

**T h e H e a r t
o f
T r a n s c e n d e n t a l
B o o k
D i s t r i b u t i o n**

(Experience Burns Brighter
than Imagination)

A Dialectic Synthesis of the Correlative
Dynamics of Internal and External Pure
Devotional Principles

Aindra Dasa

Dedication

This disquisition is dedicated to my beloved spiritual master, Nitya-lila-pravista Om Vinṇupāda Paramahaṁsa 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedanta Swami Mahārāja Prabhupāda, and all the Gaudiya Vaishnava *Acaryas* down to the present day who mercifully took the trouble to present volumes of both ancient and modern transcendental literatures aimed at inculcating upon a most degraded and suffering humanity the inestimable treasure of *vraja-bhakti-rasa*.

Acknowledgement

Several years ago, upon completing a major part of this treatise, I decided that I had better shelve the thing, despite my deep conviction about the need for this dimension of open and frank dissertation in contemporary Vaishnava society. I was thinking that perhaps the best place for it would be in a *grantha-samadhi*. After all, Srila Prabhupada had requested me to write a book. He didn't say anything about taking it to the press. I thought it better to safeguard the peaceful prosecution of my *bhajana* by avoiding the likelihood of provoking certain anticipated institutional and interpersonal hostilities toward myself. Perhaps after I'm dead and gone someone would unearth the manuscript and publish it as an assortment of novel Aindra-isms to be circulated among the curious. Otherwise, instead of shelving it, another idea was to author it incognito under a pen name.

Subsequently, however, in a dream, I asked Srila Prabhupada whether he had any occasion to go through my book to which he replied, "We will see it when it is published." This indicated to me his intention that the book should not only be written but published as well. I consider it Krishna's kind arrangement that a number of sober-minded, pure-hearted Vaishnavas and Vaishnavis came forward to selflessly assist me in the endeavor to produce this work. I am ever grateful to these individuals who sacrificed so much of their time and energy to help me. I only regret that, in a devotional society meant to instill fearlessness and individual thoughtfulness in its members, the atmospheric conditions are such that devotees opt to remain anonymous so as to circumvent the risk of being barbarously burned at the stake by the institutional powers-that-be for exercising their God-given right to freedom of pure devotional expression. Anyway, Krishna knows who they are, and I pray for His unreserved blessings upon them.

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Foreword

Some transcendental literatures are meant to be loudly recited and discussed in the public forum. Although pointing to the highest plateau of spiritual realization while maintaining a continuity of consequence in the lives of the most elevated Vaishnavas, they basically provide an introductory course designed to instill a prerequisite foundational regard for topics of transcendence in the hearts of those yet to achieve a foothold on the path of unalloyed devotion. Vaishnava writings of a more intimate category, on the other hand, given the esoteric nature of their focus, are meant to be privately relished and discussed among more qualified individuals who have already developed a strong and determined appreciation for the true nature of Krishna as the supreme enjoyer. It would be inappropriate to acquaint people who have yet to be divested of their long-standing envy of the Lord with Radha-Krishna's most intimate *lilas* without first philosophically establishing them in the principles of *prema-dharma*. That one should not cast one's pearls before swine in no way suggests, however, that books of an esoteric nature should never be written and/or made available to benefit the faithful. Many authorized Vaishnavas such as Bilvamangala Thakura, Jayadeva Gosvami, Prabodhananda Sarasvati Thakura, Ramananda Raya, Rupa Gosvami, Sanatana Gosvami, Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami, Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, Jiva Gosvami, Krishnadasa Kaviraja, Kavi-karNapura, Ramai Thakura, Dhyana-candra Gosvami, Narottama Dasa Thakura, Vishvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, and more recently Bhaktivinoda Thakura and others have poetically penned numerous literary works divulging the intimate pastimes of the Lord of Vraja, their own sacred aspirations for divine loving service, and the sublime, confidential process of spontaneous devotional practice for the sake of posterity. In this morbid world, apparently on the verge of corporately imposed global tyranny, such literature affords to the serious student of

bhakti-yoga an immense shelter, a tremendous source of solace and spiritual inspiration. This piece, harmonious with the perfect conclusions of the Gaudiya Vaishnava *Acaryas*, should be sagaciously distinguished as belonging to the more intimate category of transcendental literature. Thus, reference to any part of it in the course of an open discussion would best be done with the reader's mature discretion.

The author of this book has ventured to present his own personal insights into the realm of the Absolute with a view to demonstrate for the benefit of the broad-minded individual the tangible tie between the practical performance of *maha-mantra-sankirtana* and the vital internal realization of one's constitutional *vraja-svarupa*. Reading carefully, the sincere pure devotional candidate will clearly ascertain the true purpose of transcendental book distribution and will be favorably impelled to recognize the vigorous performance of the *yuga-dharma* as the only viable solution to the problems of life in a world fraught with tensions of every description. Wishing well to one and all, we pray the sober reader will gain great spiritual profit, redoubled inspiration, and the potency required for the effective practice and preaching of unadulterated Krishna consciousness.

The Publishers

Introduction

All glories to Shri Guru and Shri Gauranga! All glories to the thunderous congregational chanting of Radha-Krishna's Holy Names! All glories to the swan-like pure devotees of the Lord!

The great necessity in the forward march of any growing religio-cultural institution is to recognize, encourage, responsibly guide, and positively facilitate the inner spiritual development of the society's progressive pure devotional aspirants. This treatise strives in its own unique way to inspire a revolution of understanding. It attempts to deepen the self-searching thoughtfulness essentially required to bridge the apparent dichotomy between a *sadhaka's* inward *bhajana* and outward preaching by illustrating the relative importance of each, as well as their interrelation. Those fortunate souls who absorb intimately this message will find the pathway to the highest regions of *Krishna-prema* clearly open to them, whereas those unfortunates who turn from this message, preferring to attach themselves to shallow, self-aggrandizing materialistic modes of devotion will find their path plagued with obstruction. We sincerely hope to at least touch the hearts of a fortunate few. That alone would be the hallmark of our success and a source of immense satisfaction.

This small volume will be well regarded by purified clear-headed individuals who are thoroughly honest. Narrow-souled superficialists or spiritually maladroit, externally oriented *prakrita-bhaktas* of meager metaphysical or internal devotional acumen will have to muster the requisite spiritual integrity to deeply enter into the spirit of this dissertation. The subject matter of this book, like the highly elevated topics revealed in the later cantos of *Shrimad-Bhagavatam*, should not be intruded upon by the ineligible, hypocritical, corrupt, or envious. If the boot in any way fits, promptly close the book.

What need is there for any further introductory elaboration? It is as it is. Generously remitting the numerous literary imperfections herein, simply open your heart and allow

the substance of this presentation to transport your inner-dimensional quantum beyond the confines of vapid ecclesiastico-conservative conventionalism to a Krishna conscious paradigm of enriched profundity. Hare Krishna!

First Heartfelt Effusion

My dear Lordships Shri Shri Radha-Shyamasundara! Crying at the lotus feet of Shri Guru, one very fallen and destitute soul humbly offers to You the following unrestrained stream of prayerful outpourings for Your kind and considerate audience.

My dear beloved Lordships! Let me have not only this one body with only one head upon which are placed only two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and one mouth in which I find only this one pathetic tongue.

Let me have not only this one dead body upon which I find only one clumsy cranium wherein we may assume there be at least one exiguous lump of dull brain stuff.

Let me have not only this one frail figure from which extend only two sluggish legs and two feeble arms with no more than one leisurely hand on the end of each.

Let me be not only this single insignificant someone with but this one heart, one life, and one sub-atomic soul to dedicate most inadequately to Your urgently required large-scale distribution of transcendental literatures.

If You wish to offer me any benediction, then please let me have hundreds and thousands, nay, even millions and billions of stout and strong bodies, either all at once or one after another or both.

On each body let me have hundreds, thousands, even millions of heads, each with hundreds of eyes and noses, thousands of ears, and millions of mouths, each endowed with billions of fabulously fortunate tongues.

Moreover, let me have trillions of most capable brains and innumerable hale, hardy, and enthusiastic legs, arms, hands, hearts, and happy selves to fully dedicate to the earnest service of Your ministrative task of worldwide transcendental book distribution.

What is the use of a soul who cannot expand into thousands of beings, each having millions of bodies? What is the

use of having million of bodies if each body doesn't have billions of heads?

What is the use of each body having billions of heads if each head doesn't have trillions of brains and trillions of mouths with trillions of gracious tongues in each?

What is the use of having trillions of brains if each brain doesn't command quadrillions of intelligences with which to find the novel ways and means to drop zillions of transcendental time-bomb books into the laps of the fallen conditioned souls?

What is the use of having innumerable legs, arms, hands, hearts, lives, and geniuses if everyone and everything is not solely dedicated to the service of Your mission to inundate the whole planet with zillions upon zillions of transcendental literatures eulogizing Your unlimited names, forms, qualities, and pastimes in Your limitlessly divine supramundane realm of eternity, knowledge, and bliss – Shri Vrindavana-dhama?

My dear Shri Shri Radhe-Shyama! What is the use of having innumerable hands, each distributing transcendental literatures by the billions and trillions, if as an outcome of it all, not even one soul becomes Your fully self-realized, pure, unalloyed *kevala-madhurya-premika* devotee?

What is the use of billions of brains scheming to optimize the printing and proliferative dissemination of billions upon trillions of transcendental literatures if even one soul with even only one body with merely one head with but a single mouth with just the one tongue could not even come to the position of, at least even just only but once, relishing the immortal nectar of Your pure Holy Name (*shuddha-nama*) which is fully inclusive of Your sublime, internal spiritual potencies?

What would be the use of distributing millions upon billions upon trillions of sublime *rasa*-saturated scriptures if, as a result of all the hustle and bustle, not even one soul attains the fruit of *vraja-prema*, *vastu-siddhi*, the ultimate perfection of gaining Krishna's direct shelter in the *bhauma-lilas* as a follower of the damsels of Vrindavana, beyond the hope against hope suppositional domain of wishful thinking?

If as a consequence of distributing countless billions of Your transcendental literatures one could not ultimately realize

the perfection of one's *sthayi-bhava* in one of the five primary *rasas* befitting Your loving service in the beautiful land of Vraja, what would be the actual accomplishment?

What a folly if, while incessantly promulgating hundreds of thousands upon billions, trillions, or even innumerable quadrillions of small, medium, big, and *maha* big books to boot for billions of lifetimes, one does not bother to advance one's internal devotional eligibility (*adhikara*) in Krishna consciousness to triumphantly deserve entrée into Your *bhauma-lilas* for the real attainment of one's *sac-cid-ananda-siddha-deha* as a *vraja-gopa* or *gopi*!

What a perfidy if, by broadcasting countless volumes and volumes of transcendental scriptures, not even one thoughtful book distributor could fortunately gain the essential penetrating insight to deeply discover the esoteric truths behind the black (Krishna) letters on all those white (Radha) pages!

To what avail are millions of bodies with millions upon billions upon trillions of heads, eyes, ears, noses, mouths, tongues, brains, feet, legs, arms, and hands – all simultaneously serving to distribute millions upon billions upon trillions upon quadrillions of unlimited transcendental literatures all over the world, nay, all over the universe, anywhere and everywhere, immediately and incessantly forevermore – if even one pure-hearted book distributor could not verily gain, by mature, intensified *hari-nama-bhajana-ruci*, the momentous realization that, in truth, our only real business is to sit in Your holy lands of Mayapura and Vrindavana and constantly chant Your self-same *prema-nama*?

What is the use of it all, if we don't recognize that the purpose of our book distribution is to encourage as many others as possible to become pure-hearted, fully self-realized *niskincana bhajananandis* who are the fittest to propagate the Holy Name by their ecstatic performances of *prema-nama-sankirtana* which forever stands as the only true *jaiva-dharma* of every *jiva* soul without exception?

What would be the use of it all, if we could not become factually freed from the insanity of not clearly knowing who we

really are in terms of the intricacies of our ultimate, intrinsic, eternal spiritual identity (*vraja-svarupa*)?

What would be the use, if no one could become enlightened beyond the very vague notion of being a transmigrating, ten-thousandth-of-a-hair-tip, subatomic *brahman* particle floating around on the life airs of a temporary, therapeutically engaged, superficially designated, rotting corpselike defecating bag of bones masquerading as a so-called man, woman, *brahmacari*, *grihastha*, *sannyasi*, *vantashi*, *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, pot washer, *pujari*, temple president, G.B.C., *guru*, devotee, or even (hold my tongue) eminently exalted book distributor?

My dear Lordships! What is the use of constructing hundreds and thousands of pompously opulent temples, worshiping thousands and millions of grandiosely ornamented Deities, distributing umteenzillions of books, (mis)managing millions and billions of bucks, filling billions and trillions of bellies, and congregating a society of hundreds of thousands of semi-conscious squabbling neophytes, if even one soul amidst the menagerie could not ultimately achieve the supremely privileged maid-service of the treasures of Your lotus feet as You endlessly enjoy Your transcendental *nikunja-lilas* in Your eternally resplendent realm of *Vraja-dhama*?

My dearmost beloved Lordships Shri Shri Radhe-Shyama! If, however, as a result of all such laborious efforts even just one fortunate soul could somehow or other by Your unbounded special causeless mercy finally, even if after billions and trillions of lifetimes of devotional struggle, attain that most cherished goal of life, then by all means, please let there be thousands and millions of “*brihat-mridanga*” printing presses, each producing millions and billions of transcendental literatures describing Your unlimited names, forms, qualities, and *madhurya-lilas* in the sweetest of all sweetest lands, Shri Vrindavana-dhama.

If in the last, even just a single person consequently becomes Your consummately pure unalloyed *vraja-gopa* or *gopi*, serving to further exhilarate Your already limitlessly expanding ocean of transcendental bliss, then let thousands and millions of transcendental book distributors each with billions of

intelligences find trillions of newer and newer innovative methods of inducing quadrillions of conditioned souls to take to the process of hearing pure, nectarean *Krishna-katha*.

My dear beloved Shyamasundara! You are the ultimate impetus behind all events in the three worlds. Please let hundreds of thousands of book distributors each distribute by the millions and billions while tolerating all types of tribulations if in due course even one of them can come to clearly realize by practical experience the integral correlation between the external activity of propagating Krishna consciousness in the world and the internal culture of the selfless *bhavas* of the *vraja-gopis*, who relish ten million times the happiness of their own meetings with You by making the arrangements for others to get the happy chance to have Your delightful company.

Let thousands and millions of externally oriented *prakrita-bhaktas* fill the atmosphere with endless streams of *prajalpa*, faultfinding, backbiting, and fratricidal bickering, on top of all the petty institutional and interinstitutional wrangling and war – what do we care for it?

Let the over-intelligent, doggedly resorting to materially contrived managerial stratagems, injudiciously undermine the essential principle of keeping single-minded confidence in the lucid instructions of the institutional Founder-*acarya*; they'll have to learn the hard way – as will the attendantly implicated!

Let hundreds of heedless *sannyasis* and *guru*-figureheads plunge from their pompous pedestals owing to their often sentimentally justified, inappropriately frequent, and overextended proximity in dealings with their female disciples and so on. Why should we lament or bother ourselves to in any way condemn or condone; these things are going on – and on – and will continue to go on and on and on . . . Trust no future however pleasant.

Let the upper-organizational oligarchy essay to save face by repeatedly rehashing their clandestine attempts to cloak the pitiable transgressions of the institutionally rubberstamped *guru*-figureheads. Let them, on the plea of “protecting” the “faith” of their unwary disciples, in the name of service to the Absolute Truth, perpetuate the farcical façade of Guruji's

infallibility while groping for patchwork reformatory measures, lest there be appurtenant embarrassment for all concerned. Oh well, anyway . . . All glories to Kali-yuga! What could we expect? Hari bol! God helps those who help themselves. Man is the architect of his own misfortune. Let destiny prevail. We can fool some of the people – some of the time, right? It all comes out in the wash.

Let the rather foppish, high-flying *svamis*, intent on compelling the purses of the prosperous *prakrita-bhaktas*, sublimate their zeal for lordly grandeur, affluence, and fanfare on the plea of *yukta-vairagya* – ostensibly in the interest of Lord Gauranga’s *sankirtana* movement. Hmm . . .

Let the weak-hearted, ill-advised, or reckless religio-institutional administrators, beguiled by the prospects of amplified economic might, sightlessly prostitute or inelegantly abandon all managerial scruples in deference to the non-devotional demands of spiritually indigent neophytes of monetary magnetism. So much for the brahminical culture of candor and simplicity; it shall faze us not.

Let multitudes of deceitful *dharma-dhvajis*, to conceal their actual reprehensible intents, masquerade as awesome mentors of the *Bhagavata* in order to furtively milk the petty gross and subtle material assets of the *acarya*’s institution under the pretext of acquiring “spiritual opulences” by the grace of God! Let them all “enjoy” and suffer according to the sweet will of providence. We shall be thrilled to pieces – at the same time much aggrieved.

Let the determinately shallow superficialists cosmetically manage to farcically project a prodigiously meretricious institutional semblance of forthright Krishna consciousness while duplicitously concealing the relentless tenacity of their own steel-framed hearts. Let them obsequiously buff the “golden cage” institutional body as they insensibly disregard the vital nourishment of the “songbird” institutional soul.

Let the respectability and trustworthiness of the institutional “leadership” go to hell. Our eternal constitutional personal loving relationship shall never be contingent upon nor thwarted by any of this.

He Radhe-Shyama! The plastic, put-on felicitous social niceties of polished cultural urbanity hardly constitute nor necessarily evince internally developed pure devotional excellence. Godless meat-eating demons also effectively train their utterly materialistic corporate personnel to politely or hospitably interrelate with forged, highly refined deferential suavity. Are they too to be lauded as being spiritually advanced? Animals are also seen to cordially welcome their friends and relatives – and ward off their adversaries.

Let the Grand High Exalted Mystic Institutional Control Monsters allege their high-handed, spuriously assumed, cliquish inheritance of the *sampradaya's* material and spiritual legacy to patronizingly toss a scrap or two to the most servile of their pathetically ambitious bootlicking sycophants. Smiling mildly, we shall look on with casual indifference.

What does it really matter that hundreds and thousands of exploitative neophyte religio-organizational opportunists jockey for positions, more or less fraudulently establishing themselves as “illustrious” “leaders” of the Hare Krishna movement on various levels to pursue their sundry ulterior motives while having not even the slightest genuine greed for the inestimable treasure of *vraja-bhakti-rasa*. I say, “Bravo!” if, as a result of having distributed millions of transcendental literatures all over the world, we can even hope to find just one unpretentious, truly elevated, fully enlightened *rasika* Vaishnava amidst the veritable mess we’ve made of everything.

He Radhe-Shyama! Let the brutish *nama-aparadhis*, goaded by a lingering appetite for the foul fruits of *bhukti* and *mukti*, even after so much graceful guidance, remain ever attached to whatever little *labha*, *puja*, and *pratistha* they can manage to eke out from their ostentatious show of allegiance to the cause of transcendental book distribution. We shall not be impressed.

Let the benighted, pushy, audaciously puffed-up, mischief-mongering egoistic vixens, wishing to spitefully dance on the heads of the *brahmacaris* and *sannyasis* to gratify their inflated personal and extended sense of self-importance, improvidently misconceive, abort, abandon, nay, even ever so much as

vociferously revile the all-round salutary shelter of Vedic cultural ethics on the pretext of Vaisnavi social equality. Ugh!

Let thousands of unrelenting, materially anchored semi-*bhaktas* pursue their overwhelming concern for wholesale systematic institutional social development. The birds, beasts, and insects also cry for food, shelter, and sex satisfaction. Are they not provided for?

Let the sanctimonious religio-institutional organizationists treacherously robbed of their resolute faith in the all-attractiveness of *Krishna-nama-sankirtana* blunderingly adulterate the precepts of the *Acaryas*, on the plea of enhanced public appeal, by insisting on a watered-down outward display of sophistication in lieu of widespread ecstatic chanting and dancing. We doubt they will ever be very successful.

Let the mundane, *kali-cela* pseudo *kirtana-karis* most irresponsibly exploit the *sankirtana* performances to purposefully augment their own name, fame, and sex appeal, like yowling cats bewailing the want of their mates. Ha! The joke's on them.

Let thousands and thousands of cripple-minded *griha-medhis* and *grihasthas* with their womenfolk have license for the sordid sex life. Let them beget tens of thousands of grossly misled, druggery, sense-gratifying "ex-gurukuli" ingrates and the likes of them. It is of no earth-shaking consequence.

We shall applaud their grand success if even one soul amidst all of these somehow or other finds the supreme shelter declared in all the *bhakti-shastras* – the succulently nectarous, ambrosial mellow sweetness of Your *prema-nama-sankirtana-rasa*.

Let thousands of novice – and also seasoned – book distributors priggishly presume themselves to be glorious *gosthy-anandi* evangelic angels. Let thousands of imitative, half-baked quasi-devotional sentimentalists conceitedly pose to impersonate highly elevated *paramahamsa-nirjana-bhajanandis*, while having neither depth of unalloyed devotional insight nor accomplished worldly disinterest. All would do well to understand that the best *gosthy-anandi*, and also the best *bhajanandi*, is the *niskincana-bhajanandi* who

comes out from the depths of his profound *rasika* absorption in Krishna consciousness to share his realizations for the benefit of others, both by precept and by personal example.

Who cares whether or not anybody really went to the moon? What damn bit of difference does it make?

Who cares whether or not I said that he said that she said that they said that . . . who the hell knows what anyone actually said anyway? Human life is much too short for any of this.

Who cares for the skepticism of the skeptics?

Who cares whether or not any stool-passing creature of this world would be bothered to seriously understand or appreciate our heartfelt feelings about anything? Did we come to this world to win a popularity contest?

Who cares who puts whose stick in whose hole? Ultimately, we must all fly our own airplane. Why waste our invaluable time on the absurdities of the materially engrossed?

Who the hell cares who becomes the next Ravana of institutional mismanagement? God will have to sort that out. The only perfect management is in Vaikuntha anyway.

Who the hell cares what designer color the bathroom tiles in our ritzy little "*bhajana-kutiras*" shall be? Is there anyone amongst us who is not on the verge of death? Better to sell off all the marble and classy bathroom tiles, and print books.

He Radhe-Shyama! What the hell do we care if the incorrigibly infantile, bigotedly authoritarian, ego-warring power mongers crassly arrogate to themselves, on the plea of autocratic disciplic prerogative, "indubitable" theocratic predominance? Let them, under the banner of Krishna consciousness, with their presumptuous, often unduly oppressive, superciliously inconsiderate unilateral sense of communication and cooperation, rather coercively, nay, even menacingly demand absolute, fear-based genuflection. They would really prefer to suffocate any atmosphere conducive to more genial, free flowing spontaneous devotional inspiration, than, on the basis of perceivable degrees of genuine spiritual illumination, reasonably evoke the actual love and trust required for advanced reciprocal interpersonal devotional dealings. Let them, scarcely conceding to the broader tenet of

unity in diversity, at least hope to gradually, at long last, purify, in due course of the dovetailing process, their long-lingering ardor for imperial eminence and the intoxication of totalitarian controllership. This must eventuate, of course, at the expense of the subjected underdog's salubrious exercise of self-confidence, self-reliance, self-fulfillment, self-expression, and individual initiative pertaining to the personally responsible prosecution of unconstrained preferential pure devotional service. All glories to the small-minded, hollow, politically absorbed, false-ego-gratifying, unjustifiably arrogant, boorishly cut-throat Machiavellian "Hare Krishna" overlords! Come what may, they are, no doubt, serious and "well intended" in their own persuasion that the iron-fisted "might" of skin-deep religio-institutional managerial "empowerment" in and of its own makes right.

Anyway, Shri Shri Radhe-Shyama, no one is all bad. The path to hell is paved with good intentions. Be that as it may, all is well that ends well. Isn't that nice! In truth, I have no intention to fault or flatter anyone.

Where quasi-Krishna-conscious sophistry supplants genuine pure devotional *siddhanta*, where the condescending disempowerment syndrome or roguish despotism masquerades as "authorized" Krishna conscious leadership, any array of personal calamity or socio-religious anomaly would anything but dissuade an earnest aspirant from the progressive current of internal devotional amelioration. We could hardly think to turn back the tide of Kali's influence anymore than we could stop a thunderhead from storming during the rainy season. Simply hold up your umbrella, depend on Krishna, and sally forth.

It is natural to notice so many oppressive evils and perversities; after all, we're in the material world. Moreover, Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults. What else could be expected? The threefold miseries are there. We will always be harassed in so many ways by so many problems. Even if we notice the problems and even if others deny their various idiosyncrasies or decline to address their problems realistically due to a lack of Krishna consciousness or whatever, what real difference does it make from the absolute perspective? Everyone and everything

either directly or indirectly serves the absolute purpose of the Supreme. At some point in the course of eternity everyone will have his or her better day. Meanwhile, we hope for the best, expect the worst, and learn to transcendently adjust our mindset. We could hardly expect to reform all the ignoramuses of the world. Reformists who think there is scope for such should try to recognize the need to reform their very outlook which prompts them to think in such terms. At least we ourselves should not be ignoramuses and lose our own focus on the unalloyed devotional objective. Then we may hope to be of some substantial value, *sadhu-sanga*-wise.

We must certainly acknowledge any measure of spiritual progress achieved by individuals under the circumstances impressed upon them in the course of the current lifetime. That anyone is making any spiritual advancement at all in this Age of Kali is a miracle. Ultimately that is in the hands of Providence. How purely one responds to life's situations will depend on one's level of *paramarthika-shraddha* based on previously accumulated *nitya-sukriti*. Every conditioned soul under the influence of the modes of material nature is fallible, prone to fall-down and offense. Those who come forward on any level to help the *Acaryas* fight the war against *maya* are glorious. Even if they are lost in battle, temporarily falling away in various ways and for various reasons, they are nevertheless glorious, at least to some extent. Still, in all soberness, if we ourselves actually want to permanently solve the problems of life, if we seriously want to attain the goal of our *bhajana*, if we want to ascend to the terrace of *prema* and go back to Godhead by the end of this very lifetime, then we really have to focus, focus, and refocus. No one else is going to focus for us. If we're not part of the solution, we're part of the problem. If others are not willing to understand the great necessity of concentrating their energy on the aim of life, if they are not willing to recognize and follow the examples seen in the lives of those who do so, then what can be done? That is their problem. They will have to eventually muster up enough sincerity to realistically deal with it.

It's not enough that we, as spiritual probationers, turn a blind eye toward our various individual and collective ungodly

misconceptions, attachments, and lapses along the devotional path. Such apathy, though apparently convenient or accommodating in some ways, never really facilitates an enhanced internal devotional culture. Unless we are willing to admit that we have a disease, and are able to properly diagnose the degree of its infection, we could hardly hope to ascertain or apply the precise scientific therapy required for its proper treatment. In other words, unless we're willing to admit that there are problems, something we can do only if we allow ourselves to notice them, we could hardly expect any viable solution to come to light. Recognizing or frankly voicing that there are problems (calling a spade a spade) does not necessarily constitute an antagonistic "faultfinding" tone or tendency. Moreover, such may provide the impetus to our seriously adopting the means by which the problems can actually be solved. For instance, a doctor may "hate" the disease without at all hating the patient. "Hating" the disease essentially recognizes and, in effect, alludes to the existence of a natural healthy or liberated state. No doubt, "problems" refers to two categorical effects, namely the observable "disobliging" phenomena before us and, far more notably, the cynical mind-set with which we see the phenomena, the cataracts on our own eyes, or in other words, our own lack of Krishna consciousness. No conditioned infinitesimal *jiva* can offer any solution to any of life's maladies. Only Krishna can alleviate the living entity's problematic state of conditional consciousness, the root cause of all egocentricity, when the latter is somehow induced by Divine Grace to take shelter of His merciful instructions.

The idea of always seeing the "good" in something or someone doesn't necessarily have to mean seeing the relative good as opposed to seeing the relative bad. The principle can and in certain respects must take on higher-dimensional features. When we happen to see adversities, discrepancies, or non-devotional elements, which are conventionally considered to be "bad," we should always endeavor to see good in the bad by bearing in mind the "unseen" all-good hand of Krishna. Any agent that in any way reminds us of Krishna, prompts us to take shelter of Krishna, catalyzes our deeper sense of devotional

responsibility, or teaches us important and valuable lessons concerning the culture of self-effacement in full surrender to the will of Krishna should be seen as a manifestation of the all-merciful *guru* principle. Shri Guru is never bad. An elevated devotee always gratefully acknowledges the presence of Shri Guru and Krishna in everything. At least for us, the all-goodness of the *guru* principle seen in our own mistakes as well as in the faults of others may well mercifully teach us how not to be, how not to behave, and the like. Seeing in this way, we, feeling ourselves blessed by the grace of Shri Guru, should profusely praise all such indirect manifestations of *guru-tattva* as our ever well-wishers, in spite of their negative exterior. The environment is ever propitious even if fraught with apparent adversity or hostility. Yet, we would certainly have to notice and rightly respond to the blatantly abounding environmental improprieties to realize the beauty in Krishna's having placed the nonsense before the purview of our eyes. Right response does not necessitate retaliation against the environment. Adversity and various observable transgressions and imperfections, in fact, afford us an excellent opportunity to exercise our culture of *sadhu-bhusana* – tolerance, mercy, friendliness toward all living entities, humility, forgiveness, patience, determination, et al. We should understand that the sight of others' misdemeanors and various other calamities are shown to us by Krishna for the purpose of dynamically educating our own pure devotional qualities, to enhance our devotional *adhikara*. The degree to which we are able to perfect this understanding is the degree to which we are actually *sadhus* and *sadhvis*. To the extent that we are able to recognize this all-good background purpose behind all events of the world, to that extent we are seeing things in proper perspective, and to that extent we may be endowed with first-class Krishna consciousness and remain undisturbed in all circumstances, recognizing Krishna as the cause of all causes, the ultimate doer.

Relative environmental negativities simply serve to indirectly indicate, laud, and help us appreciate the all-beauteous positivity of the Absolute. The all-merciful hand of

God is always behind every major and minor happening of the world. Sometimes Krishna gives trouble to the youthful *gopis* by pinching them or harassing them along the way, toppling their head- or hip-held pots of milk, yogurt, and ghee. At other times He sends them *gunja-malas* or love messages tremulously inscribed with the juice of red roses by His own hand. Whatever He does, He simply wants to increase their affection for Him, to somehow draw their attention toward Him. Similarly, all tribulation as well as all jubilation experienced in the course of life's sojourn is but Krishna's attempt to get our attention, to elicit our reciprocation in various ways. In His childhood, Krishna would often break the motherly *gopis*' carefully kept pots of yogurt, butter, and ghee, pinch their babies to make them cry, or mischievously urinate on their freshly cleansed floors before escaping; and the *gopis*, though not catching Him in the act, would easily surmise that it was all His handiwork. Yet, when they, perturbed and frustrated, would gang up on Mother Yashoda to angrily lodge complaints against Him, they would become charmed and pleased to see Him hiding behind His mother's dress, pretending to be innocent, His face looking so sweet and adorable. At that time their hearts would melt and they would immediately become overwhelmed with motherly affection, dispossessed of their affected anger and annoyance toward Him and happy to have a good excuse to come to His home to see Him in such a state.

