 11); and *srutes tu sabda-mulatvat*--"Brahman is not conceivable to an ordinary man; He can be understood only by the Vedic sound. " (V-s 2. 1. 27) Now, in this connection *Mundakopanisad* I. 1. 4 teaches, *dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma brahmavido vadanti para ca aparā ca*--"Two kinds of knowledge (*vidya*) are to be known as, indeed, the knowers of Brahman declare: the higher (*para*) as well as the lower (*aparā*). " Srila Prabhupada comments in the purport to *Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya* 19. 17:

As far as Vedic literature is concerned, *Vedanta-sutra* is accepted as the *para vidya*. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is an explanation of that *para vidya*. Those who aspire for liberation (*mukti* or *moksa*) and introduce themselves as *vaidantika* are also equal to those groups aspiring to improve religion (*dharma*), economic development (*artha*) and sense gratification (*kama*). *Dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksa* are called *caturvarga*. They are all within the system of inferior material knowledge. Any literature giving information about the spiritual world, spiritual life, spiritual identity and the spirit soul is called *para vidya*.

Persons engaged in *dharma*, *artha* and *kama* are seeking to obtain the objects of sense gratification under Vedic injunction. Persons engaged in *mukti* or *moksa* are seeking to rid themselves of those objects, also under Vedic injunction. The first are *bhogis*, the second are *tyagis*, and both are obsessed with sense impressions either positively or negatively. For *bhogis* and *tyagis* the unobstructed truth of the Lord, His *sakti*, the *atma*, and the transcendental relationship of these three, remains unrealized. This is because *bhogis* and *tyagis* persist in struggling with the duality of enjoying and renouncing their sense impressions--impressions that amount to a screen of ignorance that hides Brahman from their vision. The *bhogis* and *tyagis* are in *maya*, not because of their sense impressions *per se*, but because of their ignorant struggle with those impressions in their effort to gratify or stultify their lust. But if they sincerely accept the direction of the Vedic scriptures, they will be lead out of *maya* into *para-vidya*, knowledge of transcendence.

To be continued, starting with Sadhana in the Upanisads

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13 January 2004

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Fifteen**

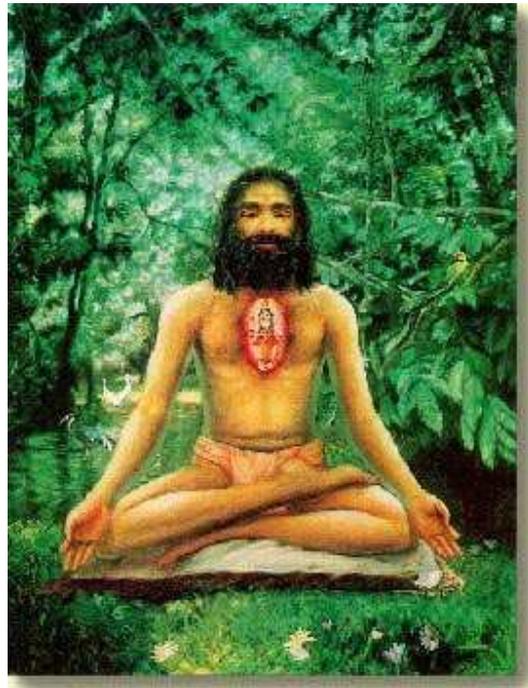
Sadhana in the Upanisads

The *tyagis*--a class that includes the *jnanis*, the *yogis*, and the *sannyasis* and the more renounced and introspective *smarta-brahmanas* of Sankaracarya's *advaita-vedanta* tradition--think that the goal of life is to be obtained by the utter extirpation of desire (*kama*). And indeed, *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* VI. 4. 7 does state that immortality in Brahman can be achieved only when all material desire is overcome--*sarve pramucyante kamah*. At the same time, the *upanisads* warn that mental speculation and word-jugglery is not the means to that goal.

*nayamatma pravacanena labhyo  
na medhaya na bahuna srutena  
yamevaisa vrnute tena labhyas  
tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam*

This verse, from *Katha Upanisad* II. 23 and *Mundakopanisad* III. 2. 3, makes clear that the Supreme Lord is not attainable through *pravacan*, philosophical erudition; nor through *medha*, intellectualism; nor through *bahu-sruti*, the study of many scriptures. It is He alone who decides to whom He will reveal His transcendental form.

Does this mean that the *upanisads* leave perfection in spiritual life up to the mercy of the Lord? The answer is a qualified yes. *Acaryadd-haiva vidya vidita saddhistam prapti*, states *Chandogya Upanisad*; and again the same *upanisad* instructs, *acaryavan puruso veda*. This means that transcendental knowledge is to be gotten from the *acarya*, the bona fide spiritual master. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet*, according to *Mundaka* I. 2. 12: one must approach the *guru* in order to realize the Absolute Truth. Yes, the mercy of the Lord is needed to achieve perfection, but that mercy is availed to the aspirant in the form of the spiritual master. Taking shelter at his lotus feet entails dedicated effort. *Vidvan punya-pape vidhuya niranjanah paramam samyam upaiti*, *Mundakopanisad* III. 1. 3 explains: one must become *vidvan*, learned; one must be *punya-pape vidhuya*, washed clean of the duality of piety and sinfulness; one must achieve the pristine purity of the Lord Himself.



*Meditation is one of the methods of sadhana mentioned in the upanisads. Katha Upanisad calls Brahman realization adhyatma-yoga. Does meditation and yoga only mean inner contemplation and self-restrained quietude?*

The means by which the disciple accomplishes this is summed up by Yajnavalkya Muni in *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* II. 4. 5: *atma va are drastavyah srotavyo mantavyo nididhyasitavyah*--"The Supreme Self is 1) to be seen (*drastavyah*), 2) to be heard (*srotavyah*), 3) to be thoughtfully considered (*mantavyah*), and 4) to be

meditated upon (*nididhyasitavyah*). Hence, the senses, mind and intelligence are to be engaged in the Supreme Self under the direction of the spiritual master.

It turns out that meditation entails *upasana*, worship. In the section of *Chandogya Upanisad* known as Sandilya Vidya (*adhyaya* III), we find this important statement: *tajjalan iti santa upasita* (*Ch. U. III. 14. 1*). The word *tajjalan* is considered by Vedantists to be key to the proper understanding of *brahma-vidya*. It indicates that Brahman (*tat*) is the origin of creation (*ja*), the maintainer of creation (*la*), and the destroyer of creation (*an*). The word *upasita* is an injunction that this Brahman is to be worshipped. In his commentary on *Vedanta-sutra* 2. 3. 31, Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana cites a statement from the Vedas, *atmanam eva lokam upasita*, "one should worship the Supreme Lord," to prove that worship is actually an activity of the soul, not the body. Hence *upasana* is a process of meditation or *vidya*, transcendental knowledge.

This is another point of contention between Vaisnavas and Mayavadis. Looking at pages 390 and 391 of *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* by Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta, we find this description of the Mayavadi understanding of worship, and of the scriptural statements that Brahman is worshipable.

God as the object of worship is based essentially on a belief in the distinction between the worshipping self and the God worshipped. The reality of the limited self like that of a worldly object is based on ignorance--on the failure to realize that God is the only reality. Besides, God is worshipped because God is thought of as the creator and controller of the world. So worship and the God worshipped are bound up with our lower standpoint (*vyavaharika-drsti*) from which the world appears as real and God appears as endowed with the many qualities in relation to the world. It is the Saguna Brahman or Isvara who can be regarded as an object of worship.

Brahman from the higher or transcendental point of view (*paramarthika-drsti*) cannot be described by qualities which relate to the world or the ego. Brahman in this aspect is devoid of all distinctions, external as well as internal (*sajatiya, vijatiya, and svagata bhedas*). Here, therefore, Sankara differs from Ramanuja who, we shall see, believes that God is possessed with at least internal distinctions (*svagata bheda*), because within Him there are the really distinct conscious and unconscious realities. Brahman, in this absolutely transcendent aspect, says Sankara, cannot be described at all and it is, therefore, called indeterminate or characterless or *nirguna*. The description of Brahman even as infinite, real, consciousness, though more accurate than accidental descriptions of Brahman, cannot directly convey the idea of Brahman. It only serves to direct the mind towards Brahman by denying it of its finiteness, unreality and unconsciousness.

Buddhism is imbedded here. Buddhism does not accept the Vedic sound to be the bridge between the world of phenomena and the world of noumena. Noumena, in Buddhist terminology, belongs to *avyakrta vastuni*, subject matter that cannot be expressed in words. *Avyakrta vastuni* appears in Mayavadi Vedanta under the name *anirvacaniya*. Sankara thus denies that Brahman as *Ding-an-Sich* (the thing in itself) is obtainable from the Vedic *sabda*.

Harking back to points I made in In2-Mec on December 11, 14, and 20, Mayavadi philosophy relegates *sabda* to alpha consciousness, i. e. the plane of merely thinking

*about*, not the beta plane of thinking *with*. We may consider this in the light of two terms from Western philosophy: mediate knowledge and immediate knowledge. Mediate knowledge is filtered to you through a medium. It is, again, information *about* a thing, as when a friend calls you on the phone to tell you about something wonderful he just experienced. No doubt you do learn something *about* his experience, but what you learn through the medium of a phone call is not quite the same as the immediate experience. The phone call gives you enough information to make you wish you were *with* your friend while he was having his experience. Look again at the previous quotation: "It only serves to direct the mind towards Brahman. . . "

The duality of the mediate and immediate has relevance to experience that is *laukika* (ordinary; wholly within the realm of limited, imperfect sense perception). But as was noted in yesterday's installment, the Vedanta philosophy taught by Srila Vyasadeva in his *brahma-sutras* asserts that in transcendental or *alaukika* experience, *sabda* is the "transparent via medium" (to use a favorite phrase of Srila Prabhupada's) by which one enters into immediate contact with the Lord: *srutes tu sabda-mulatvat*--"Brahman is not conceivable to an ordinary man; He can be understood only by the Vedic sound. " (V-s 2. 1. 27)

Thus Mayavadi philosophy is non-Vedic at its root. Sankaracarya conceived it as a preaching strategy for capturing the attention of people under the sway of Buddhism, a doctrine that lacks faith in Vedic *sabda*. This is the secret of Mayavadi philosophy's broad appeal even today. On page 375 of their book, Datta and Chatterjee note:

Those who do not believe in any revealed scriptures or in any mystic intuition, but try to understand the real nature of the world in the light of common experience and reasoning based thereon, will also value these arguments [of Sankaracarya], if only for their great logical and philosophical merit.

The operative words here are "in the light of common experience and reasoning based thereon. " This is the light that Mayavadi philosophy throws on the *brahma-vidya*, the transcendental knowledge of the *upanisads*. In common experience, words do not immediately present their objects. Speaking the word "water", for example, will not fill our mouths with that liquid and thus quench our thirst. Such is the prejudice of Mayavadi philosophy toward the Vedic sound vibration.

On the other hand, Vaisnavas like Sripad Ramanujacarya teach that Brahman, the Absolute Truth, is of the nature of internal distinctions of spiritual qualities. These distinctions are expressed externally as the qualities of this material creation. For example, the *sodasa-kala*--five *jnanendriyas*, five *karmendriyas*, five *tanmatras*, and the mind--are originally aspects of Sri Krsna's own personal nature. His nature is *antaranga*, internal, consisting of the transcendental qualities of *sat-cid-ananda* (eternity, knowledge and bliss).

Vedic sound has two levels of transmission, we learned yesterday in a quotation from the *Mundakopanisad*. These are *apara* and *para*. By the first, a material representation of the *sodasa-kala* is conveyed. That "re-presentation" is our material experience of the world. The *apara-vidya* of the Vedas teaches human beings how to correctly interact with that experience so that we do not fall down into complete *avidya*, the ignorant condition of animal life. The *para-vidya* reveals the original transcendental nature of the 16 principles of ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose, hand, leg,

stomach, genital, anus, sound, touch, visible form, taste, smell, and the mind with its attendant intelligence and ego. Mayavadis do not understand the difference between *apara* and *para-vidya*. They consign any Vedic statement of name, form, quality, activity and relationship to the category of *apara*. Then what is left? Of Vedic statements, even those of the *upanisads*, nothing. Thus Mayavadi philosophy enshrouds the Vedic bridge from the world of *apara-prakrti* to the *paravyoma*, the spiritual sky, in a fog of mystery.

The original Vedanta philosophy teaches that the *apara-prakrti* is the result of *parinama*, a transformation of the internal potency: *atmakrteh parinamat* (V-s 1. 4. 26). The *upanisads* teach that Brahman is *ubhaya-lingatva*, both *savisesa* (with spiritual qualities) and *nirvisesa* (without mundane qualities). *Ubhaya* means "both"; Vyasa deals with this in *Vedanta-sutras* 3. 2. 11-21, the section known as *ubhaya-lingadhikarana*. The word *bheda* (difference) appears in four different *sutras* to stress that the living entity is not identical to the Supreme Lord: *bheda-vyapadesat ca* (V-s 1. 1. 7), *bheda vyapadesat anyah* (V-s 1. 1. 21), *bheda vyapadesa* (V-s 1. 3. 5), and *bheda-sruteh* (V-s 2. 4. 18). Yet the Lord and the living entities share the transcendental nature of eternity (*nityo nityanam*) and sentient awareness (*cetanas cetanam*). The *jiva* is *karta*, a doer of activities with his knowing and acting senses, and his mind: *esa hi drasta sprasta srota ghrata rasayita manta boddha karta vijnanatma purusah sa pare aksara atmani sampratisthate*--"The *jivatma* is verily the seer, toucher, smeller, taster, thinker, knower, doer, the individual *purusa* who is of the nature of pure knowledge; he becomes established in the transcendental undecaying nature of the Supreme Self. " (*Prasnopanisad* IV. 9) *Vedanta-sutra* 1. 3. 12 states that the Lord is the object of these faculties of the *jiva* that begin with seeing power: *iksatikarma vyapadesat sah*--"He (Brahman) is the object of vision. "

The above paragraph presents ingredients with which one can build the unshakable conviction that *upasana* or worship is essential to *brahma-vidya*. Although the soul has fallen into the *apara-prakrti*, his original nature is like that of the Lord's. Yet at the same time the Lord and the soul are not identical. Hence even in transcendence there remains a relationship between the soul and the Lord. In his transcendental identity the soul has a mind, senses and sense objects, as does the Lord. Hence the soul engages in relationship with Him through these 16 features of their shared eternal personal nature. That engagement is *upasana*.

*Chandogya Upanisad* (III. 18,1 and 3) conveys these statements: *mano brahmeti upasita* and *ya evam veda*. The meaning is that Brahman is to be worshiped as the Total Mind, and thus He is to be known. This amounts to an equation of *upasana* (worship) and *vedana* (Vedic knowledge). The same equation is found in *Ch. U.* IV. 1. 4 and VI. 2. 2, with the statements *yastadveda yat sa veda* and *tvam upasate*. The Vedantic equation of worship and knowledge is confirmed by both Ramanajacarya and Sankaracarya! Ramanuja: *vidyupasyayoh vyatirekena upakrama upasamhara darsanat* (*Sri-bhasya* on V-s 1. 1. 1). Sankaracarya: *vidyupastyosca vedantesu avyatirekena prayogo drsyate* (*Sariraka-bhasya* on V-s 4. 1. 1).

The activities of worship of the Lord are to include all human *karmas*. This is the clear call of *Isopanisad* 2:

*kurvann eveha karmani  
jijivise chatam samah*

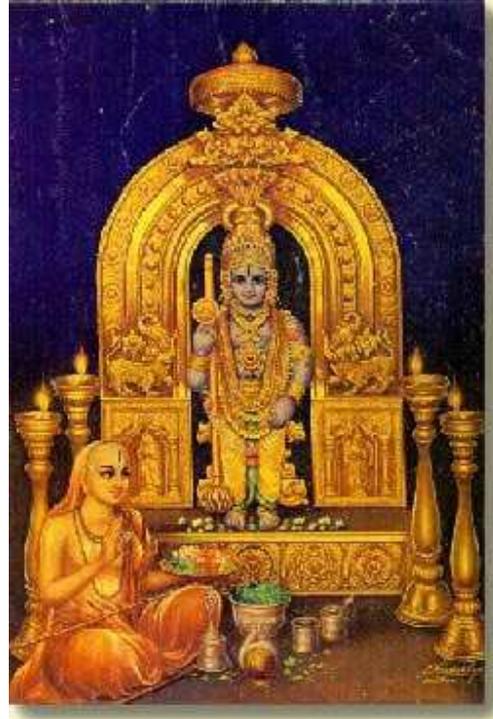
*evam tvayi nanyatheto 'sti  
na karma lipyate nare*

One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of *karma*. There is no alternative to this way for man.

"Working in that way" refers to the first verse of the *upanisad*, which instructs the human being to take what the Lord has given him as his lawful quota, and to leave aside grasping at more than necessary. Living in this way, always conscious of the *isavasya* principle that everything is controlled and owned by the Lord, a person earns no karmic reactions to his work in this world. He may live hundreds of years in the body; still he will not be touched by matter.

Srila Prabhupada used to tell a story of a saintly person who offered blessings to different people he met on his way. He blessed a *brahmacari*, *ma jiva muni-putraka*, "May you die immediately"; and he blessed a prince, *raja-putra ciram jiva*, "May you live forever. " The idea is that a *brahmacari* takes trouble to restrain his senses from their objects in order to attain a higher goal after this life. So the saintly man's blessing was, "Then die immediately and rise to your desired goal. " A prince, on the other hand, is eager to enjoy his senses to the fullest this life. Doing so, he accumulates many sinful reactions. Thus his next life is not promising. So the saintly man's blessing was, "Then live forever. Enjoy without fear of hell. " But when he met a devotee of the Lord, the saintly person said, *jivo va maro va sadhoh*--"My dear devotee, you may live or die, it doesn't matter. " Though it makes the same point as this story, *Isopanisad* offers no blessings to *tyagis* or *bhogis*: "There is no alternative to this way for man. " In all that one does, one should be a worshiper of the Lord and thus sacrifice (*sacer facere*) everything for His sake. One should shun artificial renunciation--which means accepting less than the Lord offers in this life with a view to increasing one's quota in the next life. One should shun unrestricted sense gratification--which means taking more than the Lord allows. One's aim should not be personal satisfaction in this life or the next, but the satisfaction of the Lord.

The *sadhana* that engenders *brahma-vidya* (knowledge of Brahman) is, according to the *upanisads*, a method of seeing the Lord, hearing the Lord, thoughtfully considering Him, meditating upon Him, worshipping Him, and performing all activities for Him. It is given the name *adhyatma-yoga* in *Katha Upanisad* (I. 2. 12): *adhyatma-yogadhigamena devam matva dhiro harsa-sokau jahati*--"the wise man leaves behind both joy and sorrow by realizing God through *adhyatma-yoga*. " *Adhyatma* means "transcendental. " In *Bhagavad-gita* 10. 32 Sri Krsna tells Arjuna that He is *adhyatma-vidya*, the culmination of all Vedic knowledge in realization of the transcendental nature of the individual self and the Supreme Self. In explaining this *adhyatma-yoga*, *Katha Upanisad* offers an example upon which Srila Prabhupada expounds in his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 7. 15. 41:



*The great Vaisnava Vedantist Sripad Madhvacarya shows what the upanisads mean when they say a Vedantist must practice the sadhana of seeing the Lord*

For a bewildered person in the materialistic way of life, the body, the mind and the senses, which are engaged in sense gratification, are the cause of bondage to repeated birth, death, old age and disease. But for one who is advanced in spiritual knowledge, the same body, senses and mind are the cause of liberation. This is confirmed in the *Katha Upanisad* (1. 3. 3-4,9) as follows:

*atmanam rathinam viddhi  
sariram ratham eva ca  
buddhim tu sarathim viddhi  
manah pragraham eva ca  
indriyani hayam ahur  
visayams tesu gocaran  
so 'dhvanah param apnoti  
tad visnoh paramam padam*



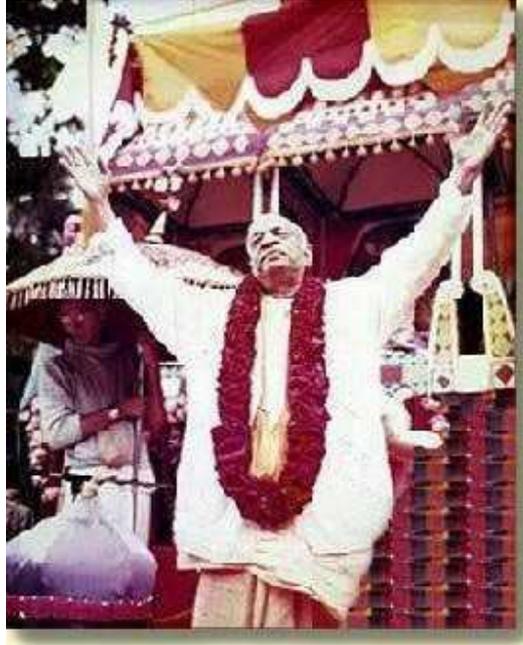
*Katha Upanisad states that adhyatma-yoga involves the body, which is like a chariot; the senses, like the horses; the mind, like the reins; the driver, like the intelligence; and the soul, like the passenger.*

understanding that *adhyatma-yoga* involves activity, going from one place to another, not self-restrained quietude and staying in the same place. The unequivocal conclusion is that if the soul can properly engage the body, senses, mind and intelligence, these very instruments will conduct the soul not to another birth in this material world, nor even to the impersonal Self that Sankaracarya aims his followers at, but to *tad visnoh paramam padam*--the transcendental abode of the Personality of Godhead Sri Visnu.