A contemporary example: A prankish young school-boy, sitting behind a sweet young girl in his class, secretly dips the ends of her braids in the ink-pot on his desk. Unknown to the girl, the backside of her nice new dress becomes totally blotched with ink and spoiled when she stands up to go home. Only at home, when she changes dress, does she come to know, and she at once ascertains the culprit and complains about him to her mother. The next day, following her mother's advice, she sits across the classroom from him in order to escape his further mischief. But do you think that stops him? Hell no! Desiring her crooked glance, he hurls spitballs across the classroom, bouncing them off the back of her head. At first she pretends not to notice. But after two or three incidents, she becomes

annoyed and turns to see from whence the spit-balls came. And who does she see – the prankish boy, hiding his smile while pretending to know nothing of it. At this point she begins to gather that he must have an interest in her, and she becomes inwardly enchanted and pleased at heart. At recess, when all the boys are playing ball, she, standing on the side, searches and searches among them to find him out in order to witness her prankster’s sportsmanship, but she doesn’t see him anywhere. Does that mean he’s not around? Hell no! Deftly sneaking up from behind, our prankish boy quietly catches a single strand of loose hair from the base of her braid and . . . ping! . . . “Oww! That hurt!” as she whirls around and spontaneously slaps his face screaming, “Oh, you nonsense!” Sprightly sprinting away, feeling very satisfied with himself, and considering all his endeavors a success, having caught her notice and achieved her reciprocation, he elatedly muses again and again, “She loves me! She touched me! She actually touched me!” Later, he sends her a box of sweets; still later, he personally hands her a beautiful bouquet of fantastically fragrant flowers . . . and the rest is history. Whether the boy pesters her in this way or that, or gives her a flower or blows her a kiss, in any case, his intention is to somehow get her attention and occupy her thoughts.

In the same way, Krishna just wants to have a relationship with us. So He disturbs us in this way or that, or from time to time sends us some special *maha-prasadam* or a nice garland of lotus flowers just to in some way or other remind us that He still exists, waiting patiently behind the whole cosmic affair. He has His hand everywhere, and behind that hand is the rest of His person, who is so sweet and adorable and enchanting and full of *rasa*. So though we may feel mistreated in some way or disturbed or dismayed by various situations, when we see within our heart of hearts the all-attractiveness of His beautiful face, we will no longer feel inclined to bear any grudges. Why? Because we know He always has our best interest at heart and that, ultimately, He loves us, even if by His prankish behavior He makes us shed a stream of tears for the rest of eternity.

Another fitting illustration is seen in the contrast between the mentality of a dog and that of a lion. If one throws a dog a bone, the dog will always run after the bone. If one throws a bone to a lion, however, the lion, lifting his head and licking his lips, will turn to check out who it was that threw the bone, considering the thrower to be a tastier prospect, a tastier entity than the thrown! It is better to have the consciousness of a lion than to have the consciousness of a dog. In other words, instead of becoming primarily concerned with or entangled by the external phenomenon itself, it is better to pursue the tastier entity, the higher taste, by looking to see who has placed the external phenomenon before us. And who will we see? We will see that supremely prankish cowherd boy, Vrajendranandana Shyama, who, by His inscrutable desire, has expanded innumerable cosmic arenas in which He may directly and indirectly enact His various sportive *lilas*. That is Krishna consciousness.

The world-view of the *uttama-adhikari maha-bhagavata* is achieved by conscientious cultivation of the same, by practicing to perceive the underlying absolute reality behind the illusory relative manifestations. The means and the end are identical. When one becomes habituated to that practice, then such habit becomes second nature. Only on the *uttama-adhikari* platform of advanced internal absorption in Krishna consciousness does one perfectly envisage the world in proper perspective, in terms of the highest understanding. The ultimate understanding is that everything is under Krishna's control, and that because Krishna is the supremely lovable absolute well-wisher of all living entities and because He is all good, His control always has its all-good, ultimately beneficial objective and outcome. The *uttama-Vaishnava* always sees the ultimate-good cause behind all the manifested events of this world. He never loses sight of that vision by adopting an illusory or semi-illusory mode of understanding, even when "coming down" to the position of an *acarya* for preaching. The *kanistha-bhakta's* angle of vision, though approaching the threshold of spirituality, is still rather mundane or erroneous on account of extensive egocentricity. The *madhyama-adhikari* Vaishnava's perception, though

considerably advanced toward the spiritual platform by way of determined *sharanagati*, has yet to transcend all tinges of mundanity. Hence it is semi-illusory and thus only partially valid. However, the perfectly liberated non-illusory acuity of reality, which is the absolute transcendental visionary platform, is the prerogative of the *uttama-adhikari* alone and no one else. Attaining the perfection of Krishna consciousness most certainly demands one's evolvment to no less than the *uttama-Vaishnava* platform of perception. Anything short of that would be considered unnatural or artificial. It is highly unlikely that a *sadhaka* will advance to the *uttama-adhikari* platform without an attentive endeavor to purposefully culture the internal and external consciousness of an *uttama-adhikari*. The culture of internal consciousness means to be absorbed in the pursuit of one's aspired-to position in the *nitya-lilas* of the Lord by cultivating the appropriate *aprakrita-bhava*, and the culture of external consciousness means to pursue the *rasika* perception of the phenomenal world as per the principles presently under discussion. A case in perfection is the instance of Srila Gaura Kishora Dasa Babaji Maharaja being harassed by boys jestingly throwing stones at him as he was riding down the road on a bullock cart. Turning to them, he spontaneously chastised, "I know who You are [Krishna], and if You don't stop teasing me, I'm going to tell Mother Yashoda about Your nonsense misbehavior!"

He Radhe-Shyama! In the last, anything seemingly unjust, unreasonable, or wrong from the relative standpoint may well directly or indirectly serve as a venerable eye-opener, constituting a formative impetus to one's pitifully crying out for Your special causeless mercy in complete self-surrender. Such could not but be seen as integral to Your absolute, perfectly synthesized, all good, complete whole arrangement for the ultimate deliverance of even such as Your single, most insignificant, all but forsaken, inconspicuous, long-lost aspiring maidservant. For me, any other outlook would be illusory. I gratefully offer You my humble obeisances again and again.

It is certainly a fact that all events of the past, present, and future on the relative material time continuum transpire on

account of the all-perfect sanction of the absolute, ever-present Supreme Will. Further, it should be well ascertained that in all circumstances every living entity involved is in some way or other effectively moved toward the ultimate surrender of the soul, or at least indirectly engaged by superior arrangement to instrumentally catalyze such surrender in someone. Undoubtedly, everything is perfectly arranged by providence to interactively elicit whatever various responses are circumstantially required to progressively effect every interrelated individual's ultimate reform. For instance, when cows and other animals (or people) are mercilessly slaughtered (physically or psychologically), perceptive individuals will at least wince upon sympathetically imagining the victims' painful plight. The more insightful will cry or at least shudder when considering the butcher's hellish future. Such observable Kali-yuga phenomena may actually serve to awaken or augment, to some extent, a pious soul's natural, inborn quality of compassion. If that much is accomplished, then it may certainly be concluded that Maya's distressful manifestations have successfully promoted a gradual progress to someone's ultimate good. Persons with *shastric* vision will soberly understand that both the tortured animals (or people) and the consequently tortured slaughterers are progressively reaping their karmic destinies under the influence of the three material qualities. Both the tortured and the torturer will in due course realize the sufferings of material existence and eventually turn inward toward Godhead. They will thus progressively attain complete perfection at some future point in time. No conditioned soul is an island. All living relativities in this world are always, knowingly or unknowingly, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, at least remotely in some way or other interactively instrumental in fulfilling the reformatory purposes of the cosmic manifestation. The apparently endless sojourn of the *jivatma* through the relative time warp of this ephemeral cosmic dimension will anyway be experienced as a mere dreamlike flash in eternity when one has, at long last, accessed the real-time eternal realm of the Absolute. At that point, the cumulative sufferings that were subconsciously retained from experiences

over innumerable lifetimes will, no doubt, positively serve to dynamically enhance the wakened soul's appreciation of the bliss of ultimate enlightenment. Therefore, the wise with the vision of eternity lament neither for the living nor for the dead.

Yet, powerful Krishna conscious preachers remain ever perturbed to see "sanctioned" ignorance or forgetfulness of Krishna, which constitutes the very basis of all "sanctioned" sufferings of the conditioned living entities. They thereby feel compelled or "sanctioned" to show mercy by helping to elevate the fallen to Krishna consciousness whenever plausible ("sanctioned"), to expedite everyone's progress to final beatitude. Was the Mogul Emperor Aurangzeb's desecration of numerous Visnu temples not "sanctioned"? Was his breaking to pieces hundreds of deities not "sanctioned"? Was his paving the walkways up to the Islamic mosques with the pieces of the broken deities not "sanctioned"? Was his terrorizing innumerable *brahmanas* and Vaishnavas not "sanctioned"? Was the envious Kazi's order to cane Haridasa Thakura in twenty-two market places not "sanctioned"? Would any soft-hearted Vaishnava condone, appreciate, or laud these "God-sanctioned" atrocities? The offended advance by their "sanctioned" praying or crying out to Krishna, their exercised tolerance, and their mercifully applied forgiveness. The sympathetic onlookers, deploring and remonstrating against the demonic mentality of the atheist, advance by their "sanctioned" sorrowful lacrimation and their "sanctioned" endeavors to either practically protect or at least verbally or mentally honor and support the Lord and His devotees. And the offenders advance by inevitably meeting their "sanctioned" total destruction, reducing their "sanctioned" false pride to "sanctioned" ashes! If fortune favors them, they may then hope to enjoy a "sanctioned" humbled fresh start.

In Kali-yuga, we may consider ourselves theistically enriched to the extent that we actually help to promote the cause of congregational *kirtana* of Krishna's Holy Name. Conversely, we may be considered as atheistical to the extent that we minimize or obstruct (by committing various offenses) the propagation of *shuddha-nama-sankirtana*. We would do well to remember that in this age both the godly and the demoniac

dwell in the same body, the extent of the latter proportionate to the measure of *anarthas* yet to be eradicated. It really depends on an individual's purity of purpose. Was the litigious disunity within Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada's Gaudiya Matha, whereby his illustrious preaching mission became markedly dysfunctional, not "sanctioned"? Would not the ability or inability to learn important and perhaps rather costly lessons from all such reprehensible ungodly stagecraft be absolutely "sanctioned" in view of some far-reaching ultimate design or purpose? Would history's horrific recurrence be anything but utterly "sanctioned"? Would not our continued ignorance of the consequences of our own unthinkable self-aggrandizing affronts to the dignity and integrity of our *acarya's* mission be well "sanctioned"? How long will we, claiming to be Vaishnavas, opt to slight, disrespect, belittle, or mistreat others out of a risky, false, condescending sense of ascendancy? If we won't learn anything from the "sanctioned" instant or eventual outcome of our own "sanctioned" blatantly whitewashed folly, perhaps at least someone will somewhere along the line. That alone would make the whole "sanctioned" charade worth a little something.

In the final analysis, it may be admitted that any pervertedly reflected illusory manifestation within this cosmos may purposefully pose to prospectively either entangle, liberate, or transcendently enrapture one, consonant with the degree of spiritual eligibility governing the way one sees and responds to Maya's multi-functional demeanor. For example, with all due respect to Maya Devi's empowered most-recognizable expansion in the shape of a psychophysical woman, a so-called man, bewildered by material absorption, misidentifying himself as *purusa* or enjoyer and succumbing to an entangling labyrinth of lusty obsessions, foolishly identifies the womanly form as a most desirable and inspirational object of gross or subtle selfish sense delectation. To a lusty man the world appears as if filled with lusty women. He thus, by harboring intensified attachments to vain, romanticized objectives, degrades himself, running the risk of rebirth into an illusory prison-suit body bearing the shapeliness of a *mayic* psychophysical woman. Thus the materially conceived "he"

ironically gets “himself” reborn as a materially conceived “she.” Such is Maya’s joke!

The somewhat knowledgeable, however, who has become wary of Maya’s allurements, will wisely see the same womanly form as “mother,” an expansion of the supreme form of material motherhood, goddess Durga. In this material world, “mother” means one who gives corporeal birth, and for one who is born, death is certain. So, she who will give birth and concomitant death within this material world shall be deftly esteemed by a vigilant aspiring transcendentalist as “mother,” the personification of repeated birth and death. Steering clear by cautiously maintaining a respectful distance, the aspirant will traverse the path of liberation, intelligently circumventing the shackles of sex attraction, the binding force of this material world.

Yet, an elevated Vaishnava acquainted with higher truths concerning the spiritually substantial reality of which this material world is merely a shadow will ably see everything in a different light. He transcends the relatively mundane principles of both *pravritti* (inclination) and *nivritti* (disinclination) that refer to material connections. Clearly, he realizes that the temporary, shadowy manifestations of this world, stemming originally from the substantial spiritual names, forms, qualities, and activities of the eternal realm of Goloka, can absolutely serve in various ways to remind a pure devotee of the supreme eternal reality of Radha-Krishna *lila*. He will therefore allow the sight of the illusory womanly form within this world, which faintly resembles the radiance of spiritual muliebrity, to prompt within himself an internal recollection of the supreme root of all minor expanded varieties of femininity. This original feature of all transcendental womanhood is none other than Shri Radha, who mothers not the material existence of repeated birth and death but rather spiritual birth into eternal loving devotion.

A subordinate king’s attitude toward the emperor’s envoy conspicuously reflects his general attitude toward the emperor. As a well-wishing emissary coming on behalf of the emperor’s government to examine the condition of a subordinate is to be properly honored, so similarly any expanded form of femininity

should be honored as a representative of Radha. This entire material world, Devi Dhama, is comprised of *prakriti*, the expanded feminine energy of Radha. Such energy in any form is meant primarily to remind one of Radha and is ultimately meant to be engaged so as to serve Her purposes in the matter of assisting to satisfy Her beloved Shyama. Herein lies the essence of the *yukta-vairagya* principle. A thoughtful Vaishnava, therefore, will recognize in any manifested feminine figure the symbolic ambassadress, or messenger maidservant, of Shri Radha, the supreme empress of irresistible supra-mundane feminine attraction for the enchantment of Shri Krishna. Externally maintaining a respectful distance from Radha's messenger (*duti*) so as not to commit offense, while humbly considering himself to be unqualified to directly associate with her as long as he remains in the *sadhaka-deha*, he will simply pray from within that she mercifully inform her *svamini* (Radha) about his pure devotional intents. Internally offering eternal allegiance to Radha's lotus feet, he will beg to remain ever supportive and covetous of Her loving service. Then Maya Devi, being very much satisfied, will mercifully serve in Her primary feature as Yoga Maya to transcendently connect the devotee to the *lilas* of the Lord. Such externally prompted reflective remembrance of Shri Radha and Her *gopi* friends and maidservants thus elevates the devotee far beyond the mundane influences of the physical field, unlocking a treasure chest of blissful internal absorption in Krishna consciousness.

Similarly, the tertiary purpose of all varieties of mundane political wrangling within or without the confines of any religious institution would be to endlessly embroil and entangle those who are externally oriented. The secondary purpose of the trite, gracelessly perpetrated power-politics, diplomacy, espionage, sabotage, back-stabbing, subterfuge, intrigue, and managerial baboonery abounding amongst the neophytes would naturally serve to dismay or disgust the disinterested intermediate devotees. These apolitical *madhyama-adhikari* Vaishnavas scrupulously avoid all such social vulgarities, valuing each fleeting moment as if it were their last. Dissociating themselves as far as possible from the *prakrita-bhaktas*, they

concertedly focus on their devotional services of hearing and chanting, etc. and remain relatively freed from the time and energy squandering perplexities of institutional strife.

No doubt the actual primary purpose of everything within this cosmos, including all the petty little interpersonal, interdepartmental, interinstitutional, international, and interplanetary conflicts inevitable at practically every Kali-yuga turn in life, is to somehow or other remind the progressive *antaranga-bhaktas* of Krishna and His various pastimes. Political intrigue in its original supramundane feature certainly exists in the highest spiritual realm, Goloka Vrindavana. As in this world, only in a pure way, it dramatically serves to thicken the plot! So, when circumstantially noticing the bogus claptrap, caballing, and sheer tomfoolery of this plane, the resolute pure-hearted *sadhakas* and *rasika* Vaishnavas may solace themselves to some extent by reflectively remembering the likes of *dina-keli-* or *mukta-carita-kathamrita* by recalling the alarming antics of Jatila and Kutila or by musing upon the original, absolute, contentious rivalry between the followers of Radharani and the followers of Candravali. As they turn disadvantage into advantage, seeing substance within shadow, they are transported to the plane of transcendental bliss. Thus, they remain self-satisfied in all circumstances. Let the calamities come again and again – and again and again and again – *te dvandva-moha-nirmukta bhajante mam dridha-vratah!*

Still, my heartfelt feelings are that we could hardly expect to legislate or despotically enforce real love and trust by injudiciously compelling the stringent orthodox letter of the law, let alone wrongheaded, illiteral, or fictive fanatical contortions thereof. It just ain't polite. Rather, I would prefer to suggest that by constant unbiased recourse to the law's dynamics, essential purpose, or inner spirit, in a facilitative temper we might hope to more or less naturally engender the desirable fruit in proportion to the purity of our perception of cogitable reality, as relevant to individual time, space, heart, and circumstance. That one would barbarously blunder to grandiloquently exhibit, time and again ad nauseam, one's unseemly, spiritually perverted *ishvara-bhava* or inordinate appetite for peremptorily

governing everyone and everything (well . . . everything except, of course, one's own materially anchored domineering manner of manipulatively controlling and controlling everyone and everything and everything else) hardly says much for one's measure of devotional sobriety, theocratic fitness, or accomplishment in Krishna consciousness.

Leadership or managerial positions dare not be exploited as incumbencies from which to intimidate or brutishly lord it over the Lord's devotees on the pretext of "getting the job done." The pure devotional service attitude and that which is vitiated by the hostile, egoistically grounded lording propensity smack not of the same tenor. *Guru* is commander-in-chief – not demander-in-chief. *Guru-parampara* is chain of command – not chain of demand. *Guru* and subsequent representatives are not to demand services on behalf of the Lord. Rather, on the basis of visibly ideal character, they are to command or elicit such by openly demonstrating the unalloyed selfless service attitude toward the Lord and the world about. It is not the institution that makes the man; it is the man that makes the institution.

To be real, earnestly shared sincerity of approach, regardless of expressional form, is at the very wellspring of trustworthiness, far above and beyond the indecorous, stereotypical tactlessness of frequently resorted to blunt, oft-times duplicitous managerial expediencies. Not all knavish administrative prevarication or diplomatic cajolery constitutes pious fraud. Moreover, love in the real sense, though certainly subsuming the substantive principle of service to actual eternal self-interest, in fact never seeks to interfere with, subvert, or squelch the individual's freely volitional application of personal integrity in deciding one's own suitable mode of devotional reciprocation. Hence, mature mutual give-and-take on the spiritual platform had better soberly respect a broader-mindedness, accommodating the significance of unique individual perspective or taste, perhaps even considerably beyond one's own prejudice or preset dogmatic viewpoint – so help us God!

He Radhe-Shyama! The pursuit of lofty mundane academic degrees very rarely if ever really lends itself to an expedited

pure devotional progress. Rather, it tends to render one more ass-like in that one often trends to unduly bear, even long after initiation into the *bhakti* cult, a cumbrous, almost unshakeable, inflated sense of self-importance. Furthermore, one may unfortunately entertain an immodest impression of one's "superiority" over others who are less materially qualified, thus gobbling up heaps and piles of temporary hog-stool-like false prestige on the basis of accumulated collegial *upadhis*. One must sagaciously avoid the snobbish, over-intelligent, grossly idiotic notion that such slaughterhouse academia is in any way a prerequisite for high-grade devotional eligibility, competency, or potential, or to any degree indicative of such. When has such a conceited, specious idea ever been taught by an *acarya* or upheld by *shastra*?

How highly educated was Valmiki? Were Hanuman, Sugriva, Jambavan, or Jatayu college graduates? How doctorately decorated were Mrigari, the hunter; Dhruva; Prahlada; or even their *guru*, Narada, in his previous life as the son of a maidservant? How sophisticated or cultured was the prostitute who, by the grace of Haridasa Thakura, converted to Vaisnavism and chanted no less than three lakhs of *hari-nama* daily? What about Haridasa Thakura himself? How literate was the celebrated South Indian *brahmana* whom Lord Gauranga embraced, eulogizing him as having truly understood the essence of the *Gita*? How boastfully bookish was Srila Gaura Kishora Dasa Babaji Maharaja? How many pointed examples are required to illustrate the principle? Besides, we should simply ask – Is the world over not teeming with college graduates and professionals who profess avowed atheism or agnosticism?

One may argue that collegians have a better chance of viewing the gamut of worldly affairs, thereby increasing their natural drift toward a spirit of renunciation, but I dare challenge this idea. Realistically, how many graduates conclude from all their studies that they should just abandon the path of material amelioration to join the Hare Krishna movement? Out of many thousands of such supposedly educated people, hardly one has any idea of spiritual perfection, what to speak of endeavoring for it. And of the relatively few who do gain some understanding of

or interest in *sampradaya* devotion, what percentage of those practicing the process on any level opts for a life of practical, devotion-based renunciation stemming from genuine material exhaustion?

Sophistical, materially conceived strategic religio-administrative contrivances may appear to bluster their professed expediency in determining the devotional eligibility of a candidate, albeit, only as long as a dearth of genuinely mature spiritual insight debilitates one's power to perceive otherwise obvious degrees of *sharanagati* or spiritual surrender, indicative of an individual's actual level of pure devotional *shraddha*. My observation is that elevated *paramarthika-shraddha* manifests on the strength of the gradual accumulation of stockpiles of *bhakti-unmukhi sukriti*, or piety connected to and giving rise to *shuddha-bhakti*. Such accrues on account of service-related association with agents of pure devotion in this and previous existences. This alone is the true measure of anyone's fitness to pursue the path of *bhakti* at the spiritual master's *ashrama*. Such pure devotional *shraddha* and subsequent spiritual evolvment may be had by anyone – regardless of materially pious or impious background in terms of species, race, caste, creed, academic qualification, or pecuniary status – via the potent influence of authentically empowered, munificent representatives of Divine Grace. There is no use in eristically contending this point, drawing on any amount of sciolistic rhetoric. All things of this cosmos, though real in the sense that they consist of the energies of the Absolute Reality, in fact appear as valueless as so many zeroes by time's dynamics, which reduce everything to oblivion. Zeroes alone are valueless. Only when the "One" of Krishna consciousness stands before the "zeroes" of this world do the zeroes gain spiritual value, proportionate to the degree that they actually contribute to the favorable cultivation of Krishna consciousness. Still, in truth, it is the "One" of pure, forceful Krishna consciousness, with or without any subsequent number of "zeroes," that is ultimately noteworthy, important, precious, and efficacious.

Magnanimous first-class preachers, in the course of spreading the message of Krishna consciousness, may go all out

in various ways to extend Lord Gauranga's *sankirtana* movement even to persons puffed-up or smug with aristocracy, mundane scholarship, and material affluence. They tenderheartedly consider those so materially obsessed to be the most terribly entrenched victims of Kali's influences, the least likely to otherwise recognize and feelingly honor the mercy of the Holy Name. The complete conversion of such spiritually debased, vainglorious Kali-yuga reprobates to Vaisnavism would serve primarily to proclaim a most prodigious spiritual triumph, further acclaiming the glorious beatitude of *bhakti's* benignity. Such conversion is not at all intended to "up-grade" the material status quo, prestige, or popularity of any missionary institution. To grant or deny facilities for advancing in Krishna consciousness merely on the consideration of material qualification certainly constitutes an outrageous spiritual iniquity. Real knowledge is engendered by and subservient to *bhakti* and is always evinced by genuine pure devotional humility. If it is observed that a "scholarly" individual has virtuously embraced standard pure devotional ethics, we should clearly conclude such to be attributable not to the individual's mundane erudition or cerebral dexterity, whatever the level, but, undeniably, to the mercy of pure-hearted *sadhus*.

Unvitiated, truly elevated, scientifically conversant devotees of the Lord easily see through the fraudulent front of feigned self-effacement so often accompanying the copiously concocted "foolosophical" distortions of Gaudiya-Vaishnava *siddhanta*, *rasa-vicara*, and so on rampant in the rather absurd dissertations of surprisingly well-placed, somewhat lavishly lettered institutional evangelists. Guileless pure devotees decline to recognize or support such gratuitous, bombastic, quasi-theosophical craftsmanship masqueraded as abstruse Krishna conscious esotericism. Hence, anything more than a semblance of *bhakti* most certainly eludes such show-bottle expositors of so-called transcendental knowledge, despite their sacerdotal echelon or externally impressive scholastic pre-eminence. Realization of the science of pure devotion is a matter of revelation from within the heart based on an individual's degree of surrender to Krishna, not degrees of

irrelevant mundane academic so-called qualifications. Bhakti, independent as she is, always causelessly appears to gradually influence the heart of anyone of her own choosing and accord. Flagrantly propagated or slyly insinuated, deviously hatched fallacies or misconceptions concerning the autonomous nature of Bhakti's benevolence would certainly be seen as symptomatic of this present age of nescience, quarrel, and hypocrisy.

My dear Praneshvari, Shrimati Radhasundari! Do You remember the instance of Your extreme compassion upon that useless little flower? I become immensely solaced and hopeful thinking of Your special mercy upon her. During Your *vana-vihara-lila*, one evening in the month of Jyestha, as You and Your Beloved were strolling along the forest path with Your *sakhis*, playful Shyama, to give happiness to the trees and creepers, was admiring them by touching their fruits and leaves and smelling their fragrant flowers. As the two of You gradually approached a thicket along the way, one unassuming, useless little flower began to anxiously cry in great anxiety, lamenting, "Oh, why did I have to be a useless flower? Why? Why did I have to be so useless? Why did I have to be without any fragrance for the pleasure of His senses? Oh! He never accepts us useless flowers. I am the embodiment of the offense of offering useless flowers! I'm so unfortunate! What is the use of having taken such a useless birth in this land of Vraja? Why did I have to be so useless?" Crying and crying again and again, she deeply despaired: "Anyway, there is no hope of ever being enjoyed by Him in this birth. I will give up my life by being trampled under His lotus feet!" With this determination, she, weeping and weeping, forcibly threw herself down off the bush, falling unconscious on the forest path. O dear Shrimati Radharani! You, overhearing the distress of her heart, pointed her out to Your loving Shyama, who, mercifully reaching down and picking her up from the ground, happily placed her as a beautiful flower ornament atop His crown, giving her limitless beaming bliss and glorifying the intensity of her *bhava* above the sentiments of all other flowers!

He Radhe-Shyama! Offering unto You my one and only scentless soul is no better than the offense of offering a useless flower. This *lila*, however, demonstrates to me that the little flower's external deficiency really had no direct bearing on the actual status of her internal loving sentiments, but rather indirectly served to enhance them. *He Radhe-Shyama!* Please in the same way, despite everything, see something good in my lowly self; pick me up and save me from the perilous forest path of my own unbounded uselessness.

Many devoted souls were placed in lower-class, materially degraded or uneducated, less sophisticated families by the will of the Supreme Authority, just to give them a better chance to more feelingly approach Your Lordship's lotus feet with the requisite humility and natural modesty which was most lucklessly lacking in their previous life of liberal loftiness. Moreover, it is clearly explained in Gaudiya Vaishnava literature that great devotees of Lord Gauranga purposely appeared in such degraded families or in impious lands specifically to demonstrate that the evolvment of *bhakti* is in no way dependent upon material conditions. Everything considered, the culmination and conclusion of all learning and education is the congregational chanting of the Holy Name.

I don't think every college graduate is an ass. Some of my best friends are college graduates. As for myself, I graduated from the ISKCON School of Hard Knocks where I am presently doing my postgraduate studies. Hare Krishna!

He Radhe-Shyama! Let those callous to the call for discipular self-improvement complacently attach themselves to retarded, self-centered, substandard, third-class sentimental modes of spiritual progress; we can be persuaded to spiritually advance only if we possess at least a preliminary aspiration for self-realization.

He Radhe-Shyama! Let the holier-than-thou religio-institutional corporate bureaucrats, endlessly clinging to their conspicuously crude, consistently illiberal *kanistha* disposition, sanctimoniously integrate their as-yet-unsubdued, ignoble fault-finding proclivities on the plea of loyal managerial vigilance. Shall not we overlook their own fault of resolute self-

aggrandizing censoriousness, as do they? Shall not we stoop so low as to criticize the criticizers who opportunistically magnify the foibles of others? Shall we at all dare to see any fault in faulting the faultfinding of the faultfinders?

Are the pots not calling the kettles black? *atma-van manyate jagat* – a thief thinks everyone to be desirous of stealing his ill-gotten gains; a cheat sees the world to be full of cheaters. Krishna often allows us to see others' faults just to remind us of the need to fine-tune our own approach to devotional life. We would always do well to remember in this connection that when we point our finger at the faults of others, three fingers conversely indicate our own. This incontrovertibly implies that even (if not especially) religiously ordained administrators who see fit to occasionally employ corrective measures with a view to bring about an individual's or a faction's Krishna-conscious cultural conformity should crucially consider it to be thrice their responsibility to address their own shortcomings, their own misconceptions, and their own reform, rather than be obsessed with the reformation of anyone else. Any field of management certainly demands the responsible assessment of the individuals involved – seeing any situation, individual, or faction with one bad eye and one good eye. Care ought to be exercised, however, so as to avoid any offense. After all, bees always delight in finding honey-like good qualities with a view to bring out the best in others.

Let the pugnacious, double-dealing congenital equivocators openly paying lip service to a dramatically elegant, generously accommodating “Krishna conscious” paradigm, underhandedly militate against any other than their own doctrinaire politically correct prejudications. We shall no longer waste our days and nights dwelling on the wonderful workings of the three modes of material nature. There is much more important business at hand.

Dear Shri Shri Radhe-Shyama! Let the inadequately edified thousands of those doggedly attached to their mere eligibility for the rudimentary practices of *vaidhi sadhana-bhakti* with their underdeveloped third-rate spiritual acumen and their unfortunate want of adequate scriptural penetration

pertinaciously err to misrepresent the actual thrust of the Gaudiya creed in their rather pontifical preachings. Let them attempt in every way to systematically disparage or quell any upsurge of expressed aspirations for *raga-bhajana*. Looking askance, we shall politely ignore them.

If as a result of limitless transcendental book distribution, even one obscure undeterred soul perfectly ascertains, appreciates, and imbibes the superlative aspect of *rupanuga* Vaisnavism, following the immaculate, spontaneous selfless loving service moods (*bhavollasa-rati*) of Your most intimate eternal associates in the supremely enchanting land of Vraja, then, my dear Shri Shri Radhe-Shyama, please let us consider the Hare Krishna movement to be somewhat forward.

My dear most lovable and merciful Radha-Shyamasundara! May the broad-minded, forward-thinking souls evermore respect these deliberations, which are replete with profound concerns for advancing a more progressive culture of *antaranga-bhakti* in the lives of Your seriously dedicated *sankirtana* devotees. Please let those essence-seeking, deeply introspective softhearted individuals who patiently and sincerely read or hear these verbose utterances very soon attain the highest transcendental happiness (*paramananda*) in the spontaneous loving service of Your lotus feet according to their innermost heart's aspirations.

Second Heartfelt Effusion

My dear Shri Shri Radha-Shyamasundara! Crying at the lotus feet of Shri Guru, one very fallen and destitute soul humbly offers to You the following unrestrained stream of prayerful outpourings for Your kind and considerate audience.

Some brazenly declare that the Hare Krishna movement is dead – a lifeless corpse spasmodically flapping for a few residual moments before total collapse. Others rashly conclude that transcendental book distribution is for the neophytes. Still others insist that the members of the Hare Krishna movement could never attain *vraja-prema* or *vraja-lila* due to all the offenses a few of its leading members have done to great souls; they could attain Vaikuntha at best. Even worse, much high-flung absurdity spews forth, inanely declaring the Bhaktivedanta purports to be detrimental to one's faith in Krishna consciousness.