The soul is the occupant of the chariot of the body, of which the driver is the intelligence. The mind is the determination to reach the destination, the senses are the horses, and the sense objects are also included in that activity. Thus one can reach the destination, Visnu, who is *paramam padam*, the supreme goal of life. In conditioned life the consciousness in the body is the cause of bondage, but the same consciousness, when transformed into Krsna consciousness, becomes the cause for one's returning home, back to Godhead.

The human body, therefore, may be used in two ways--for going to the darkest regions of ignorance or for going forward, back home, back to Godhead.

It seems unnecessary to make a wordy argument that this *adhyatma-yoga* of the *Katha Upanisad* is *bhakti-yoga* and not some other type of *yoga*. What other *yoga* could *adhyatma-yoga* be? This is a *yoga* that involves senses, mind and intelligence as well as the soul. The example of riding in a chariot demands of us an



*The simplest method of sadhana, the one that most blissfully fulfills all the upanisadic requirements for Brahman realization, is the chanting of Lord Krsna's holy names in nama-sankirtana*

To be continued, starting with the Supreme Goal of Life (*Parama Purusartha*)

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*dattva vidyausadham bhaktan  
niravadyan karoti yah  
drk-patham bhajatu sriman  
prityatma sa harih svayam*

May Lord Hari, who is glorious, handsome, blissful, and filled with love, and who cures His devotees by giving them the medicine of transcendental knowledge, enter the pathway of my eyes.

### **What the Upanisads Teach Part Sixteen**

Supreme Goal of Life (*Parama Purusartha*)

In Vedanta, the topic of *parama purusartha* has four subheadings.

- 1) *Moksa* (liberation).
- 2) *Utkranti* (the exit of the liberated soul from the body).

- 3) *Arciradi-marga* (the passage of the *jiva* to the realm of Brahman).  
4) *Brahma-svarupa* (the form of the soul in Brahman).

### *Moksa*

As you can well imagine, there are many statements about *moksa* in the *upanisads*. Here are a few key ones.

*Tarati sokam atmavit*: "The knower of Paramatma overcomes sorrow. " (*Ch. U.* )

*Mrtyum atyeti*: "By knowing Brahman, one passes over death. " (*Sv. U.* )

*Jnatva devam sarva papaih mucyate*: "By knowing God, one is freed from all sins. " (*Sv. U.* )

*Vidvan punya-pape vidhuya niranjanah paramam samyam upaiti*: "The knower of Brahman shakes off good and evil and is freed from all sins. He attains transcendental equality with the Lord. " (*Mu. U.* )

*Avidyaya mrtyum tirtva vidyayamrtam asnute*: "The liberated soul transcends the path of ignorance and death and attains immortality by the path of transcendental knowledge. " (*Isa U.* )

*Sa khalu evam vartayan yavadayusam brahmalokam abhisampadyate na ca punaravartate*: "He who has executed the prescribed spiritual discipline all through his life, attains the world of Brahman (*brahmaloka*) from whence he does not return again to this material world. " (*Ch. U*)

*Yo veda. . . so asnute sarvan kaman sah brahmana*: "He who knows Brahman enjoys in the supreme abode all auspicious qualities along with Brahman. " (*Tai. U.* )

In Gaudiya Vaisnava Vedanta, two stages of *moksa* are understood. One is called *jivan-mukti*, liberation before death, while the soul is still animating the physical body. In his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* (1. 2. 187) Srila Rupa Gosvami describes this as follows:

*iha yasya harer dasye  
karmana manasa gira  
nikhilasv apy avasthasu  
jivan-muktah sa ucyate*

A person acting in Krsna consciousness (or, in other words, in the service of Krsna) with his body, mind, intelligence and words is a liberated person even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities.

In his purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5. 4. 5, Srila Prabhupada writes:

We should act in such a way in this life that after giving up this body, we will become liberated from the bondage of repeated birth and death. This is called *jivan-mukti*. Srila Viraraghava Acarya states that in the *Chandogya Upanisad* there are eight symptoms of a *jivan-mukta*, a person who is already liberated even when living in

this body. The first symptom of one so liberated is that he is freed from all sinful activity (*apahata-papa*). As long as one is under the clutches of *maya* in the material energy, one has to engage in sinful activity. *Bhagavad-gita* describes such people as *duskrtinah*, which indicates that they are always engaged in sinful activity. One who is liberated in this life does not commit any sinful activities. Sinful activity involves illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling. Another symptom of a liberated person is *vijara*, which indicates that he is not subjected to the miseries of old age. Another symptom is *vimrtyu*. A liberated person prepares himself in such a way that he does not take on any more material bodies, which are destined to die. In other words he does not fall down again to repeat birth and death. Another symptom is *visoka*, which indicates that he is callous to material distress and happiness. Another is *vijighatsa*, which indicates that he no longer desires material enjoyment. Another symptom is *apipata*, which means that he has no desire other than to engage in the devotional service of Krsna, his dearest pursuable Lord. A further symptom is *satya-kama*, which indicates that all his desires are directed to the Supreme Truth, Krsna. He does not want anything else. He is *satya-sankalpa*. Whatever he desires is fulfilled by the grace of Krsna. First of all, he does not desire anything for his material benefit, and secondly if he desires anything at all, he simply desires to serve the Supreme Lord. That desire is fulfilled by the Lord's grace. That is called *satya-sankalpa*.

The second stage of *moksa* is *videha-mukti*, liberation after the demise of the physical body. Concerning this, *Chandogya Upanisad* VIII. 12. 1 states, *na vai sasairaysa satah priyapriyayoh apahatirasti asariram va santam na priyapriye sprsatah*--"one who has a body is in the grip of joy and sorrow, and there is no freedom from joy and sorrow for one who has a body. Joy and sorrow, however, does not affect one who has no body. " Furthermore the same *upanisad* (VIII. 13. 11) says: *asva iva romani vidhuya papam candra iva rahoh mukhat pramucya dhutva sariram akrtam krtatma brahmalokam abhisambhavami*--"shaking off evil as a horse shakes off his hairs, shaking off the body as the moon frees itself from the mouth of Rahu, I, a perfected self, obtain the realm of Brahman. "

From the above one might conclude that the *jivan-mukta*, though aloof from materialistic activities, is walled off by his physical body from immediate entry into Brahman. That he may gain full realization of his *brahma-svarupa*, death must deliver him from the body. In *Chandogya Upanisad adhyaya* IV chapter 14, Uddhalaka Aruni gives his son Svetaketu an example of a man who is kidnapped from Gandhara (present-day Kandahar in Afghanistan) and abandoned, bound and blindfolded, in a deserted region. Fortunately someone finds him, unties him and removes the blindfold. He points the man from Gandhara in the direction of his home city. The man thankfully moves off in that direction, confirming at each village that he is headed back home. As he travels his eagerness to return increases with every step. Aruni comments, "In exactly the same way, in this world when a man has a *guru* he knows, 'There is a delay for me here only until I am freed; but then I will arrive!'"

We should not conclude, however, that it is so for every saintly person who is physically manifest in this world. In *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad* IV. 4. 6-7, sage Yajnavalkya speaks to Janaka Maharaja about immediate entry into *brahma-svarupa* even while one is within the body.

*yo akamo niskama  
aptakama atmakamah  
na tasya prana utkramanti  
brahmaiva san brahmapyeti*

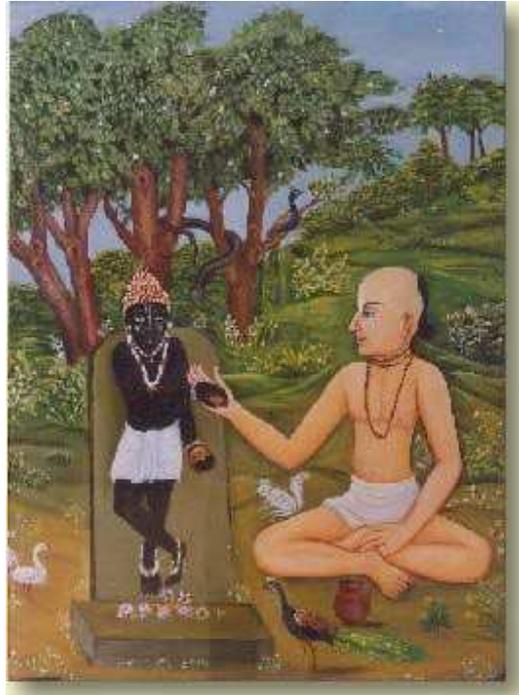
A man who does not desire--who is without desires, who is freed from desires, whose desires are fulfilled, whose only desire is the Self--his vital functions (*pranas*) do not depart from him. Brahman he is, and to Brahman he goes.

*yada sarve pramucyante  
kama ye asya hrdisritah  
atha martyo amrto bhavati  
atra brahma samasnute*

When they are all banished, those desires lurking in one's heart, then a mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman in this world.

This is not as mysterious as it may seem, if we consider these words of Srila Prabhupada spoken on the occasion of the Deity installation in Los Angeles on 16 July 1969:

In this way, if you always feel Krsna conscious, then you are fire. The same example, keeping with the fire. And if you think it is a brass-made doll, I mean to say, idol. . . *Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham*. If you think this is a brass-made idol, then it will remain a brass-made idol to you forever. But if you elevate yourself to higher platform of Krsna consciousness, then Krsna, this Krsna, will talk with you. This Krsna will talk with you.



*Srila Sanatana Gosvami serving his*

There is a Vamsidas Babaji Maharaja, he was talking with his Deity. And Krsna. . . Just like Madana-mohana, He was talking with Sanatana Gosvami. Madana-mohana. . . Sanatana Gosvami at that time had no temple; he was hanging his Deity on the tree. So Madana-mohana was talking with him, "Sanatana, you are bringing all these dry chapatis, and it is stale, and you don't give Me even little salt. How can I eat?" Sanatana Gosvami said, "Sir, where shall I go? Whatever I get I offer You. You kindly accept. I cannot move, old man. " You see. So Krsna had to eat that. (chuckles)

*worshipable Deity Sri Madana-Gopal in Vrndaban.*

"If you always feel Krsna conscious, then you are fire. " In the purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 4. 3. 23, Srila Prabhupada explains, "For example, when iron is put into a fire, it becomes warm, and when red-hot, although it is iron, it acts like fire. Similarly, when copper is surcharged with electricity, its action as copper stops; it acts as electricity. *Bhagavad-gita* (14. 26) also confirms that anyone who engages in unadulterated devotional service to the Lord is at once elevated to the position of pure Brahman. "

Thus great liberated devotees like Sanatana Gosvami had immediate personal exchange with the Deity, even to the point of conversing with Him. This was because Sanatana Gosvami's only desire was to serve the Lord: "Whatever I get I offer you. You kindly accept. " Thus Yajnavalkya Muni says, "When they are all banished, those desires lurking in one's heart, then a mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman in this world. "



*Parinama-vada* necessitates our acceptance of the Lord's complete power of transformation over His *sakti*. His *sakti* is one energy, like electricity, but under the order of the Lord it may act as spirit, or as spirit's opposite, matter, just as electricity may cook food in a stove or oppositely freeze food in a freezer. We saw in an earlier installment a quotation from Srila Prabhupada *Isopanisad* purport that for Krsna there is no difference between spirit and matter. Thus His *arca* form as the Deity is no less Himself than His *cinmaya-ananda-*

*If we accept, as we must if we subscribe to parinama-vada, that the Lord can transform spirit into matter and thus create this material world, then we must accept the converse: that he can transform matter into spirit. This is how ordinary foodstuffs become prasadam--transcendental mercy in the form of edibles that, when eaten even by the most fallen soul, purifies him and sets him on the path back home, Back to Godhead.*

*svarupa* in Divya-Vrindaban. If a devotee here in the material world "always feels Krsna conscious" in service to the Deity, then he is in the same fire of *brahma-svarupa* as the eternal servants of the Lord in Divya-Vrindaban. By the grace of the Lord that devotee's spiritual senses are awakened to fully engage in loving pastimes even within the so-called material world. If we accept, as we must if we subscribe to *parinama-vada*, that the Lord can transform spirit into matter and thus create this material world, then we must accept the converse: that he can transform matter into spirit.

### *Utkranti*

In *Chandogya Upanisad* VI. 15. 2, Uddhalaka Aruni tells Svetaketu that when a person leaves the body, *vak manasi sampadyate*--his speech merges into the mind; his mind merges into *prana*, the life force; the *prana* merges into *tejas*, the fiery energy of creation; and *tejas* merges into the transcendental Godhead (*parasyam devatayam*). The point of departure from the body for a liberated soul is the *susumna*- or *brahma-nadi*, a subtle channel that passes out through the top of the head.

*Utkranti* is the topic of *Vedanta-sutra* Chapter 4, *pada* 2. Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana comments that according to *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad*, speech, mind and *prana* enter the individual spirit soul. But this does not contradict the version of *Chandogya*:

In this way the *sruti-sastra* explains that the life-breath and the senses enters the individual spirit soul. This statement does not contradict the other statement of the *sruti-sastra* that the life-breath enters the element fire, for it may be said that after the life-breath enters the soul the two of them proceed to enter the element fire. This is like saying that the Yamuna, joining with the Ganges, proceeds to enter the ocean.

Srila Baladeva states furthermore:

In the beginning, the enlightened soul and the unenlightened soul depart from the material body in the same way. However, when they reach the *nadis* (subtle pathways emanating from the heart), their paths diverge. The enlightened soul passes through one of the hundred *nadis*, but the unenlightened soul passes through a different *nadi*. This is described in *Chandogya Upanisad* (VIII. 6. 6):

*satam caika ca hridayasya nadyas tasam murdhanam abhinihsrtaika  
tayordhvam ayann amatatvam eti visvag anya utkramane bhavanti*

101 *nadis* lead away from the heart. One passes through the head and leads to immortality. The others lead to a variety of destinations.

This is also described in *Bṛhad-aranyaka Upanisad* (VI. 4. 2). The soul endowed with transcendental knowledge departs from the material body through the passage passing through the top of the head. The unenlightened souls depart through the other passages.

Lord Govindadeva's *bhasyakara* brings us to the door of the next subtopic, *arciradi-marga*, with this comment:

In the *Yajnavalkya-smṛti* (3. 167) it is said:

*urdhvam ekah sthitas tesam  
yo bhittva surya-mandalam  
brahmalokam atikramya  
tena yati param gatim*

Among all of them, one great soul travels upward. He breaks through the circle of the sun. He passes beyond the planet of Brahma. He enters the supreme destination.

In the *śruti-sastra* also it is said that the enlightened soul passes through the *nadis* at the top of the head and thus leaves the material body. In this way it is proved that the enlightened soul certainly does leave his material body.

#### *Arciradi-marga*

This subtopic has already been touched upon in a previous installment. It was explained that there are two paths by which a soul may rise upward after death, the *pitryana* and the *devayana*. The *pitryana* was presented in some detail. The *devayana*, on the other hand, is the *arciradi-marga*, the path of the sun's rays. *Arcis* means flame. It signifies the first of a series of higher cosmic realms through which the soul passes on his way to *brahma-svarupa*. According to *Brhadaranyaka* and *Chandogya Upanisads*, *ahas* (day) is the next realm. This is followed by *suklapaksa* (the bright fortnight), *uttarayana* (the bright half of the year when the sun travels northward), *samvatsara* (the year), *vayu* (air), *aditya* (sun), *candra* (moon), *vidyut* (lightning), and Varuna, Indra and *caturmukha* Prajapati Brahma. And so the souls who follow the *arciradi-marga* at last arrive at Brahma-loka, the planet of the demigod of creation. Baladeva Vidyabhusana explains what happens next.

When the material creation up to the world of four-faced Brahma is destroyed, they go with the ruler of the material world, the four-faced Brahma, from that created world to the Supreme Brahman, who is different from the four-faced Brahma.

Sriḷa Vyasaḷeva notes in *Vedanta-sutra* 4. 3. 4, *ativahikah tallingat*, that *arcis*, *ahas* and the rest are divine personalities who assist the soul along the *arciradi-marga*. The two paths of *pitryana* and *devayana* or *arciradi-marga* are summarized by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gita* 8. 23-26.

O best of the Bharatas, I shall now explain to you the different times at which, passing away from this world, the *yogi* does or does not come back.

Those who know the Supreme Brahman attain the Supreme by passing away from the world during the influence of the fiery god, in the light, at an auspicious moment of the day, during the fortnight of the waxing moon, or during the six months when the sun travels in the north.

The mystic who passes away from this world during the smoke, the night, the fortnight of the waning moon, or the six months when the sun passes to the south reaches the moon planet but again comes back.

According to Vedic opinion, there are two ways of passing from this world, one in light and one in darkness. When one passes in light, he does not come back. But when one passes in darkness, he returns.

It would seem from these *Gita* verses and from the *upanisads* that Lord Krsna refers to here that time is an important deciding factor in the attainment of liberation. Apparently, anyone who dies during the night or during the six months when the sun passes in the south must return to this material world.

In *Govinda-bhasya* Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana makes this comment:

The *yogis*, that is, they who are devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, do not take these descriptions of the passing of the moon, the light, and other points in time very seriously. They merely make a mental note of them (*smaryate*). The *sutra* explains, *ete smarte* (they are remembered). The Supreme Lord explains in *Bhagavad-gita* (8. 27):

*naite srti partha janan  
yogi muhyate kascana*

Although the devotees know these two paths, O Arjuna, they are never bewildered.

The conclusion is that a person situated in transcendental knowledge need not be concerned about the specific time of his death. The mention of specific times is not prominent in this passage from *Bhagavad-gita* (8. 23-26). The passage begins with the mention of fire, which has nothing to do with time. In fact, the different factors mentioned in this passage are all *ativahika-devatas* (demigods that carry the soul from the body). The author of the *sutras* will explain this in *sutra* 4. 3. 2. It is also said:

*diva ca sukla-paksas ca  
uttarayanam eva ca  
mumursatam prasastani  
viparitam tu garhitam*

The best times for they who are about to die are the daytime, the bright fortnight, and the six months when the sun travels in the north. The other times are not good.

This verse describes the condition of the souls not enlightened with transcendental knowledge. They who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge always attain Lord Hari. The time when they leave their material bodies is not relevant.

Baladeva says further:

The general situation is that the souls enlightened with transcendental knowledge are carried to the spiritual world by the *ativahika* demigods. However, those *nirapeksa* devotees (devotees who are not affected by anything material and who

are fixed in the service of the Lord) who are especially distressed in separation from the Lord are carried there by the Supreme Lord Himself, for the Lord becomes impatient and cannot tolerate any delay in bringing them back to Him. This is a special situation. The *sruti-sastra* reveals the truth of this situation in *Gopala-tapani Upanisad* (1. 22 and 24). The Supreme Lord Himself also explains (*Bhagavad-gita* 7. 6 and 7):

*ye tu sarvani karmani  
mayi sannyasya mat-parah  
ananyenaiva yogena  
mam dhyayanta upasate*

*tesam aham samuddharta  
mrtyu-samsara-sagarat  
bhavami na cirat partha  
mayy avesita-cetasam*

But those who worship Me, giving up all their activities unto Me and being devoted to Me without deviation, engaged in devotional service and always meditating upon Me, having fixed their minds upon Me, O son of Partha, for them I am the swift deliverer from the ocean of birth and death.

The word *ca* (also) in this *sutra* means that for the liberated souls there are two paths, one where the material body is cast off, and the other where contact with the material body is maintained. It is not possible to say that the *nirapeksa* devotees follow the path that begins in light. Also, in the *Varaha Purana* the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself says:

*nayami paramam sthanam  
arcir-adi-gatim vina  
garuda-skandham aropya  
yatheccham anivaritah*

My devotees need not follow the path beginning in light. Riding on Garuda's shoulders, I personally take them to My supreme abode.

In this way the truth has been explained.

*Brahma-svarupa*

*yatodakam suddhe suddham  
asiktam tadrgeva bhavanti  
evam muner-vijanata  
atma bhavati gautama  
(Katha Upanisad II. 1. 15)*

As pure water poured into pure water becomes the very same, so the self of the seer who is endowed with knowledge becomes alike with the Supreme Self.

This verse might seem to be one that makes impersonalists very glad. They might question why the word "alike" is used in the translation instead of "one. " But the

word *tadrk* means similarity. *Tadrgeva bhavanti* means, therefore, "becomes alike" or "becomes similar. "

*yatha nadyah syandamanah samudra  
astam gaccanti nama rupe vihaya  
tatha vidvan nama rupad vimuktah  
paratparam purusam apaiti divyam*

Just as the rivers flowing down become indistinguishable when they enter the ocean, casting off their names and forms, even so the knower of Brahman, being free from name and form, attains the Supreme Person who is higher than the high.  
(*Mundakopanisad* III. 2. 8)

Here again impersonalists may find cause to rejoice: "Yes! This proves that *brahma-svarupa* means *sayuja-mukti* only--merging into and becoming one with Brahman!" But the impersonalists should not forget that in this same *upanisad*, the Lord and the individual soul are described as *dvasuparna sayuja sakhaya*, two friendly birds in the same tree. As we see in this quotation, the word *sayuja* is not to be taken as "merging. " It actually means "meeting," as Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana explains in *Govinda-bhasya*:

That the word *sayujya* means "meeting" is seen in the following passage of the *Maha-Narayana Upanisad* (25. 1):

*ya evam vidvan udag-ayane pramiyate devanam eva mahimanam  
gatvadityasya sayujyam gacchati*

The soul that dies during the six months when the sun travels in the north attains the glory of the gods. He approaches the sun and attains *sayujya* with it.