I ask, Are these blessings, promises, challenges, curses, insults, or threats? I dare doubt not only the legitimacy but also the very rectitude of such statements. If there were but one sincere, unsullied soul living among the members of the Krishna consciousness movement, could we not construe the establishment, notwithstanding all its trials and tribulations, to still be alive in spite of itself? Aside from that, did not great devotees of the Rupanuga-sampradaya, like Shrinivasa acarya, Bhaktivinode Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada, and more recently, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, humbly embrace the task of transcendental book distribution to uplift the fallen? Should we deem them neophytes? Moreover, are we to say that the above-suggested immature, superstitious bigotry of a few adherents becomes automatically imputed to yet the broader-minded more progressive students simply by dint of institutional membership? Must an entire army stand trial for the inter-

institutional war crimes of a handful of its soldiers? Is attainment of the *vraja-lilas* not contingent upon the Lord's response to an individual's sincerity of purpose? Can we not see even one worthy soul among the followers of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada intently pursuing the progressive living spirit of self-discovery culminating in the realization of *vraja-prema*? Is there no one "in" the Hare Krishna movement desperately crying out for the mercy of Shri Lalita, Rupa, and their attendants? Can their decision to bestow or not bestow special causeless mercy upon anyone be countermanded merely by the miserly dictums of minute *jivas* who wish to be distinguished as the foremost *rasa-Acaryas* of all the little *raganuga* wannabes? Is there any consideration at all beyond the transcendental preponderance of Shri Rupa Manjari's mercy?

O dear queen of my life, most gracious Shrimati Radharani! O cherished treasure of my heart, honey-moon-faced Shyama! Please let us have recourse to higher authorities to whom we may confidently appeal our individual cases! Have we not read many scriptures? Have we not served many *gurus*? Is Shri Vrindavana Dhama not the greatest of all *gurus*, the crowning splendor of all the scriptures? Is the dust of Vraja not ultimate authority? Is *hari-dasa-varya*, Gira Govardhana, not highest authority? May we not earnestly resort to the life-saving waters of Radha-kunda and Shyama-kunda, optimistically anticipating the fruition of our heart's enshrined aspirations? Is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja Srila Prabhupada himself not, in truth, higher authority? One may, to muster some sort of esteem amongst a rather credulous following, vaunt otherwise in violation of due Vaishnava decorum, but honestly speaking, one would do very well to remember that ultimately the decision as to who is nearer and dearer to Lord Gauranga is not in our hands. Are Shri Shri Jahnava-Nitai not our ultimate well-wishers? Does not the very name "Radha," when fervently chanted, forgive all Vaishnava *aparadhas*? Does not even a single recitation of the name "Shri Krishna Caitanya" forgive all offenses? Do the statements of the *Acaryas* regarding all these things now betray us?

Hridaya Caitanya, considering his disciple Duhkhi Krishnadasa to be a wayward offender, wanted to punish him for changing his *tilaka* and also for changing his name to Shyamananda. My dear Shyamasundara! Did Shyamananda not appeal to Lalita, Radha, and subsequently Subala (Gauri dasa Pandita, the spiritual master of Hridaya Caitanya himself)? Was Shyamananda not able to achieve the blessings of Radharani by the grace of Jiva Gosvami in spite of the displeasure and considerable consternation of his *guru*, Hridaya Caitanya?

Anyway, so be it! Even if it were true that the Hare Krishna movement is dead and so forth, still, I would never give up my deepest gratitude toward His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and his many sincere servitors who, though bearing diverse levels of spiritual qualification and empowerment, benevolently went out of their way to help extend all those life-line literatures to the lives of fallen conditioned souls like me. If the words of our *acarya* diminish one's faith in Krishna consciousness, then pray tell how, by reading his Bhaktivedanta purports, thousands of people like myself continue to come forward to join the Krishna consciousness movement and become attached to the pursuit of *Krishna-prema*?

My dear Shri Shri Radhe-Shyama! I know I'm not qualified. I know I'm an offender. On that account, I may rightly be ever deprived of the wish-fulfilling service of Your lotus feet in Your most charming land of Vraja. Still, I declare and declare emphatically that I shall never relinquish my enthusiasm for hearing the incomparably brilliant exaltations of Your glorious names, forms, qualities, and pastimes from the pages of all those beautiful books of the followers of Lord Gauranga!

Ha Radhe-Shyama! Are You kindhearted or what? If You want to stick me this way and that with all the apparently dogmatic, arbitrary, unintelligible, virtually impracticable rules and regulations of the *smriti-shastras*, then surely there is no hope for my redemption.

Yet even if in Your view I should have to be born and reborn in hell for the rest of eternity, I shall never ever give up hoping against hope that one day some unlimitedly

compassionate person will take pity on me and, though I be not at all deserving or fit, benignantly fulfill my impossible dream to attain but a dust particle of direct engagement in the service of Your eternal associates.

My dear Radhe-Shyama! Even though I am certainly a reprehensible reprobate, devoid of any trace of good qualities and deserving to be punished in every way, please hear the earnest plea of my heart's deepest desperation. Please don't laugh at me, scorn me, or doubt me in any way. Even if I will never be allowed to relish a single drop of the ocean of nectarean mellows of pure unalloyed *prema* for Your lotus feet, please let me perpetually or even just in some lifetime or another live and die in the dust of Vraja-bhumi, hoping against hope to some day in the course of eternity attain You.

My dear most fortunate and beneficent Shrimati Radharani! Please allow me to take my birth millions and billions of times in Vraja-bhumi in any species of life, even as a worm in the stool of a pig, rather than banishing me to become a queen of Dvaraka or an associate of Laksmi in Vaikuntha.

Even if I will not be permitted to eternally reside at Shri Vrindavana-dhama, please let my heart live here always.

He Radhe-Shyama! Please do not forsake me! Please forgive me for my many obvious faults and shortcomings and somehow or other compassionately find the ways and means to take my withering soul to Your lotus feet. Otherwise, what hope is there for such a helplessly fallen and blameworthy creature as myself?

To hell with trying to secure a comfortable situation within this temporary world of shadowy afflictions!

To hell with hoping for heavenly delights on earth, elevation to *svarga-loka*, or residence on any of the highest planets within this cosmos!

To hell with the achievement of mystic perfections!

To hell with all our exuberant eating, sleeping, mating, and defending on the plea of keeping body and soul together for the performance of sacrifice!

To hell with the attempt to curtail our generally excessive eating, sleeping, mating, and defending, with the aim of practicing the principles of practical renunciation!

To hell with undergoing severe penances and austerities for the sake of self-realization and God consciousness!

To hell with the achievement of the five kinds of liberation!

To hell with the attainment of Vaikuntha-loka in the eternal kingdom of God!

To hell with having been born on Earth as some kind of dull-headed humanoid in this most glorious Age of Kali in which Lord Caitanya has appeared to make self-realization easy by inaugurating the *sankirtana* movement of the Holy Name!

To hell with conceitedly boasting of our descent from a most venerable disciplic succession of eternally perfect Gaudiya Vaishnava *Acaryas*!

To hell with our enjoying the prestige of sitting at the feet of such a topmost *rasika* Vaishnava as His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, or any other for that matter!

To hell with strictly following the principles of *varnashrama-dharma*! That is for the *kanistha-adhikaris* having meager pure devotional *shraddha*.

To hell with playing “Mommy” and “Daddy” in the material world!

To hell with our having opened hundreds of temples, restaurants, and farm communities with the aim of delivering all the fallen conditioned souls in the universe from the cycle of repeated birth and death!

To hell with animal husbandry!

To hell with following from A to Z all the damn rules and regulations of the International Society for Rules and Regulations!

To hell with trying to become a Hare Krishna clone!

To hell with our having “advanced” through the fires of years upon years of ordeal in the almost intolerable association of blundering neophytes!

To hell with attempting to express our love for *guru* and Krishna in terms of endlessly bearing the brunt of relentless institutional strife!

To hell with toeing the party line!
 To hell with the institutionalism of the institutionalists!
 To hell with religio-institutional corporatocracy!
 To hell with trying to reconcile ourselves to the neoteric drift of a movement's henpecked leadership!
 To hell with being a Hare Krishna yes-man!
 To hell with all the superficial role-modeling!
 To hell with our profiling as advanced devotees when we know damn well we're not!
 To hell with grappling for socio-religious eminence!
 To hell with the institutional rubberstamping of *sampradayic* supermen!
 To hell with the "necessary evil" of (poorly) organized religion!
 To hell with all the meetings, resolutions, revolutions, dissolutions, and no solutions ad-infinitum!
 To hell with the ever-abounding, all-entangling crisis (mis)management syndrome! What could be expected of an institution that currently runs rather like a decapitated donkey?
 To hell with our having supposedly heard and regurgitated hundreds and thousands of *Bhagavatam* classes, dutifully attended thousands and millions of *mangala-aratrika* and *guru-puja kirtanas*, and perfunctorily chanted millions and billions of rounds of *maha-mantra-japa*! Shnick, Shnick, Raam, Raam!
 To hell with all our vehemently preaching about preaching about preaching about how we're supposed to preach about preaching about preaching about how we're supposed to preach! What are we "preachers" supposed to be preach-preachidy-preaching about? To what extent have we actually understood?
 To hell with the profiteering of the cash-covetous, business-brained mongers of transcendental knowledge!
 To hell with the Hindu-bindu Society for Currency (oops! I mean Krishna) Consciousness! I say to hell with milking the Hindu cash cow!
 To hell with the cost-effective, vogue-wise Hare Krishna phobia!
 To hell with the painfully put-on *sankirtana* smile!

To hell with it! Like infatuated children, avidly engrossed in the perpetual pastime of competitively collecting rare and unusual coinage, we accumulate the hundreds and thousands of unqualified neophyte disciples under the pretext of perpetuating the *sampradaya*. I say, to hell with it!

To hell with, on the plea of concern for others, becoming so blunderingly bogged down with all the petty little problems of the hundreds and thousands of corporeally attached *shisyapraya* “disciples” that one fails to oneself find the time and space required to complete even the minimum *nama-bhajana* expected of a new *bhakta*; what then of achieving the advanced internal devotional realizations needed to become, for the benefit of one’s disciples, anything better than a half-baked cookie!

To hell with the undignified, artfully employed, hard-nosed, cunningly politic, cold-shouldering, dog-eat-dog bureaucratic religio-administrative spin control! Has anyone ever achieved *prema* by this approach?

To hell with being a pawn on the chessboard of any mortal being’s religio-institutional managerialism!

To hell with coyly compromising the truth to kowtow to the cacophonous misconclusions of dull-headed under-enlightened ecclesiastics of religio-executive clout!

To hell with all the rubbish, time-wasting, power-politicking religio-institutional / inter-institutional hostilities! Are there not yet innumerable grumblers, intent on being inexorably encumbered by such endless, trivial affairs?

To hell with the materially concocted hallucination of having so-called friends and enemies amongst the Vaishnavas!

To hell with the perfidiously inflicted, heartlessly top-heavy centralized manipulation of manpower and money! On the threadbare plea of “spreading love of Godhead,” do such scheming preoccupations now indispensably supersede our life’s mission of becoming mad after Krishna?

To hell with scrambling to savor varieties of mundane *rasa* on the pretext of fostering socially feasible spiritual enrichment!

To hell with the fools who conscientiously avoid hearing, chanting, and remembering the Lord’s *rasa-lila* and other

madhuurya pastimes with the *gopis*. They will never attain perfection. If I chance to encounter the likes of such imposter Vaishnavas, I will close my ears to their philosophical absurdities, refuse to see their faces, and scorn the dismal air about their corpse-like material bodies.

To hell with fashionably passing off sub-religious quasi-Krishna-conscious eclecticism as harmonious devotional practice!

To hell with the deliberate dumbing down of the Krishna consciousness movement!

To hell with pandering to the psycho-physical indulgences of the movement's lowest common denominator!

To hell with the deaf ears of the conceited, self-complacent, ivory-towered religio-administrative elitists!

To hell with spineless, self-serving ecclesiastico-political correctitude!

To hell with our having distributed billions and trillions of transcendental literatures all over the world in scores of languages to give everyone else a chance to become fully Krishna conscious!

I say to hell with it all!

Much of the afore-denounced may be wonderful, meritorious or (de)pressingly important on one level or another, but if in the end, after all is said and done, we ourselves, as individuals could not effectively grasp, take to heart, factually realize, and blissfully relish the deepest essential living import of the Gaudiya Vaishnava *siddhanta* (learning to love Vrajendra-nandana Shyama by carefully pursuing the *bhavas* of the supra-exemplary damsels of Vraja), what would we have really gained from the whole affair? Truly speaking, what would be the sense or significance of any other allegedly laudable undertaking or feat? Are we merely amassing *sukriti* (or *duskriti*) for another valiant try in some future birth, or what? – an inconversant step in hopefully the right direction? Do we really know what we are doing? Do we want *Krishna-prema* or not? Kindly do not hastily suspect these questions to be in any way inconsequential. Okay, Krishna consciousness is a gradual process – as gradual as we make it. It really doesn't have to be *that* gradual, though.

Candidly speaking, charity really begins at home. It's true that the highest realization is to take all risk, to go out of one's way to save the world. That is our mission, for sure. Even so, still higher than that, ultimately, the very highest realization, the profoundest mission, is to save oneself. First make yourself spiritually fit. Doctor, heal thyself! First chant and dance in ecstasy like a madman, then worry about saving the rest of the world.

Higher than becoming *guru* is to become an accomplished, fully self-realized disciple, and that hardly implies that one should pompously pose as a king with no clothes to passionately impress the little neophytes with how much one might have superficially garnered from the lines of letters on the pages of piles of books. A mesmerizing, ostentatious cerebral miscellany indeed! Nowhere is it mentioned in any *shastra* that neophytes and intermediate devotees achieve *prema* by initiating hundreds and thousands of disciples. It is really best not to accept any disciples at all. Better by far we humbly endeavor to chant *shuddha-nama* via the intent prosecution of *yuga-dharma nama-sankirtana* with a view to achieve ultimate *raga-maya* perfection at the feet of Shri Guru. Then we may hope to become truly empowered instruments in the hands of the predecessor *Acaryas*.

He Radhe-Shyama! Please allow me at this point to elaborate on this proposition for the careful deliberation of the revered readers, to whom I offer my *koti koti dandavat-pranamas*.

We should bear in mind that Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in personally demonstrating the exemplary course of pure devotional conduct to edify the people of this dismal domain, adopted two programs of vital concern, which are in fact, to a large extent, intrinsically inter-supportive of each other. The three internal purposes of His advent, primarily corresponding to the *tripad-vibhuuti-cid-jagat* (internal, spiritual, all-sentient world comprising three fourths the kingdom of God), were essentially a matter of His pursuing the internal *rasika* relishment of pure devotional *bhavas*. The one external purpose of inaugurating the movement of mass *sankirtana* for the

deliverance of materially conditioned *jivas* should be seen as relevant, or consequential, to His appearance in this *ekapad-vibhuti-acit-jagat* (dull material world covering only one fourth of God's kingdom). It is a fact that His propagation of the Holy Name enhanced, in certain respects, His direct relishment of Radha's intensified happiness in the form of Her overflowing benevolence toward others in view of Krishna's expanded bliss. Nevertheless, it should be noted with profit that the internal absorption was primarily effective whereas the external parallel was a subsequent effect rooted in His aspiration to taste the ever-expanding sweetness of *Krishna-prema*.

Radha is the complete whole personification of Krishna's compassionate nature expanded into innumerable personified counterpart aspects of the same intrinsic supra-mundane potency. As the experiential value of ten-million fold must necessarily be established on the basis of the experiential value of one, so without the premise of Radha's actual experience of personally meeting with Krishna, the assertion of Her ten-million-fold happiness in making arrangements for the other expanded aspects of Herself to meet with Him remains only so much meaningless verbiage. Similarly, it is said that anyone can have the experience of ten-million-fold the happiness of personally meeting and embracing Krishna by preaching the *sankirtana* movement to convince other conditioned souls to take steps toward Him. Even so, it would behoove a thoughtful devotee to initially come to the position of personally experiencing Krishna, embracing Krishna in unalloyed *prema* – face to face, eye to eye, cheek to cheek, hand to hand, chest to chest, etc., etc. Obviously, without gaining the actual direct experience, one could hardly realize in a practical sense whether one would be in fact subjectively sustaining ten-million-fold *ananda* or not. One might question whether one is being “transcendentally” conned by an inducting missionary hype or what! If most neophyte book distributors and “preachers” were to consider the idea on the basis of the relatively paltry slight rapture they experience on the preaching field, they might conclude that if the experience of meeting Krishna would be one ten-millionth of the experience they undergo in the course

of their preaching struggle, meeting Krishna could hardly be a very happy affair! So why bother to advance one's *purva-raga*, anxiously hoping against hope to some day actually meet Him face to face and eye to eye? Moreover, if they were factually tasting the ten-million-fold happiness they were purported to be able to taste, then why do so many of them fall away to re-chew the pre-chewed gross and subtle sense gratification for want of achieving a higher taste? We see, but we don't see. If one actually saw Krishna, one would faint! If one actually saw Radharani, one would die!

One might pause for a moment and question to what extent a practitioner could have actually seen, experienced, tasted, "realized," or even basically understood for that matter what is Krishna, what is Krishna consciousness. For the most part, a *sadhaka* cannot do any more than conjecture or imagine what it means to be fully Krishna conscious. We should doubtlessly acknowledge that the Lord quickly recognizes anyone who teaches the secrets of the science of Krishna consciousness for the benefit of the fallen conditioned souls. Still, to be sure, it would not be inappropriate at this point to aver that only a topmost devotee can really preach with the requisite purity, potency, and background of full-fledged *shuddha-sattvika* realization to effectually revolutionize or spiritually enkindle the heart of anyone. Only a *maha-bhagavata* invested with the (*hladini*) potency to do so is fit to bestow *shuddha-nama*, which alone can be said to be, in the real sense, identical with *nami*, Krishna Himself, subsumptive of all His internal spiritual potencies. Others, occupied with missionary movements (antics), may by hook or by crook generate a curiosity, persuade via various inveigling modus operandi, or sympathetically encourage by pointing the way; something is better than nothing, for sure. Still, merely going through the motions (Hare Krishna movements), as it were, and actually getting the whole job done may prove to be conspicuously dissimilar at the upshot. In other words, the degree of a devotee's genuine experience of Krishna's sweetness, as proportionately revealed by Krishna Himself in response to one's evolving *premika* sweetheartedness toward Him, assumes

the fundamental measure of one's *adhikara* to perform empowered *sankirtana*.

Those who think themselves to be Vaishnavas, as well as individuals who regard themselves as *guru* of Vaishnavas, looking forward to receiving honor and respect; vying for fame, recognition, and reputation; equating the rapacious, quantitative accumulation of disciples with *sampradayic* worth; uppishly considering themselves to be superior to others though incapable of genuinely crying for the Lord's special causeless mercy, all the while forgetful of or oblivious to, nay, totally apathetic toward their internal *sac-cid-ananda* spiritual identity (*vraja-svarupa*), yet anxious to satisfy their greed for prestige and material gain by accessing religio-institutional power and position for securing diverse gross and subtle personal and extended sense indulgences or ego-inflations; remaining enslaved by mental concoction while keeping Krishna in the front, can never chant the actual Holy Name of the Lord. Nor can they qualify their fawning followers to hear the Holy Name, which alone can award the highest happiness. Though the syllables of the Holy Name be ostensibly articulated, the *aparadha-nama* or *abhasa-nama kirtana* of the egotistical can never directly help any *jiva* attain the final beatific *prayojana*, i.e., pure unalloyed *vraja-prema*. Krishna, as a person, can on the basis of His own personal feelings like someone or not like someone according to His own sweet will. No one, even adhering to or outwardly espousing strict regulative devotional proprieties, can compel Him to selectively use one's fleshy tongue as an instrument in the service of His divine sound *avatara* merely by paying lip-service to the vulgar similitude of Hari-nama or ingeniously mouthing off *sampradayic* rhetorical jargon to the extent that one prides oneself to ably parrot something of the Krishna consciousness philosophy. First deserve, then desire! How can we expect to fully enlighten others about the secrets of high-level Krishna consciousness, to, when required, lead or instruct them to their supreme perfection, if we ourselves have not deeply penetrated the esoteric truths and devotional conclusions via our own personal introspective application of the tenets of *antaranga-bhakti*-

bhajana, humbly following in the footsteps of the previous *Acaryas*? If one, being uninformed, inexperienced, or disinclined, is incapable of even theoretically discussing the constituent principles of *raga-margabhidheya*, or if one fancifully fabricates dubious, superstitious, or presumptive aberrations thereof, then how far could the disciples expect to advance under such unsatisfactory neophyte guidance fraught with utter spiritual ineptitude?

Compassion is defined as “pity inclining one to help or be merciful,” implying that one should presumably possess the capacity to do so. Obviously, one can only effectively help to the limits of one’s spiritual wherewithal. We *vibhinnamsha* souls, as minute parts and parcels of the pleasure potency of Krishna, are compassionate by nature; it is our intrinsic constitutional *dharma*. Arousal of one’s spontaneous, constitutional quality of benevolence toward others is therefore integral to the very substance of self-realization. There is, however, essentially no qualitative distinction between the pure devotional compassion displayed in terms of one’s participation in the internal supramundane pleasure dalliances of the spiritual realms of *Gokula* and *Goloka* and the pure devotional compassion expressed extensibly to the fallen souls of this world by a constituent of the *acarya*’s preaching mission. Both varieties of ministrative concern, whether existentially manifest (in practice or in perfection) as *seva* toward those who are ontologically superior or as *daya* toward subordinates, are really aspects of the same substance – the selfless service disposition, far beyond the bestial self-gratifying nescience of mundane egoism.

The intangible inverted reflection of a tree seen on the surface of a pool of water can have no existence without the original substantial prototype at the water’s edge. Similarly, miserable, selfish, and spiritually corrupt personal and extended sense gratification on the material platform, antithetical to its divine counter, exists only on the basis of the original *ananda-maya* tree of concentrated and extended selfless *prema* for Krishna and His devotees on the terrace of spiritual perfection. Censurable desire for gross and subtle personal sense gratification is at the root of the tree of material existence,

whereas the varieties of lustfully extended sensory or emotional indulgences expand the tree's downward spread of distressful material entanglement in terms of increased ephemeral bodily identification with mundane family, society, nationality, race, humanity, and so on. Correspondingly, with regard to Krishna's *nitya-lilas* it should be clearly decided that personal concentrated *premika* appreciation and enthralling worship of Krishna's supremely enchanting loveliness and lovableness is at the very root of the ever-expanding, all-entangling labyrinth of extended *para-upakara premika* fascinations, which are notably marked by a concerned ministering to others' love-laden, deepest desires for the Lord's loving association (*a%ogasa%oga*). Without a doubt, these two tendencies – the trend toward solitary *bhakti-bhajana-kriya* and the predilection for the more gregarious devotional service characterized by outreaching *sanga-kirtana* – are natural and actually essential to every soul. This is quite so because both proclivities have originated from the absolute personalities of Radha-Krishna and Shri Gauranga as seen in Their *madhurya* and *audarya-lilas* respectively. As infinitesimal, eternally separated fragments of the Supreme, the *vibhinnamsha-jivas* are in their own minute way inherently ever possessed of both these relevant juxtapositional divisions of purely supra-mundane *madhurya* and *audarya* expression. It stands to reason, therefore, that one may without much difficulty justifiably deduce that if preaching to induce wayward souls to reunite with Krishna be akin to a *gopi's* selfless service of gracefully canvassing to effectuate another *gopi's* enhanced rapture of *samprayoga* (conjugal union with the Lord) in the context of the *vraja-lilas*, then the execution of solitary *bhajana* in this sphere should also sensibly correspond to its self-same essential substance seen in the Lord's *nitya-lilas* in all purity. No one would blame Radharani for consenting to sport with Krishna in solitude for some interlude in the course of Her showering mercy upon the whole of Vraja. Similarly, solitary *bhajana* for any relative period in the progress of the eternal life of any elevated Vaishnava should not be misconstrued to be abhorrent to the high-grade pure devotional demeanor in that such may well prove to be integral to the

complete whole, long-term, ongoing eternal maturation of the individual's multi-aspected Krishna conscious experience. We must acknowledge that although solitary *bhajana* and *sankirtana* appear to be divergently constituted, the objective of both ways of worship is one – to please Krishna. It is nowhere indicated that progress in Krishna consciousness demands a unidimensional, one-sided approach to the Lord's loving service. The sincere adoption of one mode of service or another is simply a question of pertinence with regard to personal requirements in consonance with the extent of the Lord's mercy manifested in all variegatedness. In fact, today's consummately introverted *bhajanandi* may very well be tomorrow's empowered *gosthy-anandi* preacher, or vice versa.

In the long run, practically tasting the sweetness of *vraja-prema-bhakti-rasa* itself becomes the true impetus for earnestly endeavoring to share the experience with others. It is not enough to merely distribute, distribute, distribute – superficially going through the motions on the basis of bare theoretical understanding without sufficiently developed internal devotional proficiency. With considerable preparatory foresight, one must also conscientiously endeavor to ascertain the truth of one's ultimate *nitya-dharma* in terms of one's eternal inner spiritual identity. It is imperative that one progressively come to the point of actually relishing transcendental *rasa*, self-manifested through the precise systematic culture of *sthayi-bhava*, which fosters the tangible increments of *prema* from *sneha* up to the stage of *maha-bhava*. Please bear in mind that these upper levels of *prema* are possible only upon the attainment of *sampatti-dasha*, otherwise known as *vastu-siddhi*, the ultimate perfection of gaining Krishna's direct shelter upon achieving the actuation of one's supra-substantial *sac-cid-ananda siddha-deha* (perfect spiritual body) in the *bhauma-lilas* of the Lord. Nothing happens automatically or blindly by chance. Everything must be cultivated scientifically and consciously for the absolute pleasure of *guru* and Krishna with a clear conception of deliberate cause and due consequence. One could hardly expect to achieve the supreme spiritual perfection by unapprisedly harboring anomalous devotional (what to

speak of non-devotional) idiosyncrasies, which are not accommodated by the purest realm of Vraja.

To be sure, what one sees in the make-up of one's *sadhana* is basically what one could prospectively see in one's *sadhya* (outcome of spiritual practices). *Vaidhi bhakti* (fear-based, reverential devotion) alone can never in a million lifetimes lead to the stage of *raga-bhakti* (attraction-based, spontaneous loving devotion), which is essential for the attainment of Radha's realm of sweetest intimacy. *Sakala jagate more kare vidhi-bhakti / vidhi-bhaktye vraja-bhava paite nahi shakti*. "Everywhere in the world people worship Me according to scriptural injunctions. But simply by following such regulative principles one cannot attain the loving sentiments of the devotees in Vraja-bhumi." (Cc. adi 3.15) Only by the merciful arrangement of a *rasika* Vaishnava, wherein the regulative principles of *vaidhi sadhana-bhakti* are therapeutically directed toward the diverse *madhurya* elements of Vraja, is it at all possible for *vidhi* (rule) to attendantly promote the attraction and *lobha* (greed) essentially required to gain the *adhikara* (eligibility) for *raga-marga-bhajana*. Even still, one would have to possess sufficient faith, fortune, and spiritual acumen to actually recognize the need to progressively transition by stepping up onto the platform of *raganuga sadhana-bhakti* in order for the rule to be said to have effectively served its real purpose. Undoubtedly, the unqualified, irresolute *anisthita-bhajana-kari* novices on the plane of rudimentary devotion, due to insufficiently evolved greed for the Vrajavasis' sweetest moods of selfless loving service, factually have no recourse but to rely heavily upon the force of *pancaratrika* rules and regulations in their attempt to rise above the material quagmire. However, simply sticking to the reverential process alone does not produce the superlative result, the highest satisfaction of the self. The *bhava* eventually attained with great effort through exclusive fear-based, reverential adherence to the regulative principles of *vaidhi sadhana-bhakti* and the *bhava* naturally awakened as an outcome of avidly following the course of *raga-bhajana* are not qualitatively one and the same. *Bhagavata-dharma*, or the cult of *Shrimad-Bhagavatam*, is specifically and purposely, if not

exclusively, aimed at the progressive cultivation of *raganuga-bhava*. That is the opinion of Srila Vishvanatha Cakravartipada, whose judgment should not be overlooked in the slightest.

It is enjoined in the *shastras* that the *guru*, upon giving *panca-samskara* initiation, bestow a spiritual name upon the disciple to help instrumentally dismantle or at least distance the disciple's previous falsely designated mundane bodily identity based on material relativities (*sarva-upadhi-vinirmuktam*) and establish a very basic, non-specific concept of being a servant of the Absolute Godhead (*krisnera 'nitya-dasa*). The spiritual name conferred at the time of *diksa* may not directly correspond to the disciple's eternal spiritual identity and so would not, therefore, necessarily be considered the disciple's name eternally. Nevertheless, it is spiritually useful in so far as it functions to push the novice disciple's mind-set in the right direction. So similarly, it is indeed very useful, from the stage of purified hearing (*krama-shuddha-shravana-dasha*) after achieving a considerable degree of *anartha-nivritti*, to culture via *artha-pravritti* the internally conceived *siddha-deha* in terms of the *ekadasha-bhava* under the guidance of Shri Guru or *rasika* Vaishnavas. Such internal contemplation effectively enables the eligible intermediate devotee to easily overcome various latent false egoisms, by positively fostering a conceptually graspable, unambiguous, cogently personal, spiritual identity, well beyond the external bodily notion of what it supposedly means to be a devotee. Particularly for the *madhurya* devotee cherishing the mood of being Radha's *dasy-anudasi*, even the conception of being *dasanudasa* would be a false egoism, an *upadhi*, a matter of external appellation only.

It is well established that those aspects of *vaidhi sadhana-bhakti* which prove to be antagonistic to the culture of a *sadhaka's* desired *vraja-bhava* must certainly be rejected when pursuing the path of *raga*. Similarly, certain features of the internal *raganuga-sadhana* may naturally and necessarily have to be discarded if ascertained to be no longer relevant at the stage of spontaneous realization (*svarupa-siddhi*). Even so, the sincerely embraced "close enough for starters" *ekadasha-bhava* conceptualization dynamically serves to further dissolve the

material bodily conception of the self and swiftly move the guileless aspirant toward perfection (*bhava-siddhi*) by generating a very powerful and inspirational spiritually congruent virtual *vraja-svarupa* image within the heart of the disciple. It is insufficient simply to know by negation that “I am not ‘this’ [illusory material] body.” At a certain point, a seriously inquisitive individual must inevitably ask, “If I am not ‘this’ body, then what body am I?” The rather nondescript “eternal servant of Krishna” idea of being a spiritual entity beyond the presently acquired psycho-physical tabernacle may be quite theoretically ingrained upon the brain, yet merely understanding “I am not ‘this’ body” without cultivating a superior internal spiritual bodily concept of life tends to render the self an internally unsatisfying formless (*nirakara*) spiritual no-body vulnerable to nostalgic “something is better than nothing” emotional or corporeal egoisms and the return to gross or subtle mundane *rasas*. Two areas of knowledge and realization need be clearly established in the matter of a *sadhaka*’s resolve to solidly implement the practice and perfection of *vraja-bhakti-bhajana*. One must precisely comprehend the principles of *rasa-tattva* as well as the object of *rasa* and worship (*upasya-pariskriti*), Shri Krishna, and one must also be aware of the intrinsic constitutional role and nature of the worshiper (*upasaka-pariskriti*), pertinent to which is the understanding of the individual’s *ekadasha-bhava*. Incompetent neophytes who lack pure devotional *lobha-maya-shraddha* characterized by the appurtenant *sharanagati* or disposition of selfless surrender and who have yet to surpass the stage of *krama-hina-shravana-dasha* (unqualified hearing) should never be directly instructed about the esoteric intricacies of the internal culture of *raganuga-bhajana*, lest they misconstrue everything and make a mockery of the whole affair. If, on the other hand, a worthy and spiritually eligible disciple, for whatever reason, does not get the facility of receiving essential and relevant instructions regarding the positive configuration of the appropriate internal *vraja-svarupa* when actually required for further progress, then there is every danger that the inexperienced, unguided, or spiritually obstructed practitioner

will unfortunately relapse into a life of *anarthas*, as has been regrettably evidenced time and again in contemporary Vaishnava society.

It is true that at a point in time after the disappearance of Lord Gauranga a number of *sampradayic* charlatans posing as heirs to the legacies of their *siddha-rasika-Vaishnava Acaryas'* successions trended to indiscriminately bestow what came to be termed as "*siddha-pranali-diksa*" upon ineligible, materially engrossed, imitative disciples without caring to notice their so-called disciples' obviously inadequate degrees of *lobha-maya-shraddha*. It should not surprise anyone that stalwart *maha-bhagavata* devotees of the Lord like Srila Gaura Kishora Dasa Babaji Maharaja, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada would take objection to such malpractice. Among other adjustments, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati saw fit to de-emphasize the revelation of *ekadasha-bhava* for the general mass of his followers, in deference to the all-purifying process of *nama-sankirtana* and is in fact known to have bestowed the *ekadasha-bhava* system of internal *vraja-svarupa* conceptualization upon only a very deserving few. Contemporary disciplic successors, however, appear to be hard-pressed to muster up the empowerment required to feasibly implement the imparting of *ekadasha-bhava* to anyone at all, almost as if to suggest a heretofore future probability of an all-around internal devotional incompetence among the ensuing generations of *gurus* and disciples alike. Although the absolute dependency upon *siddha-pranali-diksa* as such for the evolvment of *raganuga-sadhana* is denied in the Sarasvata doctrine, timely instruction (*shiksa*) concerning the internally conceived *siddha-deha* is nevertheless essential. If members of the Krishna consciousness movement could not come to the position of having sufficient qualification, sincerity, and determination to merit receiving such esoteric instruction, then what might be suspected of the purificatory power and efficacy of the devotional process we follow? Just because untrained, ineligible, cheap, or hypocritical monkey-like individuals devoid of regulative devotional proprieties should not be esoterically instructed beyond their actual level of spiritual competence, as

is currently being done by certain overly lenient *gurus*, it doesn't mean that all the disciples of highly qualified *gurus* should be deemed lifetime devotional bambinos, altogether denying them access to such an invaluable internal devotional facility. Would we not be conveniently throwing poor little baby out with the bath water on the plea of ensured institutional sanctity? The king wears clothes. The king is a fool. Therefore, everyone who wears clothes is a fool! Not very logical. That money tends to get misspent by irresponsible people doesn't mean money should never be spent by those who are truly accountable.

It is certainly admissible that realization of one's *siddha-svarupa* while still corporeally embodied and the ultimate attainment of one's *siddha-deha* upon achieving the Lord's *vrajalilas* can be had by the mercy of the fully blossomed Holy Name who in due course gives everything to the sincere devotee. *More siddha-deha diya . . .* (Bhaktivinoda Thakura's *Sharanagati – Shri Nama Mahatmya*). Also, as stated in *Shri Caitanya-caritamrita (adi-lila 1.96)*, *tattva-vastu – Krishna, Krishna-bhakti, prema-rupa / nama-sankirtana – saba ananda-svarupa*. "The Absolute Truth is Shri Krishna, and loving devotion to Shri Krishna in the form of [*vraja*]-*prema* is achieved through congregational chanting of the Holy Name, which is the essence of all bliss." Again in the *Caitanya Bhagavata (Madh. 23.76-79)*:

*hare Krishna hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare
prabhu kahe kahilam ei mahamantra
iha japa giya sabe kariya nirbandha
iha haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabara
sarva-ksana bala'ithe vidhi nahi ara*

"The Lord said, 'Regularly chant *japa* of this *maha-mantra*. In this way you will attain all perfections. Chant at any time and in any circumstance. There are no other rules for chanting. Gather

together, five or ten, in your own homes, clap hands or play cymbals and sing *kirtana* of these holy names.”

Shastric evidence such as this, however, in no way poses to preclude the *sadhaka's* need to be esoterically instructed. *Sambandha-abhidheya-prayojana-tattva-vicara* demands the consideration of each individual's specific internal devotional requirements. It is not meant to remain a general discussion devoid of any concern for the individual disciple's personal spiritual objective. After all, the ascent to *prema* is a personal affair involving the delicate unfolding of personal sentiments based on personal desires to personally please the particular Personality of Godhead whom one considers to be one's personal *ista-deva*. We must always remember that we are persons. Krishna is a person, the Holy Name is a person, and we are all unique individual persons who need to personally conceptualize the unique personal goal of our chanting before we can expect our chanting of the Holy Name to yield the superlative personalized fruit of love for Krishna we personally require to be all we can personally be to be personally satisfied that Krishna is personally satisfied with our personal attempts to please Him in all personified personal sweetness. Chanting with specific wrong conceptions bears specific wrong results, chanting with no specific conception bears no specific result, chanting with specific inferior conceptions yields specific inferior results, and, unsurprisingly, as one might reasonably gather, chanting the Holy Name with specific superexcellent conceptions yields specific superexcellent results. *Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham...* It's not all one.

The obvious implication of the above *Caitanya-caritamrita* verse is as follows: Srila Rupa Gosvami in his *Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu* clearly delineates two basic levels of devotion – *sadhana-bhakti* (*bhakti* in practice done by *ajata-rati sadhaka-bhaktas*) and *sadhya-bhakti* (*bhakti* in perfection done by *jata-rati bhavukas* and *siddha-bhaktas*). *Sadhana-bhakti* includes two distinct paths – *vaidhi-marga* and *raga-marga* – correspondingly leading to two distinct types of perfection – *maryada-prema* (reverential love) and *kevala-madhurya-prema* (unadulterated sweetest intimate love). *Raga-marga-sadhana* is not to be

equated with spontaneous devotional service; rather, it is deemed spontaneous devotional service in practice wherein a *sadhaka* covetously endeavors to internally emulate the perfect spontaneous mood of one of Krishna's intimate eternal *ragatmika* associates. Only fortunate practitioners adequately endowed with *lobha-maya-shraddha* may legitimately take up this path. To the extent that one has not gained steadfastness in the pursuit of *raga-bhajana*, to that extent one is obliged to allow *shastra-vidhi* to prompt one's adherence to the external practices of devotional service. As one's affinity for *bhajana* prevails, *lobha* itself becomes the driving force, and the need to rely on *shastra-vidhi* becomes relatively superfluous. Likewise, *sadhya-bhakti* is divided into two progressive levels – *bhava* (preliminary love of Godhead) and *prema* (advanced love of Godhead). The stage of relishing *prema-rasa*, realized at the highest level of purity, comes only after the arousal of *sthayii-bhava* by the influence of *vibhava*, *anubhava*, *sattvika*, and *vyabhicari*, generated from the fragrance of the flower of *rati* or *bhava*. *Prema* never appears before *svarupa-siddhi*, which is realized at the stage of *bhava*. The stage of *bhava* and *apana-dasha* are basically synonomous. *Bhavapana-dasha* is the *sadhya*, or outcome of intensified *sadhana*, which progresses through the stages of *shravana-dasha*, *varana-dasha*, and *smarana-dasha* culminating in *bhakti-samadhi*. As previously indicated, *shravana-dasha* appears in two phases – *krama-hina-shravana-dasha* (haphazardous or unqualified hearing without aspiration to a particular *rasa*) and *krama-shuddha-shravana-dasha* (systematic, offenseless hearing with the ultimate aim of pleasing Krishna). If as a *kanistha-adhikari shraddhavan jana* one hears *Krishna-lila* in an unfocused way without having undergone sufficient purification via advanced devotional association, clouds of *anarthas* will obstruct the discernment of one's natural inclination toward a particular *rasa*. Such hearing designated as *krama-hina-shravana* may in fact retard the arousal of one's latent proclivity for *raganuga-bhakti* if one does not scientifically endeavor to improve one's approach to the hearing process. However, when faithful upper class neophytes who are *antarmukha* (looking inward in the spirit of self-

discovery) attentively and methodically hear (*nityam bhagavata-sevaya*) about Krishna's *nitya-lilas* and *naimittika-lilas* under the wholesome guidance of experienced *raganuga-sadhakas* and *rasika* Vaishnavas, they, by such *krama-shuddha-shravana*, swiftly and without difficulty dissipate the clouds of *anarthas* (*nasta-prayesu abhadesu*) and come to the *nistha* platform (*bhaktir bhavati naisthiki*). Purposeful *krama-shuddha-shravana* appreciably manifests the enchanting sweetness of the Lord's pastimes, spontaneously arousing the hearer's latent predilection for *raganuga-bhakti*. As *anarthas* (material lust and greed) decrease in the course of extensive hearing (*ceta etair anavidham*), one gradually recognizes within oneself a special natural appreciation for particular pastimes of the Lord enacted with a particular *ragatmika* associate endowed with a specific *rasa*. This indicates one's natural constitutional inclination toward a particular *rasa*. The awakening of a basic yet firm eagerness to attain a kind of relationship with the Lord similar to that of one's esteemed *ragatmika* archetype constitutes one's specific innate *lobha*.

It should be emphasized here that the details of a disciple's *ekadasha-bhava* are generally to be sussed out between the disciple and the *guru* during the *krama-shuddha-shravana-dasha* stage in light of the disciple's specific *lobha*. *acarya-vani* has it that these constituents of *raga-marga-sadhana* may be inculcated to the disciple quite early in the course of events if the *guru* sees that the disciple's association is pure, elevated, and *siddhantically* solid. When, satisfied that the *guru* has correctly ascertained one's inner greed for achieving a specific devotional perfection, one vows to heartily accept the compatible *bhava* for continuous cultivation, only then does one come to the stage of *varana-dasha*, which is the very basis of *raganuga-bhajana-nistha*. Having become "fixed-up" and satisfied on the brahminical platform of goodness (*sthitam sattve prasidati*), one becomes freed from the major lot of gross material distractions. At this point one may gradually focus and absorb one's mind and heart (from *smarana*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, *anusmriti*, to *samadhi*) in the remembrance of one's given *vraja-svarupa* while cultivating the mental service of Radha-Krishna's

eightfold daily pastimes (*asta-kaliya-lila-manasa-seva*). *apana-dasha*, as a sequel to all this, comes quite later in the chain. Hence, it would be erroneous to conclude that *raganuga-sadhana* and the prerequisite greed (*lobha*) to pursue the path of *raga* would commence from the stage of *bhava*. Moreover, it would be terribly clumsy to suggest that *sadhakas* must first attain *vaidhika bhava-siddhi* on the path of reverential devotion before gaining the credibility and the go-ahead to even dare to consider the prospect of pursuing the principles of *raganuga-sadhana*. It is preposterous to in any way deduce that *sadhana* would begin after *sadhya* (*apana-dasha* [*rati*]) has been achieved. *Jata-rati* Vaishnavas are *bhava-bhaktas*, not *sadhana-bhaktas*.

After the attainment of *svarupa-siddhi*, a *siddha-bhakta* anxiously cries to be reinstated in his or her original constitutional relationship (*vastu-siddhi*) with the Lord. This state of intense eagerness is technically termed *lalasamayi*. It is incorrect to equate *lalasamayi*, which is manifested in the perfectional stage, with *lobha*, the basic element needed for embarking on the path of *raganuga-sadhana* while in the state of bondage, the position of imperfection. It is not that one must be perfect (*jata-rati*) before one can practice to become perfect. If *sankirtana* of the Holy Name can bring the *sadhaka* to the highest perfectional platform of unalloyed *Krishna-prema*, why should we not expect the Holy Name to grace the *sadhaka* with the relatively lesser *adhikara* required to merit hearing esoteric *ekadasha-bhava* instructions from the lips of Shri Guru – instructions that are actually required for the tangible practice of proper *asta-kaliya-lila-smarana* and *manasa-seva* in pursuit of the internal achievement of *raganuga bhava-siddhi*, *svarupa-siddhi*. Whether or not the present generation of *gurus* have the *adhikara* to adequately deliver the goods is a question in and of its own. God knows; it's a question that the *guru*-figureheads themselves will ultimately have to honestly acknowledge and answer. But in principle it should not be presumed that just because the general mass of people tends to be prone to degradation and hypocrisy, genuine people don't exist, and that such genuine people should not be instructed and encouraged

according to their genuine internal spiritual needs. It is not altogether surprising nor blameful that an astute disciple, upon ascertaining a drought of *siddhantically* viable confidential guidance at the feet of *guru*, might opt to go hither and thither in search for someone who might ably fill the bill. One could hardly expect to acquire the requisite knowledge of the moods of Krishna's *nitya-parikara* and their *anugata-seva* just like that, without receiving proper direction. At which stage in one's devotional progress does esoteric instruction concerning the culture of one's internal spiritual identity become relevant? The dictum most sanctimoniously bandied about, "First deserve – then desire," should be rightly understood. One deserves to desire simply when one's desire is big enough. One's desire is big enough when there is no room in one's heart for any other desire. Ultimately, the bottom line is this: Dire necessity knows no law.

Some devotees, though not understanding the intricacies of their own spiritual identities, may for all intents be esteemed as elevated *uttama-adhikaris*, given that they have somehow cent per cent surrendered body, mind, and words to the service of the Lord and His Holy Name with undivided faith, realizing Hari (*namī*) and Hari-nama to be identical. That is the opinion of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, as evidenced in Jagadananda Pandita's *Prema-vivarta*. Still, it would not be unreasonable to infer that these individuals, far from being fully self-realized, really need to make considerable progress to be all they can potentially be as representative Gaudiya Vaishnava spiritual masters in disciplic succession. To be sure, the internal *bhava* and pure devotional outlook of a *kevala-madhurya-premika-bhakta* (*vraja-vasi*) would no doubt have to be conscientiously and meticulously cultivated here and now in this current lifespan if one were to expect to achieve the highest perfection this time around. Otherwise, one could hardly expect to fully transcend all substandard notions (material or spiritual) about oneself before quitting the present physical body. It's not good enough to remain a fallible neophyte with an ambiguous sense of belonging to the spiritual realm. Everything will be tested at the time of death, the outcome determined by one's previously

cultured *bhava*. *Yam yam vapi smaran bhavam, tyajaty ante kalevaram*. It is not such a cheap or haphazard affair that “Oh well, anyway, somehow or other. What me worry.” No! Not that we apathetically await a windfall of mercy while mulishly ignoring the purposeful, scientific pursuit of the Gaudiya-sampradaya’s highest ideal.

It is a fact that the vast majority of those claiming to have been initiated by a bona fide *guru* in proper disciplic succession in terms of either *bhagavata-vidhi* or *pancaratrika-vidhi* will not upon the end of the present lifetime be fortunate enough to attain the Lord’s manifest *vraja-lilas*. If we want to be included among the small percentage that actually succeeds, we will have to seriously focus and intensify our *bhajana*. *Kripa-siddhi* is very rare – an extremely atypical improbability. Though we in all our inadequacies hope and pray for such divine dispensation, we cannot sophisticatedly force the exception to become our rule. That is not in our hands. The standard success formula, which largely stresses our willful application of appropriate devotional practices, should not be artfully ignored. We must scrupulously deepen and deepen our inner quest. *Jivasya tattva-jijnasu*. There should be no other purpose behind any of our life’s activities. *Nartha yas ceha karmabhiih*. That is deservingness. Do not heed the die-hard religio-institutional dogmatists. It’s not enough that children pretend to be adults ad nauseum. A tad of spiritual common sense may have to be mustered to grasp this point.

Revelation is gained through *priiti-bhajana*. Vrajendranandana Krishna from within supplies the required intelligence to one lovingly engaged in devotional service (*raga-bhakti*), not to one fearfully engaged merely on the basis of *shastra-vidhi* (rudimentary scriptural rules). *Priiti-bhajana* undoubtedly connotes the *ragatmika-bhakti* of either the ‘*mukhya*’-*vraja-janas* or the *sadhana-siddhas* and *kripa-siddhas* who have been elevated from conditional existence to the status of eternal Vrajavasi associates of the Lord. The foremost feature of this *priiti-bhajana* principle is found in the young *vraja-gopis*’ mode of spontaneous loving service. *Ramya kacid upasana vraja-vadhu-vargena ya kalpita*. There is no higher expression of *priiti* to be seen anywhere else. Dumping family ties, household

duties, reputation, feminine bashfulness, as well as all moral considerations, they run in the dead of night with resolute enthusiasm to satisfy the senses of Krishna. Lord Krishna reciprocally unfolds His innermost heartfelt feelings in proportion to the intensity and depth of His devotee's loving sentiments. The young damsels of Vraja, distinct from devotees in *vatsalya*-, *sakhya*-, and *dasya-rasas*, are ever infatuated and enthralled to intimately engage with Him day and night (*satata-yuktanam*) in keeping with the *asta-kaliya-nitya-lila* format. It is of little wonder that Krishna would feel naturally inclined to reveal to them His highest penchant for the pleasures of paramour love (*parakiya-rasa*), awarding them the intelligence (*dadami buddhi-yogam tam*) by which they may overcome all obstacles (so-called husbands, in-laws, superiors) in their endeavors to unite with Him as their *upapati* (*yena mam upayanti te*).

However, the *parakiya* disposition of one belonging to another catalytically diffuses its influence from different angles all over the land of Vraja to augment both in the Lord and in His devotees an apprehension of mutual unattainability in various ways. This effectively intensifies the nuances of love in all the primary *rasas*. It is certainly a fact that when applied to the delusive sense of Krishna's belonging to another (as the son of Vasudeva and Devaki, as the scion of the Yadu dynasty, or as a denizen of any realm other than the land of Vraja), the *parakiya* notion hurls His parents, friends, and servants into a deluge of acute loving desperation. Here, resultantly, the devotee's mind and heart are seen to run mad after Krishna in a way undreamed of in any other quarter of the spiritual world. The dread of separation from Krishna increases His value in the eyes of His devotee.

With regard to the *madhurya-rasa*, however, the *parakiya-tattva* finds its ascendancy not in the supposition that Krishna belongs to any other (as aforementioned), but rather in the fancy that the young newly wed *gopi* girls themselves belong to others – their lawful “so-called” cowherd husbands – and that Krishna must assume the wife-thief-like *upapati-bhava* in His efforts to woo their hearts. The superexcellent speciality of this

parakiya angle of influence is that it augments the succulence of *rasa* not so much by intensifying the devotee's desperation to serve the lotus feet of Krishna, but by amazingly amplifying Krishna's desperation to serve the feet of His devotee. Out of extreme anxiety to meet the nearly unobtainable, Shyamasundara forgets Himself, babbles incoherent nonsense, and wanders aimlessly around in circles like a madman. His disquietude over being separated from His *gopi* beloveds increases their worth in His eyes, making His mind and heart run after them, with special deference to the supremely luscious lotus feet of Shri Radhika.

It may be additionally noted in this connection that there are two brilliantly illuminating developmental features of *gopi-prema* described in the *shastras*: *ghrita-sneha*, love like ghee, which is not sweet in of itself; and *madhu-sneha*, loving affection like honey, which is always permeated with the sweetest deliciousness. Although married to another (Govardhana Malla), a situation which augments the *parakiya-bhava* in that sense, Shri Candravali, the right-wing-*gopi* embodiment of *ghrita-sneha*, characteristically traverses the inner path of thinking, "I belong to Him." As Krishna congruously reciprocates His devotee's *bhava*, it is seen that He sometimes in the course of His all-accommodating frolics condescends to nourish Candravali's affectionate feelings, but He's still His own man. Yet Shri Radhika, the left-wing-*gopi* embodiment of *madhu-sneha*, exerts an entirely different *parakiya* influence over Lord Krishna on the basis of Her thinking, "He belongs to me!" As Krishna responds to Radha's feelings, He finds that He is no longer His own man. No longer is He independent. Rather, He, the supreme beloved, becomes the henpecked lover of She who now dominantly disports the dignity of being supremely loved by Him. She becomes His beloved. He madly runs to give Himself to Her, and She, from time to time, condescends to allow Him to become Her devoted servant, making Him dance like a puppy dog in Her hands. She becomes the prepossessing possessor of Him who is ever-increasingly possessed by Her totally enticing, honey-like, transcendently preponderant ever-new supra-mundane feelings of absolute possessiveness. Thus, in Her absence, Shri

Krishna, transcendently engulfed in His own amorous delusions, finds Himself dancing behind a most skillful dancing-master, Shri Radhika's roving image, appearing before His lovesick gaze in every Vrindavana tree and creeper in every direction.

Parakiya-tattva similarly goes on to manifest another charming permutation. Radha's maidservants, like Radha, also cherish not the humor of belonging to Krishna. They are *radhika-snehadhika sakhis* who, though married to other cowherd boys, treasure the status of belonging to Radhika. Upon seeing a *manjari's* sincere and unwavering devotion to Shri Radha's lotus feet, a devotion filled with boundless love greater even than the love He Himself feels for His own devotees, charming Krishna will embrace her, take the betel nuts from His own mouth and place them in hers, and place His own forest garland upon her. Why? She is not His. She belongs to another (*parakiya*). She is Hers. Having taken shelter of the indomitable fortress of Radha's lotus feet, she has conquered Him outright. As seen in *Shri Sanat-kumara Samhita*, Lord Krishna instructs Sada-shiva, "A person who once surrenders to Her [Radha], saying, 'I am Yours,' attains Me also – without doing any extraneous *sadhana*. Of this there is no doubt. Therefore, O Shiva, one who desires to conquer Me should surrender wholeheartedly to Her. In this way, one becomes extremely dear to me." In *Ujjvala N...lamaṅgi*, Maṅgi-manjari says to the young, inexperienced Caturṅgi, "Caturṅgi, let me teach you what I have learned from my own experience. If you make friends with Radharaṅgi, then within that friendship is automatically included ecstatic love for Hari." Again, Krishna says in the *adi Purana*, "One who claims to be My devotee is not My devotee. But one who claims to be the devotee of My devotee is actually My devotee." Elsewhere, in the *Padma Purana*, Lord Krishna intimates to Narada, "Therefore, if you want to impress Me, then become wholly devoted to Radha."

Krishna has personally given Himself to Radha, and as might be expected, He very much appreciates and identifies with those elevated individuals who fortunately follow suit. Indeed, He becomes madly enamored of the *manjaris' sakhi-*

snehadhika-based unstinted bodily beauty, a sublimely scented beauty far surpassing that of the *sakhis* possessed of other *bhavas*. Hence, birds of a feather are seen to flock together. Since the *manjaris* are so intimately intertwined with Radhika and Krishna's heart is ever given to Radhika, the proximity of Krishna and Radha's *kinkaris* is not so astonishing. Pure devotees have no desire for *mukti*. They desire only *shuddha-bhakti*. Yet *mukti* is automatically achieved by them without their directly endeavoring for it. In the same way, though having not even the slightest desire to directly associate with the rascally Krishna, having no desire other than to serve Radha's lotus feet, Radha's maidservants naturally gain optimum access to the loftiest communion with Radharāṇī's Krishna, unimaginable to Radha's other categories of *sakhis* and Krishna's various other *yutheshvari* mistresses. If tenderhearted Shrimati Radharāṇī affectionately shows Her *kinkari* to Her Krishna, who walks the path of debauchery, ordering her to play the role of a transcendental love thief, please hear how that maidservant will faithfully serve Her. With smiling sidelong glances, and with the hairs of her body standing up with joy, she will tightly embrace Him. In this way, she will taste the nectar of Radhika's *carana-seva*. Even though Krishna tells the *manjari*, "The queen of My life is very merciful to you," and even though He again and again kisses her, embraces her, and maddens her with the nectar of amorous pleasures, and even though He creates in her a wonderful wealth of sweetest love, the *manjari's* thoughts nevertheless remain ever absorbed in the nectar pastimes of Shri Radhika's lotus feet. When the *manjaris'* necks are embraced by the magnificent arms of Radha's lover in the sweet and wonderful *rasa*-dance festival, splendid with tinkling bracelets, anklets, and other ornaments, they will always fix their gaze on the footprints of their queen, having no motive other than to please Her. Seeing the *manjari's* unrivaled love for Radhika, a love that has outclassed even His own, and seeing the *manjari's* purest motive to intently serve to fulfill Her purposes, enthusiastic Krishna inundates her with His own amplified love-bliss, unknown even to His own devotees. Even so, the *manjari's* resolve to sympathetically savor Radhika's

sweetest ecstasies, which exceed Krishna's *ananda* ten million fold, keeps her always fixed and victorious.

This same *parakiya* permutation, however, has another important function. There are many times (perhaps more often than not) when a *manjari* must thoroughly resist Krishna's advances in order to safeguard her integrity as Radha's confidential *kinkari*. The *parakiya* sense of belonging to Radha rather than to Krishna fortunately affords her the necessary footing and firmness to successfully accomplish the task. This bears special significance particularly for the *sadhana-siddha manjaris*, who are *vibhinnamsha-jivatmas* possessed of limited potency. They are *anu*, very insignificant, whereas Krishna is *vibhu*, unlimitedly great and omnipotent. On her own, the *sadhana-siddha manjari* could hardly hope to withstand the onslaught of Krishna's unlimited attractiveness, sweetness, beauty, and handsomeness. How could she resist Him? Can a particle of iron escape the force field of a great magnet? Highly unlikely. Yet, if there is the influence of a greater magnetism, if the *sadhana-siddha manjari* is constantly bound by the force of greater attraction, greater sweetness, and greater beauty, she can easily deflect His absolute unlimited wantonness. That is Shri Radhika. Without Her shelter, who could stand a chance? Radhika, the supreme *svarupa-shakti* counterpart of Shri Krishna, is also *vibhu*. She too is unlimited, as are Her many *kaya-vyuha* confidants. As such, Radhika, on the basis of Her transcendental preponderance, can effectively ward off the rapacious cupidity of Her lover, when She deems it necessary to play hard-to-get. So too, under the auspices of Radha, can Her privileged *vibhinnamsha kinkari*, through her bond of affection to Radha reinforced by her *sakhi-guru's* potent directives which totally accord with Radha's wishes. On the strength of Radha's prevailing influence and her rigid disinclination to breach Radha's trust, the *manjari* boasts the requisite authority and prerogative to say "no" to Krishna. Resisting, she may address Krishna in the following words: "Hey, you *lampata!* Control Your senses! Forget it! I'm not Yours for the taking. I belong to Svamini! I'm just Her insignificant messenger. Merciless boy, be kind to me. Let go of the edge of my *sari*. Look! The sun is

setting. I have to go to evening *arati* now. It is not Your fault that You cannot understand my dear friend's message and You slight Her valuable gift. You are just too unintelligent to understand. Krishna, why do You raise the fearsome cupid's bows of Your eyebrows in that way? O Krishna, O moon of Vraja, if You neglect my friend and instead try to make advances upon me, I shall give up my life on the spot!" In this way, the *jiva*, though very insignificant, also facilely acquires the power to purposefully play hard-to-get.

At this juncture, the *parakiya* influence displays another noteworthy facet. Unattainability on the basis of Radha's dominion appreciably places the *sadhana-siddha manjari* in a much fairer light. Due to the inaccessibility of Radha's maidservant, which generates an increased fascination within Krishna's heart, the value of the infinitesimal becomes greatly magnified. Something easily obtained can be easily taken for granted or abandoned. Something rarely gained even after considerable struggle becomes highly treasured. Krishna can easily overlook, disregard, or cast aside the minute *jiva*. What is the appeal of an insignificant spark compared with that of an unlimited fire? Radha and Krishna are said to be like a single ghee lamp with two immaculate, brightly blazing, infinite love-flames. They are ontologically one soul, yet, inconceivably, They morphologically manifest as two, differentiated, synergistically infatuating and infatuated, limitlessly lovable supreme personalities. In the contest of Their infinitely sublime love-infatuations, neither admits defeat. Their absolute love-play is perfect and complete. Yet we see that They, in the course of Their *lilas*, from time to time make Themselves scarce, so as to augment each other's worth before one another. Sometimes Krishna disappears to increase the *gopis'* love for Himself, or at other times, when, for instance, She finds that Krishna has started the *rasa-lila* before Her arrival to the *rasa-mandala*, Radhika, unseen by anyone, indignantly goes into hiding across the Yamuna to mope a Mana-sarovara lake of tears. No one likes to be taken cheaply. Everyone likes to be appreciated. Why? Because the same psychology is originally there in the Absolute. If the infinite counterpart aspects of the Absolute see the need

to actively expand each other's estimation of one another's worth, then how much more of such necessity exists for the relatively inconsequential *vibhinnamsha-jivas* in their approach to the Lord's reciprocal relationship. The plight of the *jiva* is such that her finitude hardly adds up to very much in face of the unlimited fancy of the Absolute. Oversimplifying the matter, some would suggest that the unlimitedness of Krishna's heart can certainly accommodate and magnify even the smallest-of-the-smallest spark of *prema*. Although that is not incorrect, still, it may be objectively observed that when the *jiva* spark becomes especially splendid by dancing in proximity to Shri Radhika's unlimitedly dazzling love-flame, Krishna's appreciation of the *jiva* becomes extraordinarily enriched and distinctly sustainable. Do not bother yourself to become too much infatuated with Krishna. Rather, act in such a way that Lord Krishna may become ever more infatuated with you.

In the realm of Vraja, *parakiya-tattva* glistens with yet another powerful radiance. *Manjari-tattva*, though commonly understood to be constituted of a singular mind-set, is in fact quite bejeweled with diversity. Just as there are left-wing (*vama*) and right-wing (*daksina*) *yutheshvari-gopis* and *sakhis* with many varieties of devotional dispositions, so also there are many varieties of left- and right-wing *manjaris*. Rati Manjari is *daksina-mridvi* by nature, right wing and very soft and sweet. As evidenced in Srila Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami's *Vilapa-kusumanjali*, Rati Manjari, from her right-wing vantage point, stands as perhaps the greatest exemplar of the mood of belonging to her *yutheshvari*, Shri Radhika. "I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O queen, please understand this and bring me to Your lotus feet." Among the *asta-manjaris*, Shri Lavanga Manjari is also *daksina-mridvi*, and Shri Rasa Manjari has qualities similar to hers. However, Shri Rupa Manjari is *vama-madhya* (left wing and moderate), Shri Guna Manjari is *daksina-prakhara* (right wing and harsh), Shri Manjulali Manjari is *vama-madhya* like Rupa, Shri Vilasa Manjari is *vama-mridvi* (left wing and sweet), and Shri Kausturi Manjari is similarly *vama-mridvi* in nature. The famous Shri Ananga Manjari is also *vama-madhya* in temperament. As among

countless snowflakes no two are exactly alike, so too are there untold varieties of *manjari-bhava*. It is, therefore, not at all astonishing that different *manjaris* are possessed of different cherished ambitions as well as different feelings toward their *yutheshvari*. Just as Radha's *madhu-sneha* differs from the *ghrita-sneha* of Candravali in terms of owner and owned, as previously discussed with respect to Shri Krishna's relationship, so the *sakhi-sneha* of the various *manjaris* also differ. Like Rati Manjari, many feel within themselves a deep sense of belonging to Radha. Others, however, boldly embrace the prominent sense of Radha's belonging to them. And, as one might surmise, Radha mercifully reciprocates their feelings. Krishna belongs to Radha, but to whom does Radha belong? She does not belong to Krishna. Nor is She self-possessed. She undeniably belongs to another (*parakiya*). She belongs to Her *manjari* maidservant. Krishna, in response to Radhika's *bhava*, again and again runs to give Himself to Her, but do you think He always finds it so easy? Certainly not! He's at the mercy of the *manjaris*, who may not all be so kindly disposed toward His unabashed wicked licentiousness. He often finds Himself futilely begging at the feet of Radha's relentless left-wing *manjari* maidservants who derisively keep Him at bay, playfully enhancing the effectiveness of the *vipralambha-rasa*, which greatly nourishes the Divine Couple's mutually intensified emotional ecstasies at the ripest time of Their imminent union.