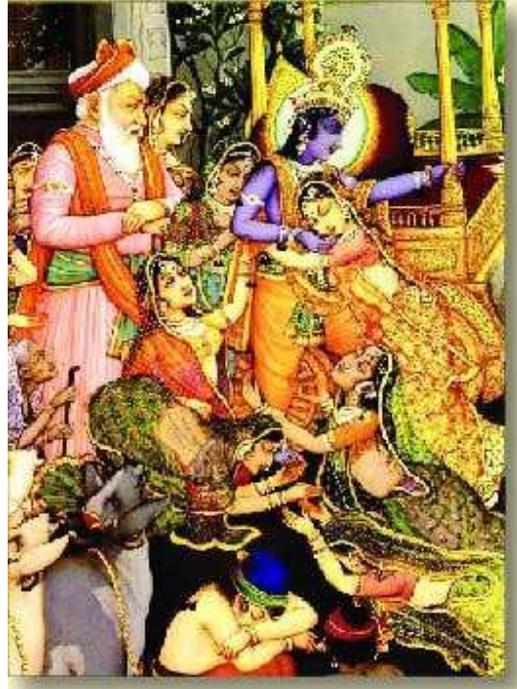
*Salokya* and the other kinds of liberation are different varieties of *sayujya*. It is not that when they feel the sentiment of separation from the Lord the liberated devotees are not also, at that same moment, meeting with the Lord. This is so because the Lord is always manifested in their thoughts and continues to touch them with His glories.

The example (of the rivers entering the ocean) given above should not be taken to mean that the liberated souls become identical with the Lord. When water from one place enters water of another place, the two waters do not actually merge and become identical. They remain separate. This is seen in the fact the the volume of water in the ocean increases as the rivers flow into it.

*Brhadaranyaka, Chandogya, Prasna and Kausitaka Upanisads* speak of *brahmaloka* as the final destination of the liberated soul. *Brahmaloka* means "spiritual planet" or "world of Brahman." The *Katha Upanisad*, as we have seen in earlier installments, is very clear that this world of Brahman is the *param-padam* of Sri Visnu.

*Vedanta-sutra* 3. 3. 36 begins an *adhikarana* (a section of *sutras*) about the *divya-puri* (divine city) within Brahman. This divine city is mentioned in *Mundakopanisad* II. 2. 7. *Chandogya Upanisad* VIII. 1. 5 speaks of a *brahmapura*. These *upanisads* are expounding upon a statement found in *Atharva Veda* (X. 2. 29. 33): *puram brahma a vivesa aparajitam*.

Thus we see that the understanding of Brahman as a world, as a place, as an abode, is well-supported in the *sruti* texts. What is more, *Chandogya Upanisad* VIII. 12. 3 gives a detailed description of this abode. The *mukta* enters this abode by way of *param-jyoti* (transcendental light, i. e. the *brahmajyoti*) and finds transcendental variety within.



*The Vedas, Upanisads, Vedanta-sutra and Srimad-Bhagavatam* reveal that *within the effulgence of Brahman there is a divine abode where the Lord and His liberated devotees dwell.*

*evam evaisa samprasado 'smac charirat samuttaya param jyotir  
upasampadya svena rupen abhinispanyate sa uttama purusah sa tatra  
paryeti jaksan kridan ramamanah sribhir va yanair va jnatibhir  
sa nopajanam smarann idam sariram*

Arising from his last body, and having approached the transcendental light (*param-jyoti*), the liberated soul is restored to his own form. In that state he is the exalted person (*uttama-purusa*). The *mukta* moves about there laughing, playing, and rejoicing, with women, with carriages, with other *muktas* of his own period or of the past *kalpas*. So great is his ecstasy that he does not remember even the person standing near him, nor even his own body.

In his purport to *Bhagavad-gita* 15. 18, Srila Prabhupada translated the first part of this verse differently.

The following verse appears in the Vedas (*Chandogya Upanisad* 8. 1 2-3): *tavad esa samprasado 'mac charirat samutthaya param jyoti-rupam sampadya svena rupenabhinispanyate sa uttamah purusah*. "The Supersoul coming out of the body enters the impersonal *brahmajyoti*; then in His form He remains in His spiritual identity. That Supreme is called the Supreme Personality. "

Lord Visnu is *purusa*, as explained in *Satvata Tantra* 1. 36:

*virad-dehe yad avasad  
bhagavan pura-samjnake  
atah purusa-namanam  
avapa purusah parah*

Because He resides (*usa*) in the home (*pur*) of the *virata-deha* (cosmic body of the universal form), the Supreme Lord is called *purusa*.

Similarly the *jivatma* is *purusa* because he resides in the home of the human body. By His grace, Lord Visnu expands into every heart as the Supersoul to maintain the individual soul in his body (*eko bahunam yo vidadhati kaman*). When it is time for the living entity to leave that body, the Supersoul goes with him. But He is always the master of material nature which appears within the rays of his spiritual effulgence (*yasya prabha prabhavato jagadanda-koti*, from *Brahma-samhita* 5. 40). His luminous form dispelling the darkness of ignorance, the Lord is the all-powerful personification of eternality, knowledge and bliss. The conditioned soul, on the other hand, is but a tiny, spiritually undeveloped spark that hovers within the Lord's bodily rays. The *jiva's* misguided urge is to leave that light and take shelter of darkness. The Lord kindly grants the soul's desire by revealing to him his next body, created by the agent of darkness, *maya*.

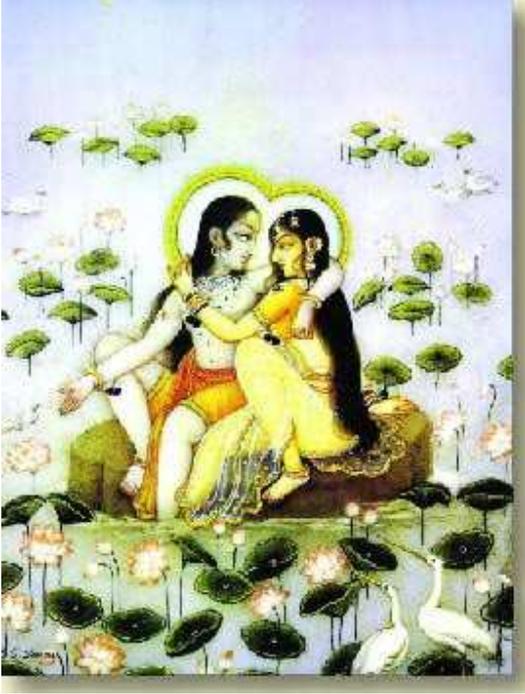
When the soul is freed from his obsession with darkness, he rises out of the last body into the light and prays:

*hiranmayena patrena  
satyasyapihitam mukham  
tat tvam pusann apavrnvnu  
satya-dharmaya drstaye*

O my Lord, sustainer of all that lives, Your real face is covered by Your dazzling effulgence. Please remove that covering and exhibit Yourself to Your pure devotee. (*Sri Isopanisad* 15)

Passing through the light of Krsna's effulgence, the soul enters the spiritual world and attains a transcendental form like the Lord's own.

*Yo veda. . . so asnute sarvan kaman sah brahmana*



*The supreme truth is rasa. The jiva becomes blissful on attaining this rasa. Who would work with the body and prana (sensory powers) if this blissful form did not exist? He gives bliss to all.*

He who knows Brahman enjoys in the supreme abode all auspicious qualities along with Brahman. (*Taittiriya Upanisad* II. 1)

*yato vaco nivartante aprapya manasa sah  
anando brahmano vidvan na bibheti  
kutascaneti*

He who knows the bliss of Brahman, from which words and mind turn away unable to reach it, is not afraid of anything. (*Ta. U. II. 9*)

*anando brahmeti vyajanat anandadhyeva  
khalu imani bhutani jayante  
anandena jatani jivanti anandam prayanti  
abhisamvisanti*

He realized that bliss is Brahman; for from bliss, verily these things are born. They live by bliss. And when departing, they enter into bliss. (*Ta. U. III. 7*)

*raso vai sah  
rasam hy evayam labdhanandi bhavati  
ko hy evanyat kah pranyat  
yad esa akasa anando na syat  
esa hy esanandayati*

The supreme truth is *rasa*. The *jiva* becomes blissful on attaining this *rasa*. Who would work with the body and *prana* (sensory powers) if this blissful form did not exist? He gives bliss to all. (*Ta. U. II. 7*)

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
15 January 2004*

### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below begins in Salem, Tamil Nadu, while he was working in a branch of the TV Sundaram company.*

It was the end of June, 1974. As per a recent agreement with the workers' union, the company was to dispense a semi-annual cash bonus along with this month's regular pay allotment.

Our department's job was to do the calculation of each employee's bonus percentage. But two of our men had gone on leave. SVS was in a fix--how would all this work be finished before payday, tomorrow?

I bailed him out by working late, doing the jobs of three men, including the arithmetic, the counting of the cash and the sorting of the pay envelopes. Shortly before ten o'clock, the night watchman came by the office and looked in.

"How can you finish all this tonight? It is that you're not coming to work tomorrow?"

I brushed him off with a confident grin, assuring him that I was nearly done and there were no problems. Nodding, he ambled out. But his suggestion that I would not work here tomorrow sunk in.

Right then and there my determination to go on with life as I'd been living it crumbled around me. The falldown with the prostitute gnawed at my heart; it had become just the first of a string of transactions with women of the night. Yet I continued to keep up an image of myself as a mystic. My mother was fed up with me. She had tried to arrange a marriage for me, but I had made such a bad impression upon the girl's family the arrangement was scotched in the egg. And on top of that, here I was, caged like a wild beast in the TVS organization. I wanted out.

I completed the work at ten. I signed the register for my own pay envelope and pocketed it. The watchman let me out of the building and through the security gate onto the street. I stood in front of the factory for a moment, gazing at its monolithic bulk that seemed to glow a sinister dull red under the harsh spotlights. "Not in this lifetime again", I swore under my breath.

I took an autorickshaw to my apartment in a low-class part of town, where I had lived since the business with Mani and the prostitute. My roommate at this time, Mr. Joseph, was the headmaster of a Christian school. It was his habit to drink whiskey every evening, and this evening he was dead drunk. I found the door to the apartment ajar, and him sprawled out on the floor with a bottle still clutched in his fist.

I left a note on my bedroom mirror to whomever would come looking for me on behalf of the company: "Please don't look further. I have left Salem. If I ever become useful I will come back. " I extracted ten 20-Rupee notes from my pay envelope and on the back of it scribbled a message for Mr. Joseph: "Please send this money to my mother. " Pocketing the Rs. 200, I lay the envelope and my apartment key on the floor mattress in his room; I knew this was one task old Mr. Joseph could be trusted with. After all, he was a good Christian.

I tiptoed around his snoring form and exited the apartment, closing the door softly behind me. It was almost eleven. The front door of the rooming house faced a through-city highway on which express busses to Madras drove. Waiting under a flickering defective neon tube struggling for its life amidst a swirling cloud of bugs, I was lost in my thoughts.

Soon a bus came and I stepped out into the street and waved it down. A skinny woolly-headed conductor with a few days growth of beard opened the rear door. I tried to enter but he blocked my way. "What's your destination?"

I asked back, "Well, where does the bus go?" He repeated his question and I repeated mine.

He cursed and shouted, "What a stupid conversation for this time of night! Just get in here!" I boarded and the bus roared off. After half an hour of eyeing me strangely at a distance, the conductor sat down on the next seat and said with a nervous laugh, "Now are you ready to tell me where you're going?" In a wooden voice I replied, "I'm still asking you where this bus is going." He shook his head, muttered something to himself and then said wearily, "This bus goes as far as Arakkonam." I paid the fare without further comment.

We pulled into Arakkonam shortly before dawn and I disembarked in front of the railway station. Nearby I saw a hotel. The only availability was a single room with a common bath and toilet across the hall from it. I took it.

I had no luggage with me, just the pants, kurta and slip-on shoes I was wearing, and my money. Dazed from the night journey and my own inner distress, I sat listlessly in the dingy room for a while. Soon I had to go to the bathroom. Stepping out into the hall, I noticed that a light was on in the room opposite mine. I heard a mother talking with her son and daughter inside--and I recognized the voices. This was the family of my uncle Balasubramanian from Kerala!

I froze, my heart pounding. Listening at their door, I could understand they were on their way to the pilgrimage town of Tirupathi to visit the famous Venkateshwara Swami temple, some seventy-five kilometers north of here. They would soon depart the hotel by car and would pay a quick visit to a Karttikeya temple just beyond Arrakonam at a place called Tiruthani. If they saw me now, my plan of leaving everything would fail. I withdrew silently into my room. Sitting on the edge of the bed in total anxiety, I said over and over to myself, "Why did I come to this town? Why did I take this lodge?"

At seven o'clock I heard them leave. With a bursting bladder I rushed into the bathroom and relieved myself. I immediately went downstairs and told the man at the desk, "I'm vacating." His jaw dropped. "What! You just arrived!" I paid and walked out onto the sunlit street. Arrakonam, a small country town, had come to life with jingling bicycles, honking traffic and a group of marching pilgrims singing songs in praise of Karttikeya.

These pilgrims were villagers on their way to Tiruthani. Some of them carried kaveri, gaily decorated boxlike structures made from light wood. These they supported on their shoulders to ceremonially transport brass pots of water or milk meant for offering to the murti. I apathetically fell in step with them, having nothing else to do. Singing and dancing around me, they swept me along.

It wasn't many minutes before we had left Arrakonam behind. The pilgrims kept up their celebrations as we trekked across the arid, treeless and generally flat landscape. Sometimes the asphalt road we followed brought us near hills of huge

boulders that reared a hundred meters or so up into the brilliant morning sky. But there were no houses. The countryside appeared uninhabited.

After about an hour we came to Tiruthani Temple, situated on the peak of a rocky hill. A big stone stairway rose majestically from the roadside to the entrance gate. The temple was crowned by a distinctively-shaped vimana (main tower). The shape signified that the deity within is Karttikeya. Around the building stood a high wall painted with red and white vertical stripes, a usual feature of temples in Tamil Nadu.

Tiruthani means "the lord's garden". Lord Karttikeya is believed to have landed here from Kailash (the heavenly abode of his father Shiva) and taken a little rest in a garden at the top of this hill. After that he went to the ocean shore at Tiruchendur and killed the demon Surapadma.

As I climbed up the stairs with my companions, they sang prayers asking favors from the murti. I was numb, almost catatonic when I got to the top. "What is my life for?", I moaned half-audibly.

At this point religion, philosophy and mysticism meant nothing to me, despite all my high-flown pretensions of the past. Utterly frustrated with myself, I would have welcomed death had I believed it would really end my existence forever. But I feared rebirth even more. I yearned for something to lift me out of my private hell. But at the same time I doubted there was any hope for me.

Now inside the temple's dark, massively-pillared interior, the pilgrims fell respectfully silent. I shuffled listlessly before the murti of Kartikkeya. He stood between his two wives Valli and Devasena, the three of them black and glistening in the flickering lamplight. The priest chanted a prayer that said "May all the bad results of sinful deeds be destroyed by your spear. " With my eyes shut tight in desperation and my palms pressed together before my face, I prayed: "Please give me some direction. "

I stumbled out into the bright sunshine with a buzzing head and wearily started down the stairs. At a small mandapa I saw an wizened old begger sitting in the shade. I sat down next to him and we started talking. He asked me "Where are you going?", just as I asked him, "Where should I go?"

He looked at me a little startled, working his toothless jaws. "You're asking me where you should go?"

"Yes. I don't know where I should go at this point in my life. Give me a sign. "

"Then go to Tirupathi. "

"No, I don't think I should go to that place because someone who will spoil my plan has just left for there. "

"No, no, don't worry about that!" he snorted. His conviction caught my attention. "You must go there. Your plan will become successful; no one will stop you. " He then quoted a poetic couplet: "'When Kartikkeya was dissatisfied by not getting the fruit, he came to the south. '" This referred to Kartikkeya's losing a test of wits to his

brother Ganesh, who received as a prize a fruit from the hand of the sage Narada; in frustration, Karttikeya retired from Kailash to Tiruthani, in South India.

"Karttikeya went south," the old beggar continued, "but you--you go north. "

I gave him a few coins and walked to the bottom of the stairs. Boarding a northbound bus, I rode across the Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh border to Tirupathi. All the way I glumly mulled over why I was bothering to make yet another pilgrimage to another hilltop temple to see one more mute stone idol.



*Venkateshwara Swami is one of India's most popular Vishnu murtis. He is known by the name Sri Balaji to pilgrims from North India, but Srinivasa is the name South Indians prefer. Srinivasa means "the Abode of Sri", Sri being Lakshmi, the Goddess of Fortune.*

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According to the Ramayana and the Puranas, in ancient times Lord Vishnu descended to earth from the spiritual realm as Prince Ramachandra. His consort Lakshmi descended as the beautiful Sita, Rama's wife. When the demon-king Ravana attempted to kidnap Sita, the fire-god Agni tricked him by substituting Vedavati for Rama's spouse. Thus Ravana took Vedavati with him to his island kingdom of Lanka, thinking she was Sita.

Vedavati is actually an illusory form of Lakshmi. She had previously appeared as a Himalayan yogini over whom Ravana had lusted; she flung herself into fire rather than endure the demon's attentions. As she disappeared into the flames, Vedavati placed a curse on Ravana, telling him she would return to destroy him and his dynasty. As Lord Vishnu's divine energy, she could not be burned. The fire-god Agni kept Vedavati with him. Together they waited for Ravana to make his move against Sita. Disguised as a sage, Ravana enticed Sita to step out of a magical protective ring of fire so that he could abduct

her. But as she stepped across the fire, Agni switched Sita for Vedavati. The real Sita was then sequestered with Agni.

It was Rama's purpose all along to destroy Ravana and his race of man-eaters. Accepting the mood of a husband whose beloved wife was in great peril, Rama attacked Lanka and destroyed Ravana and his kinsmen. But after recovering the illusory Sita, Rama ordered her to enter fire, as she had been defiled by the touch of a sinful demon.

Ever-faithful, she did as she was told--and Agni emerged from the flames bringing with him both Sita and Vedavati. Though Agni requested Rama to accept Vedavati as a second wife, Rama refused, saying, "I have vowed in this descent to have only one wife. I will accept Vedavati when I appear on earth as Srinivasa. She will then be known as Padmavati and be My bride. "

As Srinivasa, Vishnu wed Padmavati. But Lakshmi (Sri) came to disturb the marriage, claiming it was invalid because Srinivasa is always hers. As Sri and Padmavati quarreled, Srinivasa took seven steps back and became a murti. The heartbroken goddesses wailed in sorrow, but Srinivasa consoled them by telling them that they were both expansions of the same spiritual potency, the Vishnu-shakti. The two goddesses embraced each other and then stood on either side of Srinivasa. Indeed, Lakshmi and Padmavati assumed murti forms themselves.

The Venkateshwara temple is a religious magnet that yearly draws millions of pilgrims from all corners of India. A common sacrifice these pilgrims make is head-shaving, which is done by man, woman and child alike. The temple yearly collects millions of rupees in donations; much of this money is used to help the poor and provide facilities for pilgrims.

But in my dejected cynicism I wondered, "How is it that a stone in Tirupathi can attract so many pilgrims? Someone was really clever to think up this money-making gimmick. "

I arrived in Tirupathi around noon. I boarded a bus that ferried pilgrims to and from the top of Tirumala hill, where the temple and the surrounding complex is situated. The complex is truly a city in itself, for a staff of thousands--priests, administrators, workers and their families--permanently resides there. In addition, there are never less than five thousand visiting pilgrims, and often many more.

After leaving the Tirumala bus stop and walking past by well-kept blocks of administrative offices and pilgrims' guest houses, I turned down a wide paved promenade lined by stalls proffering all sorts of goods for sale. At the end of this bustling bazaar loomed the gopuram, an ornately carved tower that soared high over the front gate of the temple.

A queue of pilgrims stretched from the cavernous temple entrance around the side of the building and back into a series of waiting halls, all filled. I took my place at the end. It was two and a half hours before I got to the Deity.

But in spite of the long wait, I felt my despair fade as I slowly traversed a vast courtyard lined with row after row of ancient, intricately carved stone columns, on my way to the sanctorum sanctorum. As I ascended the few stone steps leading to the doorway of the Deity's residence, the excitement of the devotees burst around me in chants of "Govinda! Govinda!" We quickly moved through the crowded entrance area and down the right side of a long corridor that led directly to Srinivasa, suddenly visible over the heads of the throng in front of me.

The line moved swiftly forward. I kept my eyes fixed on the Deity and felt that whatever was drawing me closer was much more than the physical factors of the forward motion of the crowd. I was entering into an intense personal exchange with Transcendence.

At the end of the corridor was the darshan or viewing area. Now I stood directly before Srinivasa, black in color and bedecked with silver, gold and jewel-encrusted ornaments. The upper portion of the Deity's face was covered by Vishnu tilak, a U-shaped white marking worn on the forehead. The bottom of the "U" should normally just fill the space between the eyebrows, but a distinctive feature of this murti is that the tilak is oversized and covers the eyes. He wore a high conical silver crown topped by a rounded peak. His decorations shimmered prismatically in the light of the votary lamps.

In the brief moment I stood before Srinivasa, I was moved by the remembrance of my mother's exclusive and abiding devotion to Vishnu as the complete form of the Supreme Truth, which other forms like Siva and Durga only partially represent. A verse from the Bhagavad-gita crossed my mind: "Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear. "



The darshan area was supervised by young but stern-looking ladies who briskly ushered the pilgrims past the Deity, sometimes with shoves between the shoulder blades of those who lingered too long. I dared not tarry. I turned and followed the queue back up the other side of the long corridor to the exit, looking over my shoulder to get yet another glimpse of Srinivasa. Leaving the residence as quickly as we had entered it, the queue continued on its route through the temple compound to the front gate.

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"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender  
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not fear. "*

Coming out of the temple from beneath the gopuram, I wandered into the bazaar again. Jostled by the teeming shoppers, I reviewed the emptiness of my life. "Just as I'm being pushed to and fro in this marketplace, so I've been pushed from one fruitless pursuit to another, with nothing to show for it. " Remembering the Bhagavad-gita again, I decided I must attain that state of deliverance from all reactions to my foolish deeds. I would surrender myself to spiritual life and become a sadhu, a wandering holy man.