Devotees who aspire after the Divine Couple's eternal, transcendently utopian realm of *svakiya-mayi sambhoga-lilas* (Ranga Mahal) generally think the *parakiya*-punctuated *vipralambha-bhava* to be antagonistic to the favorable fulfillment of Radha-Krishna's desire for continuous relishment of *sambhoga-rasa* (*nitya-nikunja-vihara*). They argue that in the spiritual world, the *ananda* savored by the Divine Couple in the company of Their intimate associates ever-increasingly expands for eternity anyway, so why wish upon Them the distress of separation if the intention is to make Them happy? They are already ever-increasingly happy to be in each other's company, so why disturb Them with the aim of increasing Their happiness? Just let Them be happy. This idea, which does not

accommodate the interplay of the diverse *rasas* of Vraja Dhama, is, however, analogous to an immature neophyte disciple's inability to understand the positive purpose of the *guru's* chastisement. Shri Guru mercifully punishes a disciple simply to strengthen, upgrade, and intensify the disciple's determination for spiritual progress. Yet the less intelligent neophyte prefers to be flattered than to bear the weight of the *guru's* reprimand, which seems intolerable. It is certainly a fact that the *ananda* of the Lord and His eternal associates eternally expands without limit. Still, on closer examination it can be clearly observed that, corresponding to the diverse *lila* configurations prelimited to various sectors of Goloka, Krishna and His entourage know either eternally ever-increasing *ananda*, eternally ever-increasing more intensified *ananda*, or eternally ever-increasing most intensified *ananda*. The *parakiya* element in *vraja-lila* certainly intensifies in various ways the *priti-bhajana* of the Lord's *ragatmika* associates. This enhances the Lord's *ananda-maya* reciprocal dealings with them in a myriad of ways, making them the objects of His special consideration and affection. As Krishna becomes mad after the *gopis*, who are accomplished in their varieties of *parakiya* absorption, which overstep the regulative principles of the *shastras*, so also, by extension of His compassionate nature, Lord Krishna becomes very much inclined toward those *sadhakas* who, recognizing and aspiring after the super-excellence of the *vraja-gopis'* *parakiya* loving sentiments, constantly drink deep of the ambrosial *priti*-saturated *asta-kaliya-lilas* of Vraja. He thus mercifully helps them by providing necessary intelligence (the ability to see things in proper perspective) and appropriate knowledge of the progressive path of *madhurya-maya-vraja-bhakti-bhajana* (*jnanadipena bhasvata*), by which they themselves may ultimately achieve the perfectional platform of unalloyed *priti* for His absolute pleasure. In this way, Vrajendranandana Krishna kindly dissipates the darkness of ignorance (*ajnana-jam tamah nashayami*) that prompts a *sadhaka's* attachment to any other objective.

From the stage of basic *anartha-nivritti*, when *guru* and Krishna will be satisfied with the intensity of our anxiety, our

desperation, our ardent avidity for attaining our natural eternal mood of loving ecstasy, *bhava-siddhi*, there will certainly be further and further enlightenment by gradual revelation from both within and without. Then practical attainment of our authentic, eternal *prayojana*, our requisite *premika* relationship as an assistant of Shri Guru in his or her eternal services to Radha and Krishna, will be sure and solid by Their grace. At that stage only, fullest empowerment to act as an agent of Krishna's compassion, both internally as a *vraja-gopa* or *gopi* serving in His *nitya-lilas* and externally as a preacher moving within this psycho-physical dimension, becomes possible – not otherwise.

This material world will be repeatedly *vyakta* and *avyakta* (manifest and unmanifest) for the rest of eternity. It is not that this insignificant point on the eternal time continuum is the all-important consideration. For all of eternity there will be innumerable fallen conditioned souls who will need to be delivered to the supreme perfection by the influence of someone's highly qualified and most capable, fully self-realized, super-consciously empowered preaching efforts. Furthermore, a most profound truth is that Krishna, being an extremely witty connoisseur, very often requests the emancipated *jiva* who has in the *sac-cid-ananda* spiritual body attained His pleasure pastimes at His abode of Goloka to return in the *acarya-svarupa* to this material cosmos as a *nitya-muktavatara*. Such a *mukta-jiva* may then act as the greatest emissary of the Lord's compassion to the *baddha-jivas* bound by the network of Maha Maya's allurements. Having become the recipient of the fullest extent of Krishna's mercy, only the said emancipated *jiva*, as a fully enlightened *gopa* or *gopi*, has the most splendid, incomparably beatific experience of the brightest absorbing *prema* contrasted against the black background of previous material existence characterized by abject forgetfulness of the Lord. The *nitya-siddha-jivas* as well as Krishna's divine *svarupa-shakti-tattva* counterparts, and even Shri Krishna Himself, being always transcendently situated and ever free from the influence of the modes of material nature, can never have such an extremely enhanced contrastive experience of the extent of

the Lord's compassion. Only the emancipated *jiva* fully evolved to the acme of individually achievable transcendence can most perfectly empathize with the plight of the conditioned soul. And only such a thoroughly unfettered devotee, having perfectly completed the progressive course of *vraja-bhakti-bhajana*, can bring about in Krishna an enhanced appreciation of His own golden quality of benevolence – an appreciation otherwise unfeasible in the spiritual world. It is only the emancipated *jiva*, therefore, who truly realizes what bliss is in store for the conditioned soul upon achieving the highest perfection, and as such, the emancipated *jiva* is the fittest instrument to deliver the fallen souls to the highest end. Having the fully actuated *sac-cid-ananda-siddha-deha*, the emancipated *jiva* remains ever beyond the degrading influence of the modes of material nature. He or she may, therefore, remain perpetually within the material world if required for assisting the Lord's preaching mission, apparently descending to the second-class or *madhyama-adhikari* devotional status without running the risk of falling down to the material platform. Every disciple wants Guruji to be such a fully empowered *parama-maha-bhagavata-avatara*, coming down from the spiritual world to deliver disciples to the lotus feet of Krishna. We will have the rest of eternity to collect the thousands and millions of disciples, if that's what Krishna wants. Not that we push the panic button, childishly play makeshift lifeguard *guru* jumping into the ocean of material existence to "save" the "drowning" souls, become overwhelmed by the tidal wave of *maya*, and heroically get ourselves drowned in the process.

It's nice that we in all our spiritual infantility intelligently rely on the power of our *guru's* fully self-realized purports in the matter of serving to assist his preaching mission through the medium of transcendental book distribution. That is, no doubt, a tremendous credit. In the end, however, it would surely be preposterous to expect the books to be fully Krishna conscious for us, wouldn't it? Transcendental book distribution certainly serves to powerfully inculcate ideal spiritual standards upon humanity. That is the mercy of the *acarya-parampara* – to give us some meaningful engagement along the way. Nevertheless,

we should not idiotically ignore the obvious implication that it is we who have to personally learn and gradually realize the full gamut of progressive pure devotional experience. This must necessarily be accomplished by the practical application of appropriate, authoritatively approved internal *rupanuga* methodologies, which are notably illustrated in the writings of Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami and Vishvanatha Cakravartipada. The point is that practically every one of us at some juncture was on the receiving end of the book distribution effort. “Book distribution effort” means that the books were distributed to someone, and we happened to be the “someones” to whom the books were distributed. Why were the books distributed to us? The idea should be that the books were distributed to us to induce us to go to the highest end of realizing our eternal relationship with Krishna in one of the *vraja-bhavas*. Unless and until we actually go to that end, the purpose of the book distribution that was done to enable us to receive the book won’t be perfectly fulfilled. Therefore we have to go to that end to make the book distribution effort a complete success. Any intelligent and thoughtful book distributor should deeply consider, understand, appreciate, and in due course apply this principle in practical life. Otherwise, what is the meaning of the whole affair? How can we deem our transcendental book distribution a complete success unless the “someone” becomes fully absorbed in relishing the *vraja-bhavas* as a result of having gained an attraction and greed for them? “Someone” – Who? – The we “someones.” “Work now; *samadhi* later.” That’s all right. But how much later? How later does later have to be before later can be considered later enough? Later after some future God-knows how many births?

Restoration of one’s constitutional topmost *vraja-prema*-saturated quality of *para-duhkha-duhkhi* compassion toward others, following in the wake of the immaculate moods of the *gopas* and *gopis* of Vrindavana, and achievement of full-blown self realization in terms of the *jiva*’s highest potential are in effect one substance. *Prema* and compassion are essentially tantamount in that *prema* deliberately expresses itself as the service endeavor to facilitate the happiness and relieve the

distress of Krishna and His devotees, not excluding the fallen potential devotees of this prison world of threefold sufferings. Particularly in the higher *vraja-rasas* – *shringara*, *vatsalya*, and some varieties of *sakhya* – a natural, supramundane sense of superiority in relation to Krishna as a lover, son, or friend may be noticed, wherein the devotee is seen to rightfully manifest *daya-bhava* (mercy) as a consequence of *karuna* (pathos) toward the Lord. Such occurs in response to suitable *uddipanas* (stimuli) due to the intoxicating nature of intensified *rati* for the *visaya-alambana* (object of affection), which naturally covers a *raga-bhakta*'s knowledge of Radha-Krishna's omnipotence. This is not very astonishing. As the highest features of *prema* exhibited in the stages of *sneha*, *mana*, *raga*, *anuraga*, *bhava*, and *maha-bhava* are unachievable in the present material body (*sadhaka-deha*), it is no laughing matter that one progressively attend to the internal culture of the moods of Vraja, for without doing so, one could never hope to manifest the suitable eternal spiritual body (*siddha-deha*) essentially required for *prema*'s maximum expression. Actually, the highest *premika* compassion evincible by any *jiva* can only be gained in the company of Krishna's eternal retinue after joining His manifest earthly *lilas* in this material world. When that degree of *prema* brims over to compassionately inundate the rotting lives of this world's doleful detinue, then only can topmost empowered preaching be done by anyone. As such, it would behoove any aspiring preacher who wants to realize his or her highest preaching potential to go to that end, even if it demands a concentrated, purposeful dedication of considerable time and energy in this lifetime to preparatory *antaranga-bhajana* with that long-term aim in view.

Greed-induced multi-aspected absorption in *ananda-maya-vraja-bhakti-bhajana*, both internal and external, could never in its real light be discerned by a deepest intellect to be a selfish or self-centered affair. It should never be confounded with the egoistical approach of the Himalayan forest-dwelling liberationist referred to by Prahlada in his prayers to Lord Nrisimhadeva, as recounted in *Shrimad-Bhagavatam*. If it were, it could hardly be accepted as *vraja-bhakti*, because by definition, at its very core, the exclusively selfless, self-giving

service attitude, far above petty concerns for mitigating personal pangs of material bondage or for private spiritual satisfaction, is meticulously cultured for the absolute pleasures of the Lord and His devotees. *Lalasa mayi*, the intense desire for being reinstated in one's eternal, constitutional, perfect spiritual body (*siddha-deha*) as an eternal resident of Vraja, should in no way be presupposed by anyone to be any sort of gross or subtle material or spiritual sense gratification. A surrendered devotee harbors no ambition separate from the interest of the Lord. Such a devotee's only business is to recognize and sensibly submit to Krishna's desire to have us back with Him – to serve Him, play with Him, and dance with Him in the eternal sky of Krishnaloka. In as much as it honors the Lord's wishes, a sincere *sadhaka* will nobly do the needful, pursuing the favorable internal cultivation by which His desire may ever be fulfilled. Not to do so would be utter conceit. This attainment of the Lord's *nitya-lilas* at Vraja-bhumi and onward to Goloka is coveted only for the purpose of achieving the otherwise unachievable highest expressible form of pleasure-giving *prema*. A true Vrajavasi does not consider personal happiness and distress independent of Theirs (Radha-Krishna's) to be in any way a compelling factor for his or her actions. That is the speciality of the Vrajavasis' standard of devotion, which distinguishes their excellence, far surpassing that of the best devotees of any other realm. Although in *vraja-bhakti* liberation and beatific delight are naturally consequential, as in any other pure devotional approach, they could never be seen as crucial elements in a Vrajavasi's decision-making process, though they should not necessarily be altogether eschewed or despised.

To say that the genuine, pure-hearted *vraja-bhakti-bhajanandi* is selfishly bent on his own bliss, personal benefit, or comfort zone would be akin to declaring that the *gosthy-anandi* preacher is primarily engaged as such to secure for himself either the spiritual beatitude; the ego-gratifying *daksina*, honor, and reputation; or the sheer adventure personally plundered from his burlesque preaching extravaganzas. One might exhaustively harp and harp about the hypocritical, cheap, imitative imposters of either ilk, but that should never ascribe

any improbity to the truly sincere. Negation of the nonessential in no way suggests a need to negate the essential. In either authentic case, we should be prepared to acknowledge the primary focus on the actual sincere service endeavor as distinct from its pleasurable or remunerative side effects – “eating to live” as opposed to “living to eat.”

Shrimati Radharani in Her inimitable Krishna conscious absorption transcendently experiences more distress than the combined distresses of all the conditioned souls of the entire material existence put together. Although Her “distresses” are transcendental and *ananda-maya*, as opposed to the niggardly nature of a *baddha-jiva*’s suffering, they are nonetheless very real and unimaginably excruciating. In truth, Her anxieties over the condition of the incarcerated *baddha-jivas*, as represented in the lamentations of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to Thakura Haridasa, constitute but a minor feature of Her complete whole domain of loving afflictions. It is of little wonder that a soft-hearted *para-duhkha-duhkhi* devotee, upon knowing these things, might opt to compassionately seek in various ways to somehow help mitigate Her severe amorous excruciations. How could we conceive that such an attempt to assist in the services of Her preponderant internal “home” affairs is in any way less noble than the attempt to alleviate the relatively insignificant sufferings of the minute individuals of this world? If anything, the consideration of the magnitude of necessity pertaining to the primary plight of Radha all the more amplifies the reason to laud the internal affairs of those enlightened individuals seriously endeavoring to qualify themselves to become Radha’s *palya-dasis* through strenuous *antaranga-bhakti-bhajana*. They are neither in the least *bhukti-kami* nor *mukti-kami* nor *svananda-kami*.

In any case, neither the genuinely pure-hearted *gosthy-anandis* nor the bona fide, high-minded, internally inclined *bhajanandis* ever purposefully act for their egocentric personal benefit. Their only aim is to make others happy – for Kṛṣṇa’s satisfaction ultimately Krishna, which is the very basis of their own fulfillment. By the satisfaction of Krishna through any program of loving service, the entire creation is benefited,

in the same way that by watering the root of a tree, all leaves, flowers, and fruits are automatically nourished. The presence of merely one pure devotee of either standing in this world can sustain the entire planet. However, for a *sadhaka*, particularly in Kali-yuga, no sort of internal *bhajana* or *asta-kaliya-lila-manasa-seva* can ever secure the superlative result without the practitioner at regular intervals functioning to help uplift the populace by loudly broadcasting the *sankirtana* of the Holy Names of Radha and Krishna. After all, *hari-nama-sankirtana* does happen to be the *yuga-dharma* for this current age. It is seen that although certainly situated as topmost *paramahansa-bhajanandis*, the Six Gosvamis of Vrindavana, headed by Shri Rupa, faultlessly epitomized this principle both by their regular performance of *Krishna-kirtana* and by their efforts to elucidate the principles of *vraja-bhakti-bhajana* in their many writings that have effectively served to propagate the truths about unalloyed devotion down through the generations. Indeed, one would do well to notice that though the Gosvamis always absorbed themselves internally in the search for Radha and Krishna through feelings of separation (*viraha-bhajana*) and in fact did not actually distinguish themselves as *gosthy-anandi* itinerant preachers, still, they externally benedicted the people of this world by the fruits of their resolute *ananda-maya-bhajana*. The incomparable, unswerving life of concentrated *bhajana* fortitude exemplified by the Gosvamis and their followers in and of itself stands ever monumental in the hearts of the *anuragi* Vaishnavas and perennially serves as a pre-eminent paragon for the world at large, conspicuously expressing the greatest good to all faithful aspirants on the path of inwardly progressive *antaranga-bhakti-bhajana* for all time to come.

Ultimately, both real *bhajananda* and real *gosthy-ananda* spontaneously spring from the *ananda-maya* platform under the influence of the Lord's *hladini-shakti* or *svarupa-shakti*, as per the evolvment of *bhava* and *prema* when one transcends the influence of the three modes of material nature. Anything short of that, however boastful, could hardly be more than a semblance of the real thing with relatively little efficacy on any front. Hence, a consummate *gosthy-anandi* of any stature always

stands on the solid underpinnings of advanced internal *bhajana*. Moreover, the transcendently situated *niskincana ananda-maya-bhajana-kari*, even though veiling himself from the worldly purview, ever enhances the world by dint of his very presence in all purity.

Innumerable neophyte “preachers” out on the most congested streets of the most important cities in the world, clangorously bellowing the semblance of *hari-nama-sankirtana* either on the offensive stage (*pratibimba-namabhasa*) or the clearing stage (*chaya-namabhasa*), could hardly accomplish for the spiritual welfare of the conditioned souls what could be achieved by the lips of even one reclusive forest-dwelling *shuddha-nama-bhajanandi*. Admittedly, *aparadha-nama* can offer the putrid fruit of karmic sense gratification (*bhukti*) within the cycle of repeated birth and death. *Chaya-namabhasa* can also at best free the heart from material contamination (*anartha-nivritti*), augmenting one’s chances for liberation from material existence (*mukti*), up to granting residence in Vaikuntha-loka. Even so, neither *aparadha-nama* nor *abhasa-nama* chanted by the millions could ever in a billion years impregnate the heart of anyone with *shuddha-bhakti-shakti*, enkindling the *jiva*’s dormant *vraja-prema*, as would a single recitation of *shuddha-nama*.

Nama-aparadhis, who generally favor the *bhogyadarshana* of Shri Guru, are more or less parasites within the institutional “body” of the spiritual master. They have not actually evolved to the status of spiritually functional constituents. Though donning *kanthi-mala* and Vaishnava *tilaka*, worshiping the deity, professing loyalty to Shri Guru, paying lip-service to the philosophy of full surrender, holding lofty ecclesial or priestly positions, and having ample opportunity for spiritually elevating *sadhu-sanga*, they in fact remorselessly behave rather like *kalicelas* or *kaitava-bhaktas* (typically categorized as *pratibimba-bhaktabhasa*), with little scope for much tangible spiritual advancement on account of their unrelenting gross and subtle exploitative tendencies. Indeed, their fanfare of devotional fervor may be comparable, at best, to cracking nuts with a *shalagrama-shila*.

Individuals who have yet to surpass the stage of chanting *chaya-namabhasa*, even though earnestly struggling to clear away offenses against the Holy Name along with their concomitant repercussions, are comparable to the shadow of a devotee (*chaya-bhaktabhasa*) or *bhakta-praya*, the mere likeness of a devotee. The *chaya-bhaktas*, though potentially nearing the threshold of pure devotion, are not thus far to be accepted as pure devotees in the true sense. Though affiliated with *sampradayaic* society through *bhagavata* or *pancaratrika* initiation and having recourse to graceful, spiritually powerful *sadhu-sanga* and pure devotional scriptures, all such said unqualified neophytes could have, at best, but a semblance of *shuddha-bhakti*. Quite often, due to imprecise perception, unwarranted attachment to narrow comprehension of the *acarya's* instructions, confusion, or sheer juvenile speculative notions about what they imagine to be the reality of Krishna consciousness, they disastrously obscure, adulterate, or even obliterate the essential substance of spiritual life. Espousing rampant, wide-ranging institutionally integrated erroneous dogmas while clinging to barely-understood institutionalized ritualistic formulas and formalities, they in due course imprudently project or spread a relatively distorted semblance of the pure devotional atmosphere upon the milieu of a bona fide spiritual establishment. Thus generating a vitiated semblance of the *acarya's sampradaya*, such unskillful persons knowingly or unknowingly form a virtual impasse for those inadequately acquainted with the Gaudiya *siddhanta*, fatefully hindering the latter's hopes of gaining even a glimpse of what would truly constitute ultimate *paramarthika* attainment.

One who chants *shuddha-nama* is actually a *shuddha-bhakta* in the real sense. And the simple truth is that only a *shuddha-bhakta*, whether *gosthy-anandi* or *bhajanandi*, can do much substantial good for anyone. Without chanting *shuddha-nama*, who can honestly claim to be having *nama-ruci*? Without chanting *shuddha-nama*, who can responsibly claim to be doing any kind of empowered *jiva-daya*? Without chanting *shuddha-nama*, who can sensibly claim that *Vaishnava-seva* has been truly accomplished?

Furthermore, one might consider this point: those who are actually *pandita* or learned in all the scriptural conclusions see all living entities with equal vision. One who loves Krishna loves everyone – cares for everyone – not only humans. Mahaprabhu, Lord Gauranga, expressed this when He asked Thakura Haridasa about the deliverance of earless beings like snakes, trees, and stones. There are innumerable microbes floating in just one cubic inch of air. There would naturally be so many trees, creepers, insects, lizards, rodents, birds, and other creatures within or around our *shuddha-nama bhajanandi's bhajana-kutira* – how many souls would be residing within his very body? The extent to which these countless souls would benefit by circumstantially associating with his pure-hearted supplication of *shuddha-nama* would be inestimable. The contextual implication would be that if we were to generously extend the concept of *gosthi* (family) to those other than human beings, then it would not be wrong to also consider the genuinely pure-hearted *bhajanandi* a *gosthi-anandi*. He at least inadvertently, if not consciously, does the highest good to the greater “family” within his sphere of influence by instrumentally serving to prompt the advent of Shri Hari-nama Prabhu, who mercifully dances within his heart, on his tongue, and in the atmosphere about him. Any sound vibration produced anywhere on this planet is believed to encircle the Earth seven times before dissolution. This makes it possible for his chanting to purify the ethereal atmosphere of the whole world. The result would be all the more powerful if he would be living in Vrindavana, where the purificatory benefits mount a thousand fold. No man is an island.

From another perspective, it may be inferred that even though the *nirjana-bhajanandi* outwardly appears to take the *nirjana* position, apparently neglecting to expand the “family” of devotees in this dimension, he could hardly be *nirjana* in the absolute sense in that he, in the course of his inner-dimensional absorption, remains ever associated with the constituent *vraja-jana* members of Krishna’s eternal “family” through the agency of *manasa-seva*. He is never actually really alone. Because he selflessly serves to favorably expand the bliss (*ananda*) of

Krishna’s “family” (*gosthi*) of eternal associates, he may surely, in the fullest sense, also be honored as *gosthy-anandi*. The purport is that until one at least approaches the stage of realizing one’s eternal *ananda-maya* relationship with the Supreme Absolute Reality in one of the five primary transcendental *vraja-rasas*, no one should out of envy, spite, or feelings of superiority toward others proudly or self-righteously proclaim oneself to be either *gosthy-anandi* or *bhajananandi*, much less dare to denounce one or the other on the basis of perverse lopsided religio-institutional bias or immature, subjectively predisposed shallow superstition. It is better, as a matter of common decency, to humbly try to chant the Holy Name with all self-effacement while endeavoring to progressively qualify oneself to unobtrusively assist the Lord and His devotees in whatever small way possible, as inspired by one’s indwelling monitor *guru* and confirmed by His various external representatives.

Bearing all this in mind, it might be argued from one angle or another that the only major consideration in this connection is the satisfaction of *guru* and Krishna – that if preaching, primarily through the medium of transcendental book distribution, is what satisfies them, then one need not look beyond the vigorous execution of that activity alone to achieve ultimate transcendence. Then again, it might be argued that if one is engaged in the activity of transcendental book distribution, one is Krishna conscious. Okay, fine. However, one might perspicaciously ask, “How Krishna conscious?” How “Krishna conscious” does “Krishna conscious” have to be before “Krishna conscious” could be considered “Krishna conscious” enough to be fully “Krishna conscious”? To what extent could a new *bhakta* be perfectly “Krishna conscious”? It is declared that anyone who follows the four disciplinary restraints – no illicit sex, no intoxication, no meat-eating, and no gambling – and chants a minimum of sixteen rounds of *hari-nama-japa* daily is qualified to make disciples all over the world. Yahoo! Fantastic! So then, if it is just a matter of outward animation, new *bhaktas* also follow the four regulative principles and chant a minimum of sixteen rounds even without having been initiated. Even

robots can do that! Maybe they should also be allowed to initiate disciples all over the world. Why only the institutionally rubber-stamped “*gurus*”? Robots could also be programmed to distribute books, or offer *aratrikas*, or clang a pair of *karatalas* for that matter. Let us ask ourselves a crucial question – Is it what we do, or the actual level of consciousness behind what we do, that is ultimately important?

We would do well to remember that neither *guru* nor Krishna really need our *patrams* (leaves) or *puspams* (flowers). They are pleased by *bhakti* alone. And just as *bhakti* is realized by degrees, so also is *guru*’s satisfaction, which is an evolvable thing, answering to the quality of Krishna consciousness more so than to the quantified outward display of “devotional service.” Though apparently aroused by the disciple’s external actions, *guru*’s pleasure, marked by profuse blessings for further progress in Krishna consciousness, must indeed be based upon the qualitative dynamics of the disciple’s internal service attitude to be real, solid, and spiritually legitimate. In fact, it may be reasonably established that the resolute desperation to discover the details of one’s internal constitutional identity as an eternal resident of Vraja in itself affirms the initial sign of Shri Guru’s profound benedictions upon a disciple. If such ardent solicitude is lacking, one might do well to wonder to what extent Shri Guru’s satisfaction has actually been invoked.

Some less-than-philosophically-astute individuals attempt to purposefully popularize as institutional dogma a fallacious understanding that by externally serving Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s *sankirtana* movement in *vaidhi bhakti* alone one will automatically pop up somehow or other in *vraja-lila* after the end of the present life – an unverifiable post-dated check. They insist that one need not currently concern oneself in the least with the cultivation of any internal program of *raganuga-sadhana*. “Just blindly put your duty-bound nose to the *vaidhi bhakti* grindstone. Don’t think; just do! *Ma shucah!*” This sort of crafty conclusion, manipulatively framed to camouflage the spiritual inadequacies or incompetence of a movement’s post-founder embryonic leadership, may serve to conveniently dodge or altogether evade deeper queries about the much-

anticipated here-and-now practical application of esoteric Rupanuga Gaudiya Vaisnavism – at least temporarily. But it hardly does justice to the subject; moreover, it commits a manner of violence against the progressive quest of a sincere candidate who perhaps actually deserves promotion to higher-level, internal Krishna conscious pursuits.

At a cursory glance, frequently adduced passages from Srila Prabodhananda Sarasvati's *Shri Caitanya-candramrita* and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura's *Shri Navadvipa-dhama-mahatmya* may appear to allude to this erroneous impression. However, these statements could never persuade anyone who has ventured to seriously scrutinize the various scriptural texts and commentaries of the Six Gosvamis and their followers to subscribe to such idiocy. The correct conception is quite the sound of a different drummer and also not so unmelodious. It is said in *Caitanya-candramrita* that *yatha yatha gaura-padaravinde . . .* – “to whatever extent a pious person becomes devoted to the lotus feet of Lord Gaura, to that extent the flood of the nectar of Radha's lotus feet spontaneously arises in his heart.” The word “extent” is crucial here. Similarly discussed is the matter of attaining the service of Krishna in all primary *rasas*, through the preliminary worship of Gauranga Mahaprabhu in *dasya-bhava*. Here, the word *dasya-bhava* in relation to the service of Mahaprabhu certainly does not connote reverential servitude in terms of the *vaidhi bhakti* format, any more than it would when used to denote the *rasa* of servitude to Krishna in Vraja. Rather, particularly for those souls who have the innate capacity for the conjugal *rasa*, the word *dasya-bhava* should serve only to indicate one's spontaneous attitude of loving service to the merciful Radha aspect of Gaura's personality. Serving Lord Caitanya in *dasya-bhava* becomes tantamount to serving Shrimati Radharani in *dasi-bhava (radha-dasya)*.

Generally, in the Rupanuga-sampradaya, one is advised to dive deep into the ocean of service to Lord Gauranga's Navadvipa *lilas*, internally conceiving oneself to be a *kishora-brahmana* who, as a servant of the servant (*dasanudasa*) of Svarupa Damodara Gosvami, accordingly assists to augment Mahaprabhu's relishment of various *vraja-bhavas*. In doing so,

one transitionally surfaces in the nectarean ocean of Radha's *madhurya-lilas* as a blissful *kishori-gopi* maidservant of the maidservant (*dasy-anudasi*) of Shrimati Lalita Devi within the group of Radha's *sakhis* in the land of Vraja. The Rupanuga approach to *gaura-lila* and *Krishna-lila* is not the dull-headed affair of the *prakrita-bhaktas*. Indeed, a conscientious internal culture of *bhavas* is most certainly required – a culture above and beyond though not necessarily exclusive of the external apparently *vaidhika* program of missionary duties. With this in mind, the basic unconditional service attitude practiced at the very onset of a novice's humble surrender to the *acarya's* external missionary training program may be easily adapted and internally applied at a more mature stage to fittingly promote the true, cognitive, esoteric evolvment of one's eternal constitutional *bhava-deha* or *vraja-svarupa*.

When Gaura's mercy will flood the heart with an aspiration to serve Radha's *vraja-lilas*, one will come to appreciate the value of service to the lotus feet of Lord Nityananda. Just as Gauranga inclusively embodies the *bhavas* of Krishna's foremost *svarupa-shakti* counterpart, Shri Radha, so also, Nityananda Rama inclusively embodies the foremost *baladeva-svarupa-shakti-tattva* who appears in Vraja as the younger sister of Radharani, Shrimati Ananga Manjari. Balarama's Kali-yuga *avatara* as Nityananda is markedly more than Baladeva Himself in that He, unlike Balarama, can directly relish the internal mood of loving service to the lotus feet of Radha, in the *madhurya-rasa* parallel to Gaura's relishment of *radha-bhava*. As previously mentioned, Krishna and His supreme *svarupa-shakti* counterpart, Shri Radha, though morphologically differentiated, are ontologically one. So also is the case with Baladeva and His topmost *svarupa-shakti* expansion, Ananga Manjari, from whom Balarama's own personal consorts such as Varuni and Revati expand. All the members of Krishna's family, including Balarama, possess the deepest regard, affection, and love for the sweetest, most eminently lovable Shrimati Radharani. Yet, owing to certain social constraints, Balarama, as Krishna's older brother, is practically dispossessed of any opportunity to directly express His love for Her. So, to fulfill His most

confidential desire to serve Radha's lotus feet, He accepts an expanded feminine form as Her younger sister. Still He Himself, in His masculine Baladeva *svarupa*, is unable to directly relish the experience of being in the position of His *shakti-tattva* expansion, just as Krishna is unable to directly relish the moods of Radha. He, therefore, in *gaura-lila*, accepts the *bhava* and complexion of His supreme self-same *svarupa-shakti* counterpart to experience that which was transcendently impossible in *Krishna-lila*. Thus Balarama manifests the form of Nityananda Rama in the same way that Krishna dons His Gaura *svarupa* to savor the ultimate loving disposition of Radha in *vipralambha-maha-bhava*. As Krishna and Balarama are one, so, similarly, Radha and Ananga Manjari are one. In fact, Ananga Manjari is celebrated as a veritable second Radha. Yet, by the will of Balarama, she acts as *dasy-anudasi* in the capacity of a *prana-sakhi* (*upa-manjari* of Lalita Sakhi) in the service of Radharani, just as Balarama Himself functions as servitor Godhead to assist *svayam-rupa* Krishna in various ways. Balarama as servitor Godhead is *adi-guru* in the *vatsalya*, *sakhya*, and *dasya rasas*. Similarly, Balarama's expanded *madhurya-svarupa*, Ananga Manjari, is the *madhurya-rasa adi-guru*, who most compassionately acts as the liaison linking the *jivas* with the confidential services of Radha and Krishna. Her position as Radharani's younger sister greatly facilitates this role. This is a hint as to the import of Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura's statement *heno nitai bine bhai, radha-Krishna paite nai*. Indeed, it is only by Nitai's boundless mercy upon the most fallen conditioned souls that the *vraja-gopis'* superexcellent spontaneous devotional *bhavas* have been made readily accessible to the whole world. Just as Ananga Manjari is the special mercy manifestation of Radha, so Nityananda (in the mood of Ananga Manjari) is the special mercy manifestation of Gaura (in the mood of Radha). By Nitai's special causeless mercy, one becomes free from material attraction, attains the land of Vraja, and finds shelter at the lotus feet of the Six Gosvamis headed by Shri Rupa. By seriously acquainting oneself with the writings of the Six Gosvamis of Vrindavana and their authorized representatives, one accesses the truths concerning

parakiya-rasa-maya Radha-Krishna and the appropriate *bhajana-kriya* required for attaining Their eternal relationship on the path of spontaneous loving devotion.