From a stall dealing in North Indian clothing I bought a lenga (loose-fitting pyjama-like trousers), a gamcha (a single piece of cloth that is wrapped about the waist as a bathing suit) and a four-meter length of cotton cloth. From another place I got some turmeric. Then I went to the Swami Pushkarini, the large sacred bathing pool next to

the temple. Using the turmeric as dye, I colored the lenga and long cloth yellow and set them out to dry.

I got my head shaved by one of the straight-razor barbers squatting on the concrete steps around the pool. Removing my clothing, I put on the gamcha and dipped thrice into the holy waters. As I came out, a man passing by paused to apply a dab of moist white clay from a small brass bowl in his hand to my forehead, deftly making the tilak mark with one stroke of a finger. I took this as a sign of the Lord's acknowledgment of my desire to surrender.

After I and my yellow-dyed clothing had dried, I donned the lenga and wrapped my head turban-style with the middle part of the long cloth, bringing the two lengths of excess down from the back of my neck over the top of each shoulder. I crossed the lengths at the chest and tied them around my waist.

I placed my old shirt and pants in the bag I'd gotten from the cloth stall and left my slippers at the pool. I still had 150 rupies. I decided to donate this to Srinivasa.

At the temple entrance, I saw the counter for the "special darshan" costing twenty-five rupees. This allowed one to cut his waiting time in the queue to around a quarter of an hour. I decided to have six special darshans and exhaust my money.

Coming before Srinivasa the sixth time, I noticed that I was still carrying the bag of old cloth in my hand. In my mind I asked the murti, "You are known as Hari, 'He who takes away our material attachments'. How will You take this bag from me?"



*As I exited the long corridor and entered the front room of the residence, I noticed a bearded brahmin sitting in a cordoned-off area there. He was stockily-built and bare-chested. His forehead, torso, arms and spine were adorned with twelve tilak marks, signifying him to be a temple priest.*

As I exited the long corridor and entered the front room of the residence, I noticed a bearded brahmin sitting in a cordoned-off area there. He was stockily-built and bare-chested. His forehead, torso, arms and spine were adorned with twelve tilak marks, signifying him to be a temple priest. He was grinding paste from a block of moist sandalwood by rubbing it on piece of flat sandstone. I broke from the line and kneeled down near him to watch. The sweet-scented sandalwood paste mixed with a little saffron or camphor was applied to the body of the murti as a refreshing cosmetic. But the paste was usually smeared on the Deity just after the early morning bathing ceremony; it was strange that he prepared it in the mid-afternoon.

I was just going to ask him if there was a special puja (worship) about to happen when he looked up at me and asked, "What do you have in that

bag?"

"Oh, just some clothing," I said, opening the bag so that he could see.

Noticing my old kurta, a style of shirt not often seen in South India, he said, "This shirt is very nice. If you're not needing it anymore, can you give it to me?"

I protested, not wanting to give a temple priest my old castoffs. But he was so insistent that I relented on the condition that he arrange a special darshan of Srinivasa for me, one in which I could stand as long as I liked before the Deity.

He readily agreed. He set the bag on a nearby shelf and took me firmly by the hand, leading me through the crowd to the long corridor.

The length of the corridor was divided down the middle by a special aisle about one meter wide that was sectioned off from the rest of the corridor by metal hand rails. This served a double purpose: it separated the incoming queue from the outgoing and allowed authorized persons a free route to the darshan area. One could enter this aisle through a metal gate where the donation box stood. A police guard in an olive drab uniform and beret was posted nearby.

The big bearded brahmin unlocked the gate with a key dangling at his waste and led me into the aisle between the rails. He strode ahead, pulling me behind him until we came to the darshan area where the pilgrims passed between us and the Deity.

He stood next to me while I viewed Srinivasa to my heart's content. I wanted to indelibly impress my mind with the form of the Lord, so I began by meditatively studying each part of that form, beginning with the feet. I gradually brought my eyes up to the Lord's two hands, the left one held in the mudra of pushing down misery, and the right one in the mudra of benediction. Just above shoulder level another two hands held the symbols of Vishnu (the disc and the conch). I studied the slightly smiling expression on Srinivasa's face and wondered if it indicated satisfaction or amusement, or perhaps something even deeper. Again I moved my eyes back to the feet of the Lord and repeated my meditation twice over.

After that I studied Sri on the Lord's right and Padmavati on His left. And then I took in the whole scene, including the backdrop of the sanctum sactorum and its floor and ceiling. I estimated I'd stood there for five or six minutes.

Finally I looked at the brahmin. He nodded his head and turned. Halfway back to the gate he motioned that I should slip over the handrail and leave with the line of exiting pilgrims. I did so, and he went ahead to the gate and let himself out.

When I got to the front room, I went back to his place, wanting to thank him before I left. But he was not there. Nor was my bag on the shelf. Nor was there even any evidence that he'd been making sandalwood paste some minutes before.

A little confused, I went to two other brahmins who were sitting nearby. "Excuse me," I spoke politely, "where is the bearded brahmin who was here a short while ago?"

They eyed me a bit strangely. "Bearded brahmin?" snorted one. The other laughed, "You think this is a Shiva temple?" True, I reminded myself, Vaishnava brahmins don't wear beards.

"He was making sandalwood paste over there," I pointed. One of the brahmins shook his head. "No, that's not done at this time. You'll have to come back at six tomorrow morning if you want to meet the brahmin who does that duty. He's gone home hours ago. "

Was I was dreaming now, or had been dreaming when I was with the man with the beard? "But he took me to have darshan through the gate. Didn't you see me?"

They both looked at each other and chuckled. One said, "We couldn't help but see you, because we've been here the whole time. You went through the darshan queue again and again. We thought you were mad. But you were not with a bearded brahmin, and you did not go through the gate. "

Leaving them joking merrily between themselves, I went to the guard and asked him if he'd seen me go through the gate. "Don't waste time here!" he shouted in Telegu. "Move along!"

"Please, just give me a moment," I implored. "I was brought through this gate a few minutes ago by a brahmin, and you were standing right here. Didn't you notice us?"

"And who do you think you are, the peshkar (head priest)?" he sneered. "It's my job to make sure only VIP's get through this gate. And you don't look like a VIP to me. "

"Well, in that case I think a miracle has happened," I gulped. He motioned me to the door and told me brusquely, "People have visions here every day. That's nothing special. Go home and don't worry about it. "

I came out of the residence in a daze.

Passing through the pavilion where prasadam (the sanctified food remnants of the Deity) is distributed, I accepted a plate of rice topped with dahl beans as my first bhiksha, or begged meal. I vowed from then on to live only by begging, and named myself Swami Atmananda.

After leaving the temple compound I returned to the bazaar, moving in the direction of the bus stand. I had to push through swarms of newly-arrived pilgrims excitedly rushing to the darshan queue. Finally I reached the thoroughfare where I saw some share taxis picking up passengers for the ride downhill.

There were eight people in a car closeby; a man called to me from the back seat and asked, "Would you like a ride down with us?" "Yes I would," I answered, "but I have no money. " He waved me over as the door opened: "I'll pay your fare, just come. "

I squeezed in and we started down the winding road to Tirupathi. All the way I was absorbed in deep contemplation on what had happened to me in the temple. I asked myself who the bearded brahmin could have been: "Perhaps Srinivasa come in disguise?" I doubted that. He surely wouldn't personally look after such a wretch as I.

My old skepticism reasserted itself: "The whole thing was imagination. " But I clearly remembered standing before the sanctum sanctorum for several minutes. So many pilgrims passed between where I was standing and the murti, and I could still see these people in my mind's eye--many with shaven heads, dressed in styles of clothing from all over India, all being hurried along by the female attendants. As I mused this over, I realized another very strange thing: I couldn't remember the form of Srinivasa at all. Just the silver conch and disc. The rest was. . . blocked.

'Well, maybe I didn't really stand there so long,' I ventured. But I simply could not convince my intelligence that it did not happen. After all, the bag full of clothing was gone. I recalled how I had mentally challenged Srinivasa to take even that last possession away; mysteriously, my challenge had been met.

At last I just shook my head and smiled to myself. 'It may be impossible to explain how it happened,' I told myself, 'but today I've been liberated. ' I had to admit that despite all my doubts this clever trickster Lord Srinivasa had definitely changed my life for the better. I felt spiritually purified, completely refreshed and, for the first time in quite a while, optimistic.

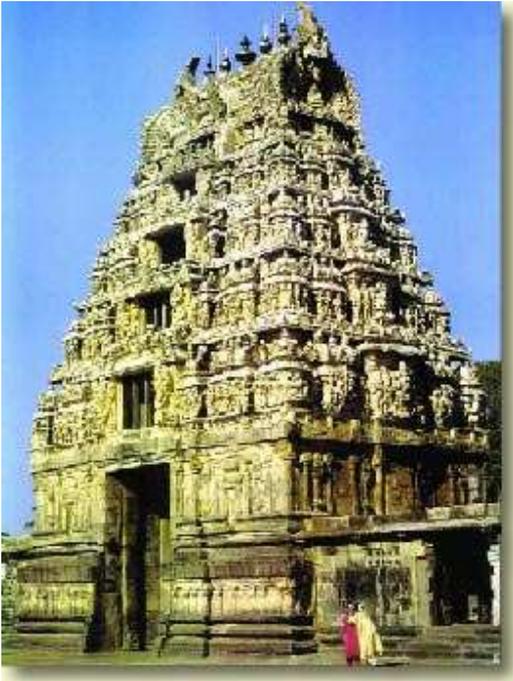


*I had to admit that despite all my doubts this clever trickster Lord Srinivasa had definitely changed my life for the better. I felt spiritually purified, completely refreshed and, for the first time in quite a while, optimistic.*

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
16 January 2004*

### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below begins in Tirupathi, Andhra Pradesh, after he had donned the attire of a sadhu and vowed to renounce the world before the Deity of Sri Venkateshvara.*



*I walked the rest of the distance to Tirupathi town and stopped at the Govindaraja Swami Perumal, another beautiful Vaisnava temple.*

saw many more Sai Baba photos under the inspector's glass desktop cover.

The taxi stopped at the bottom of the hill next to a huge statue of Hanuman. Everyone got out, they to eat at a roadside kitchen and I to begin my wanderings as a mendicant. I walked the rest of the distance to Tirupathi town and stopped at the Govindaraja Swami Perumal, another beautiful Vaisnava temple. I stood before the Deity with my palms pressed together before my chest. "Now I am finished with material life", I vowed. "Now my spiritual life must begin. "

As I left Govindaraja, it crossed my mind that I knew precious little about spiritual life except that as a swami, I should beg for my needs. I had so much to learn, and needed someone to learn it from.

Nearby I noticed a police station. I walked in, found a well- built, mustachioed inspector at his desk and sat down in front of him. He looked up and, seeing my sadhu dress, asked respectfully, "How can I help you?" I noticed a portrait of Sai Baba on the wall of his office and took this as an opportunity. "I want to go to Baba's ashram. How can I get there from here?" I



*I stood before the Deity with my palms*

He brightened visibly when I mentioned Sai *pressed together before my chest. "Now Baba and enthusiastically replied, "Go by I am finished with material life", I bus from here to Anantapur, then change vowed. "Now my spiritual life must buses there for Bukkapatnam, where you begin. "* catch the bus for Put- taparthi. Baba's Prashanti Nilayam is in Puttaparthi. "

I thanked him. After a hesitant pause I took the first step in my new life as a mendicant by asking, "Would you kindly help me in meeting the expense for this journey?"

He beamed even more. "Oh, I am very happy to send someone to Sai Baba, the avatar of the modern age. But I have nothing here. Just go down the road until you see a shop called Srinivas Wines. My wife works there--you tell her I sent you for bus fare to Prashanti Nilayam and she will be most happy to give it to you. "

Following his directions, I soon came to a shop called 'Srinivas Wines' that shelved a great assortment of bottled liquor. The walls behind the shelves were mirrored to make the stock look twice as voluminous. In the back, under a framed and garlanded color poster of Lord Srinivasa, sat a fat lady in a sari. I stepped inside and greeted her with "Sai Ram", the motto used by the Baba's followers. She returned the "Sai Ram" and politely gave me a seat. I told her why I'd come and she was very moved. Opening a drawer, she took out a wad of notes and placed it in my hand.

"May I send somebody to get the ticket for you and bring you to the bus?" she asked humbly, eager to do more service. "No need," I replied dismissively, getting into the feel of a swami's detached aplomb. "Your husband's directions will be sufficient. " As I stood up to leave, I momentarily saw my face reflected among the wine bottles. My Vishnu tilaka had rubbed off, and with my big turban and confident air, I looked like the famous Swami Vivekananda.

The way to Prashanti Nilayam proved to be rough. I got on the Anantapur bus at 5:30 PM and it drove the whole night before arriving at the last stop, several hours behind schedule. From there I caught a southbound bus to Bukkapatnam, bouncing for 50 kilometers more on a hard narrow seat. The ride from Bukkapatnam to Puttaparthi was mercifully short.

The sun-drenched country town of Puttaparthi enjoyed a measure of notoriety even before the advent of its resident mystagogue Sai Baba. In olden times it was a place of cobra worship. On the top of a hill called Uravakonda sits a huge boulder in the shape of a hooded serpent; legend has it that whoever is bitten by a snake from this place will never recover.



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I arrived at Satya Sai Baba's Prashanti Nilayam ('Abode of Perfect Peace') to cries of "Please have mercy, give, give" from a large group of ragged beggars sitting outside the front gate. Past them, flocks of well-heeled people crowded into the compound; that meant Sai Baba was here now. I viewed this scene with decidedly mixed feelings.

"He is supposed to be God", I considered, "and his followers say he has the power to remove misfortune, disease and poverty--so why are these beggars loitering here just outside his own house? And if his disciples are

really so blessed, why don't they do something more for these poor people than just throw coins?"

With these misgivings, I entered the spacious and rather beautiful ashram compound. In the middle stood Sai Baba's residence, a large apricot-colored building called the Mandir; before it, on a stretch of sandy soil called the 'darshan area', perhaps a thousand people sat on their haunches in rows, waiting for Sai Baba to appear on the upper-floor balcony. Beyond the crowd was a round, roofed stage, the Shanti Vedika. Nearby that, I saw many pilgrims camped in large open sheds.

Other buildings, arrayed around the compound wall, faced the Mandir, among them a small hospital. I'd heard that just by eating the holy ash (vibhuti) that Sai Baba mysteriously produces from his hand, the diseases of the faithful were cured. Reading the sign listing the visiting hours of the doctors, I wondered why, if he had the power to cure with ash, he needed a hospital staffed with Western-trained physicians.

A big, bearded and bright-turbaned Sikh came walking past the darshan area. I fell in step with him and asked where he was going. He was on the way to the canteen to get something to eat. We got to talking; he asked me about myself, and I told him I'd left everything for spiritual life. "I am searching for God," I said with a mild smile, "so I came to see if God is really here. "

He flashed a mischievous grin. "Well, I don't believe in any of these so-called avatars, but I happened to be on business nearby and somebody told me Sai Baba is God, so I just dropped in here to see what this God is up to. " He chuckled. Then he looked at me quizzically and asked, "You have no money?"

"No", I replied.

Stopping, he held up a forefinger and declared sonorously, "Don't worry, God is here, and he will NOT feed you. " We both burst out laughing.

Still laughing, I said, "Well, God may not feed me, but you're here, so why don't you buy me breakfast?"

"Oh, no problem", he exclaimed heartily. Slapping me on the back, he lead me into the canteen. "What's your name?"

"Swami Atmananda. "

"Oh, you're a swami?"

"Yes, I just became swami yesterday. " We had another big laugh.

The canteen served the usual South Indian fare of idli, dosha and sambar. I was ravenous, and the Sikh was obliging. "Eat up," he urged, ordering more doshas for me, "because God won't feed you, and I'm leaving in half an hour. Whatever you want, you take. Don't worry. " I packed it in, and he paid for it happily.

Coming out of the canteen, he pointed me to the inquiry office, telling me if I had any questions, I could get them answered there. We bade each other fond farewells. Then I entered the office and browsed through some of the books on display there. From a volume of his lectures on the Ramayana, I gleaned that Sai Baba's teachings consisted of standard Advaitist platitudes and little else. Advaita philosophy, the de rigueur of all popular Hindu gurus, was something I'd studied extensively but grown bored with. I was not impressed.

Putting the book back, I asked a man in the office if there was a room I might have. This gentleman, Mr. N. Kasturi, turned out to be the chief assistant to Sai Baba in Prashanti Nilayam. He answered my question by quoting the prices of guest facilities.

"But I have no money. I want to stay here for two weeks. Can't you give me a place to live?"

"I am so sorry," Kasturi answered with resigned finality, "but we don't have such arrangements. If you wish to stay for free, you may kindly move into the pilgrims' sheds. "

I changed the subject. "I'd like to see Sai Baba. Is there a way to do that?"

"Oh," he smiled benevolently, "seeing God is not so easy. Just have a look here. . . " he motioned towards the darshan area where the crowd sat expectantly in the sun. "Today they've been waiting for two hours. Some have been here for months, not leaving. No one knows when he will come down to see them. It is all divine. "

Leaving Mr. Kasturi, I entered the darshan area and sat down in in one of the rows. On my right was a Chettiar (a member of the Tamil merchant community). He started telling me about a daughter of his who could not speak; he'd left home and

business "to get the God to give her a voice. I've been here seven days-- no darshan! My time has not come. I don't know what I will do now. " His lips quivered and he abruptly turned away, his eyes brimming with tears.

I'd come to Shanti Nilayam out of curiosity, not faith, and did not relish the prospect of sitting the whole day uselessly in the sun like this man had been doing for a week. I stood up and left the compound through the gate. After aimlessly walking around Puttaparthi for a while, I found myself on a sandy road facing some newly whitewashed buildings. One was a cloth shop that had a 'Lodging' sign above a side entrance. Inside were four rooms for rent. Not seeing anyone, I sat down on the steps outside.

Mulling over how gullible these Baba followers seemed to be, I wagered to myself that the only power one needed to control such people was quick-wittedness. Just then a man came out of one of the rooms as if to leave. To test my theory, I greeted him with "Sai Ram. " He echoed my greeting.

I asked him, "What are you doing here and what prayer do you have?"

At once startled and fascinated by my cryptic question, he knelt down next to me and asked excitedly, "Where is Swami from?"

Deliberately inscrutable, I replied: "Swami is from wherever he is. Just tell me--what is your prayer?"

He was flustered. "Oh, but Swami knows my prayer. "

I gazed at him stonily. "That may be, but still we should say our prayers openly. "

He was trembling when he answered. "I am doing a big business, and I am not sure what is the outcome, so I need blessings. "

I paused, mysteriously surveying the sky as if consulting the gods. Then riveting him again with my eyes, I asked, "What time do you go for darshan?"

"Oh, I was thinking of going now, but I've heard there are so many people. I have tried six times to see Baba. I'm not complaining, you understand, it must be my sinful karma, but my time has not come. "

I said with finality, "I want to go with you for darshan. Now tell me--where are you staying?"

"I am staying here. The owner of this shop is my relative. "

"I want to stay with you. I have no place. "

"Oh, certainly! I should be very happy to have a swami stay with me. Swamis don't often come here, because they don't understand that Baba is God. Only very rarely is it revealed to them that the God they are seeking is Sai Baba. So you please come with me. "

He took me into his room and asked about my bags. I answered distainfully, "The whole world is my bag. " I refreshed myself and took a light nap. Then we both went to the darshan area.

We sat down in the first row. I could not help but think how foolish all this was: "If these people think that they can't see Sai Baba because their time hasn't come, then who is more powerful, time or him?"

Suddenly Sai Baba appeared on the balcony, holding up his right palm in the abhaya-mudra blessing. I observed him intently. After seeing how easy it was to influence his disciples, I wanted learn more. Somewhere in the back of my mind a plan was brewing.

He was a very small man. His trademark frizzy hairdo formed a black halo around his face. Wearing a longsleeved iridescent orange silk gown that reached to the floor, he flitted downstairs like a wraith. He moved ever nearer to me along the first row, taking letters from people and holding them in his left hand. I watched his walk, his gestures, his facial expressions. Finally he went past on to the end.

I noted that as he went down the row he motioned a few people to stand. Mr. Kasturi quickly gathered them in a group.

Without going on to the seven rows behind, Sai Baba came back the same way. He stopped in front of my new roommate and looked at him closely. My friend stared back goggle-eyed, his Adam's apple bobbing in his throat. Abruptly Sai Baba turned away from him and looked at me, motioning with his finger that I should stand. I really didn't know what was going on, because this was my first time here.

My friend was bursting with excitement: "Oh, you have been called! Baba has granted your interview! Please, can you mention my case to him? Ask a blessing for me!" As I got up, he touched my feet. Kasturi directed me to join the other chosen ones.

Meanwhile Sai Baba passed swiftly through the other rows, almost as if he was floating. After finishing, he came back our way and nodded to Kasturi, saying in Telegu, "Send them up. " Then he went upstairs.

With Kasturi at the lead of our group, we ascended the stairs right behind Sai Baba. As he reached the top, Sai Baba dropped the letters into a waiting trash bin. Then he turned left and went inside his quarters. Kasturi showed us into the interview room on the right. There were six of us. We sat down on sofas to wait.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
17 January 2004*

## **SRI GARGA-SAMHITA**

### **Canto Three**

## SRI GIRIRAJA

### Chapter One

#### Sri Giriraja-puja-vidhi The Worship of Sri Giriraja

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
18 January 2004*

*Here's a message of transcendental nectar from my Godbrother Sriman Radhakunda Prabhu:*



*The lotus feet of Sri-Sri Radhika-Madhava.*

Jaya Sri Radhe,

Radha Madhava have 19 signs on Their Lotus feet. Sri Radhika has a conch, a mountain, an altar, an earring, a chariot, a club, a missile, and a fish on Her right lotus foot. Her left foot has a chakra, a lotus, an elephant goad, an umbrella, a flag, a flower, a bangle, a creeper, a moon, a barleycorn and an upward curving line.