Mere rudimentary *vaidhika* devotion to the feet of Lord Caitanya can hardly evoke a highly evolved nectar-flood of Radha's direct influence upon anyone. "Extent," as applied to the principle of *gaura-bhakti*, refers to the degree of internal devotional qualification in one's approach far more than to any externally quantifiable mass of regulative devotional practice. The factual proof that the nectar of Radha's lotus feet is extensively flooding one's heart will be seen in one's attentiveness to deeply understand and practically pursue the path of *vraja-bhakti-bhajana*. Either *sambandhanuga-bhakti* (*dasya*, *sakhya*, or *vatsalya-bhajana*) or *kamanuga-bhakti* (*madhurya-bhajana*) will be practiced under the guidance of the Gosvamis according to one's progressively perceivable natural internal inclination or aptitude for a particular mellow of loving service to divinity. The edict *seva sadhaka-rupena siddha-rupena catra hi / tad-bhava-lipsuna karya vraja-lokanusaratah* mentioned in Srila Rupa Gosvami's *Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu* truly for all time applies both externally and internally to *sadhakas* who have yet to transcend material bondage as well as to *siddhas* who are *jata-rati* Vaishnavas having attained the perfect realization of *sthayii-bhava*, or constant devotional ecstasy. There is no broadly applicable streamlined institutional lame way out. No founding *acarya* of any Krishna conscious establishment ever casuistically instructed in such a way so as to shrink from the responsibility of deliberately enhancing or nourishing the deserving disciple's progress onto the path of beatified *vraja-bhakti-bhajana*.

When purposefully prescribed to forcibly inculcate the principles of Krishna consciousness, *vaidhi bhakti* certainly functions to coercively rehabilitate a conditioned soul's misdirected or unconstitutional *raga* (attraction) or *asakti* (attachment) to worldly objects of material sense gratification, by obliging one to focus upon Krishna-ized sense objects. This is, no doubt, a step in the right direction, and in the beginning it is actually required. If, however, one does not intelligently

endeavor in the present life to surpass the rudimentary stage of obligatory, reverential devotion strictly governed by scriptural regulations and embark upon the path of spontaneous, internal *raganuga* attraction (*para bhakti*), one will almost invariably remain a *kanistha-adhikari* or *prakrita-bhakta*, moored to the modes of material nature. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. At best, one may come to the platform of *aishvarya-jnana-mayi bhakti*, gaining fitness for *mahima-jnana-yukta-prema*. This type of *bhakti*, contaminated with knowledge of the Lord's supremacy, leads to the spiritually conditional realm of Vaikuntha-loka or the majestic Vaikuntha-vrindavana on Krishnaloka, where the *aishvarya-lilas* of Radha and Krishna are served in awe and veneration or, at utmost, the opulent realm of Dvaraka.

Vraja-lokera bhave yei karaye bhajana / sei jana paya vraje vrajendra-nandana. "One who worships the Lord by following in the footsteps of the inhabitants of Vraja-bhumi attains Him in the transcendental planet of Vraja, where He is known as the son of Maharaja Nanda." (Cc. *Madhya* 9.131) All bona fide Gaudiya Vaishnava *Acaryas* agree that the *madhurya-lilas* of Vraja can only be attained by ascending to the terrace of *kevala-madhurya-prema* via the path of *raga-bhakti* under the merciful guidance of an emissary of Vraja Dhama. Furthermore, it is clearly declared by Kaviraja Gosvami in his *Shri Caitanya-caritamrita*, with reference to the appearance of Vrajendranandana Shyama, that *raga-marga bhakti loka karite pracarana*. *Pracarana* means to propagate, to make the super-excellence of the path of *raga-bhakti* known to the conditioned souls of this world. Unless one is exposed to the vibrant, esoteric transcendently erotic principles of the spiritually constituted damsels of Vraja, which surpass all considerations of mundane morality, one can hardly expect to clearly construe the lie of its lustful perversion projected upon the illusive material panorama. It is imperative that the preachers of Krishna consciousness become solidly acquainted with the truths regarding the propriety of the sublime pastimes of Radha and Krishna so as to powerfully eradicate the misgivings concerning these affairs abounding among scholars, theologians,

and the general populace. It is not enough to unconvincingly cower behind a glib formula that denounces any open discussion of the matter before the unconverted. Taboo, prudery, and timidity concerning the enlightened free propagation of the correct conception of the thing have only paved the way for rampant misconception amid those victimized by the vigorous, widespread propaganda of the Mayavadi impersonalists, Sahajiyas, professional preachers of the *Bhagavata*, and other such demonic elements waylaying an already darkened contemporary world view devoid of properly developed personal understanding of the Absolute. Shripada Shankaracarya purposefully preached his concocted illusionist philosophy of impersonal monism with the intention to create within the minds of the people in general an aversion to the proposition of a tasteless impersonal outcome of religious life. In this way he indirectly promoted irreligion in the form of materially “tasteful” lawless sexual indulgence, the result of which would be a profuse influx of low-life progeniture (*varna-sankara*) upon the face of the Earth. His mission was simply to preface the descent of Lord Gauranga by kindly giving the most condemned conditioned souls a chance to gain the highest good upon encountering the *sankirtana* movement with the Lord’s maximum munificence in view. Unless the preachers of the Rupanuga-sampradaya systematically and forcefully present the topmost personal conception of God as the supreme lover, the ultimate purpose of Shankaracarya’s undertaking will not be fulfilled. Moreover, people will not have the opportunity to clearly see an all-attractive *raso vai sah* alternative to the relatively tasteless *brahman* conception of spirituality, without which they could hardly have much impetus to abandon the quest for *rasa* on the mundane plane. Knowledge of the true nature of the original spiritual mellow of conjugal love as the ultimate cause of its dull, shadow-like material reflection effectively alleviates the problem of mundane affinity by the power of superior magnetism. Scientific exposition of the highest *madhurya* aspect of the Personality of Godhead will naturally preclude all philosophical aberrations thereof to benefit the open-minded. Offenders, determined to deny the

authoritative persuasion of the Vaishnava *Acaryas*, will go to hell anyway of their own accord. What can be done? We should not be overly concerned about that.

Aishvarya-jnanete saba jagat mishrita / aishvarya-shithila-preme nahi mora prita. “Knowing My opulences, the whole world looks upon Me with awe and veneration. But devotion made feeble by such reverence does not attract Me.” (Cc. adi 3.16) *Aishvarya-jnane vidhi-bhajana kariya / vaikunthake yaya catur-vidha mukti pana.* “By performing such regulated devotional service in awe and veneration, one may go to Vaikuntha and attain the four kinds of liberation.” (Cc. adi 3.17) Lord Shri Krishna desired to appear in this world at the very end of Dvapara-yuga for two reasons – to personally taste the quintessential mellows of love of God (*prema-rasa-niryasa*) and, beyond that, to purposely propagate the process of *raga-marga-bhakti* in the world. In doing so, He would herald the highest good to the most fallen people of this Age of Kali, who would get the opportunity to learn of His enchanting *vraja-lilas* from the scriptural accounts of His earthly pastimes. Krishna, as *lila-purusottama*, tasted *prema-rasa* from the standpoint of the *visaya-vigraha*, the supreme enjoyer and object of *prema*. Being relatively unimpressed by reverential devotion, He deliberately revealed the beauty and sweetness of the Vrajavasis’ purest love for Him to the world by practically evincing that love in the course of His manifest pastimes. Yet, until His advent as Lord Caitanya, His purposes remained largely unfulfilled. Retrospectively, it appears that *Krishna-lila*, in fact, simply paved the way for the Supreme Lord’s appearance as Lord Caitanya who, for the most part, merely expanded upon and, in His own way, dynamically reinforced the two original (internal and external) objectives of Krishna. By tasting *prema-rasa* from the standpoint of the *ashraya-vigraha*, Shri Radha – the resplendent abode of the highest *prema*, whose relishment is ten million times greater than that of Her beloved – Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, as *prema-purusottama*, became increasingly moved to compassionately distribute *vraja-prema* in an unprecedented and unparalleled way. In fact, as detailed throughout the Gosvamis’ writings, He exuberantly preferred to

bestow that most succulent, mysterious *prema* that follows in the wake of Radha's matchless expressions of *maha-bhava* (*samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam sva-bhakti-shriyam*). In this way, Mahaprabhu abundantly fulfilled what remained unfulfilled in Krishna's attempt, by powerfully preaching the process of unalloyed devotion as He demonstratively practiced it Himself. If Lord Krishna desired to propagate *raga-marga bhakti* in the world by way of exhibiting His *madhurya-lilas*, Lord Gauranga, the self-same Lord Krishna appearing in Kali-yuga as the most munificent devotee of Himself, desired it a thousandfold on the basis of His *audārya* disposition. That is precisely what distinguishes Him as the *maha-vadanyavatara*. Kindly bear in mind that the Lord's aim to propagate the *vraja-bhavas* is but an aspect of the external reason for His divine appearance, an aspect that was not meant to be kept hidden. In fact, to further this propagation work, the Six Gosvamis and many of their contemporaries and followers took great pains to elaborately illustrate both gradual (external) and sophisticated esoteric (internal) methods of *raga-marga-bhajana* in their volumes of literature. Thus, scientifically expounding the principles of *vraja-bhakti*, they continue to perpetuate the greatest act of mercy upon the world's Kali-yuga populace down to the present day. That few would be chosen (qualified) does not imply that many should not be called. We, as living *vibhinnaṁśa jivas*, are eternally parts and parcels of Lord Caitanya. Part and parcel means "partner." We are meant to act as partners in the "business" of the Lord, having the same shared interests at heart. Suffice to say, more mature "business partners" representing the Lord's *sankirtana* movement should recognize the gravity of their assigned "business" responsibilities. Following in the Lord's footsteps, we should likewise personally pursue the matchless mellows of love of Godhead (*vraja-prema*). Similarly, whenever and wherever possible, we should also purposefully preach *raga-marga-bhakti* in the world, showing the highest munificence to the fallen people of this Age of Kali. Mercifully spark the *lobha* or greed for the thing by facilitating an inspired regard for, and attraction to, the *Bhagavata's* essential message, and then, in due course, help to diligently fan

that spark of *lobha-maya-shraddha* into a blazing fire of *raga-mayi* spontaneity – not that we should beat about the bush, becloud the issue, sweep it under the rug, or altogether exterminate the thing. If out of devotional ineptitude, immaturity, oversight, deceitfulness, miserliness, or sheer ignorance, we were to grossly neglect or faithlessly sidestep the forward implementation of this prime, two-fold missionary objective, then how could we, in good conscience, deem ourselves as compliant, competently instrumental, magnanimous agents of *guru* and Gauranga’s grace?

Deliberating upon the profoundest precepts of the Gaudiya-sampradaya and the progressive navigation of the Krishna consciousness movement, we might guardedly examine how a number of individuals in key ecclesiastico-administrative positions, due to either inexperience, imprudence, unadorned obtusity, neglect, or self-aggrandizing, perhaps even diabolical intents, are, as a matter of fact, irresponsibly steering the movement in a direction that may not so closely adhere to the actual course intended by the *sampradaya*’s founding *Acaryas*. So, fine! Let them do like that. Whatever nonsense they think to do, let them do it. Because in any case the flow of the *kevala-bhakti* cult, by the decree of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, will be *apratihata*, unobstructed. It will not be checked by any faction’s substandard, foolish, materially conceived, watered-down misrepresentation of the *sankirtana* movement’s fundamental principles. Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu doesn’t really need the help of any individual or any group of individuals to accomplish His missionary goals. They who are internally advanced enough to precisely distinguish and wholly surrender to the Lord’s divine loving network undoubtedly inherit the privilege of assisting Him as His authorized *sampradayic* agents. If we don’t act as His instruments to purely propagate the full gamut of essential teachings of the Rupanuga tradition, it is not that no one will come forward to do the needful. Lord Krishna instructed Arjuna, “Even if you do not fight, all the warriors assembled on this battlefield are already put to death by my arrangement. Therefore, relinquish your petty weakness of heart! Acting as My instrument, stand up and fight!” Similarly,

Lord Caitanya has enjoined that the Krishna consciousness movement be spread to every town and village throughout the world. And “spread” means to spread in terms of the aforementioned purpose for which the movement is actually meant – to raise people to the path of spontaneous loving devotion, principally by way of congregational chanting of the Holy Name – thus giving them the chance to evolve to the stages of *raganuga-bhava* and *vraja-prema* in this lifetime, not after some future millions of births, who knows how far down the road. Mahaprabhu’s purposes will certainly be fulfilled in some way or other by someone; do not think otherwise. It’s just a question of who gets the credit.

Neither the territories nor the by-laws nor the treasuries, logos, or various other external accoutrements of an institution necessarily constitute the spiritual essence or *sampradayic* spirit of the institution, any more than the body of an individual constitutes the soul of the individual. Just as an automobile is important in so far as the automobile serves the purposes of its owner, a spiritual institution can be considered important to the extent that it actually serves to further the spiritual objectives of the *sampradaya* it claims to represent. If the car breaks down or crashes, the owner may want to junk the thing and accept another more reliable conveyance. Often it is moralized that the spiritual master’s institution is the “body” of the spiritual master. But the body of the spiritual master may become diseased. If some part of the spiritual master’s body becomes gangrenous, then it may become necessary to amputate that part of the body. In other words, the body may become at least partially if not wholly dysfunctional in the matter of serving the purposes of the spiritual master. That is not impossible. It is not that the body of the spiritual master, either in a healthy condition or in a diseased condition, is the spiritual master proper. The institution is his body, the printing press is the heart of that body, his magazine is the backbone of that body, his disciples are his bodily limbs, the collected hoards of money are that body’s precious blood, but what constitutes the consciousness, the essential supra-cognitive aspect of the *acarya*’s eternal spiritual existence? One might proffer that his

consciousness is tantamount to his teachings, his personal ecstasies expressed in the purports of his books. Who would disagree? But then we should ask whether or not we have even begun to understand the most basic of those teachings – that we are not this body. The body of the spiritual master is not the eternal cognizant essence of the spiritual master proper. The spiritual master is not his body anymore than we are our bodies. To say that the spiritual master’s institution is the body of the spiritual master does not imply that the spiritual master’s institution is the quintessence of the spiritual master’s existence. So the conclusion should be that the institutional “body” of the *acarya* is not to be equated with the *acarya*’s cognitive, essential spirit – the eternal *sampradayaic* truths. Rather, the body is to be seen as merely the chariot of the soul. The institution is a body through which the realizations of the *sampradayaic* soul are to be expressed. Service to the *acarya*’s real self interest is not merely a bodily (institutional) affair; it is to recognize, embrace, uphold, and disseminate the tenets of his *sampradaya*’s highest ideology, an ideology expected to be embodied by his institution.

From another angle, we may say that the body of the *acarya* is factually identical with the *acarya*’s soul, at least in a qualitative sense, in that the *acarya*’s body is fully absorbed in *yajna*, sacrifice. *Bramarpanam brahma havir, brahmagnau brahmana hutam / brahmaiva tena gantavyam, brahma-karma-samadhina* (Bg. 4.24). All things connected with the performance of sacrifice – the firewood, the fire, the ghee, the offered grains, the officiating priest, the performer of sacrifice, and the sacrifice itself – become merged in transcendence. They become one in purpose, one in quality, as constituents of Brahman via pure devotional *yajna* for the satisfaction of Visnu. Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. So in that sense the body of the spiritual master is respected on the same level as the spiritual master’s soul. Even if his body becomes diseased or a portion of it becomes gangrenous, he may still remain fully determined to engage the body in acts of sacrifice. However, the spiritual master may observe that the disease of his body is such that it unremittingly obstructs the

body's reasonable absorption in *yajna*, by which it could viably stand as a useful Brahman constituent of his existence, so much so that he may blamelessly opt to discard his body as useless for all practical purposes. If the body becomes in some way contemptuous toward the spiritual master's real pure devotional ideal, or if the body becomes contemptible in the eyes of the spiritual master, then what's the use of such a body? In other words, if the institutional "body" of the *acarya* becomes deviated from its true purpose, in terms of the function intended by the *acarya's sampradayic* "soul," then that body becomes rejectable. We would have to question whether the institutional body of the *acarya* is, in truth, fully engaged in *yajna*. To the extent that the constituents of the *acarya's* institutional body are fully absorbed in *yajna*, to that extent they are spiritual. Conversely, to the extent that they are deviated toward sundry gross and subtle material pursuits or substandard, conditional spiritual pursuits, to that extent they could hardly be considered spiritually fit – or perhaps their legitimacy as actual constituents should be dismissed. In other words, we should sagaciously question whether the "constituents" that are materially or in other ways conditionally absorbed are at all real constituents of the spiritual master's institutional body, or are only apparent constituents having no genuine relation as parts and parcels of the true form of the *acarya's* institution although seeming to be integrally related. Viewed sanely, they may be deemed as reflections (*pratibimba*) of constituents, shadows (*chaya*) of constituents, partial constituents, or perhaps atrophied constituents.

If we accept the body of the *acarya* as qualitatively identical to the soul within that body, we might analogously conclude that the institutional body of the *acarya* should be seen as identical to the *acarya* himself, the *sampradaya's* pure representative. We would then have to willingly admit that those customarily seen as constituents of the institutional body who are not purely absorbed in unalloyed devotional *yajna* as per the ideals and standards of the *acarya's sampradaya* could hardly be accepted as parts of the *acarya's* institution in the true sense, although claiming to be or masquerading as such.

Granting that the *acarya* is a *maha-bhagavata*, an unalloyed devotee of the Lord, the institution purported to be his body would necessarily have to embody his ideals as a completely spiritual manifestation of the purest *sampradayic* principles, as an external exemplar of internal devotional substance, qualitatively one with the *acarya*. If that were so, then wherever we would see a dearth of unalloyed devotional substance, we would have to question whether what we are seeing before us is, in fact, the real form of the institution. Otherwise, since the quality of the disciples is said to reflect the quality of the *guru*, someone might wonder whether the institutional anomalies represent impurities or a lack of qualification on the part of the *acarya* himself. Hence, they who, though declaring institutional membership, consciously or ignorantly undermine, either by precept or by personal conduct, the true *sampradayic* standards and decline to comply with the *sampradaya's* ultimate purpose of facilitating the total range of unalloyed devotional experience in its members, could scarcely themselves be accepted as bona fide representatives of the *acarya's* institution. In other words, we would have to very seriously question what or who actually constitutes the institution of the *acarya*? Once again, we would have to discerningly separate form from substance or spirit.

Why say that the institution is the body of the *acarya*? Given that the *acarya* is the representative of Lord Caitanya, we should be able to reasonably conclude that the institution is, in fact, the body of Lord Caitanya. Yet, it is seen that, in the course of His manifested earthly pastimes, Mahaprabhu uncompromisingly dismissed His own devotees who deviated from standard devotional proprieties. Similarly Advaita acarya openly rejected a few of His own sons due to their preaching erroneous conclusions. A son is considered an expansion of his father's own body. They were His sons; still, He unhesitatingly disowned them. In the same way, if on account of sadly sensing a spiritual impotence, a disciplic incompetence amongst its membership, Mahaprabhu would deem an institution established by any eminent representative of His *acarya-parampara* effectually useless in the matter of practically advancing His intended missionary objectives, He may see fit to

altogether discard or perhaps sideline the ineffective community until (if and when) its half-slumbering constituents eventually wake up, wise up, and actually take up and powerfully preach the progressive path of beatified *vraja-bhakti-bhajana* for the benefit of the world. Meanwhile, the pure broad-minded souls adhering to the path illuminated by the expressed ideals of the Gaudiya *Acaryas*, whether linked to this, that, or any other branch of the Caitanya tree, institution or no institution, will be selected and empowered by Lord Gauranga to do the *sampradaya's* real propagation work. They will be credited with helping the Lord to fully expand His ten-thousand-year golden era of maximum mercy within this darkest nightmare Age of Kali, as the rest remain satisfied with an ongoing mere semblance of the *sampradaya's* legacy.

Sometimes the example is given that the Ganga, even though filled with filthy debris (stool, corpses, factory waste, and other assorted garbage), is still the Ganga. It is always pure, no matter what. So in the same way, the *acarya's* institution is assumed to be always pure, even if it is burdened by many impurities. But the stool floating in the Ganga is not the Ganga. Neither are the dead bodies, the oodles of scattered plastic bags, the laundry soap bubbles, the oil slicks, nor the other abounding ungodly contaminants carried by the Ganga. The Ganga is the Ganga. Whatever is impure or rejectable is brushed aside or disregarded, and then we take our bath in the Ganga. We don't take our bath in the stool. We don't take our bath in the dead bodies. We take our bath in the Ganga. Ganga water itself is pure. But if we were to make the mistake of thinking that the corpses, stool, or other debris are identical with the Ganga, are as venerable or as important as the Ganga, or are parts and parcels of the Ganga, then our thinking would certainly be a grand parade of sheer stupidity. The correct understanding of the analogy should be as follows: The Ganga is analogous to the *sampradayaic* flow, not to the institution. The pure form of the institution corresponds to an obstruction-free stretch of the Ganga's riverbed channeling the river's (*sampradaya's*) powerful current. Superfluous stool, corpses, and garbage represent various petty *anarthas*, while massive sand dunes,

craggs, and dams correspond to more seriously obstructive misconceptions, philosophical deviations, and exploitative tendencies. The unalloyed *sampradayic* flow that is to be channeled by an institution is certainly pure. The institution can also be considered pure and wholesome to the extent that it actually facilitates the free-flowing current of pure and powerful *sampradayic siddhanta*. To that end, the various *apasiddhantic* anomalies or non-devotional absurdities vexing an institution's state of affairs must be diligently circumvented or discarded by a concerted institutional *anartha-nivritti*. At any rate, the bath is not to be taken in the institution or in the various attending *anarthas*. The bath is to be taken in the pure teachings of the *sampradaya* obtained wherever we can fortunately gain the association of genuine, highly enlightened *sadhus*. Then one will make progress, becoming purified not by the institution per se but by availing oneself of, adhering to, and serving the progressive current of the *sampradaya's* unalloyed devotional teachings.

Another example: If there was no water in Radha-kunda, who would be interested to go there for bath? A *kunda* without water would hardly be considered a *kunda*. The steps leading into the *kunda* facilitate our approach to the water, but if we were to slip or trip on a loose stepping stone, we might fall on our butt or break our head before having the chance to take a dip. The idea is to take bath in the water, not in the steps. Similarly, the institution is set up to facilitate our access to the liquid mellows of the *sampradayic* truths. If we get hung up on the institution to the point where we fail to honor the *sampradayic* truths, then what would be the use of all the gorgeous socio-institutional arrangements?

To further illustrate, a shower in a shower-room is called a shower not because there is a nicely tiled shower stall with a nice shower curtain and a first-class shower fixture, soap dish, towel ring, and ingenious drainage system. Unless a shower of water comes forcefully showering out of the shower's shower head, a "shower" would be a shower in name only. The corresponding components of the analogy should be obvious. If there is no water or just a trickle, who in their right mind would

sensibly accept it to be a shower? Similarly, regardless of exhaustive institutional sophistication, if at the end of the day we were to dejectedly notice a scarcity of high-level unalloyed devotional instruction, or barely a dribble from the orifices of the elegant institutional fixtures, how could we realistically infer the presence of a full-force *sampradayic* flow?

It is not the institution that makes the *sampradaya*. The *sampradaya* is not the institution. *Sampradaya* means school – a school of thought, an angle of vision or approach to the Absolute to be disseminated through the medium of an *acarya-parampara*. If the institution preserves and aids endowment of the pure teachings of the *Acaryas* to posterity, then the institution, as a facilitator, is a viable instrument in the hands of the *sampradaya*. It's helping the *sampradaya* do its job. But if the institution fails to recognize and responsibly fulfill the ultimate purpose of the *sampradaya's* very existence, the institution becomes more or less worthless in that the *sampradaya's* true or ultimate legacy would be forbidden to flow beyond the barrage of shoddy institutional cerebral misconstructions and auxiliary convolutions thereof. Just as the Ganga naturally seeks the path of least resistance, so also, unsurprisingly, the *sampradaya's* current flows wherever it finds a channel unobstructed by the various categories of spiritual inadequacy and mundane affinity.

Where lives the *sampradaya*? The *sampradaya* is not found in the bricks and buttresses of a bunch of buildings. The *sampradaya* is not recognizable simply by a blazing bodily *tilaka* decoration or an institutionally standardized mode of attire. The *sampradaya* is not the holding of a pompous board of baboons expert at botching the business on behalf of the spiritual master. The *sampradaya* is not a bluffing brigade. Actually, the *sampradaya* remains with anyone who truly adheres to the principles of unalloyed devotion and disseminates the esoteric axioms of the *Bhagavata* in a way that powerfully transforms the hearts of the conditioned souls so as to inspirationally bring them to the path of unalloyed devotion. A person on the path of unalloyed devotion has no purpose other than to attain the spontaneous loving service of Radha and Krishna in the realm of

Vraja and help others do the same. Unless and until we wise up and actually embrace this understanding of the purpose of Lord Caitanya's preaching movement and resolutely help to wholly fulfill that purpose, there will be so much disturbance and distress within the institutional fold.

Very often we hear dreadfully erroneous expositions of *abhidheya-vicara* doggedly presented as if to preclude any prospect of pursuing *raganuga-bhajana*, on the pretext of protecting the *praja* from prying into places where the presumed-to-be poor little fledglings shouldn't venture – explaining away the philosophy instead of explaining the philosophy. Such may appear to be ecclesiastically expedient but hardly satisfies the soul's quest for truth. Of course, it may temporarily serve to ward off inquiries beyond the "preacher's" explanatory power. However, by resorting to such impotent dissertative travesty, one appears to be no better than a blundering buffoon to individuals conversant with the *shastric* conclusions. Preaching is the essence. There is no doubt about that. Within the compass of any socially interrelating institutional preaching complex, preaching in some way or other, either by precept or by example, is virtually inescapable. That is the significance of both good and bad association. Atheists also ascend the lecterns to preach their conjectural world view. It is not so much a question whether or not one is preaching. Rather, it is more the matter of what is (or is not) being preached. The intelligent relatively fixed-up disciples can certainly glean the essence of the *Acaryas'* teachings simply by sincerely studying the *shastras*. Unfortunately, they then very often become disappointed and discouraged by the well-intended misguidance of some of their esteemed rather neophyte "authorities" who, miserably misrepresenting the conclusions of the Gaudiya *Acaryas*, confound the affairs, thereby practically retarding the submissive disciples' spiritual growth by disallowing them to make the progress they really need to make to actually achieve the ultimate goal of their rarely attained human life. Time and tide linger for none, life relentlessly slips through their fingers, and hundreds of

institutionally committed disciples devoid of any inkling of their eternal constitutional *vraja-svarupa* clamor at death's door.

Sometimes the *sampradaya* appears to broaden its influence, manifesting many concurrent branches within or even beyond the margins of any particular institutional milieu, as a number of pure-hearted, spiritually empowered individuals endeavor to propagate the correct, unadulterated *bhagavata-siddhanta*. At other times, it appears that, due to a dearth of qualified recipients, the *sampradaya* reposes its authority in a singular individual who single-handedly preserves the *sampradaya's* pure spiritual legacy. Such an *acarya* may not be at the helm of a huge institution supporting world-wide missionary activities. Yet because he carries within his heart of hearts the complete-whole manifestation of Lord Krishna along with His *antaranga-shaktis*, he is quite fit to pass on the true *sampradayaic* tradition. Even though his pure teachings might be rightly received by just a single qualified disciple, that one disciple may in turn impress the same upon many. There is ample precedence for this in the history of Gaudiya Vaisnavism. Still, at other times, it may be seen that an *acarya* intentionally establishes a nation-wide or world-wide institution to facilitate large-scale propaganda work, but only a few or even only one among his thousands of initiated disciples actually catch the essential current of the *sampradaya's* teachings and become perfectly qualified to impart the pure esoteric *sampradayaic* principles to subsequent generations. That is also not unheard of. It is understood from *acarya-vani* that upon contacting *sad-guru* a disciple generally requires three lifetimes before coming to the stage of ultimate perfection, *vastu-siddhi*. The spiritual master's different disciples are not on the same rung of *bhakti's* evolutionary ladder. Some of the disciples are in the course of their first acquaintance with *sad-guru*. In this lifetime their attempt to chant the Holy Name will be, more often than not, fraught with offense. Owing to meager devotional fortitude, they will not likely achieve the *adhikara* required to transcend rudimentary devotional practices and so must intelligently submit themselves to the force of stringent *vaidhika* rules and regulations to have any devotional standing at all. Others are in

the course of their second attempt. Chanting *namabhasa*, they will gradually gain steadiness and the eligibility to pursue the path of *raga*. A few may progress to the terrace of *bhava* and *prema* by chanting *shuddha-nama*, having come to their third lifetime of service at the feet of *sad-guru*. After quitting the present *sadhaka-deha*, they will be promoted to the *prakata-lilas* of the Lord. The chronological sequence of initiation does not necessarily correspond to the progressive levels of advancement of the different disciples. Though the *acarya's* senior disciples might rightfully claim or demand the junior's customary respect, as per external protocol, the natural esteem offered to first-class *paramahamsas* can be genuinely elicited only when devotees of a discerning eye undoubtingly acknowledge appreciable levels of practical renunciation coupled with scripturally sound pure devotional expression. Certainly, those who chant offensively, regardless of disciplic seniority or institutional echelon, can hardly be accepted as bona fide agents of the *sampradayaic* flow. To be real, only an elevated, spiritually endowed disciple, having achieved the internal standing of a *maha-bhagavata* on the basis of *shuddha-nama-bhajana* is substantially fit to act as an empowered agent of the *bhagavata-sampradaya*. Such a spiritually qualified individual, though not necessarily assuming any earth-shattering external institutional hierarchical status, will, in fact, timely and powerfully manifest the *sampradaya's* profoundest influence. In the interim, many others, institutionally "big" or "small," who are more or less preoccupied with varying degrees of watered-down, exoterically intended philosophy that often verily accommodate their own subtle or gross personal and extended self-aggrandizing concerns and who maintain an apathy toward unalloyed devotional absorption, though perhaps very much institutionally involved, will effectively remain more or less on the factual *sampradaya's* periphery. When these spiritually naive, *siddhantically* unapprised, or materially ambitious "disciples" endeavor to climb the corporate institutional ladder to access and occupy key administrative positions for the purpose of pursuing their sundry ulterior objectives, what institutional anomalous or farcical

consequences can we not expect? Would we deem sickly or convalescing in-patients at a hospital to be part of the established medical institution itself? Would it not be more realistic to objectively regard them as clients having the good opportunity to access the convenient medical facility offered by the hospital? If an in-patient misinterprets or declines to follow the doctor's advice or if a patient without passable medical training and experience decides to do quackery in the hospital's lobby, should we take such to be part of the hospital? Is an attending student at a university to be taken as part of the educational institution, or is the student simply the recipient of the institution's tutelage? Even if we posit the meaninglessness of a university without students, would it be at all proper for an upstart student bereft of adequate erudition and wisdom to pompously profess to be a professor? If a psychiatric patient having no clear recollection of his or her true identity impersonates a psychiatrist, would we behold a pinnacle of sanity? When money talks, everything walks. Bucks – the basis, preaching – the excuse, futility – the principle, and, as one might guess, purity (spiritual sanity) – a farce.