On Sri Madhava's right lotus foot is a barleycorn, an upward curving line, a chakra, a lotus, an elephant goad, a flag, a thunderbolt, an umbrella, an octagon, 4 swastikas and 4 jambu fruit. His left lotus foot bears the markings of a conch, a sky emblem, a cow's hoof print, a unstrung bow, a triangle, four water pots, a " moon and a fish.

Please meditate on Their Lotus feet and pray to become a servant at Their Lotus feet!

Your ever well wisher

Radhakunda das  
[radhakunda@rediffmail.com](mailto:radhakunda@rediffmail.com)

P. S. Krsna is known as Radhika-paramodaya: He is supremely manifest only because of Radhikarani!



## **SRI GARGA-SAMHITA**

### **Canto Three**

### **SRI GIRIRAJA**

### **Chapter Four**

### **Sri Krsna-abhiseka The Coronation-Bathing of Sri Krsna**

#### TEXT 1

Sri Narada said: Then, accompanied by the demigods, Indra went to a secluded place on Govardhana Hill and bowed down before Lord Krsna.

#### TEXT 2

Sri Indra said: You are the master of the demigods, the supreme controller, the Lord who is perfect and complete, the oldest, the supreme person greater than the greatest and above the material energy, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari. O master of the spiritual sky, O master of the universes, please save me! Please save me!

#### TEXT 3

You are the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, perfect and complete, who descends as the ten avatars. Desiring to protect the Vedic scriptures and the cows of piety and desiring also to kill the demons headed by Kamsa, You have taken birth in this world.

#### TEXT 4

O master of the spiritual sky, as a father forgives his son, please forgive me, a proud fool bewildered by Your illusory potency, a fool who has become a great reservoir of offenses to You. O master of the demigods, O home where the universes dwell, please be kind to me.

#### TEXT 5

Om. Obeisances! Obeisances to You! Obeisances to You, the lifter of Govardhana Hill, the pleasure of the cows, land and senses, the Lord who resides in Gokula as the protector of the cows, the master of the gopas, the husband of the gopis, the lifter of the elephant among mountains, an ocean of mercy, the creator of the universes, the

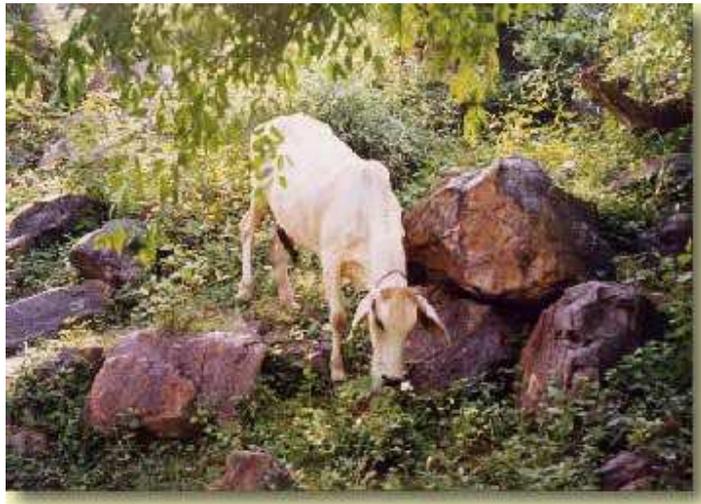
auspiciousness of the universes, the home where the universes dwell, the enchanter of the universes, the enchanter of many millions of Kamadevas, the lover of King Vrsabhanu's daughter, a lamp shining in King Nanda's family, all-attractive Sri Krsna, the perfect and complete original Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of countless universes, the master of the transcendental abode of Goloka, the companion of Balarama!

#### TEXT 6

Sri Narada said: A person who, rising in the morning, recites these prayers of Indra attains all perfections. Dangers will not make him fear.

#### TEXT 7

After offering these prayers, Indra folded his hands and accompanied by all the demigods, bowed down before Lord Krsna.



#### TEXT 8

Then, on beautiful Govardhana Hill, the surabhi cow born from the milk-ocean bathed the gopa-king Krsna with great streams of milk.

#### TEXT 9

Its four trunks filled with celestial Ganga water, the intoxicated elephant Airavata bathed Lord Krsna.

#### TEXT 10

Then the joyful devas, kinnaras, gandharvas, rsis and personified Vedas offered prayers to Lord Krsna and showered Him with flowers.

#### TEXT 11

When the coronation bathing of Sri Krsna was completed noble Govardhana Hill began to melt with joy.

#### TEXT 12

Pleased, the Lord left the mark of His lotus hand on the melting hill. O king, even today that handprint can be seen on Govardhana Hill.

#### TEXT 13

O king of Mithila, know that the footprints Krsna left there are a great holy place that destroys the people's sins.

TEXT 14

O king of Mithila, next to Lord Krsna's footprints were the surabhi cow's hoofprints.

TEXT 15

O king of Mithila, the celestial Ganga water that bathed Lord Krsna on Govardhana Hill became the Manasa-ganga lake, which destroys all sins.

TEXT 16

O king, the streams of the surabhi cow's milk that bathed Lord Krsna on Govardhana Hill became the Govinda-kunda lake, which destroys the greatest sins.



TEXT 17

Sometimes the water in that lake tastes like delicious milk. One who bathes there attains Lord Krsna's feet.

TEXT 18

Circumambulating Lord Krsna, bowing down, making many offerings, calling out, "All glories!" and showering Him with flowers, the happy demigods returned to their celestial abode.

TEXT 19

A person who hears this narration of Sri Krsna's ceremonial bathing attains a result much greater than the result of ten asvamedha-yajnas. He attains the supreme creator's transcendental abode.

## CHAPTER Five

### Gopa-Vivada The Dispute Among the Gopas

TEXT 1

Sri Narada said: Having seen Krsna wonderful and surprising pastimes, the gopas and gopis said to Nanda and Yasoda:

TEXT 2

O king of the gopas, no one in your family could lift a hill. O Yasoda, you could not hold even a single rock for seven days.

TEXT 3

What is the strength of a seven-year-old boy? How strong must one be to lift Govardhana Hill, the king of mountains? We have begun to doubt the identity of your unnaturally strong boy.

TEXT 4

With one hand He playfully held up the greatest of mountains as an elephant holds up a lotus flower or a child holds up a mushroom.

TEXT 5

O Yasoda, your complexion is fair. O Nanda, your complexion is also fair. This boy is very dark. He is different from the rest of the family.

TEXT 6

This boy is like a ksatriya. For Balarama a ksatriya's nature is not unexpected. He was born in a ksatriya family descended from the moon-god.

TEXT 7

If you don't tell us the truth, we will leave the community. Was this boy really born in a family of gopas? If you don't tell us, there will be a great quarrel.

TEXT 8

Sri Narada said: As she heard the gopas words, Yasoda became gripped with fear. Then King Nanda spoke to the angry gopas.

TEXT 9

Sri Nanda said: O gopas, I will carefully tell you what Garga Muni said. O gopas, by his words you will be quickly free of your anxiety. Garga Muni said to me:

TEXT 10

In the word "Krsna" the letter "k" means "the lover of the goddess of fortune", "r" means "Lord Ramacandra", "s" means "the Lord of six opulences " or "the Lord who resides in Svetadvipa. "

TEXT 11

"N" means "Lord Nrsimha", "a" means "the eternal one" or "the Lord who enjoys what is offered in the sacrificial fire" and "h" means "the Nara-Narayana Rsis. "

TEXT 12

These six letters combine to form the name of the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is perfect and complete. That is why this boy is named Krsna.

TEXT 13

In the other yugas He is white, red or yellow but at the end of Dvapara-yuga and the beginning of Kali-yuga, this boy becomes dark-complexioned (Krsna).

TEXT 14 AND 15

That is why Nanda's son has the name Krsna. Because He is the Lord (deva) that rules over the eight vasus (the heart, mind, intelligence and the five senses), He is also called Vasudeva.

TEXT 16

Because He is the husband (pati) of King Vrsabhanu's daughter Radha, who was born in the palace of Kirti-devi, He is also called Radha-pati.

TEXT 17

Sri Krsna is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is perfect and complete. He is the master of countless universes. In the transcendental abode of Goloka He shines with transcendental glory.

TEXT 18

In order to relieve the earth of its burden, kill the demons headed by Kamsa and protect the devotees, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead has now become your son.

TEXT 19

O descendent of Bharata, His names are endless. His names are hidden even from the Vedas. His transcendental pastimes will show what His names are. Do not be surprised by them.

TEXT 20

When I heard Garga Muni say this about my son, I did not doubt his words. The words of the Vedas and the words of a brahmana are the final proof of what is true in this world.

TEXT 21

The gopas said: If the great sage Garga Muni actually came to your home and performed the name-giving ceremony, why did you not call your relatives to come and witness it?

TEXT 22

You kept the name-giving ceremony a secret even when it was performed in your own home!

TEXT 23

Sri Narada said: Their bodies filled with anger as they spoke these words, the gopas left Nanda's palace and went to King Vrsabhanu.

TEXT 24

Filled with anger for their kinsman Nanda, all the gopas spoke to Nanda's friend, King Vrsabhanu.

TEXT 25

The gopas said: O King Vrsabhanu, you have a noble heart. You are the best person in our community. O king, O leader of the gopas, you should sever your ties of friendship with King Nanda.

TEXT 26

Sri Vrsabhanu said: What wrong has King Nanda done that I should sever my ties of friendship with him? King Nanda is worshipped by the gopas. He is the crown that gloriously decorates our community. He is my dear friend.

TEXT 27

The gopas said: O king, if you do not sever your ties of friendship with him, we, the people of Vraja, will sever our ties of friendship with you. O thoughtful one, in your home you have a grown-up daughter of marriageable age.

TEXT 28

If you, the first person in our community, who have now become maddened with your wealth and opulences, find yourself unable to give Her in marriage to a suitable bridegroom, the fault will be yours alone.

TEXT 29

If you do not for a long time sever your ties of friendship with King Nanda, we will ostracize you from our community. O noble-hearted one, reject, reject King Nanda.

TEXT 30

Sri Vrsabhanu said: O gopas, I will repeat for you Garga Muni's words. Those words will make you free of all these anxieties. Garga Muni said:

TEXT 31

The boy that was born in Nanda's home is the master of countless universes. He is the master of Goloka. He is greater than the greatest. No one is greater than Him.

TEXT 32

On the demigod Brahma's request, Krsna came to this universe to remove the earth's burden and kill the demons headed by Kamsa.

TEXT 33

Sri Radha, who in the realm of Goloka is Sri Krsna's first queen, has taken birth in your home. You do not know how exalted She is.



TEXT 34

I will not arrange the marriage of Radha and Krsna. They will be married in Bhandiravan forest by the Yamuna's shore.

TEXT 35

In a beautiful secluded place near Vrndavana forest the demigod Brahma will perform their wedding.

TEXT 36

O best of the gopas, please understand that, in the palace of Goloka, Radha is the first queen of Sri Krsna, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the crest jewel of the worlds.

TEXT 37

From Goloka all you gopas have come to the earth. The gopis and cows have also come, by Radha's wish, from Goloka.

TEXT 38

After speaking these words, the great sage Garga Muni left. From that day I have not doubted Radha's exalted position.

TEXT 39

The words of the Vedas and the words of a brahmana are the final proof of what is true in this world. O gopas, now I have explained all this to you. What more do you wish to hear?



### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below took place in Puttaparthi, at the asrama of a famous pseudo-incarnation of God.*

There was a door within the interview room that opened directly to Sai Baba's quarters. After a few moments he glided through it as everybody rose with palms joined in pranam-mudra. Out of politeness, I also got up. I had a close look at his eyes; they seemed staring and unfocused.

He gave ash to a couple of people--I saw it clearly materialize from his fingers. Near me stood a girl of about ten with her father. When Sai Baba came to her he set two earring that just appeared in his hands into the lobes of her ears. Father and daughter gasped in astonishment, for her ears had not been pierced before. Now they were, and hung with gold.

Seeing this feat, everyone cried "Sai Ram! Sai Ram!" in great wonderment. Then, without acknowledging me with so much as a glance, he turned back and exited from whence he came, Mr. Kasturi on his heels.

A moment later Kasturi came back through the door and announced, "The interview is over; everyone should go now. He did not speak with you, but you are very fortunate, for you saw a miracle of Baba's power. " He waved everybody to the door that opened on the balcony, and we stood to leave.

I followed the father and daughter, but Kasturi stopped me with an outstretched hand. "Please continue to sit. Baba wants you to wait here comfortably. " I nodded, a bit nonplussed, and retook my seat. As soon as the room was cleared, Sai Baba came in again. This time he looked different.

He didn't have that entranced, almost dazed look I'd seen on his face before. Now he appeared completely normal and relaxed. I thought irreverently, "How interesting: mad looks for the masses. "

He stood in front of me. This time I didn't get up. Speaking in Sanskrit, he asked me how I was feeling and if everything was all right. I replied in Tamil, "I do not know Sanskrit; please speak to me in your native tongue. " He switched to his Telegu and asked the same question. Conversation was now possible, because Telegu and Tamil are quite similar.

I answered, "By God's grace, everything is all right. I have a place to stay, and my plan is to visit Prashanti Nilayam for two weeks. " He walked around the room as if in thought and came back to me.

"You say you want to visit for two weeks?" I nodded.

"What is your mission here?"

Remembering what I'd told the Sikh, I replied, "I am looking for God. "

He suddenly smiled and half-raised his arms, turning the palms of his hands in my direction in what I guessed was a double benison. Bending his body slightly at the knees, hips and shoulders, he tilted his head coyly to one side and uttered in a silky voice, "If you can't find God here, where will you find Him?"

I was not very impressed by this little show, and was beginning to feel uncomfortable. "Well, I'll be here for some time, and I hope to meet with you more. . . " my voice trailed off uncertainly. Eyeing me intently, he said firmly, "Any time you want, you can see me. "

Just then a servant appeared in the doorway to his apartment and gave a signal. Sai Baba waved him off. He turned to me again and asked, "Aren't you hungry?"

It was just about lunchtime, so I answered, "I wouldn't mind to eat something now, but of course I have to arrange that somebody gives me biksha. "

He smiled magnanimously. "Eat with me. "

I couldn't hide my surprise and I thanked him. He went through the door and I followed. Entering his private dining room, we sat down on plush cushions at a low round marble-topped table.

Through a wide entranceway, I could see his bedroom. I noted some of the paraphernalia of God: a silk-covered bed, and next to that a nightstand topped by an alarm clock and some medicine bottles. Behind a half-open door I glimpsed a flush toilet.

He nonchalantly sang something to himself as his man brought the lunch on a serving tray. The meal consisted of utma (vegetables fried with farina), achar (hot pickle), fried eggplant and coffee.



The utma, to my surprise, was flavored with onions; I knew that strict sadhus shunned onions, as this food gives rise to passions. Coffee, an intoxicant, would likewise be considered a worldly indulgence. But apparently Sai Baba did not care for these rules. And neither did I, for I was a self-made swami, under vows to no one.

We finished. He got up to wash and gargle, and I did the same. Then with his customary benign smile he nodded his head, indicating that I could go.

As I came down the staircase, I saw the people still sitting in rows, now gazing at me with open mouths. My friend the roommate rushed up to me with a look of awed ecstasy fixed on his face. Others were running up behind him as we met at the bottom of the stairs.

He eagerly inquired, "What happened? After the interview the others came down but Baba kept you with him. "

I said with a nonchalant shrug, "Oh, I had lunch with him, that's all. "

Suddenly at least two hundred people were mobbing me. I was pulled towards a fancy lodging block and ended up in a big airconditioned apartment with a roomful of rich people sitting in front of me. They had locked the door and were guarding it because a big crowd had gathered outside.

It was practically an interrogation session: "What about the miracle with the earrings? And what did Baba say to you?" But I sat silent and serene in the big upholstered chair they'd given me. In my mind, I was gloating at my sudden change of fortune. I wondered if I could exploit this situation further. I had to find out what being God was really like. "Just do it," the opportunist within myself crowed. "It's not a sin; you're just giving them faith in something higher. This is the life you've been waiting for. "

In the relaxed and self-assured manner I'd picked up from him I began singing Chitta Chora (Thief of the Mind), a well-known Sai Baba song. The entire group froze in a hush. Then one by one they started clapping and singing along enthusiastically until the whole room was in an uproar. The song completed, again I was silent. The proverbial pin would have sounded like a car crash.

Finally, I spoke, softly: "What do you want from me? I am a beggar. "

"Swami," came the answer, "you're one of those rare swamis who has accepted Baba as God. Baba has said this is very extraordinary, because he is hiding from those who are engaged in religious and spiritual life. He says that at the end of their sadhana he gives them the darshan they expect--if they worship Rama, he'll appear to them as Rama. If they worship Shiva, he'll come to them as Shiva. But as Baba, only very fortunate people can see him. "

I closed my eyes. "But to me", I murmured, "he is simply a guide. "

Somebody from the back exclaimed, "Ah-hah, what a vision! His guide!" I began to perceive that whatever I said here would be accepted as "nectarean truth. "

Just then a curtain that covered the opened glass door to the balcony moved in the breeze. Seeing this, two ladies in the crowd began to weep. "Baba! Baba is here with us right now!", they sobbed.

Now I could really see how it worked. One didn't have to do anything. Such foolish people would create their own "miracle", propagate it, and make you God.

My friend was there in the group, close by. He urged, "Swami, please tell us your experience with Baba. "

"Everybody was sent out," I began, "but Mr. Kasturi asked me to remain seated, and Baba came to me. He spoke to me in Sanskrit. "

They all looked at each other with wide-open eyes. I heard murmurings of "Sanskrit! Veda! Veda coming out of his mouth. "

I continued on, even to the point of standing up to show them the pose he made when he said, "If you can't find God here, where will you find him?" And I told them how he said anytime I wanted I could have darshan. They hung onto every word.

My friend asked, "Did you speak to him about me?" I shook my head solemnly. He whined, "But I requested you to do that. "

I answered with gravity, "Either you understand he's God, or you understand he's an ordinary person. If you think he's God, then he knows. If you think he's an ordinary person, you shouldn't be here. Why should anyone have to recommend your case?"

Someone exclaimed, "That's the exact thing Baba says! 'If you think I am God, then why don't you have faith, and if you don't think I am, then why are you here?' Baba speaks the same thing!"

Another lady called from the back, "Swami, one more song? Some nectar for our ears?" So I sang a song about Vishnu, one Sai Baba also sings but which is not his composition. As the afternoon drew on I got hungry. They brought me to the canteen and of course, paid for everything.

As it turned out, my friend had also become a celebrity with these rich people because of his relationship to me. They flocked to him to get my attention, and they flocked to me to get Sai Baba's attention.

Despite my hidden cynicism about the 'God' of Prashanti Nilayam, I was yet quite drawn to him because he had pulled off his act so well. Having renounced worldly aspirations, I'd found here a whole new temptation. Nothing arouses ambition in the heart like the fame of another, and though I was loathe to admit it to myself, I envied this 'God'. The curious thing was that my crass imitation of Sai Baba's behavior was thought by his followers to be devotion to him.

I was to find out that he thought that way too.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
19 January 2004

**Nectar from [radhikamadhavabindu@yahoo.com](mailto:radhikamadhavabindu@yahoo.com), hosted by Sriman Radhakunda Prabhu**

Lalita placed her left hand on fawn-eyed Sri Radhika's head, slightly lifting Her head and holding a cup of musk in her right hand. With a pencil she mixed that musk with aguru and made a circle on Sri Radhika's forehead with this mixture. In the middle of this circle she drew an eight petalled lotus with sindura and in that circle she swiftly made a sweet picture with spots of sandalwood paste and camphor.



Then Lalita applied eyeliner mixed with camphor around Sri Radhika's eyes from a cup. (Pretending to speak with Her eyes Lalita jokingly said: O eyes! If you ask me Why are you smearing us, the best of all limbs, with this dirty ink while you adorn all the other limbs of Radhika with gems and pearls?, then I'll tell you) I know how much you yearn for black substances (you yearn to look at Krsna), therefore I have offered you this black substance.

## **SRI GARGA-SAMHITA**

### **Canto Three**

### **SRI GIRIRAJA**

### **Chapter Six**

### **Sri Hari-Pariksana The Test of Sri Krsna**

### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below took place in Puttaparthi, at the asrama of a famous pseudo-incarnation of God.*

A day or so later I asked my friend to take me around the village of Puttaparthi. We went to the Chitravati river, but it being the dry season, there was no water, just a channel of sand.

On a rocky mound near the riverbed stood a tamarind tree from which Sai Baba is said to have magically plucked mangos and other fruits during his youth. I clambered up the rocks and sat beneath it. At the time I was not aware of the significance Sai Baba's followers attached to this tree; I only happened to go there because it looked like a suitable spot for meditation. I sat in the lotus pose, and my friend sat next to me. With closed eyes I visualized Lord Rama, God's avatar as the prince who defeated the demon Ravana.

When I opened my eyes my friend was sitting close with his hands folded and a doglike look in his eyes. I supposed he was expecting some teaching or order from me. He looked so utterly helpless that I had to pity him. The best thing I could do, I figured, was to get him out of Puttaparthi, for here his foolishness would only increase.

"You should to go to Bangalore, where Baba has his smaller center. There will be no interview for you here. "

He asked despondently, "Swami, what paap (sin) have I done?" "You've done many", I replied. He shivered. "But just do this-- go to Bangalore. And Baba may yet see you there. " In the back of my mind I was thinking, "You fool, can't you see you're neither rich enough nor unusual enough--like me--to get Sai Baba's attention?"

Within a few days he left, after arranging with the shop owner my continued stay in his room.

On another day's stroll, I stopped at an old Satyabhama temple on the outskirts of Puttaparthi. This temple was established by Sai Baba's grandfather, Kondama Raju. It is said that his son Pedda prayed here for a second male child; subsequently, a boy was born who got the name Satya Narayana, known later as Satya Sai Baba.

I found it curious that the temple was in need of repairs as if it was neglected by Sai Baba's followers. By a strange coincidence, I'd arrived at the same time as Sai Baba's older brother, who had come to visit the temple from his home nearby.

I asked him about his famous sibling: "Do you think he is God?" He waved his hand impatiently. "This is sinful", he said with faint disgust. "That's a big mistake he's making, and God will punish him for it. He was stung by a scorpion when he was a boy, and after that time started babbling about Shirdi Sai. " (Sai Baba claims to be the reincarnation of a "Kabirpantha" fakir--a mystic on the path of the Muslim impersonalist Kabir--who hailed the town of Shirdi, near Bombay; this man, who died in 1918, was the original Sai Baba. )

"It may be that when he was stung that baba came into his body," the brother continued, "but no matter what happened, for him to claim he is Rama and Krishna is wrong. In our family we worship Rama and Krishna as God, but he has taken that position for himself. When his time comes, he will be punished for this blasphemy. "

I'd become an overnight junior celebrity at Prashanti Nilayam; in my yellow cloth I stood out in the crowd, and the news that I'd eaten lunch with Sai Baba had spread like wildfire throughout the compound. I often entertained the crowd by singing Sai Baba's songs in the style I'd learned from him. Twice daily, different rich men fed me at the canteen. Yet despite the attention I was enjoying, I was growing restless. I'd declared myself a seeker of God, but the easy life here diverted me from my intended goal.

On the seventh day, an excited Kasturi came up to me in the canteen. "Baba wants to speak to you. "

"Should I go to the darshan place?"

"No, you just go up to his quarters. "

"What, right now? Just walk in?"

"He's there waiting to see you!" Kasturi was almost frantic, so exasperated was he with my quibbling. "Please, you just immediately go to him! Even I'm not getting such chance of close contact to Baba!"

So, very casually, as if it was the most natural thing in the world, I walked up the stairs to the interview room and sat down. He didn't come out. I got up and poked my head into his dining room. But he was not there either. I entered his quarters and looked in his bedroom.

On the bed he faced me, reclining on his side, his head supported under a folded arm. As I entered he smiled broadly and lifted his hand in blessing.

I looked around for a place to sit, but there was no chair in the room. Finally I just sat down on the corner of the bed. "Kasturi said you want to see me", I began.

"Yes", he replied. "I just wanted to ask you if you've found God yet. "

"No, I haven't".

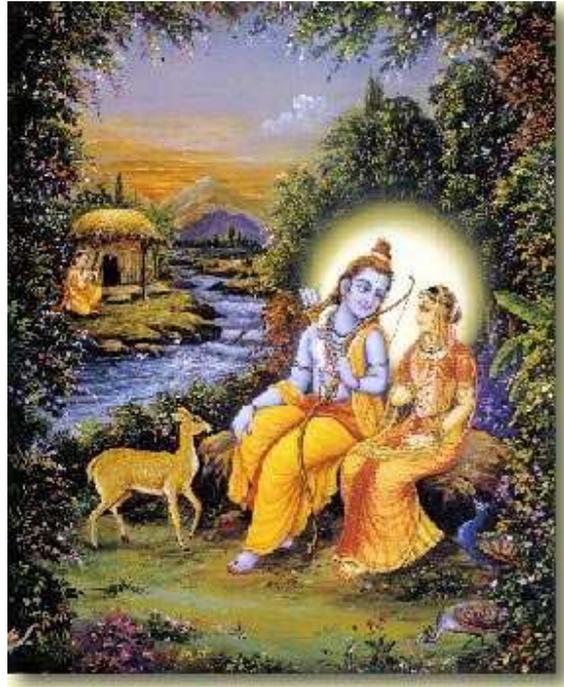
With a hint of knowing irony in his voice, he said, "Under the tamerind tree you meditated on Rama. "

"Yes, I did", I replied evenly. "That's my usual dhyana. I like to meditate on Rama, the ocean of mercy. He protects those who are weak. "

His eyes bored into mine. "But why are you looking for God elsewhere when you sit with him now?"

I let a polite, thoughtful expression register on my face before telling him, "You are a holy man and my elder, and I am very low and sinful. I don't want to say anything improper to you, please understand, but--you are not God. "

He nodded as I spoke, as if expecting my rejection of his divinity. "All right", he said when I finished, "as you see me, so I look. If you want to see me as God, I am God. If not, I'm not. But try to understand--that is what God is. " He spoke a little more along this line, peppering his arguments with the usual Advaitist slogans.



*I like to meditate on Rama, the ocean of mercy. He protects those who are weak.*

I interrupted him. "Excuse me, but I've read all this in your Rama Katha book. Now, one time in there you say everybody is Rama, and another time you say that you are Rama. So what do you actually mean? Look, I know you are not Rama. And to be consistent with Advaita philosophy you ought to tell your followers that the highest truth is impersonal Brahman. Advaitists say that everyone is actually only nameless formless light. You are an Advaitist, aren't you? If you are, then you should know that it is incorrect for you to say 'everyone is Rama' or 'I am Rama', because Rama is a person, and Brahman is impersonal. "

"Yes", he replied in a patient tone of voice, as if indulging a wayward child. "But I have realized Brahman, and they have not. "

I got a bit upset at this point. "Then you should make them realize it. But you deliberately keep them in a position inferior to yourself. You are pushing them down, not lifting them up. At great personal sacrifice they are coming here from many miles distant to wait outside for weeks and months just to catch a glimpse of you, and here you are, happily enjoying it all. Even ordinary politicians show more interest in their followers than you do. You just threw all those letters in the can. At least you could read them. "

"Cool down, cool down", he waved languidly. "As soon as I touch those letters, I know what is in them, and I answer through their karma. "

I stared at him in exasperation, hardly believing what I was hearing. "But karma is always happening to everyone, whether they write you letters or not. If you act through their karma, what do you need this Prashanti Nilayam for? Why do they

have to come here to see you? Please don't mind my boldness, but I am very disturbed by all this. When the curtain moves, these poor people are thinking you are there. They are so gullible, and I am sorry to say I think you are exploiting them. "

"But I was there when the curtain moved", he said self-contentedly. "You sang Chitta Chora very nicely. I was there. "

Now even more disappointed, I told him, "I know you have mystical powers. You see and hear things ordinary men cannot. So why don't you use your powers to remove their sufferings once and for all instead of playing them along like this? Why do you keep those who have surrendered to you in ignorance of their eternal spiritual existence? How will they ever get out of this miserable world of birth and death? Just giving earrings doesn't solve the problems of life. "

"All right", he said, a hint of resignation in his voice, "you will understand later on. " Then, changing the subject he asked, "You need any help here?"

"No, I am fully protected by God. "

"You don't give that credit to me?"

"To some extent I do, because these people who are paying for me are your devotees. But I see it is my karma that is supplying my upkeep in this world. And that is true for all those people out there, and that is also true for you. You have a karma that allows you to sit there, and by my karma I'm sitting here. If I had your karma and you had mine, I'd be the 'God' here, and you would be the frustrated one. "



He didn't hear me. A change had come over him. He sat up, his eyes unfocused and glittering. "I have to go down now", he said in a distant voice. "I will speak with you again. " He quickly exited, leaving me in his room alone.

I decided to have a look around. Opening a closet in his bedroom, I found it filled with orange gowns. I wanted to find his stock of ash, having myself previously experimented with teleporting ash with the aid of a mantra. But the room was bare of anything save the bed and a few standard items.

So I stretched out upon the bed as I'd seen him do and imitated his pose in jest, admiring myself in the bedroom mirror. Then I got up and looked from the balcony as he ran up and down the rows, generating mass hysteria. The police had to restrain people from mobbing him. Then he went onto the Shanti Vedika stage.

I suddenly felt sorry for this little man who would be God. "He's just a puppet," I thought. "All these people think he's Rama, and he believes it himself--but he, and they, are just being guided by some higher force over which he has no control. "

I went down to see what he was up to. Onstage, he had the crowd going in full swing. Arms upraised, he led them in song, which they responded to in a riotous chorus. As the song ended he collapsed into a chair. He was worshiped with incense,

lamp and flowers, like a murti in the temple. Then a group of Sanksrit pandits chanted the Rudram and Chamakam prayers, which are meant for Shiva, to him. This was too much for me. I walked out of the compound to my room.

By the morning of the ninth day the novelty of Prashanti Nilayam had worn off. Thoroughly fed up with the label of 'the swamiji who loves Baba' that everyone had put on me, I decided to go. I went to Kasturi and shook his hand, saying, "Thank you and goodbye. "

He was surprised: "You're going? I thought you would stay here. You sing so sweetly. We had one swamiji from Rishikesh who also sang for Baba, and Baba took very nice care of him. He will take care of you too. "

"God is taking care of me. What can Baba do? Let him take care of himself first," was my quick reply. "You should watch out for his health--when he gets into those running moods, I think it isn't good for him. "

"What?!" Kasturi spluttered. "What is this you are saying?!" "No, never mind, I didn't say anything", I reassured him, smiling brightly. I waved him off and went into the canteen to bid adieu to the manager.

Today there were only about a hundred people gathered at the darshan area. It had been announced that Sai Baba would go to Bangalore; his big foreign-made automobile was ready at his private exit gate.

I went into the Mandir's ground-floor bhajan hall and made obeisances before the altar upon which the forms of Krishna, Satya-Narayana and Shiva were displayed. As I came out, I looked up and saw Sai Baba motioning to me from the balcony.

I strode up the stairs and found him in the interview room sitting in a chair, his hands on the armrests. I entered, offered him my respects and took a chair facing him.

"So?" he smiled. "Going?"

"Yes," I smiled back.

"But you said you'd stay two weeks. "

"Sorry, but I've become too dissatisfied here. I'm tired of all these sentimental people and the suffering and anxiety they are putting themselves through for you. "

"Do you know where you will go next?"

"No, I don't, but I hope to end up in a peaceful place. "

All at once he rose from his seat, his eyes again glittering. He gazed down into my face and intoned meaningfully, "Until you find what you're looking for, you'll have no problem for food. "

He lifted his right palm: "I will maintain you. "

"For whatever you are doing for me," I replied, "I am very thankful. But I don't accept you as God. "

In an odd voice he prophesized, "You yourself will become God. " He moved his hand forward as if to give me vibhuti.

"No", I countered, "don't give me that ash. I don't want to take it from you like this. Just let me take it from the container. "

"But why won't you take it from my hand?" he purred.

"Well", I grinned, "I know it doesn't originate from your hand, so let me take it from where it really comes. "

"You're wrong. It does come from my hand", he insisted.

"Sorry", I grinned again. "I don't believe you. Let me take it from the container. "

Without saying another word, he went into his quarters and brought out a small pot filled with ash. Holding it out to me he said simply, "Very well. If you want, take it from here. " I sprinkled a bit on my head.

"Please go happily and remember my words to you. "

I said, "Namaste," and got up to go. He spoke once more.

"You dislike me, don't you?"

"No, you're a nice man. Why should I dislike you?"

"When you find what you're looking for, you will dislike me," he said softly in that odd prophetic voice. He left me and I went downstairs and out of the compound.

Relieved to be departing Puttaparthi, I walked out of town along the main road until I reached the highway. I turned to have my last sight of the ashram. Just then, Sai Baba's big car glided out of the special gate, drove down the road and turned onto the highway in my direction.

The automobile sidled up next to me, its motor humming. In the back I saw the familiar smiling face ringed by the frizzy hairdo. Next to him was a well-known female singer in an expensive silk sari. As his electric window buzzed down, he told the driver to turn off the engine.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
20 January 2004*

## **SRI GARGA-SAMHITA**

### **Canto Three**

## **SRI GIRIRAJA**

### **Chapter Eight**

#### **Sri Giriraja-Vibhuti The Opulences of Sri Giriraja**

##### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below begins in Puttaparthi, just as he departed the asrama of a famous pseudo-incarnation of God.*

"I'm going to Bangalore", Sai Baba called to me through the open window of his limousine. "Would you like to come?"

"No," I told him. "Now I'm taking my own direction. "

"But you don't know where you are going. "

"That's true, but I am going nonetheless. "

He turned to the lady next to him and said, "He doesn't even know where he's going. He's just looking. I tell him to stay, but he says 'no, I am going. ' I ask him where, he says 'I don't know. ' All the time just looking, looking. "

Then I said jokingly, "But like everybody, I am only looking for you. "

Still speaking to the lady he said, "Everybody's looking for me to become themselves. He's looking for me to become myself. "

I laughed, a bit embarrassed. I could see he knew my motivations all too well. He turned to me again. "Go to Jilallamuri and see Amma. " Amma was a woman whom many said was an incarnation of a goddess. "You'll be very happy in Jilallamuri. "

"How shall I get there?"

He said something to the lady. She took twenty-five rupees out of her handbag and handed the money to him, and he held it out to me.

"You have 25 rupees; it costs twenty-three rupees eighty to take a bus from here. Just go to the bus stand and wait. "

Taking the money, I waved, "All right, so goodbye. This is the last time we'll see each other. "

"No, we'll meet again," Sai Baba chuckled. He told his driver to start the engine, and the window glass buzzed up. Then he was off.

I went to the bus station; the Jilillamuri bus soon came and I boarded it. Rolling through the parched landscape, I reflected on my recent experiences.

Amma lived in the simple village environs of Jilillamuri with her husband and six children. She attracted much bigger crowds at her place than Sai Baba did at Prashanti Nilayam. Like Sai Baba, she was reputed to have miraculous powers of healing and problem-solving. But her crowds were fed daily free of charge with a sumptuous feast.

In the morning and the evening she gave lectures dressed in colorful silks, crown and ornaments like Devi. The rest of the day she wore a simple sari and did household chores.

She lived in a no-frills four room house with her family. In the yard she had built a spacious hall for the pilgrims. It wasn't difficult to have audience with her, and it was all the easier for me, for I came dressed as a sadhu and had been sent by Sai Baba.

I found her in the kitchen, cooking for her family. She was a plump, friendly woman with a big sindhur dot on her forehead who looked for all the world like an average Hindu housewife. She fed me first and then we talked.

I told her that I was searching for someone who could show me a higher state of spiritual awareness, and that I had not been satisfied with what I'd seen in Sai Baba. She immediately said, "Oh, then you should go see Bala Yogi. " Bala Yogi was an ascetic mystic who lived not far from Jilillamuri.

"Yes, I can go see him also", I replied, "but I see you are very advanced yourself. I am impressed by your simplicity, practicality and especially your charitable attitude to others. "

She gazed at me unblinkingly for a moment and then said, "But I cannot help you. Your problem is that you have a great desire to become God. But that is impossible. God is already God. We are like small drops that have been churned out of a big pot of yoghurt. We can't rightly claim to be the whole pot of yoghurt, though at times we hear some people speaking this way. Sai Baba says he is the whole pot. But it's all from the last life. He's left over with some power. Anyway, it is not my policy to criticize. "

Just then a man walked in. Amma got up from the table we were sitting at and touched his feet. She introduced him to me as her husband. Assuring him she'd be only a few more minutes, she then turned back to me.

I told her that Sai Baba said I would become inimical to him after I found what I was looking for. She remarked, "I also see many things, but I keep them to myself. " I asked her what she meant by 'the whole pot of yoghurt', and she explained that it is the totality of everything of which we are only tiny parts. We can only realize that totality through devotion, she said; by devotion she meant service to family, friends and fellow man.

She paused, detecting my skepticism. I commented that I'd heard this before. "I can more or less understand what you say intellectually, but I think the actual realization of this oneness that so many gurus and avatars speak about, not just you, is much more difficult than it is admitted to be. That is why I am looking for a teacher who can show me this truth you are telling me about. "

"So, that's why I am saying you should go see Bala Yogi," she replied quietly. "You won't find what you want here. Anyway"-- she closed her eyes as if meditating on some inner vision--"keep clean inwardly and outwardly. That is the only way to always feel the presence of God in everything. "

After taking her blessings, I left. I was impressed by this woman, much more impressed than I was with Sai Baba, but meeting her had not done anything for my growing desire to actually experience transcendence myself. Outside, I asked the way to Mummuvivaram, the village of Bala Yogi. I begged the fare and boarded the bus.

Bala Yogi ("little yogi") had renounced his home when he was only six years old. He came to Mummuvivaram and sat down on the ground in meditation, never to move from that place again. It was said he neither ate nor passed stool nor urine after that. Moreover, a cobra snake was his constant companion. A house had been built around Bala Yogi by the faithful, and the people of the village profited greatly from the pilgrims that flocked to see him. But he remained aloof from all this attention.

It was only possible to see him during a period of a few days out of every month. During those days a huge multitude gathered at Mummuvivaram to have darshan. It so happened that I arrived there during one of these peak periods. The darshan queue was so long that I supposed it would take me two days of standing in line before I would get a chance to see Bala Yogi. I lost heart and decided to move on.

But while I viewed the scene from a distance, a man hailed me. He'd been sent by a government minister who had noticed me. The minister, thinking by my dress that I'd come all the way from North India, invited me to have a special darshan.



Bala Yogi was said to be fifty years old but looked only thirty, having the wispy beard of a young man and long matted locks of hair on his head. His finger- and toenails had grown out long and crazily twisted. He sat glowering in the half-lotus posture with a large fired clay statue of a cobra behind him, the hood of which was poised over his head like an umbrella.

The pilgrims passed quickly before him. There was no time for anyone to have more than the briefest look. I had entered with the minister and some other big men who apparently wanted to have a private talk with the yogi. They stopped the procession of pilgrims and announced their desire to discuss improvements of the pilgrimage site. Bala Yogi simply screamed at them incoherently, sounding like nothing else than a child throwing a temper tantrum. The minister and his friends retreated quickly, and the procession resumed. An attendant asked me to leave.

I went out and stopped at a soft drink shop. There were photographs of Bala Yogi hung on the back wall. I struck up a conversation with the man behind the counter

and asked if there were any relatives of Bala Yogi living in this area. "He has three brothers", the man answered, "and one doesn't like him. The other two are members of the committee that organizes the pilgrimage services in town. "

I asked for the address of the brother who had rejected Bala Yogi. He lived in the outskirts of Mummuvivaram, in the area of the family's ancestral home. I went there and found him to be an elderly man, retired from active life.

Asked about his brother, he recalled, "One fine morning the boy left home. He went over there where he is now and sat down. He wouldn't eat, and there was this cobra with him that frightened everybody away. The family used to go there and clap hands from a distance; then he'd send the snake away and we could talk to him. But try as we might, he would not come home. Later on all these people started coming. "

"But what is his goal?" I inquired.

He shrugged. "His purpose is known to him alone. All I know is that he doesn't like people. He only stayed where is now because the family begged him to not go farther off than he'd done. You see, he was only six years old, and naturally mother and father were quite afraid to lose him. But he never cared for them--his own parents! He certainly doesn't care for these people who come to worship him now. "

Then I asked, "What do you think about all these people saying he is God or an avatar?" He answered emphatically, "Just because a man has three wives does not make him Dasaratha. " Then he explained that his father had three wives, just as King Dasaratha had. King Dasaratha was the father of Lord Rama. "My father had three wives, like Dasaratha, and he also had four sons, like Dasaratha. But that doesn't mean that one son must be Rama. "

It appeared that Bala Yogi needed to sit in one place to maintain his powers. There was also a secret about his connection with the cobra that I found out later in the Himalayas. And, though common folk considered him to be God, Bala Yogi himself never made such a claim; indeed, he didn't seem to care a fig what his devotees thought about him.

After bidding goodbye to the yogi's brother, I went out and sat beneath a tree to think things over. Giving up my worldly life, I had set out to become an accomplished spiritual master, but I knew I needed training. So far I'd seen three well-known masters who were said to be highly advanced. But I found Sai Baba to be a mere caricature. Amma was praiseworthy for her simplicity and dutifulness, but she could not help me in my search; at least she was honest enough to admit it. And this Bala Yogi looked like a grim misanthrope who just sneered at anyone who fell at his feet.

Considering all this, I found myself laughing at how useless my search was proving to be.

But I'd looked for only ten days. I couldn't so quickly give up hope that there was a teacher somewhere out there who was genuine and who could actually help me. I decided to go to the Himalayas.

IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
21 January 2004

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**SRI GARGA-SAMHITA**

**Canto Three**

**SRI GIRIRAJA**

**Chapter Ten**

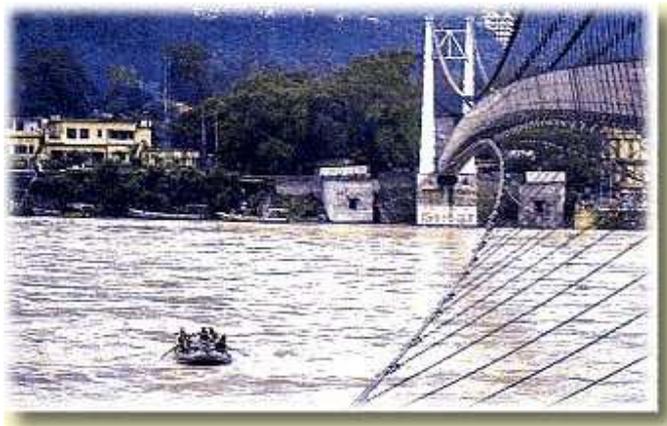
**Sri Giriraja-Mahatmya  
The Glory of Sri Giriraja**

**Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below begins after he departed South India.*

I traveled north to Delhi, leaving the south and its odd gods--Sai Baba, Amma and Bala Yogi-- behind. I stayed two weeks in India's capital. Little of note happened, except that I attended an outdoor program at which a bearded ex-university instructor who now called himself Acarya Rajneesh gave a talk to a crowd of "up-to-date" Indians mingled with a good number of Westerners. At the end he got everyone to dance crazily to rock 'n' roll music that blared from the stage out of enormous loudspeakers. For all that, Rajneesh singularly failed to impress me. I begged a train ticket from the Delhi stationmaster for passage to Rishikesh. Arriving there I went straight to the Shivananda Ashrama, or as it is otherwise known, The Divine Life Society.