We can scarcely see among us deeply absorbed natural *paramahamsas* possessed of markedly elevated transcendental consciousness evinced by expressed mature spiritual insight and discretion. Nor would we generally expect internally immersed *paramahamsa* Vaishnavas to be very much attentive to the nitty-gritty of direct hands-on institutional management. Unsurprisingly, fate would often have it that by default various less spiritually evolved individuals take the helm, even though they may be unacquainted with – even virtually oblivious to – the *rasika* culture of unalloyed devotion, as per the scientific, systematic exposition of the *vraja-bhakti* paradigm seen in the *Acaryas'* writings. Still others, often owing to their assorted, relatively handy material qualifications, are ceremoniously taken on board as additional digits in the equation, though their perceptions, conceptions, and judgments are relatively impure in that they have yet to rise above the four defects of conditional existence. We could hardly expect the majority of an institution's administrators to be on the highest perfectional

platform of Krishna consciousness. As such, canonical or ecclesiastico-managerial decisions arrived at on the basis of majority vote may often be fraught with material conception, *apasiddhanta*, and compromise by dint of confusion, distortion, mundane wrangling, or agnosticism devoid of *sampradayic* authority, thus rendering the whole show relatively *asara*, or useless. It is imperative, therefore, that the religio-institutional administration have the integrity, willingness, and intelligence to recognize and accept the salient advice of those impartial few who are actually pure, spiritually elevated, free from false pride, unenvious, and beyond the sway of material influences.

The idea that a body of executors dubbed the “ultimate managing authority” of a societal organization be reckoned, heralded, or broadly accepted as head of the socio-bodily infrastructure of such a society is sheer misconstruction and a flight of the imagination – a calamitous contravention of *daiivi-
varnashrama* principia. Individuals displaying a passion for administrative overlordship may brandish considerable diplomatic dexterity in the matter of cleverly hoodwinking lay practitioners into accepting the alleged legitimacy of various covertly contrived ecclesiastical managerial maneuvers, but mere spectacle of tactical proficiency hardly adds up to an air of brahminical intelligence. Institutional governance is certainly the prerogative of *ksatriya*-spirited devotees. In the scheme of things, these devotees, who do far better when they comport themselves as righteous *rajarsis* rather than as menacing Mafiosi, basically serve as the arms of the institution. Their function is to protect the society’s movable and immovable assets, ensure economic stability, see that the various classes of devotees are peacefully prosecuting their prescribed religious duties, and curb the cheating propensity of the neophytes. A *rajarsi* is considered a saintly administrator, however, on account of his openness to respectfully abide by the good counsel of truthful, qualified *brahmarsis* and advanced unalloyed devotees of the Lord, who are not so managerially encumbered. Any initiate acting in any social capacity may be regarded, on one level or another, as some kind of Vaishnava. Even so, those who are true *brahmanas* and *paramahamsa* Vaishnavas by

quality and work are undeniably the actual head of an institution's social set-up. A social body that either doesn't have or doesn't recognize its head is like a ship adrift without its rudder.

In an *acarya's* physical presence, those acting as his zonal secretaries, as well as diverse other executive representatives, may easily receive guidance through his direct personal instructions. An *acarya* himself acts as the society's head, directly approving or disapproving the actions of his society's managerial arms as he sees fit. An *acarya* may even see it necessary to totally rescind the managerial authority personally invested in his zonal representatives if the latter deviate from his expressed will. Such a scenario is certainly not unheard-of.

But what happens after an *acarya's* inopportune physical demise? All his disciples may take refuge in his recorded *vani* to gain inspiration and positive direction for advancing the cause of Krishna consciousness. Still, it would be most unreasonable to conclude that those somewhat managerially adept individuals to whom the *acarya* had delegated certain arm-related executive responsibilities should, in the *acarya's* absence, suddenly seek to assume the position of the society's socio-religious head. Likewise with the subsequently deputed new generation of international, zonal, and local managers.

We could hardly think those possessed of supposed executive-class intelligence tilting toward diplomacy, compromise, duplicity, unjustifiable psychological coercion, covert administrative wrangling, connivance, collusion, and conspiracy for the forward march of various "Krishna conscious" managerial agenda or political ambitions, to be having a clearer, more advanced *shastric* perception of reality than those who are impartial, managerially unencumbered, and, in fact, to a much larger extent, brahminically occupied. The attempt of managerially engrossed individuals lacking superior brahminical transparency to administer institutional affairs without respecting genuine brahminical counsel simply perpetuates a socially imbalanced quasi-devotional society of cheaters and cheated – bungling *bhaktas* who brainlessly buy into the burgeoning business of bureaucratic befuddlement. To

show due deference to the spiritual needs of the individuals who constitute the society, proper brahminical leadership must always prevail over administrative concerns.

From the Vedic sociological standpoint, we might mindfully deduce the following:

1) *Brahmanas* can be seen as spiritually and intellectually qualified anarchists. To practically function in the capacity duly prescribed for them in the *shastras*, they really require a demilitarized ambience wherein they may peacefully and creatively exercise their God-given right to be self-regulating, independently thoughtful people. Naturally, the independence afforded to them brings with it the highest constitutional responsibility, namely selfless sacrifice in the direct service of *guru* and Godhead.

2) Real *ksatriyas* are basically noble-minded God-conscious monarchists. They are meant to rule their domains on behalf of the *brahmanas* who in effect have factual dominion over the world on behalf of Lord Krishna.

3) *Vaishyas* are theistic charitable capitalists.

4) *Shudras* are theocentric working-class socialists or communists.

There is a place for anarchy in human society. There is a place for monarchy in human society. So also is there a place for capitalism and communism. The *daivi-varnashrama* cultural paradigm scientifically accommodates these four dissimilar social ideologies in perfect equilibrium under the one banner of service to the Absolute. It is simply a matter of recognizing, facilitating, and suitably balancing the needs of different kinds of people. In view of social distinctions on the basis of diverse individual psycho-physical dispositions, it would be irresponsible on the part of any one section of society to artificially impose a single ideology upon all. This would force a state of stultification upon the social order. Similarly, encroaching upon or crippling another's God-given station hinders the affected individual's natural socio-constitutional development. Members of an establishment erected to facilitate the gradual progress of internal pure devotional absorption (*antaranga-bhakti*) may in the beginning need to be externally or

conditionally engaged in light of various individual psycho-physical requirements. To that end, many devotees, while inwardly striving to cultivate pure devotional sentiments, may outwardly appear to be socially stationed on the basis of *varnashrama* considerations that naturally demand certain prescribed social limitations. One who has achieved a profound taste for pure devotional practices is in fact no longer obliged to strictly abide by external *varnashrama* laws. *Vidhi-dharma chadi' bhaje krisnera carana / nisiddha papacare tara kabhu nahe mana.* “Although the pure devotee does not follow all the regulative principles of *varnashrama*, he worships the lotus feet of Krishna. Therefore he naturally has no tendency to commit sin.” (Cc. *Madhya* 22.142) For such a *sadhaka*, who is actually beyond mundane designations and their concomitant *varnashrama* obligations, adherence to *varnashrama* prescripts is optional. However, as long as one has yet to achieve *shuddha-nama-ruci*, as long as one is likely to pursue material desires, in other words, as long as one’s engagement on the basis of psycho-physical considerations is an issue, even though one may pride oneself to be a Vaishnava having received *pancaratrika-diksa*, or even if one happens to truly be a *jata-ruci* Vaishnava but has preferred to mercifully profile as a social exemplar, one must respectfully submit to the constraints upon one’s external status to avoid an escalation of adverse communal anomalies. Pure Vaishnavas doing the needful to further the cause of Krishna consciousness may externally act in any social capacity. Still, when acting as *brahmanas*, they must externally adhere to brahminical codes of conduct; when acting in the administrative capacity as *ksatriyas*, they must honorably abide by the standard social etiquette prescribed for *ksatriyas*; and when acting as *vaishyas* or *shudras*, they must similarly follow appropriate social protocol. Noncompliance would be rather roguish. Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself declared, *naham vipro na ca nara-patir napi vaishyo na shudro naham varni na ca griha-patir no vana-stho yatir va . . . gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah.* “I am neither a *brahmana*, nor a *ksatriya* . . . The only designation that I wish to accept is that of a servant of the servant of the servant of

Krishna.” He was transcendently situated. Yet, externally as a *sannyasi*, He very strictly followed the religious duties of the *sannyasa* order so as not to effect a decline of social standards. Harmonious social interdependence and cooperation within any Vedic cultural institution can come into view only when the different classes of individuals involved sensibly honor the specialties and diverse social parameters of each and every aspect of the *daivi-varnashrama* system.

Amalgamation of administrative and brahminical functions is quite objectionable. Even if provisory modifications in the social complex are justified by force of emergency circumstances, they would hardly be deemed ideal. Division of labor is actually required – and for a very good reason. It is not that individuals functioning in the arms capacity, though they may be Vaishnavas, should doggedly insist on also acting as the head, as if there’s no need to acknowledge the presence of distinguished brahminically qualified Vaishnavas. Nor should they act as though there is no need for a social head. Nor should they imagine that a governing body of flapping arm-like managerially engaged individuals constitutes the highest religio-institutional headship. If for no other reason than to set a proper example to benefit others, Vaishnavas playing the part of administrators (*ksatriyas*), though perhaps internally very elevated, should nevertheless attune to their social role in toto by externally paying due deference to the counsel of devotees acting in the brahminical capacity. There is ample precedence for this in the examples of great Vaishnava kings such as Maharaja Janaka, Maharaja Ambarisa, Maharaja Yudhisthira, and others. Celebrated saintly *ksatriyas* appearing in the solar dynasty extending from Manu to Maharaja Iksvaku and others, though highly competent to act as *gurus* in *parampara*, having received through disciplic succession the highest conclusions of the *Gita*, nonetheless paid humble homage to the *brahmanas*. Even the Supreme Guru, Lord Krishna, and Lord Ramacandra, playing the part of *ksatriyas*, in the course of Their *lilas* deferentially honored and sought the good counsel of qualified *brahmanas* to demonstrate the principle by Their own example. Again, eligible individuals who intend to act in the brahminical

or head-like capacity should voluntarily relinquish arm-like administrative designations and engagements to accept higher social responsibilities and, within the context of the institutional setting, independently situate themselves in such a way that they can practically function as a clear-thinking head without being swayed by the temptation to pursue diplomatic affairs and the like. They should focus on purely brahminical activities and as far as possible keep themselves aloof from managerial entanglements and various political exploits so that they may have the clear-sightedness and purity of heart needed for truth to spotlessly manifest in their intelligence. *Pathana pathana yajana yajana dana pratigraha* – these are the brahminical engagements, and it is by observable degrees of proficiency in the execution of these brahminical duties combined with qualities such as those mentioned in the *Gita* (*shamo damas tapah shaucam . . .*) that the measure of an individual's brahminical aptitude is to be appreciated. Brahminically inclined devotees should be allowed to free themselves from those activities which tend to deter them from their resolute absorption in pure brahminical culture. By culture of appropriate activities consistent with brahminical standards, they may easily augment their personal purity, achieve respectability as trustworthy representatives of pure spiritual values, and gain the recognition and confidence of the subordinate sections of society. With due respect to all the *prabhus*, the current breakdown of love and trust in the society of devotees is basically attributable to the recurring, unbridled, Machiavellian dastardly hypocritical deeds of the (what is now ceremoniously palmed off as) religio-institutional leadership. The simple truth is that unless an independent, self-reliant brahminical entity is established beyond the control of the institutional governing body, there really is no viable, socially operative, *shastrically* warranted religio-institutional headship or armship.

A *brahmana's* principal quality of truthfulness may easily become compromised if he allows himself to come under the control of the administrative class. His cooperation with an institution's administration does not at all require his

subjugation by executive authority, provided he adheres to the brahminical codes of conduct. Mutual cooperation, as an expression of love for the institutional founder-*acarya*, obliges the executors to execute the will of the *brahmanas* under the edicts and precepts of the *acarya* – not that frank and honest *brahmanas* are minimized, affronted, and dominated by the marshal-spirited managers who in turn flatteringly court the easily corruptible, money-mad, business-brained, *vaishya*-like neophytes and so forth. It is not that a contingency of opportunistic so-called *brahmanas* shall be kept under the thumb of the executors, like pets for interpretively screwing out “*shastric* evidence” to momentarily suit and justify purposely perpetrated *apasiddhantic*, communally imbalanced “party-line” miscomputations. Just as an *acarya*’s book trust, though fashioned to fulfill certain institutional objectives, may be constituted as an independent managerial authority beyond the jurisdiction of the institution’s governing body – just as other trusts such as M.V.T. may be similarly constituted in collaboration with their mother institution – so in the same way, a brahminical advisory entity to which a governing body must be held accountable may also be established above and beyond the jurisdiction of the institution’s governing body. If the head-like brahminical council is subordinated by the arm-like governing body, there is every likelihood that the former may be headlocked or bullied by the latter into resignedly espousing the administration’s often-half-baked discombobulated party-line policies instead of being allowed to stand up independently for truth, to which the administration must sensibly submit. In accordance with the principles of *varnashrama-dharma*, the governing body (an administrative entity) must be answerable to the consensus of a brahminical council. The legs are intended to carry the body under the direction of the head. The belly is to nourish the entire body to help fulfill the purpose of the body’s very existence, which is to be ascertained by the head. The arms are to protect the body’s existence under the guidance of the head. It is the head, not the arms, belly, or legs, that decides the purpose and right direction of the socio-institutional body at large. It is not that the governing-body bureaucrats should

misconstrue the term “ultimate managing authority” to mean “ultimate authority,” erroneously posing themselves as the ultimate indubitable institutional overlords. It is not that devotees acting in an administrative or ruling capacity don’t need to seek the approbation and blessings of those devotees who are by and large brahminically occupied. Second-class intelligent managers are not the ultimate authority in Vedic society. First-class intellectual *brahmana* Vaishnavas are the ultimate guiding authority as per the *daivi-varnashrama* blueprint.

Just as an *acarya* during his physical presence checks the behavior of his zonal secretaries, so too in the *acarya*’s absence, an independently powerful purely brahminical intelligentsia must be recognized and solidly established to advise, correct, or even, when required, disband or dethrone the executive oligarchy when the latter strays from the unequivocal directives of *guru*, *sadhu*, and *shastra*. Our founder-*acarya*, seeing the topsy-turvy Kali-yuga condition of the world, repeatedly expressed the need to train up qualified *brahmanas* to assume the role of social head in order to rectify the ills of a present-day misdirected state of human affairs. To this end, it may be assumed that he tried his level best. To advocate that the establishment of an institution’s brahminical head is in any way unfeasible is to suggest that either there really is no need for a body to have a head after all, or that perhaps certain individuals are attached to a scheme of unbridled institutional dominance, erroneously thinking that Vaishnavas, who are above *varnashrama*, need not conform to *varnashrama* protocol while managerially “doing the needful,” or else that the *acarya*’s attempt to create a class of spiritually intelligent *brahmanas* to guide society was unsuccessful. However, considering his probable success, they who would be capable of offering guidance to the whole of greater humanity would certainly be qualified to positively advise the administrative-class executors of his relatively tiny institution. One might incisively question the likelihood of reestablishing a head on a macrocosmic human society if we ourselves could not even practicably implement the principle on a microcosmic scale. If a religio-institutional

exemplar of *daivi-varnashrama* society could not be practically established, then from what living example of the thing would humanity at large have to draw? Moreover, if we were to surmise that the *acarya* was unable to train up qualified *brahmanas*, how could we ever think him successful in the matter of creating self-effulgent *paramahansa* Vaishnavas fit to model as successor *sampradayaic* *Acaryas*, transcendental to the *sattvic* brahminical qualifications in every respect? It should not be concluded, however, that “because I’m not very much spiritually advanced or qualified, none other could possibly be more advanced or qualified than me” – *atmavan manyate jagat*.

From the onset of Kali-yuga, *brahmanas* as a class lost their headship credibility in the eyes of the subordinate social divisions as a result of a general increase of religious hypocrisy and crass, self-centered petty materialism abounding particularly among those who laid claim to hereditary brahmanism. Yet simply by sidelining the *brahmanas* with a view to arbitrarily administer political affairs, the *ksatriyas*, who were no less affected by Kali’s influences, could not sustain the trust of the similarly dishonest and increasingly selfish Kali-yuga *vaishyas*, who in turn sought by various capitalistic maneuvers to overthrow the self-indulgent hegemonic so-called *ksatriya* overlords. And, of course, as history would have it, the *shudras* and sundry other humanoid social degenerates, unable to tolerate the exploitative monkey business of the merchants and money changers, revolted against their exploiters to uppishly establish their own brand of hedonistic honesty among thieves. That’s just the way the Kali-yuga cookie crumbled. However, despite all that, it was not at all the *acarya’s* intention that the Kali-yuga derangement of the *varnashrama* system should persist – at least not in the context of a controlled socio-religious institutional environment. If we are to accept that all the *acarya’s* disciplic descendants are Vaishnavas simply by dint of *nama* and *mantra* initiation, and that being a Vaishnava transcendental to *varnashrama* considerations renders the call to externally honor traditional *daivi-varnashrama* social protocol null and void even while one advantageously occupies various socio-religious incumbencies, then why waste our invaluable

time discussing and discussing the *acarya's* presumably insightful instructions concerning the apparently practical institutional and trans-institutional inculcation of *daivi-varnashrama* behavioral standards? Why pay lip-service to the organization of society in terms of the *varnashrama* scheme of societal divisions unless we are willing to exercise the humility, discrimination, and appropriate determination needed to honor and follow the attendant inter-class etiquette?

At the end of the day, unless one's adherence to *daivi-varnashrama-dharma* in some way promotes a fondness for hearing, chanting, and remembering Radha-Krishna's *madhurya-lila-guna-rupa-nama*, unless it enables one to become cognizant of one's eternal constitutional relationship with the Lord of Vraja, moreover, unless all such external psycho-physical bodily regulation actually helps to bring one to the point of love of Godhead on the fully self-realized platform, then *shrama eva hi kevalam* – the whole affair is simply so much useless endeavor, leading only to the formation of another material body. Let everyone immediately get off the material platform and focus exclusively on the internal culture of unalloyed devotion, bearing very little if any concern for the rules and regulations of *varnashrama-dharma*. *Eta saba chadi' ara varnashrama-dharma akincana hana laya Krishnaika-sharana*. “Without hesitation, one should take exclusive shelter of Lord Krishna with full confidence, giving up bad association and even neglecting the regulative principles of the four *varnas* and four *ashramas*. That is to say, one should abandon all material attachment.” (Cc. *Madhya* 22.93) *Sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam sharanam vraja* – the most basic ABCD's of spiritual life. Reestablishment of *varnashrama* principles in society, though organizationally useful and important on one level as far as institutional progress or Vedic social intercourse goes, is quite secondary and even superfluous to the culture of unalloyed devotion. It is neither the primary concern of the *Acaryas* nor the goal of the Gaudiya-sampradaya's teachings. The *Acaryas'* primary objective is to propagate love of Godhead, *vraja-prema*, via the process of *nama-sankirtana*, and their secondary objective is to reestablish *varnashrama-dharma*. Even if it is circumstantially found that an

institution's bureaucracy deviates in various ways from the pursuit of these primary and secondary *sampradayic* or institutional objectives, even if Kali's clerically cloaked secret agents infiltrate various echelons of the institutional establishment to subvert, hijack, or derail the Krishna consciousness movement, that will not dissuade the faithful *sara-grahi* Vaishnavas, however obscure or unassuming they may be, from pursuing and, whenever required, overtly or even covertly preaching the principles of *raga-marganugamana-prema-dharma*. Perhaps only a very few who will be associated with them will fortunately catch the real idea and become adequately qualified to carry forth the progressive current of the *sampradaya's* *rasa*-imbued heritage.

Many will be pleased to prostitute the pure devotional principles for affectedly dignified, institutionally conventionalized substandard objectives which accommodate conditional devotional, mixed devotional, quasi-devotional, or non-devotional attachments. Some would be happy just to get the hell out of this hellhole and go to Vaikuntha. Others would be gratified to go to heaven. Some are more than happy to hoard their collected *guru-daksina* in their secret Swiss bank accounts. Others, keen on contractual so-called devotional engagements, are rapaciously bent on bringing home their monthly wage packets (Oops! I mean their *grihasta* "maintenance allowances"). Anyway, however we euphemize the thing, they get their padded positions – their hearth and home, their conveyances, and their promised pensions upon retirement. The institution becomes practically like any other materialistic corporate establishment. It may be pragmatically convenient to contractually bind people in order to ensure an externally impressive illusion of managerial success, but in terms of generating an atmosphere of pure, unconditional devotion, it does no more than increase our indigestion. Nevertheless, it's easier to pay people to do the jobs than to engage them in acts of pure devotion. So it looks like the jobs are getting done. The floors are getting swept; the Deities' *bhoga* offerings are getting cooked; the *puja* is being covered; the funds are being raised. There is even a semblance of

institutional management. However, no one gets the benefit of entering an atmosphere that is surcharged with unconditional devotion, simply because the pure devotional energy is most conspicuously lacking. Performing services with a view to gaining material amenities hardly even constitutes *karma-yoga*, what to speak of *bhakti*. Some individuals, making excuses for themselves, are simply satisfied with short-term genital infatuations on the plea of “Krishna conscious” home life. Still others boldly campaign for the institutional ratification of “Krishna conscious” homosexuality, and so on and so forth.

When an individual or the consensus or joint action of a body of individuals accords with the principles of *sampradaya* as per the decisions of *guru*, *sadhus*, and *shastras*, then only will the words and deeds of such individuals elicit our commendation and compliance. Conversely, it would be most indecorous of an individual or body of individuals deviating in various ways from standard *sampradayaic* conclusions, regardless of ecclesiastico-administrative bearing, to expect or demand anyone’s unreserved avowed allegiance. Our fealty shall be to the service of truth, not to the service of rationalized philosophical misconstruction.

Everything is undoubtedly orchestrated by the Supreme Controller to mete out the various circumstantial requirements of every devotional candidate. It is not by chance or for no good reason that one soul gets genuine *sadhu-sanga* and another has to hear from an avowed institutional charlatan. We all have to go through our various positive and negative learning experiences. No one can avoid cooperating, in some way or another, with the Lord’s greater cosmic arrangement. However, it should be noted that one result is attained by directly supporting the Lord’s unimpeded munificence and another by indirectly serving as His cheating agent. It is not that, because we have “joined” a *maha-bhagavata’s* promising spiritual institution (society), we cannot become cheaters, we cannot dull-headedly or mischievously mislead or under-edify people. “Jaya Gurudeva! Jaya Gurudeva!” But are we actually guiding them properly? Or are we cheating them by not allowing them to see what the *sampradaya* actually intends to teach. Years and

years are wasted in misconception, both for the cheaters and for the cheated. And then, maybe, if one is fortunate (*bhagyavan jiva*), one miraculously stumbles upon someone who can actually elucidate the essential import of the *shastras* and mercifully offer proper internal devotional direction from the realized platform. Regardless of the extent to which the *prakrita-bhaktas* and other show-bottle miserly institutional ignoramuses pride themselves to be satisfied that whatever they're doing on the basis of ulterior personal motives is in some way gratifying to the ego, mind, senses, or whatever, the true fact is that they will, in due course, eventually, in some lifetime or another, dejectedly recognize that their soul has not been satisfied. They have not become *prasannatma*. Watered-down philosophy means watered-down result. Watered-down result means they are cheated and cannot become fully joyful. Becoming sufficiently frustrated, they may then, sooner or later, fortunately come to the position of crying out to Krishna and honestly begging for the real thing in all humility.

Wherever we will find a realized exemplar of the full array of unalloyed devotional wisdom, there we will behold a perfectly holistic representative of Lord Caitanya's *sankirtana* movement. It may be argued that "Well, we, on various levels, are all representing the movement in the making." "Movement in the making" means to progressively move the bungling *bhaktas* from the position of unaccomplishment to the position of accomplishment, from imperfection to perfection, from impurity to purity. The idea is that the movement is like a hospital gradually moving everyone toward the healthy pure devotional ideal – not that one should idealistically expect everyone in the hospital to be perfectly healthy and pure. That's all right. We shouldn't unjustly cast aspersions upon the sincere patients (*sadhakas*), though they, with all their frailties, have yet to be fully disinfected. The point, though, is that the doctor should be healthy and pure. The movement's *Acaryas* (leaders) coming in the *acarya-parampara* should be pure and self-realized. It is not that there shall be no subsequent generations of *Acaryas*. All the disciples are instructed to come up to the decontaminated, liberated standard of *acarya*. The offenseless *shuddha-nama-*

bhajana/sankirtananandi practically manifesting the pure attributes of an *acarya*, who clearly ascertains, follows, and, from the realized position, propagates the scriptural conclusions, as per the decisions of the previous *Acaryas*, is to be considered a truly viable link in the *sampradaya's* disciplic succession. There really can be no feasible makeshift or stopgap “blind uncle” vicar. Disciplic succession means from *acarya* to *acarya* or *Acaryas*, not from *acarya* to umpteen gazillion blockheads who, being too spiritually gutless to grasp the recognized esoteric method of unalloyed devotional realization, prefer to parade about, presumably on the plea of *para-upakara*, preaching any retarded shabby so-called philosophy that blunderbusses out from their internally bankrupt, institutionally bamboozled, busy-bodying brainlessness.

Just as the series of crystal-clear lenses of a telescope brings a distant image within the purview of our eyes, in the same way, a *sampradaya's* transcendental heritage is brought into the scope of our understanding through a transparent medium, the chain of pure and spiritually potent representatives of the *acarya-parampara*. Dusty, foggy, flawed, warped, or impotent lenses will not do. A chain is as clear and reliable as its faultiest lens. To act as transparent medium means to allow others to clearly perceive the descending radiance of the *bhagavata-siddhanta* by purely exemplifying the perfect application of the principles of *bhagavata-dharma* (as per *sambandha-abhidheya-prayojana-vicara*) on the basis of scriptural evidence and personal attainment. *acarya*, in the Gaudiya line, really means one who is fully Krishna conscious, who purely teaches the path of unalloyed devotional conduct (both external and internal) by personally imbibing and practically demonstrating the unalloyed, unconditional loving devotional ideals of a Vrajavasi. Whether a *nitya-siddha avatara* appears in this world as an *acarya*, or a *sadhana-siddha*, having attained perfection in a previous life, is reborn by the will of the Lord to act as *acarya* in the service of the *sampradaya*, or one or more individuals in the present life gain the spiritual fitness to exemplify the principles of *vraja-prema-dharma* for the benefit of others, the role of *sampradayic acarya* is not a matter of

institutional rubber-stamping. There's no question of institutional rubber-stamping. The rubber-stamping of *gurus* is, in fact, quite against the principles of *sampradaya*. It indicates neither purity nor high-caliber Krishna consciousness. There actually has to be purity, and where there is purity coupled with realized *siddhanta*-based *raga-mayi* unalloyed devotional expression, rubber-stamping or no rubber-stamping, there we may hope to see the actual current of the *sampradaya*.

No amount of institutional legislation has ever in the past ensured that the budding disciples will not get any other than *sad-guru*, nor does such presently offer any reasonable assurance to that effect, nor can such ever feasibly promise a foolproof approach to *sad-guru* in the future. Glaring testimony of this statement rests in the much-less-than-unblemished post-founder-*acarya* institutional track record. What more need be said? One gets *sad-guru* by the grace of God. Having accumulated suitable *sukriti* by lifetimes of inadvertent contact with agents of *bhakti*, a fortunate *jiva* becomes inclined toward the service of the Absolute. When Krishna, who is seated as Paramatma within the heart, directing the wanderings of every living entity since time immemorial, deems one the object of His mercy, then only, by His arrangement, is it possible for one to get the feet of *sad-guru* – not otherwise. By the mercy of Krishna, one gets *guru*, and by the mercy of a genuinely elevated Vaishnava *guru*, one gets Krishna. The institutional rubber-stamping of *guru* as well as the recurrently observed herding of unsuspecting fledgling devotional candidates into institutionally endorsed liaison with chic-awash, locally lionized, ecclesiastically rubber-stamped *guru* figure-heads simply boasts of a preposterously overestimated shot at managerially manipulating, governing, or meddling with the entirely independent will of the Absolute. In reality, though, God's will is quite beyond the grip of any theocracy's ostensibly ironclad administrative edicts. Those who are God-sanctioned to get the feet of *sad-guru* will definitely succeed by dint of Providence's inscrutable transcendental system – even without the “aid” of materially concocted religio-legislative contrivances. And, despite all the well-intended precautionary legislation, those not

destined to get *sad-guru* in the present life, though associated with one or another preaching organization, will be frustrated time and again, even after repeated futile attempts. Of this there is ample precedence. The shining example of devotees authentically empowered by *Krishna-shakti* to undeviatingly represent the teachings of the predecessor *Acaryas* will itself suffice to satisfy all institutional requirements. Aspiring *sampradayaic* adherents need only be *siddhantically* edified and alerted as to the standard *shastric* criteria for ascertaining the fitness of *guru*. That much institutional governance is legitimate. Deviants and imposters will automatically be shunned and fall into disrepute. No amount of artificially imposed ecclesial governance in the matter of *guru* appointment under any clumsy pretext can change for half a hair-breadth the God-sanctioned progress of a *jiva's* sojourn through eternal time. To advocate otherwise on the plea of administrative safeguard and quality-control is to indecorously vaunt one's lack of faith in the inescapable will of the Supreme and the *Acaryas'* actual instructions concerning the principles of disciplic succession.

It is not enough to proficiently engage the unapprised, sub-devotional, ass-like neophytes in preliminary sub-religious purificatory processes. Outwardly epitomizing the strict adherence to rudimentary *vaidhi* devotional codes of conduct alone is not sufficient to qualify anyone as an *acarya* in the real sense. Certainly the bona fide *bhagavata-acarya* has the enormous task of gradually uplifting two-legged animals to a reasonable semblance of religious life, but the onus does not culminate in merely instituting semi-devotional or obligatory devotional regimentation on the foundation of stereotyped external religious formulae. An *acarya* must have the fitness to elevate the disciple to the pinnacle of ultimate *raga-mayi* spontaneous devotional perfection. He himself must exemplify the standard of unalloyed devotional perfection as inspirational living proof that the process of *rupanuga-bhajana* actually works, that transcendence or divine consciousness is practically achievable. A language instructor does not merely teach his students the alphabet. There's also spelling, grammar, composition, style, syntax, and so forth. Similarly, a bona fide

sampradayic agent must be competent to offer advanced instruction to further enlighten the more eligible graduate and post-graduate disciples. A disciple could hardly hope to reach the stage of *para bhakti* for the attainment of life's ultimate objective under a neophyte's insufficient guidance. The velocity of a disciple's pure devotional progress is an individual affair, contingent upon preexisting and presently acquired types and levels of *shraddha*. It is not the duty of an *acarya* to hinder the advancement of a progressive student by insisting upon the latter's exclusive confinement to the regulative principles of *vaidha-sadhana*. With all due respect, *vaidhi bhakti*, being considerably encumbered and constrained under the sway of *aishvarya-jnana* (knowledge of Krishna's supremacy) and encroached upon by scriptural injunctions together with argument, intellection, analysis, and ascription, is not real *bhakti*. It is not *para bhakti* or *kevala-bhakti* in the real sense. Unless one comes to the platform of *para bhakti*, one's devotion to *guru* and Krishna cannot be considered real. *Vaidhi bhakti* as applied in the context of Rupanuga Vaisnavism serves only as a threshold to the house of real *bhakti*. It is merely a rudimentary apprenticeship, meant to offer the *kanistha-adhikaris* a preliminary footing on the devotional path. It is not that we are to remain indefinitely on the *prakrita* platform as life-long *kanistha-adhikaris* with no higher superlative devotional idea. *Bhakti* that is characterized by the unconditional endeavor to please Krishna, to love Him because His personality is so unlimitedly enchanting and lovable, simply because He is the way He is, the sweetest of all sweets, regardless of whether or not He is, in fact, the Supreme Personality of Godhead – that is real *bhakti*. Real *bhakti*, *para bhakti*, is none other than *raga-mayi* spontaneous devotion, and *raganuga-sadhana-bhakti* is unarguably a necessary bridge to the plane of spontaneous *raga-mayi* realization.