In Salem I'd become friendly with the head of the small Shivananda Yoga Mission. The library was well-stocked with books on spiritual philosophy. I read a volume by Shivananda that seemed to speak directly to me. "The Rishis are beckoning us, this day," he wrote, "to start for Rishikesh, the center of the sages. Come, meditate on the rocks, take bath in the Ganga, gaze at the holy peaks. . . "



*A view of the bridge over the Ganges River at the holy city of Rishikesh.*

However, once I'd arrived at Rishikesh I didn't feel a great deal of welcome at the Divine Life Society, the headquarters of Shivananda's mission. They gave me three days stay with three meals each day free of charge, which was very nice of them. But I was looking less for a place to eat and sleep and more for personal guidance in spiritual life. What I found was a busy kitchen, a busy office, a busy printing press, and four general meditation classes a day.

In the evening satsang was held. All the sannyasis came to this gathering: Swami Krishnananda, the general secretary, Swami Premananda, the ashram commander, Swami Shankarananda, the philosopher, Swami Bhuvananda, and Swami Devananda. Morning and evening, Shankarananda gave Kenopanishad class.

On the third day I was able to meet Swami Shankarananda and put some questions before him. He warned me about my interest in clairvoyance, mystic powers and so on. "It is an impediment," he said. "I almost went mad from it himself. " He advised me to meditate with concentration, to engage my senses in active work and not be idle and speculative.

"We are very close to the Himalayas," he told me. "There are many renounced people in these environs who are adept in yoga and mediation, and some of them influence neophytes who dabble in meditation for their own purposes. These adepts can take control of the minds of the neophytes and divert them from the true path. You have to be very careful about slipping onto the mental plane. Select your path

carefully. Take a mantra. Take austerity. Do regular meditational exercises. Find a path suitable for you. Find a guru. "

"Why don't you be my guru, Swamiji?" I asked.

He held out both his palms for me to see, as if to show he held nothing in them. "I am too busy. I must concentrate my energy on writing and lecturing. And what other time I have I spend in meditation--which even includes cutting sabji two hours daily as part of my sadhana. Look, why don't you go talk to Swami Premananda about this?"

Swami Premananda wore his hair and beard long and liked shiny silk saffron cloth. When I asked him if I could become his disciple, his smile was quick and bright. It was more illuminating than what he told me.

"I know what you want. You seek to find yourself by becoming part of a spiritual assembly. " He looked at me closely as if to take me into his confidence. "You know, Kannan, years ago our Shivananda formed an institution up here that he called the Bharata Sadhu Samaja (Society of Sadhus in India). At its high point it boasted 7000 members. But real sadhus refused to join. Perhaps they thought Shivananda was trying to form a political union. No, he just wanted cooperation between genuine sadhus to weed out the criminal element. Did you know that many criminals come up here and take the dress of sadhus? So you see, you have to be very, very careful. Don't set your mind on 'joining' a group. It is very easy to fall in with the wrong people. "

"Yes," I replied, "and that is why I am coming to *you*--Swami Premananda. Never mind what others may or may not be doing, *you* are a sadhu, so there's no doubt *you* can help me. "

Premananda nodded his head from side to side, his eyes twinkling. "Fair enough. I may be a sadhu, but you are still very young. You should see more yogis and visit other groups. Have you been to Badrinatha?"

"No. "

"Ah, then just walk up there! By the time you get back, you'll be a sadhu even if you don't want to be one. That is how I became a sadhu. "

"But Swamiji, I think I need guidance. In the past I had some very strange experiences with tantra and such things. For a couple of years now I often find my brain awash in powerful thought waves that come from. . . well, I don't know where they come from. Sometimes I fear I'm losing my mind. "

"Yes, yes, that's what it's all about!" he asserted. "Meditation means you have to face such psychic disturbances, tolerate them, and at last when you reach a point where the disturbances don't bother you, then you stay on that point. That is when you've found your path. "

"But Swamiji, you have this organization. What is it for if not to help a person like me? I've read all of Shivananda's books. He says that everything is here--

organization, food, a place to stay, classes, association. He says we don't have to wander around and eat dry leaves. "

"Yes, well, it *was* like that once," said Premananda a little philosophically. "But now it's become too institutionalized. If it comes to be known that I talked with you for 45 minutes, I may be reprimanded for not doing my regular work. Previously Shivananda used to spend hours and hours preaching to the young sadhus, but now we are given schedules we have to follow. I have a time sheet to keep. And what's more, even if you do stay here, there's no future for you. All the positions are taken up, and new people are not wanted. You seem to be a sincere boy--why don't you just walk: go to Deva Prayaga, Vashishta Gufa, Rudra Prayaga, so many holy places are nearby in these glorious mountains. Spend the next one fourth of your life on pilgrimage. Don't stay anywhere long. When you're gone through that, you'll be a mature fruit. "

Premananda was the ashram commander, so from him I got an extension on my stay--three days more. On the fifth day, as I was on my way to the dining hall, Swami Bhuvananda informed me that Swami Krishnananda, the General Secretary, had called for me. En route to Swami Krishnananda's office I met a one-eyed Gujarati vanaprastha with a scraggly beard and matted locks. He used to talk to me before meals, if only to remind me that so many young men ran away from home every year and headed to the Himalayas. Almost none stayed, as they could not find what they were looking for. Old One-Eye was a sort of "no-hope" type, but I found his ironical observations rather amusing, in spite of myself.

Giving me a knowing look, Old One-Eye fell in beside me. "Now your time here is over. He'll tell you you have to leave the ashram. That's why he's called you. Twenty years ago he did the same to me. But as you see, you find me every day at the dining hall during meals. That is only because Shivananda gave written instructions that until I die I can eat here. "

"What should I do?"

"Just look on other side of Mother Ganga. " His arm swept the riverscape that was crowded with the towers of temples and ashrams. "So many many societies for yoga and meditation. You came to this particular one because you're from Tamil Nadu and have heard about Shivananda, himself a Tamil. But the same misguidance you get here you can get in all those other places. "

As we arrived at the entrance to the office he said wryly, "I'll leave you here," and turned back toward the dining hall. I entered and offered full dandavats to Swami Krishnananda who sat on a mat on the floor behind a low table. As I stood up I pressed my palms together in pranams and intoned "Hari Om. "

He glared at me without answering. I found not a trace of sympathy in his face. I imagined him with his neck in a military collar and his shoulders pinned with brass stars.

After several seconds of cold silence he said, "What is it--first three days, then six, and still more time after that? Do you think this place is a a dharamshalla? This is an ashrama meant for serious people who practice sadhana. "

"Swamiji, I am ready to do any sadhana you give me. I've read all of Shivananda's books. I am attracted to this way of life. I've come here only for that--for spiritual life. I used to work in TVS. I had a good position, but I gave it up for finding God. Please take me. I'll do anything. I can do office work. Any service. "

"I see. You were with TVS?"

I saw some hope in his seeming change of demeanor at the mention of my former place of work, a company founded by a South Indian brahmin that was respected all over India. "Yes, Swami Maharaja. I worked in the accounting department. "

His next words seem to pounce upon me from out of his mouth. "So why don't you go back there?"

"Oh, no. I am not going back to that life. I couldn't bear it. "

"You think this is a place for people who give up their jobs?"

"But in his books Shivananda invites us to do that: to come here to holy Rishikesh, study the Vedas, practice yoga. That is why I am here. I am young, ready to work. Just take me and make what you want out of me. "

Krishnananda held up a hand like a policeman halting a car on the road. "These past five days I've been watching you. It is my responsibility to judge who is fit for ashrama life and who isn't. You just talk, talk, talk all day and are clearly averse to work. Do something useful with your life. Go back to TVS! And know this: no matter what you do, from this afternoon onward you'll get nothing more to eat at this ashrama. Be sensible. Leave here. Now. "

At that moment a rich family arrived at his door. In an instant Krishnananda's face changed from a frown to a smile. As he welcomed them he said gently, "This holy place is a shelter. " He exchanged warm talks with them for a while; at the end the father of the family wrote out a check. Accepting it graciously, the swami lifted his cloth to reveal his feet, which they thankfully touched.

As the family left, I followed them out, not bothering to speak another word to Krishnananda. I sought several persons to say goodbye to, including the one-eyed man. I found him talking to an old man with a swollen leg. I sat down inbetween them. Old One-Eye asked me, "So what did the Kannada say? He won't take Tamils, I know. "

"He didn't say anything about Tamil or Kannada, but he wants me to leave. "

"That is because he sees you are intelligent. If you join here, maybe in five-six years you'll be sitting in his place. He won't let people move up. That's why I left the railway. They wouldn't let me move up. Here it's the same thing. Just go to the Paramartha Niketan ashrama, or Gita Bhavan, or there are so many others. What do you want, anyway? You want to stay up here the rest of your life and not work hard, isn't it?" He darted a look at the old man and they both laughed. I smiled, feeling slightly foolish. But I spoke bravely what I thought my mission in life was.

"No, it's not a question of avoiding work, it's a question of what work. I want spiritual work. "

"Work and spiritual? There is no such thing. Spiritual means you tell others what to do. Go around, see all those ashrams, and tell me if it is not so. "

I knew his cynicism was as much a cover for his own failings as it was a jab at the failings of others. But I laughed anyway. Laughing helped me slough off the words Krishnananda told me. Had I thought over what he said, I would have had to confront the memory of my deceased father, who one fine day, when I was very young, abandoned the family with the intention of joining the Divine Life Mission and becoming a swami. Shivananda himself turned him away, classing my father as "unfit. " After that, for a while he even took to living in a cave. In this way a few months passed before he suddenly returned home. Near the end of his life, bedridden with illness, my father kept a sign on the wall above his head: "Unfit. "

Was I here in Rishikesh only to make the same mistake he did? I didn't want to think about it. Without admitting it to myself, I was glad Old One-Eye was running down Swami Krishnananda. It gave me an "out. " Laughing at the swami behind his back spared me from having to look deeper into my heart than I wanted to see.

In any case, this is how it developed that I came to Paramartha Niketana on the other side of the Ganges. There were sheds along the riverbank for sadhus to sleep in; I started using one. If you've got no luggage--and I had none--it wasn't bad. Mosquitos and many other bugs were your bedmates, but that is part of the life.

I took bath in Ganga daily and chanted Vishnu Sahashra Nama afterward. I studied the eleventh chapter of Bhagavad Gita. . . which meant I would think this river is Krishna, the mountains are Krishna. Such were my speculations on how everything is Brahman. In the library of Paramartha Niketana I read many books on advaita philosophy. Daily several lectures were held in the ashrama, and I attended them all.

When I wasn't sleeping, bathing, eating, studying, listening to lectures and trying to meditate, I walked. I walked all around Rishikesh and gradually became known to the residents as "the walking Madrasiwalla. "

From my exploration of the town and all its ashramas, I concluded I would like best to stay at Gita Bhavan. A well-known yogi who came from a cave in Mount Abu was visiting there at the time. He taught me tratak, a meditation upon fire, moon and the sun.

Once, as he was explaining kundalini yoga to me, he had me sit in lotus asana. He then said, "Hold your breath" as he touched my navel with his ring finger. Then he advised me to exhale slowly and meditate. I was to keep meditating and breathing in and out very slowly for 15 minutes. I did so, and just as a quarter of an hour passed I fell instantly into unconsciousness.

When I came to my senses he was not in the room. I discovered I had been "out" for two hours. Feeling strangely purified, I walked out of the room and found the yogi giving a lecture. His method was to explain everything in the light of yoga. He ridiculed those who say yoga is not for this age. All holy men, he claimed, no matter

what their path was, were advanced in Kundalini. He said Shivananda's shakti went up to "artha," therefore he did welfare work. Somebody else's went up to his svadhishthan-chakra, that's why he wrote books. And so on.

I considered asking if he would accept me as his disciple, but before I worked up the courage this yogi returned to Mount Abu. And so I moved out of the Gita Bhavan and gradually passed through 24 ashramas. In each I lived a few days. Once during this time I met Swami Krishnananda as he walked through the streets of Rishikesh with two other sannyasis. Seeing me, he marveled, "Are you still here?" I nodded and told him I'd been moving from ashrama to ashrama. A shadow of annoyance crossed his face. "You're wasting your life up here," he snorted. "You should have done what I told you and gone back to TVS. " As he stalked off with his two companions he urged me, "Do something useful!" I offered pranams and murmured "Hari Om. "

A few days later Vishvaguru Munishanandaji Maharaja arrived from Gujarat. He was a bigger name than the yogi from Mount Abu. Large crowds gathered to hear him speak, including the leading sadhus of other ashrams--except for the Shivananda ashrama. Munishananda was like a pope of yoga and advaita philosophy in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Punjab. In these parts of India he had achieved a level of "automatic importance" like that of the Kanchi Shankaracharya, whom I'd met in Kerala.

Munishananda taught dhyana yoga and standard Mayavadi philosophy. There was no doubt he was blessed with a natural aptitude for the physical exertions of yoga. He had such control over his abdominal muscles that he could roll his stomach about, a feat he often showed off during his lectures.

I got an audience with him at which I requested to be admitted to his Rishikesh ashram as a student. "What are you practicing?" he asked me.

I mentioned two routines I'd learned from the Mount Abu yogi, which were yoni mudra and tratak. He chuckled. "That's no practice. Do you meditate?"

"Yes. "

"On what?"

"Well, when I stay next to the Ganges, I meditate upon her--the river's cycle, how she comes from ocean and returns to the ocean. . . "

He gave me a sharp look. "Ganga-devi doesn't come from the ocean. She comes from Vishnu's feet!"

I apologized and explained that I wasn't experienced. "With your permission, I ought to stay here in your ashrama and learn from you. "

"You've seen my demonstration of yoga techniques?"

"Yes, but I don't think I could ever go far in that direction. I heard you say in your lecture that these things only concern the body. My interest is to master things of the spirit. "

"Very good. That you should do. It means dhyana, meditation, and I do teach that. But you have to be fixed up to learn it. I observe restlessness in you. That will never do. But listen--I'm leaving here and will return in two months. If you are still in Rishikesh when I get back, I'll teach you. In the meantime you should attend our world peace prayer at the ashrama two times a day. "

I had seen that. The ashramites gathered at these sessions to shout "Vishva ki! Kalyana Ho!" over and over.

"Prayer cleanses the heart," Munishananda continued. "Do that daily and go on with your pranayam, your yoni mudra and tratak. " He stayed three days more, during which time I attended the private meditation sessions he held for his four disciples. We sat in padmasana with closed eyes. After a while I'd peep to see what was going on around me. I saw that his disciples were also peeping. But Munishananda seemed fully absorbed in his practice. He was an extraordinary man, no doubt. He spoke four languages and quoted Sanskrit extensively in his lectures. None of this he'd learned in an academic institution. His self-education was another proof that this was not his first lifetime as a spiritual teacher.

"With the arrow of Om," he would say, "you should shoot the pranava (breath), and kill the mind. " On the last day of his stay I got another audience with him. I told him about the particular problems I had with my mind, the subtle influences that I often felt.

"Look," he said, frankly but not unkindly, "you won't obtain your spiritual life in Himalayas no matter what you do. "

"But. . . but why?"

"I want you to do one thing after I've gone. I want you to go to Neelkanth Mahadev. You'll see yourself what spiritual life in the Himalayas means. "

Neelkanth Mahadev is a holy place above Rishikesh. I vowed to Munishananda I would follow his instruction. And I did.

*IBSA (ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Sadhana Asrama), Govardhana, India  
22 January 2004*

**Report from HG Jayatirtha Caran Prabhu on the Auckland Temple Opening  
Auckland, New Zealand**

(festivities were held during the week of 11-17 January)

Okay so this is what I was up to the last week, or at least arranging for it, going around buying all the ingredients, setting it all up and then ready to open the new temple, move the Deities in and do some yajnas there too.

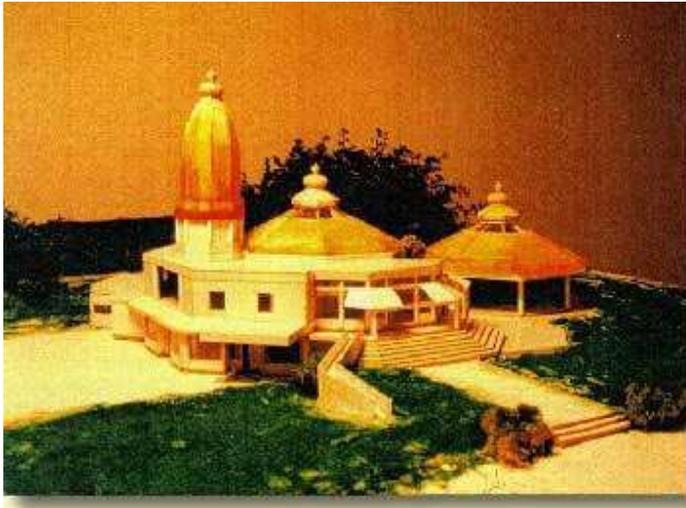
We had in attendance; Sri Sriyuts HH Jayapataka swamin, Prabha-vishnu swamin (GBC for Australasia), Indradyumna swamin, Ramai swamin (co-GBC), Bhakti-visram-madhav swamin, Devamrita swamin (co-GBC), Hari Sauri prabhu ACBSP, all

the Australian Temple Presidents; Aniruddha from Melbourne, Atmarama ACBSP from Sydney, Ajita prabhu from Murwillumbah, Tirtharaj prabhu from Brisbane, former TP of Christchurch and Auckland Alalanath prabhu ACBSP, present TPs and managers of New Varshan (Auckland temple farm) Jaya Sila prabhu ACBSP and Kalasambhava prabhu ACBSP, Hanuman prabhu, TP of Christchurch, and about 1000 other devotees.

It was incredible.

I was in charge of all the moving of the Deities, organizing all the VIPs to carry the Deities to the vehicles and to bring the Deities into the new temple and oversee the bathing/abhishek, as well as the installation of Sudarshan chakra and flag and kalashes on the roof and various yajnas in the temple room.

I guided Hari Sauri prabhu through the dhyana for installing Sudarshan into the sacred waters that later we'd bathe the Deities and do prokshaniyam of inside and outside the temple and pour those waters over the temple spire, chakra, flag and main kalashas about the high points of the temple. The process goes something like this; I recite one mantra that describes Sudarshan with His 1000 arms, so many weapons, fangs as teeth, flames as a tongue, kagul around His eyes, mekhala belt, ankle bells, so many things, and it makes a visual image in the mind, well then using a flower to transfer that image we that was invoked in the mind we drop that flower into 200 litres of water and recite Sudarshan gayatri over it. We then installed the Sudarshan chakra and did about ten nyasa homas to Sudarshan invoking His protective presence. In the afternoon Ramai swami, Prabhavishnu swami, and Devamrita swami, as well as former headmaster of the Gurukul Bhava prabhu, and Kalasambhava ACBSP assisted in the bathing of the Chakra, Dwaj and Kalashas on the roof.



*A designer's model of the new ISKCON Mandir at Kumeu on the outskirts of Auckland, New Zealand.*

The next day we brought the Deities down from the old temple to the new one, about one kilometer down to the back of the property. There were devotees in front, devotees behind and devotees by the road side all chanting Hare Krishna, some making offerings as we went. In the very front car was our resident police officer in his police car, Rasik prabhu TKG giving a police escort with flashing lights, and behind him was the front car of the procession with Big Srila Prabhupad with Jagannath Baladev Subhadra in the back of the car with a couple of pujaris fanning Them, as the

temperature was pleasantly in the high 20s C (27-29 C). In the next vehicle, a convertible sports car of one Indian congregational member rode Gaura Nitai assisted by a few pujaris holding Them and some fanning Them.

The next car was small Srila Prabhupad and two sets of Radha Krishna utsav Deities for the 1008 Kalash maha-abhishek that evening, where we had got over 1008 sponsors for different quality kalashas (gold, silver, copper) they can bathe the Lord on special snan-vedis.

By the Lord's mercy I was on the horse drawn coach with Radha and Giridhari, Who we had to have sitting opposite each other as They would in Their real jhulan festivals in Vraj so They can look at each other. My service was to help hold Radharani with Kalasambava prabhu, on the other seat was Indradyumna swami and Jaya Sila prabhu holding Giridhari. The Deities are over three feet tall (about one meter) made of solid marble, so They are very heavy in weight. Hari Sauri and Ajita prabhu were on one side of the coach and Ramai swami and Jayapataka swami on the other, and all manner of Radha Krishna katha was being told.

Then a big black bumble bee flew onto the coach circled the Deities a few times, hovering in front of Radharani and then Giridhari and then settled on Giridhari's garland--Hari Sauri prabhu then mentioned how a similar thing once happened in Mayapur with Prabhupad there, to which Prabhupad said this was very auspicious sign. The journey down the road was wonderful and smooth, and when we got to the temple there were hundreds of devotees there many many Indian matajis chanting Gujarati songs to Radha Giridhari and throwing rose petals and rose water. Just then another big black bumble bee landed on Srimati Radharani as we carried Her to the temple up the steps, as the last Deity entered into the temple devotee came and told me that it was raining with the Sun shining (divya-snan).

Prabhu the next part I cannot even describe in words. We had four snan vedis in the new Deity room, I appointed one devotee to fill and pour liquids from a kalash and another to hold a big Laxmi conch, except on Prabhupada's snan-vedi where he was bathed with kalash only by his dedicated servant Hari Sauri prabhu, assisted by Christchurch temple president Hanuman prabhu. Tirtharaj, Auckland head pujari Narad-rishi prabhu and head pujari from Melbourne Murari Chaitanya were looking after Gaura Nitai, Alalanath prabhu and Anirudha prabhu and Atmarama prabhu, and BVM maharaj were looking after Jagannath's snan-vedi. Indradyumna swami, Devamrita swami, Jaya Sila prabhu and Kalasambhava prabhu were all around the central snan-vedi of Radha-Giridhari. I was handing all the various sodasa upacharas to Jayapataka swami for him to offer to each set of Deities prior to the actual bathing, and then the bathing began. Pure waters to begin with, then Panch-gavya, Panchamrita (milk, yogurt, ghee, honey, sugar water) then rose waters, scented waters with musk of Ratnarani (night queen), Bakool flowers, fragrant Mogra oils placed into the waters, fruit juice bath; dark grape juice, pineapple juice, cranberry juice, orange juice and apple juice, then five kinds of fragrant herbs and spices bathed through the sahasra dhar with cool waters, then warm waters, then Ganges water, then rose water again and finally the protective Sudarshan tattwa homa waters, Ramanuja prabhu passing each item to me in the sequence I placed them.

After the bathing the Deities were dried and dressed in towels and the bathing sets cut up and thrown out to the hundreds of devotees eagerly chanting in the temple room. The curtains closed for a few minutes while devotees then dressed the Deities

into a simple but decorative night set so that the Lord could quickly receive Their super opulent Raj-bhoga offering that was just completed in Their new Deity kitchen. The floor was cleaned and Their new marble tables filled with preps, but also all the floor was covered in many many preparations and offered to the Lord. After some time we handed the first of those dry food prasadam to Jayapataka swami and he began to distribute them over the balustrade to the eager sea of devotee hands waving upward to receive it. This went on with all of us also helping and all the Lord maha-prasadam off Their plates being distributed.

We then did prayascitta homas, and the Iskcon mangal archana homa to cover for any inconveniences we may have caused the Deities over the last few days, and begged Their blessings and forgiveness. The atmosphere by now completely transcendently surcharged; numerous devotees including Hari Sauri prabhu, Kalasamvara prabhu, Jaya Sila prabhu, Bhava prabhu, Alalanath prabhu and myself all said it was one of the most memorable and truly life altering moments of our devotional careers.

What more can I say. . . . . There's other stories too like the lady who gave a \$70,000 donation to fix the road all around the temple, the Mayor of the district, President of local Hindu temples, ASB Trust bank who donated \$250,000 toward the community aspect of the project for the prasadam hall, etc, and other groups all spoke so nicely, it was such a buzz.

The entire mood of the place is just like Vrindavan, the temple overlooks the estuary, and in itself "is a million dollar view" as they say. The breeze that comes from the estuary is so refreshing, you have to visit to really appreciate what has been done here, it is something special, really special. I humbly yet boldly declare that there's no doubt that Prabhupad would be pleased (this was said by many devotees, but in particularly by Atmananda prabhu ACBSP, eyes full of tears and quivering chin and lips. . . . .

There were many pictures taken, we may get hold of some soon, will share if you like, pretty inspirational stuff. . . . .

Trusting this finds you well in every respect.

I beg to remain, yours in the humble service of the Lord and His devotees.

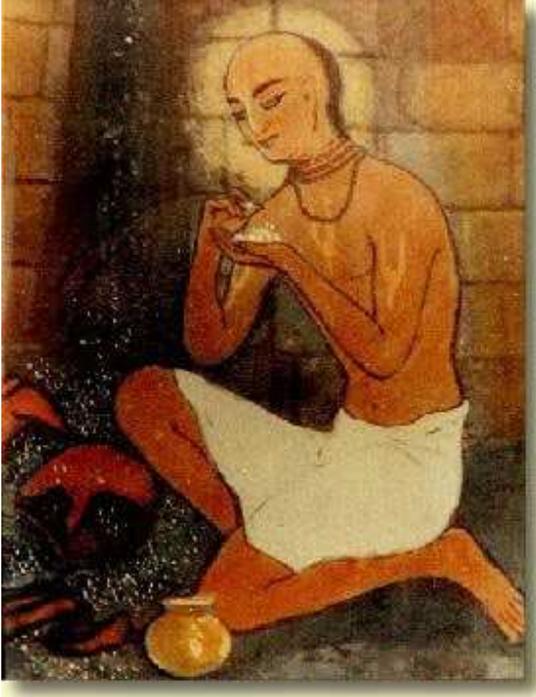
Shubh dinam astu or Have a Nice Day

Shri KrishnArpanamAstu

ys, JTCd



joy of the mellows of the devotees with your display of bluish platforms that are full of splendour and fragrance. Please allow me to live close by you!



*Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami in his mood of renunciation in total dependence upon the mercy of Lord Jagannathadeva.*

close by you. !

8.

O Govardhana! King of mountains! Because the nectar of your name as Hari's best servant emanated from Srimati Radharani's pearl-like mouth, which was revealed by Vedic scriptures like Srimad Bhagavatam (10. 21. 18), you are called the new tilaka (because of your long thin bluish shape at the edge of Vraja) of Vraja. Please allow me to live close by you.

9.

O Govardhana! You are the only giver of joy to Sri Sri Radha Krsna and Their associates, that are always surrounded by the people, animals and birds of Vraja in the mood of friendship. Please mercifully accept me and allow me to live close by you.

10.

5.

O Govardhana! You affectionately and secretly embrace the neck of your own dear friend, Sri Radha Kunda, the place which is very dear to you and Lord Hari. Please allow me to live close by you and show me the intimate pastimes of the Divine Young Couple there!

6.

O Govardhana! You make your name, nourisher of cows, successful by constantly giving land, water, grass and the shade of your trees to the cows and thus you are famous in the three worlds. Please allow me to live close by you!

7.

O Govardhana! Your glories are increased by the enemy of Aghasura and Bakasura, Sri Krsna, when He protected the Vrajavasis and vanquished Indra by quickly using you as their new shelter from the rain. Please allow me to live

O Govardhana! Although I am vile and deceitful, the causelessly merciful Sri Sacinandana submitted me to you. Therefore, do not consider whether I am qualified or unqualified and accept me. Allow me please to live close by you.

11.

Anyone who carefully recites these ten verses praising the king of mountains Srila Govardhana, that are the givers of divine mellows, will swiftly attain a place to live close by Govardhana, the bestower of bliss, and he will attain the precious jewel of the auspicious loving service of the Divine Couple, Sri Sri Radha Krsna.



### **Sketches of a Devotee's Pre-Krsna Conscious Life in India**

*Back in the late 1980's I tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told me by an Indian devotee, whom I shall not name to protect his privacy. These stories relate his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmin family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krsna consciousness. What you will read below begins in the Himalayas.*

At 5:30 in the morning I began the upward trudge from the Rishikesh environs into the green Himalayan foothills. Some tree-cutters hailed me and asked where I was going. "Neelkanth Mahadev," I told them. They laughed. One of them shouted after me, "In another hour you'll be coming back!"

"No, I'm going up to pay my respects to Mahadeva Lord Shiva. "

Seeing that I was serious, the grin left his face. "This isn't pilgrimage season now," he said gravely. "Unless you are Lord Shiva's own man, you'd be better off to turn around and go back down the way you came. "

I kept walking through dense woods until the path was blocked by fallen trees. I took another route, one that led me over large boulders. My climb was not only very tiring, but gradually, as the whispery loneliness of the deep forest settled upon me, it became almost frightening. Doubt invaded my mind. Should I turn back like the woodcutter said? I finally got to a spot where it was possible to rest. I was so exhausted that I dropped into sleep and woke up that afternoon. I'd had nothing to eat. I *had* nothing to eat. There was nothing to do except to keep on walking.



*The temple of Neelkanth Mahadev, where Lord Shiva drank the poison that turned his throat blue.*

I finally entered a valley formed by three hills called Vishnukoot, Brahmakoot, and Manikoot. Here stood the Neelkanth Mahadeva shrine that housed a Shiva-linga. At this site Lord Shiva drank the halahala poison produced from the churning of the milk ocean millions of years ago. Showing honor to the poison's terrible power, Mahadeva's throat (kantha) turned blue (nila). Hence the name of this holy place.

After paying obeisances to the linga, I stood outside the shrine and surveyed the steep rock-studded woodland. I sat down to meditate. Soon the valley was covered by darkness and the fierce chill of an autumn night at a thousand meters above sea level. Next to the temple were a few sheds for pilgrims; I retreated inside one where I fell into an uneasy sleep. I sensed the presence of many ghosts.

Daylight broke over the peaks above. A brahmin priest and a few other persons were worshipping in the shrine. A confluence of mountain streams flowed nearby, so I bathed in these swift waters so cold they seemed to cut into my flesh. After my ablutions, I got a bit of prasadam (sanctified foodstuffs) from the brahmin along with directions to the Manikoot peak. For nearly two kilometers I continued on my way, struggling up the slope until I arrived at Siddhon Ka Kot. The brahmin had told me that this was a place of meditation for great sages of old. He personally believed the yogis were still there, but invisible to modern people. I did feel an palpable spiritual aura about the area. But though there were caves enough, no yogis were to be seen in them.

Munishananda had told me to visit Neelkanth Mahadeva; some days after his departure from Rishikesh I happened to meet Swami Shankarananda of the Shivananda Ashram who confirmed Munishananda's advice and added that I should go even higher into the mountains beyond Neelkanth Mahadeva. Both swamis seemed certain I would attain something up here that would be of help in my spiritual quest. So far I hadn't found whatever they were hinting at, so I pushed ahead.

Trekking past a holy place called Sukhvasani Devi, I stayed my northward course. After a couple of hours I came to a huge boulder that blocked my path. A river of rubblestone had slid down from above with the boulder in its lead. It was labor to get those rocks behind me; I looked at the sky and estimated that it was just past noon.

I rounded a bend and came face to face with a little boy. A bit behind him a girl hardly in her teens tended a small herd of goats. Both youngsters looked bedraggled and dirty. They wore odd earrings that appeared to be made from leather. Before I could say a word the two started shouting and throwing stones at me.

A cave yawned in the rock face to my right. I scrambled inside to avoid being pelted by the stones. The cavern was huge and illuminated by a fire flickering in the center

of the floor. Before the flames sat a bearded yogi, his wirey body perfectly immobile in the padmasana pose of meditation. His long gray hair was matted and coiled into a great bun atop his head, and his fingernails had grown out even longer than Bala Yogi's. His ancient craggy face, relumined in the orange glow, was bent towards the flames, eyes fixed and staring. Next to him lay a chinda (a yogi's forceps for picking up live coals) and a big pile of firewood.

The children did not dare enter the cave. I sat down near the yogi, but he gave me no notice. From the looks of him, he was deep in trance. I noticed a small metal trunk tucked into a shallow recess of the cave wall. After a few minutes of sitting in silence, my curiosity got the best of me. I went over to the trunk, squatted down and opened it. There were only letters inside, perhaps one hundred of them, still in their envelopes. The ones on top showed recent postmarks. As I sifted through the stack, I found some dating to before Indian independence. At the bottom were letters with postmarks from the 1880's. All were written from Meerut, the envelopes addressed to Swami Trilokeshwarananda Yogi in care of the Rishikesh post office. The oldest letters began 'Dear Sharmaji,' the later ones 'Respected Swami Maharaja. ' I looked over at the yogi, still frozen in meditation. Was this Sharmaji? Had he been here for ninety years?

Closing the trunk, I got to my feet and walked around. The cave was as large as the interior of a cinema house. At the end it narrowed to a niche twice the height of a man. A shaft opened in the top of the niche, tunneling straight up into the mountain. How far up it extended I could not tell--it was pitch black.

After about half an hour a mountain woman entered the cave carrying a rough wooden bowl filled with goat's milk. She wore the same sort of earrings as the children. I tried speaking to her but she cut me off with a cold look and then ignored me completely. She stood a respectful distance from the yogi, her eyes on the ground, waiting in silence. A few moments passed as he gradually came out of his trance. When he acknowledged her with a shake of his head, she quickly stepped forward to put the bowl down near him. Just as quickly she moved back. He threw the milk into the fire and took some ash from the fireplace. As she retrieved the bowl, she extended her right hand; the yogi dropped the ash into her palm. She bowed and hurried out.

I offered my pranams and dropped to my knees before him. "Swamiji. . ." I began. He interrupted me gruffly. "What are you doing here?"

"I came for your darshan," I said meekly.

"What do you want from me?"

"I am just a sadhaka. I've come hoping to learn yoga from you. "

He winced in disgust. "You don't come here to learn. This is not a yoga school. Why don't you go down to Rishikesh and move into an ashram and learn some excercises?"

"I was there. I was sent here by Munishananda and Shankarananda. "

"Pah! How many times must I tell those fools down there not to send people up?"

"Please, can't I be your servant?"

"Serve how? I look at the fire. I don't need your help for that. "

I persisted, desperately trying not irritate him. I didn't doubt that if he cursed me, I'd be in a lot of trouble. "Swamiji, have mercy on me. I need some instruction in my spiritual life. I've come all the way up here from South India. Kindly help me. "

"What sadhana do you follow?"

"I chant Vishnu-sahasra-nama each day, and. . . . "

"This is no place for people who chant Vishnu's name," he said with finality.

"But whatever you are doing, you could show me. "

"What I am doing, you'll never be able to do. You people live on food. We live on sadhana. "

"But you could teach me to live on sadhana. "

The yogi shook his head and scowled. "I don't accept disciples. Now that you are here, you can stay one night. But don't bother me. I must do my meditation. " He stoked the fire and locked his eyes on it, tuning me out.

When he said 'you people live on food,' I realized how hungry I was. I ventured outside; the children had gone. I found a stream and filled my belly with its icy waters.

At about two in the afternoon, the mountain woman returned bringing water and flour in two bowls. While she waited, the yogi mixed the flour and water and made dough which he divided into two lumps. After flattening the lumps into patties between his palms, he threw them into the fire. He let them sizzle for two minutes before removing one blackened pattie with his chinda. He stood and walked to the back of the cave. There he broke the bread in half, throwing a piece up into the shaft as he called out, "Take it, Ma. " The piece of bread did not fall back.

He sat down at the fire again and tore the half-pattie still in his hand into two more pieces, giving me one. The other pattie just burned to a crisp in the fire. We ate; it tasted like a piece of coal with a gummy interior. After finishing, he rubbed his hands with ash and motioned for me to do the same. Then, as before, he gave the lady a little ash. She collected her bowls and departed. Without a word he stoked his fire and went back into trance.

It grew dark outside. I chanted the Thousand Names of Vishnu and went to sleep. I was awakened repeatedly by weird sounds, shouts and screams from outside; each time I sat up but saw nothing except the yogi gazing into the fire. When I rose the next morning, he was still in meditation. I went to the stream to wash myself, and as I returned I saw a young gentleman dressed in suitjacket, shirt, tie and pants hiking

up toward the cave, a briefcase in his hand. He could have only come from Neelkanth Mahadev.

If I'd seen Shiva himself coming up the path, I wouldn't have been more astonished. Stock-still, I watched him until he drew near the cave. Then I called to him. He returned my greeting with a smile. I asked him what he was doing in the mountains.

Pausing for breath, he said, "I've just come from Meerut to see Swami Trilokeshwarananda. I need some ash for my mother. She's sick. And what are you doing here?"

We got to talking and went inside the gape. The yogi had not come out of his trance, so I tried to find out as much as I could from the young man about himself and 'Sharmaji. ' But he didn't know very much about the yogi except that he was a distant relative. It appeared that his family had told him little beyond ordering him to collect some ash. They'd sent him here once before for the same purpose.

As we whispered near the fire, the yogi's meditation broke. Before the young man could say anything the yogi rasped, "You again! I told you last time not to come up here anymore. "

After falling at the yogi's feet, the man knelt before him, head bowed and hands folded in prayer. "Maharaja, have mercy on us. Mother is sick. "

"Why do you people keep writing letters to me?" The yogi shot a glance over at me. "Did you read those letters?"

I was too embarrassed to reply.

"Of course you read those letters!" the yogi exclaimed. Suddenly as spry as a playful boy, he jumped up, cackled and shook his head in all directions until the bun on his head loosened. Great ropes of hair cascaded over his body, reaching to his knees. "Everybody who comes up here reads my letters," he whooped. "The fools have nothing else to do. " He turned to his visitor from Meerut, who had backed away in fright. "Now this time you take enough ash so that you don't have to come back. And tell your people to stop writing. "

The man nodded gratefully and opened his briefcase, removing a tin box. The yogi scooped handfuls of ash from the fireplace and unceremoniously dumped them into the box, spilling the gray powder all over the young man's clothes. When it was full to overflowing the poor fellow closed his box, returned it to the briefcase and, after bowing down once more, beat a hasty retreat from the cave.

Animatedly, the yogi strode over to a corner of the cave and picked up a snakestick (a coiled wooden walking stick). He smiled at me as if I were an old friend. "Let's go for a walk," he said. "I haven't been outside for a long time, you know. "

Taken aback at his sudden change of mood, I asked--just to keep up the conversation--"How many days was it since you last went out?"

He flung his head back and laughed. "Days! I stopped counting days a long time ago. " We stepped out into the sunlight. He took a deep breath and gazed around contentedly.

"Swamiji," I said, "How do you get letters up here?"

He snorted. "Once or twice a year the postmaster sends a team up here from Rishikesh with letters for me. I am the only one who gets letters. " He pointed with his snakestick up the valley where a rocky path wound around the mountain and disappeared. "There are sixty caves beyond mine. I'm the new man here. The sadhus up above use me as their contact to the outside world. I'm the only one who eats--once every few days, a little burned dough. They live on air. Once a year they come down to my cave, sixty sadhu-babas together! That you'd like to see!"

"Yes, I would. I'd like to go up and see them right now," I said bravely. Then my stomach growled.

He laughed, the sunlight revealing deep creases in his leathery face. "Oh, hungry young fellow! If you want a comfortable life with meals twice a day, doing a little meditation, you better go back down to Rishikesh. "

I smiled ruefully. "Swamiji, my problem is just that I don't know what sadhana to follow. I'm chanting Vishnu-sahasra-nama, I do tratak, but I don't know what is best for me. "

"What is your goal? That's the first point to settle. "

"Well. . . like those swamis in Rishikesh speak about constantly, my goal is kevalanand, oneness with God. "

He chuckled and was silent. We walked to the stream where, with cupped hands, he splashed water all over his near-naked body. Then he stood up straight, arched his head back and gazed into the sun that had moved near the granite peaks to the west. After a minute he looked at me and spoke.

"You should go up to Badrinath. You'll learn about kevalanand there. " Again he chuckled, muttering something under his breath.

"But here I could learn also, from the sadhus. . . . " He cut me off with a sarcastic barb: "Even if you threw yourself into their meditation fires, they wouldn't warm up to you. "

"Well, you said you are the new man here. How long did it take for you to be accepted by them?"

"If I told you when I came here, you wouldn't believe me anyway. I've been here too long. Too many people know about me now. Those Meerut people started to send letters to me only after they found out about this place. Before that it was peaceful here. Hah. . . I can remember Rishikesh before it became fashionable. That Paramarthaniketana Swami turned it into a tourist attraction. Before then, Rishikesh was a genuine place. "

I remembered something I'd wanted to ask him. "Swamiji--tell me, what happened to the bread you threw up into the shaft?"

"Hah. Before I moved into this cave, there was another who did worship to Kali Ma in that style. So when I took over, I continued. "

"But what happened to the bread, why didn't it come back down?"

He looked at me as if I was a fool for asking. "She takes it, that's all. "

As we walked back to his cave, the mountain woman came by with her goats and two children. "Don't bring any milk today," the yogi called to her. I bade him goodbye, deciding to walk back down to Rishikesh. For a few days I remained at the Munishananda Ashram.

During that time I visited the ashram of one Prem Baba. It was a simple place, the centerpiece being a fire kunda with a trident mounted in the middle. Prem Baba was a wild-looking Shaivite from Gujarat. It seemed he had only foreign disciples. There was a thin Italian woman, an Australian couple, a Swiss boy and a few others, all hippie types. One fellow played an instrument called a Ganjeera while Prem Baba lit his sacrificial fire. After chanting mantras and making offerings to Shiva, Babaji fired up a chillum (a clay hashish pipe), sucked in the smoke and, as he breathed it out, chanted BUM BUM BOLONATH BUM BUM BOLE.

The chillum went around the circle of disciples. Each first touched it to his or her forehead and then took a puff. When it came to me I put it to my head but passed it on without smoking. The Italian lady next to me urged, "No, no, you should-a take--con amore. "

"I don't do this," I said.

"Ees okay, just-a take. "



So I tried it out and choked on the harsh smoke. Afterward I had to lay down. When I awoke, it was the next morning. I took a bath and chanted Vishnu-sahasra-nama twice. Later in the market area I met the Italian and another European woman as they came by on a rickshaw. The Italian, hardly more than a skeleton in t-shirt and jeans, jumped down from the rickshaw and cried, "Oh, you please-a come again, see the guru!"

I said no, sorry, I am on another path. I tried to tell them that drugs were not good. The Italian girl held out her skinny limbs. "See, I have-a nothing. Don't matter no more. I die, become-a Om. "

I remembered what Trilokeshwarananda Yogi had said about Rishikesh being no longer 'a genuine place. ' I decided to go to Haridwar.