Real *bhakti* is solely the prerogative of the *raga-bhakta*. Any expression of devotion to *guru* and Krishna not based on *raga* cannot be accepted as a real devotional expression, because the devotion on which the expression is based is not actually real devotion. It is obligatory, fear-impelled ritualistic

devotion, which does not lend itself to the natural, free-flowing spontaneous loving attraction of the heart toward the confidential service of Krishna and His dearest devotees. The *acarya* may graciously hear and accept a neophyte disciple's relatively sincere but rather sentimental childish glorifications to encourage his disciple's gradual devotional progress. Moreover, an aging *kanistha-adhikari* posing as an intimate associate of the *acarya* may naturally take pride in nostalgically reminiscing about the *guru's* past inter-personal dealings, as far as a tenaciously life-long neophyte's paltry perception of reality permits. Yet unless and until one comes to the pure cognition of one's ultimate internal *raga-mayi* relationship with *sad-guru*, in consonance with the intrinsic *nitya-dharma* of the soul as an eternal denizen of Vraja-dhama, any air of allegiance to or appreciation of the *acarya*, the *acarya-parampara*, or the *acarya's sampradayic* legacy must be considered relatively petty, shallow, or superficial. As such, apart from the unalloyed devotee established on the platform of *para bhakti* or real, spontaneous *raga-mayi* devotion, no one would be accepted as a perfect and complete *siddhantically* comprehensive and very real representative of the Rupanuga-sampradaya. Delineation of the principles of *vaidhi bhakti* constitutes merely a tiny fraction of Shri Caitanya's teachings. If one does not pursue the path of real devotion, *raga-bhakti*, and if one does not purposely endeavor in the course of one's preaching to encourage others to surpass the *kanistha* stage, to upgrade to the path of *raga-bhakti*, then it cannot be said that one is viably representing the tenets of the Gaudiya-sampradaya. To genuinely represent the Gaudiya-sampradaya as per the principles of *rupanuga-dharma*, one must, through the process of extensive hearing about Krishna's *vraja-lilas* and all relevant topics, from the stage of *shravana-dasha*, first allow oneself to become attracted to the sweetest prospect of realizing an intimate relationship with Vrajendra-nandana Krishna. Then, with intense greed, great enthusiasm, strong conviction, and one-pointed determination, one must, following one's own intrinsic inclination toward one of the *vraja-bhavas*, transcend the conditional, *vidhi*-dependent *kanistha-adhikara* and come to the position of firmly embracing

the principles of *raganuga-sadhana-bhakti* from the stage of acceptance (*varana-dasha*) in the *madhyama-adhikara*. By deep internal cultivation, characterized by intensified hearing, chanting, and increasingly constant recollection of Radha and Krishna's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes, one can verily gain the appropriate *raga-mayi-bhava* as one's *sadhya* (*apana-dasha*). Then, as a *bhavuka* or *premika maha-bhagavata*, from the realized position, having attained the desired outcome (*sadhya*), namely spontaneous loving devotion based on *raga* or attraction to the beauty and sweetness of Krishna in His loving dealings with the Vrajavasis, one can powerfully propagate the *bhagavata-siddhanta* in such a way as to positively inspire adequately fortunate conditioned souls to abandon all occupations save and except the cultivation of loving service to the lotus feet of Radha and Krishna on the basis of the attractiveness of the *vraja-lilas* and the superlative nature of the principles of supra-mundane *raga*. To say nothing of the true function of various illustrious institutions established on behalf of the Gaudiya-sampradaya, ultimately, the total material creation is an institution set up simply to directly and indirectly facilitate a few fortunate souls' eventual highest attainment of the *vraja-lilas*. To preach *raga-marg-bhakti*, the path of *vraja-bhakti-bhajana*, to the world via the *prema-nama-sankirtana* movement of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is to effectuate the purpose of the entire creation.

If neophyte devotees cannot at least begin to appreciate the elementary example of compassion toward others, as shown by Prahlada Maharaja's expressed anxieties for the fools of this external realm, then how could we expect them to fathom the ocean of *premika* compassion abounding in the topmost devotees' transmundane eroticism in the supreme realm of Vraja? Can a kindergarten pupil understand calculus or trigonometry? It is necessary for the externally oriented novices to observe the principle of compassion directed externally toward the realm easily identifiable to them owing to their own horrific experiences of material entanglement. Then it may be possible for them to gradually come to recognize and serve the superlative, internally applied aspect of the same principle,

appreciable only from a platform of considerable purification. That is an indispensable part of our basic training. In that sense, for a novice, earnest engagement in the Lord's external preaching mission under rudimentary rules and regulations may certainly function as a prerequisite for future high-grade internal *bhajana*. If, however, one does not intelligently come to the position of meticulously culturing the internal *raganuga-bhava*, then preaching Krishna consciousness remains for the most part an external affair, a kind of showbottle-ism in the name of Krishna consciousness. The put-on *sankirtana* smile may appear to be temporarily useful in the matter of eliciting an immediate favorable response from a naive or good-natured audience, but unless one is actually blissful, having achieved the *ananda-maya* status of *apana-dasha*, attaining the genuine experience of one's constitutional spiritual *sthayi-bhava* as a result of spiritual trance (*samadhi*), one's make-show preaching won't effectively generate in others the *ruci* required to sustain long-term pure devotional service on the basis of powerfully inculcated spiritual substance. Nor will it directly foster the preacher's own ultimate *premika* absorption in the moods of Vraja.

It is often rabidly sermonized that "Higher than living in Vrindavana for one's personal benefit is to leave Vrindavana for the benefit of others," the conclusion naturally being "Therefore, get out of Vrindavana and PREACH!" Placing the lotus feet of my spiritual master upon my humbled head, I dare to offer a few of my observations in this connection. It should be obvious to any sober-minded devotee that the *acarya's* instructions to this end stand not as a mandate to abandon the Vrindavana "comfort zone" but rather as a directive to abandon the self-centeredness of pursuing one's personal benefit (material or spiritual) while neglecting the practical cultivation of the *adi-vrajavasis'* sublime *para-upakara* mood of helping others become spiritually enriched. Once again, it is the attitude, the consciousness more so than the action, that is under scrutiny. Because the endeavor to benefit others is based on a higher selfless devotional mind-set than performance of devotional service simply for one's personal gain, the former, whether done in or out of the *dhama*, would in principle

naturally ascend to a markedly more elevated platform. It would serve us well to remember that our *guru-maharaja*, Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, after having spent nine preparatory years in Vrindavana, went out to benefit the people of the western world as a fully self-realized spiritual master; not as a “fake it till you make it” relatively unimpressive, struggling neophyte of a superficially polished cyber-preacher, having little if any actual cognition, by way of divine revelation, as to the details regarding his highest potential *vraja-svarupa*. For the most part, we have seen over the years that many devotees of every rank, for diverse reasons, tend to leave, nay, rather flee from Vrindavana, not for powerfully preaching Krishna consciousness all over the world, but for pursuing their various personal and extended personal material requirements. I do not prefer to expand very much upon this point, for fear of drastically increasing the bulk of this book. Suffice to say, on account of maintaining sundry gross and subtle material attachments, one would certainly be deprived of the actual internal experience of the *dhama* even while residing here. Would it not then be rather presumptuous to expect that the mere semblance of a devotee, incapable of uttering *shuddha-nama*, is in any way fit to establish any more than a mere semblance of the Vrindavana atmosphere anywhere outside the *dhama*? Flying and flying around and around the world on the plea of supposedly preaching Krishna consciousness or (mis)managing institutional affairs in and of itself does not necessarily constitute, in the highest sense, “the benefit of others” any more than living in Vrindavana necessarily adds up to merely “one’s own benefit.” Nowhere in the teachings of the *Acaryas* is it suggested that it is impossible to reside in Vrindavana for the benefit of others. In fact, real Vrindavana life, as exemplified by the Six Gosvamis, means to voluntarily accept painstaking austerities in devotional service for the benefit of others.

Shastra has it that fifty percent of a disciple’s devotional merit automatically goes to the *guru*’s account, even without the disciple’s conscious offering. If the disciple consciously sacrifices on behalf of the spiritual master, both the disciple and

the *guru* achieve one hundred times the result of the proffered devotional austerities. It would be the *guru's* greatest asset to have serious, hard-working, sacrificial-minded, lazy-intelligent *rupa-sanatananuga* disciples serving to reveal the pure cult of Vrindavana to the world from the transcendental seat of Vrindavana or Shri Dhama Mayapura where the result of such *para-upakara* preaching work towers a thousand times over and above that which is achieved by the same preaching done anywhere else in the world – for the beneficiaries and benefactors alike. Yes, we should all agree that it is higher to leave Vrindavana for the benefit of others than to stay in Vrindavana for one's own benefit, but who says Vrindavana life is meant to be for one's own benefit? Krishna's *gopas* and *gopis* of Vraja, whose immaculate selfless moods of devotion we are to emulate, never for a moment consider their own benefit. Their every endeavor is to sacrifice for the service of others – the service of Krishna; the service of Radha; the service of Her friends and maidservants; and the service of Nanda-Yashoda, Balarama-Shridhama-Subala, Raktaka-Patraka, and the rest. They come to this Earth planet to do the highest good to others by generously attracting the conditioned souls to the beauty and sweetness of their intimate highest *para-upakara* moods of loving service demonstrated in the course of the *vraja-lilas*. They are not misers; nor are their genuine representatives, coming in disciplic succession.

The simple truth is that achievement of the highest self-sacrificing moods of the Vrajavasis, whether done within or beyond the physically manifest boundaries of Vraja-mandala, requires one's meticulous assimilation of their consummate *para-upakara* loving service attitude. Practical internal solidification of the spirit of that broad-minded, most considerate devotional temper is immensely supported by loud *sankirtana* of Krishna's Holy Name. Indeed, favorably assisting the *acarya's* preaching mission anywhere in the world can certainly help one to get a foothold in the progressive cultivation of the topmost *bhavas* of Vraja when done with a proper conception of the internal counterpart *vraja-lila* feature of the externally directed preaching principle. Still, it is not at all

wrong to follow Srila Rupa Gosvami's advice in *Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu*: "If possible, one should physically reside in Vrindavana." Since any devotional service performed in Vrindavana yields a thousand times the result, one year of such service would yield the result of the same service done elsewhere for a thousand years. Thus if the average lifespan were taken to be eighty years, then one year of *para-upakara*-based pure devotional service done in the *dhama* would be equivalent to more than twelve lifetimes of the same *para-upakara* devotional service done anywhere else in the world. That is the extraordinary power of this holiest land of Bhauma Vrindavana, as confirmed by the statements of the Gaudiya *Acaryas*, in particular our Srila Prabhupada. Practicing while physically residing in Vrindavana all varieties of favorable internal and external devotional service for the benefit of others is the best way to practically capture the essence of a *vraja-vasi's* selfless service attitude. It is the best way to expedite one's progress in the affair of realizing the radiant *para-upakara* nature of one's own *sthaiti-bhava* as an eternal resident of Vraja. It is the best way to expedite one's progress in the business of accumulating the heaps and piles of *krita-punya-punjab* mercy-credits in one's transcendental bank account, actually required for directly joining Krishna's *bhaumalilas* in the *siddha-deha*. It is the best way to expedite one's progress in the matter of gaining the internal qualification required to actually preach from the platform of ultimate perfection. If for any reason one cannot take full advantage of this greatest spiritual facility manifest on Earth by the mercy of Lord Krishna and His purest internal devotees, then taking shelter of the Holy Name while endeavoring to assist Lord Caitanya's Sankirtana Movement wherever one may be, one must endeavor to cultivate feelings of separation from Vrindavana, based on intensified desires to attain eternal residence in Vrindavana. *Kripa kori' koro tare vrindavana-vasi*. Then one may also gradually augment the purest *para-upakara* nature of an unalloyed *vraja-vasi* by *guru* and Gauranga's divine grace.

Some fools foolishly foolosophize that performance of the *yuga-dharma* has very little if anything to do with the internal

culture of *raganuga-bhajana*. They hastily relegate *nama-sankirtana* to the realm of externals – *sankirtana* being, of course, the business of the masses and mere ordinary *bahiranga-bhaktas* (external devotees). Their tendency to do like this, however, simply demonstrates their utter incompetence to reasonably grasp the inner significance of the eternally comprehensive, broad-spectrum *sankirtana* principle that undoubtedly fosters both external and internal devotional involvement. They really ought to be embarrassed and ashamed of themselves. *Hari-nama-sankirtana*, as well as its extension in the form of transcendental book distribution (*brihat-bhagavata-kirtana*), when sincerely and purely done for the Lord's exclusive pleasure, in fact naturally and very easily elicits within the heart of a deeply introspective devotee a profound, indelible impression of the soul's latent constitutional *stri* disposition. One thereby becomes acquainted with the soul's true position as part of the cooperative aspect of Shrimati Radharani...’s complete-whole loving game plan. *Stri*, the feminine influence, refers to the principle of expansion. When the *stri* principle is pervertedly reflected in the illusory material dimension, where both so-called males and so-called females are deranged, misled, and corrupted by a false male egoism (*purusa-abhimana*) aberrant to the original temper of the soul, it manifests as the expansion of a mayic “man’s” loathsome all-entangling empire of mundane egocentric “enjoyments.” The pure spiritual aspect of this *stri* principle, however, exists diversely in all pure constitutional *rasas* (*dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya* and *madhurya*) proportionate to the degree to which masculine consciousness is discarded in deference to the intensified unalloyed selfless service temperament that extends to the standard of *parakiya-bhava* where the *stri* dynamic expresses its maximum deliciousness. Serving to blissfully expand the empire of the Lord's satisfaction, Krishna's transcendental *stri* enjoyables purposefully entangle Him in the loving network of amorous interpersonal reciprocity on the spiritual platform. Radha, Lord Krishna's *adya-shakti*, is known as *mula-prakriti*, the original root of all expanded varieties of *prakriti*, which is intrinsically female, or ontologically the enjoyed aspect of the Absolute. The

infinitesimal *jiva* (*para* prakṛiti), characteristically possessed of the spiritual *stri* quality expanded to a minute degree, is designed to in some small way facilitate or help to expand the happiness of the supreme enjoyer, Shri Krishna. This transcendental *stri* function of the pure soul is most thoroughly fulfilled when the subordinate “she” cooperates to fulfill the purposes of the *stri* empress, Shri Radha, by directly or indirectly serving to increase the Lord’s variety of enjoyables. Purely conducted *sankirtana* of Radha-Krishna’s all attractive names, forms, qualities, and pastimes enables the practicing devotee to tangibly experience what it is to function in that way, because, through its performance, the devotee, aside from personally pleasing the Lord, naturally serves to expand Krishna’s pleasure empire by inducing a myriad of souls to come forward to serve Him for His satisfaction. Thus, by performing *sankirtana-yajna*, one becomes scientifically acquainted with the true essence of one’s intrinsic *stri* nature, which undoubtedly finds its peak expression in all perfection as a follower of the transcendently flirtatious damsels of Vraja. As such, it should be clearly affirmed that *shuddha-nama-sankirtana* and the perfection of Krishna consciousness, augmenting *vraja-prema-bhakti-rasa*, go together very well.

The performance of *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*, when inspired by a conscious greed for *vraja-prema*, powerfully augments one’s merit in the matter of attaining the transcendental loving service of Radha-Krishna’s *nitya-lilas*. Such *sankirtana*, done in pursuit of the *madhurya-bhavas* of the Vrajavasis according to one’s personal taste (*sva-ruci*) would thus be accepted as *nija-abhista-bhava-sambandhi* (connected with one’s desired *sthayi-bhava* or constant ecstatic loving mood as a *vraja-gopa* or *gopi*). It is not merely because the physical bodily senses of the *sadhaka-deha* are externally engaged in activities of devotional service that one’s actions must be characteristically categorized as *vaidhi bhakti*. It is the motivation factor, the internal absorption behind the actions, that establishes the status of one’s activities more than anything. When *lobha*, or greed for the ultimate attainment of the moods of Vraja, prompts their performances, both

sankirtana of the Holy Name and transcendental book distribution, done purely as *yajna* for the satisfaction of Lord Caitanya, no longer function as *vaidhika* duties. Rather, they ascend to the path of spontaneous loving service and become celebrated as potent constituents of *raga-bhajana*, bridging the apparent gap between external and internal affairs. At this juncture, it would not be superfluous to firmly reiterate that, strictly speaking, the sole objective of the *bhagavata-marga* is to augment *raganuga-bhava*.

With all due respect for the topics under discussion, one should mark with utmost interest that the internally perfected realization of one's eternal spiritual identity (*vraja-svarupa*), whether achieved by the practice of *antaranga-bhakti-bhajana* or by *kripa* or by both, would immensely enhance one's preaching proficiency and efficacy. Therefore, it would not look at all well for a resolute pure devotional aspirant to childishly neglect to recognize the intersupportive nature of *sankirtana* and *antaranga-vraja-bhakti-bhajana*. In this age, *sankirtana-yajna* is the vital force of inspired *antaranga-bhajana*, and conversely, beatified *antaranga-vraja-bhakti-bhajana* is the essential dynamic behind superlatively empowered *sankirtana*.

My dear most lovable and merciful Radha-Shyamasundara! May the broad-minded, forward-thinking souls evermore respect these deliberations, which are replete with profound concerns for advancing a more progressive culture of *antaranga-bhakti* in the lives of Your seriously dedicated *sankirtana* devotees. Please let those essence-seeking, deeply introspective, softhearted individuals who patiently and sincerely read or hear these verbose utterances very soon attain the highest transcendental happiness (*paramananda*) in the spontaneous loving service of Your lotus feet according to their innermost heart's aspirations.

Third Heartfelt Effusion

My dear Shri Shri Radha-Shyamasundara! Crying at the lotus feet of Shri Guru, one very fallen and destitute soul humbly offers to You the following unrestrained stream of prayerful outpourings for Your kind and considerate audience.

He Radhe Shyama! When, by a stream of unprecedented tenderheartedness, will the cowherd girls of Vrindavana bestow upon this wretched person the most blessed birth within the cowherd community of Varsana? When, by the mercy of my beloved *guru*, will I appear as a resplendently delightful young damsel of Vraja? I will never mature beyond the end of my twelfth year and will remain ever intoxicated with luscious freshly blooming *vama-madhya* love-fascinations. My bewitching spiritually perfect bodily features and transcendental voluptuousness will lay to shameful waste all the most beauteous and supposedly charming froglike women of the lower, middle, and upper planetary systems of this cosmic creation! By Your beneficent, divine benediction, the *laksmis* of Vaikuntha, the queens of Dvaraka, the enlightened ladies of Mathura, and even the *sakhis* of Vraja Dhama will highly esteem the irresistible prepossessing pulchritude of my person! My transcendental slender-waisted, nicely hipped figure, the color of creamy golden honey tinged with a rosy hue; my sweet face with deeply charming, dark, *kajjala*-lined doe eyes; my blissfully arched cupid's bow eyebrows, flawlessly flanking the elegant *tilaka* on my forehead and circumscribed with captivating *kasturi gopi*-dots; my elegantly raised nose adorned with a chained, honey-pearl nose ring; my luxuriantly soft and smooth rosy cheeks and rapturously sportive, glistening honey-moonbeam playfully smiling cherry lips; my jasmine-entwined, long braided locks of glossy, dark bluish-black softly curling hair, bedecked with clusters of *campaka* flowers and falling nearly to my feet; my deep crimson, splendidly embroidered,

silk-satin *choli*, bountifully brimming with newly blooming adolescent grace; my iridescent indigo skirt and scarlet diaphanous veil, embellished with ornately embroidered alternating Radha-golden and Shyama-bluish lotuses, which I received from the lotus-bud hands of my tenderhearted mistress, Shrimati Ananga Manjari; and the matchless supra-celestial, sparkling sapphire-studded, golden earrings, *mangtika*, necklaces, armlets, chiming bracelets, finger rings, waist-bells, delicately jingling *nupura* ankle-bells, and toe rings, adorning my graceful limbs; my everything: my heart, my mind, my words and deeds, and my entire existence – all this will be ever absorbed in the mercy-mellows of our eternal reciprocal loving intimacy. Indeed, by the interceding, pity-laden appeal of my beloved *guru*, Your very acceptance of my heartfelt supranatural amorous aspirations and Your mercy glances of profuse grace upon my humble existence will render the entire cosmos along with the powerful controllers of the fourteen worlds utterly subservient to me!

To augment the nuances of paramour love, unlimitedly gracious Purnamasi-devi will arrange for my marriage to an overconfident, dunderheaded cowherd boy from the village of Yavata. Though outwardly feigning fidelity toward him, I will not be the least interested in keeping his company and will never ever allow him to defile me or, for that matter, so much as even touch a hair on my delicate body, which I will have dedicated exclusively for the *prema-sevas* of Your pleasure pastimes. While speaking deceptively charming candy-coated blather, I will cheat him and my in-laws at every opportunity, to escape the dungeon of household duties and flee into the forest to faithfully serve Your nectarous *nikunja-lilas*.

Having been magnetically drawn by the captivating song of the flute, I, deeply immersed in *parakiya-bhava*, will eternally reside by the beautiful banks of Radha-kunda within the skillfully secluded, idyllic, mind-alluring, bliss-pervaded Vamshivadanandada Kunja near the northern *ghata* in the enchanting grove of Shrimati Lalita Devi. My ornately filigreed golden entrance-gate arbor, lusciously entwined with vine-clusters of intoxicatingly fragrant malati, juhi, and madhavi

flowers, frequently attended by swarms of intoxicated buzzing bumblebees and butterflies; my splendidly inviting, personally landscaped love-bower, bordered by luxuriant, consecutively coupled, multicolored, sparkling gemstone-like *kalpa-vriksha* trees and spiraling *kalpa-valli* creepers, concertedly bearing six-seasonal sweet and fragrant fruits and flowers of all description; my enchanting winding garden walkways, glowingly paved with intricately picturesque emerald, ruby, lapis lazuli, crystal, honey-golden onyx marble, and moonstone mosaics of elaborate paisley and supra-celestial leaf, fruit, and flower designs, flanked by thick moss, ferns, and varieties of lush, sweet-scented flower bearing verdure; the adjoining intermittently situated, divinely engraved, tastefully gem-bedecked, comfortably cushioned golden bliss-benches beneath the beautifully bending bows of over-laden *kadamba*, *campaka*, *bakula*, *ashoka*, *parijata*, *radha-chori*, *Krishna-chori*, and lovely land lotus trees, graced with adjacent meticulously sculptured elegant crystal swans, magnificent emerald and sapphire peacocks, and unblemished translucent marble supra-delightful, rapturously poised, flirtatiously dancing love-maidens; my privately placed, splendidly domed, black-and-gold onyx garden gazebos, beautified with many flower-creeper-embraced, delightfully festooned, exquisitely carved ivory-inlaid pillars and arches and replete with varieties of irresistibly engaging pleasure accoutrements such as large and small, multi-colored, super-soft silken pillows, firm, satin-covered love-bolsters, elegantly carved golden pitchers and goblets for supplying refreshing, cool water and ambrosial nectar drinks, as well as jeweled *pan* boxes and moonstone-studded golden spittoons, plus *camara* whisks and large hand-held peacock fans for creating cooling and festive breezes; my indescribably sweet and attractive, immaculately sculpted *cintamani* crystalline *kunja* love-cottage, intimately nestled amidst maze-like, consummately love-inspiring forest-flower-laden courtyards, intriguingly arranged rock gardens, exotic flower gardens, blissful *tulasi* groves, and charming, sweet-scented vineyards continually filled with the symphonic twittering, warbling, cooing, passionate crying, and sweet-talking of many varieties of parrots, mynahs, peacocks,

swans, cranes, gulls, doves, pigeons, sparrows, and finches always ecstatically responding to my love-lorn constant singing of Your Holy Names – *He Radhe Shyama*, the splendor of my personal abode cannot be suitably described by a mere string of words. When, in the course of Your never-ending love escapades, will You, by Your unlimited kindness, periodically come to see my exquisitely enchanting private *vilasa-kunja* as one of Your favorite secret pastime paradises?

He Radhe Shyama! When, mercifully coming to grace my delightful love-bower, along with Your dearest beloved Shrimati Ananga Manjari, who is the goddess of my very life, will the two of You simultaneously, from both sides, embrace me and kiss my cheeks, knowing me and my everything to be Your very own?

He Radhe Shyama! When will I be invited into the services of Your eternal eightfold daily pastimes within the all-blissful love-groves of Shri Vrindavana? I will ever-attentively in every way selflessly serve to augment Your absolute delight. Sometimes I will sweep Your pastime-cottage with my long curly locks of hair. Sometimes I will massage Your exquisitely beautiful limbs with fragrant oils, bathe You, dress You in splendid garments, and decorate You with incomparably charming flower ornaments made by me and my friends, just to see them become mercilessly mutilated by Your reckless ravaging love play. Sometimes I will gently wave a fan of peacock feathers to remove the drops of perspiration produced from the heat of Your heart's passion for each other. Sometimes I will blissfully offer You varieties of intoxicating honey wine to initiate the jubilation of a million cupids. You will reciprocate by forcibly inducing me to drink as well, after which I will not be able to clearly articulate what Cupid did or did not do to me to enhance the munificent expansion of Your pleasure pastimes. And sometimes, when You are in the mood, You will ask me, Your unworthy maidservant, to sweetly sing from the core of my heart, while playing the *svara-mandalika-vina* in *ragas* appropriate to Your delightful *bhavas*, which naturally accommodate my own desired mood of ever-loving service.

O *He* Radhe! When, in Your assembly of *sakhis*, will I get the chance to see, with my own blooming eyes, incomparably lovely Lalita Sundari forcing her way between me and Lord Shyama while endlessly rebuking Him with the most outrageous, audaciously sarcastic criticisms to prevent Him from capriciously ripping at my upper garments? When will I, my glistening honey-sweet lips slightly smiling, relish, with a love-laden sidelong glance the nectar of His ambrosial, crestfallen face at that time?

And when, in Your smiling presence, by Your incomprehensible kindness, will I ever whisper into His ear, “I love You too!” as Your enchanted, whimsical Shyama, knowing me to be Yours, passionately embraces me to His heart?

When will I become so blessed as to be in Your company when Your lover prankishly accosts You along a narrow footpath, demanding amorous favors as an excise for Your invaluable loads of carefully concealed bodily beauty?

When, as clouds rumble in the sky, will I, hiding my blissful smile behind the corner of my veil, apprehensively witness the witty way the unreliable Shyama boatman entreats You to step into His old dilapidated boat on the banks of Manasa-ganga at the foot of Govardhana Hill?

What uncommon price will the uncommon lecherous gardener demand of me as payment for even the least of His uncommon tree-grown pearls? O Radhike! Will that day soon come when I will delightfully embrace the moods of the *sakhis*, who, with clever insistence, forcibly assert Your rulership over the forest of Vrinda as Your messengers remonstratively demand, at Your behest, a tax on all the produce from Shyama’s newly harvested astonishing garden-crop of pearls?

He Gandharvike! When will I personally witness Shyama’s indescribably sweet masquerade as Your new *sakhi*, His disguise as a young female snake charmer, His bold intrigue as a distressed demigoddess, His impersonation of Your foolish husband, His emergence as a wild, ferocious beast along the forest path, and His many other guises all donned when circumstantially needed to access Your loving embrace?

When will a certain inconsolable maidservant become happy upon seeing You accept the dress and appearance of Subala Sakha to escape Mother Jatila's vigilance? My heart will ever revel in the ecstasy of these pastimes.

He Vrajadhipe Shri Radhike! The ambrosial pastimes of Your two delicate lotus feet are an ever-enchancing limitless mercy ocean of sweetness! In this world, the perfected *antaranga-bhaktas* standing at its shore are sprinkled with a few mist-drops of the nectar spray from the crashing waves of that ocean. I, fortunately encountering the seaside-breezes coming through the merciful lotus mouths of my beloved *guru* and all the eminent *Acaryas* in disciplic succession, have now become maddened by the mere scent of that ocean's proximity. Not caring for the opinion of others and firmly disallowing anyone or anything to come between me and my ultimate attainment, I, though blinded by tears of intense simultaneous hope and desperation, nevertheless hasten to get a glimpse of that ocean of *premamrita*.

He Praneshvari Radhe! When oh when will I, with a purest heart, be privileged to selflessly and most intimately serve Your wonderfully enchanting *rasa* dance festival in the company of Your beautiful *sakhis* and most enchanting *kinkaris*? Sometimes I will play on the *vina*, sometimes I will flutter on the flute, and sometimes I will delightfully sing on the fifth note while blissfully reciprocating Your beaming smiles. Sometimes I will clap my hands or chime the *karatalas* in time with the various rhythmic drums that serve to set the pace. Sometimes, when Your unlimitedly charming younger sister will, on Your indication, prankishly pull frantically protesting me by the hands into the circle of twirling *gopis* to dance by her side, You will make Your ever devoted Shyama dance with each of us in turn! When He catches hold of my hands, spins me around, and embraces me by the neck, maddening me with the intoxicating aroma of His avid cupidity for the nectar lips of Your loyal, unalloyed maidservants, at once my tongue will desire to become hundreds of tongues with which to taste the honeydew sweetness of His kisses! My jubilant nose will desire to become thousands of noses with which to relish the ambrosial fragrance

of His arms! My eyes will want to become millions of minnows to swim in the nectar ocean of His unfathomable handsomeness! My ears will wish to become billions of goblets with which to quaff the elixir of His fearlessly forward, flirtatious flattery! My two virtuous, budding raised breasts will shamelessly yearn to become a host of freshly blossomed saffron-pollen-besprinkled, honey-laden golden lotus flowers to enrapture His intoxicated-bumblebee-like heroically roaming eyes! My hands will want to expand by the trillions to check His persistent whimsical pinching! My horripilating thighs will urgently require quadrillions of empathetic reinforcements to sustain my all-but-swooning everything! And my mesmerized mind, intelligence, happy heart, and soul will ever remember, honor, and favorably serve, for Your exclusive satisfaction, the shoreless mercy-ocean of the peerless pastimes of Your tender lotus feet!

Dearest Shrimati Radharani! When, at the end of Your nocturnal love festival, as I serve to satisfy You with extraordinarily delicious, aromatic *pan*, will You and Your sweet-hearted Shyama whisper about me into each other's ears, knowing the treasures of Your lotus feet to be the most cherished hope of my heart?

He Radhe! When, having awakened from this dreamlike conditional material existence, the miserable affectation of male egoism long forgotten, will I find myself automatically rising to smilingly muse upon Your Shyamasundara's distinctive love marks on my person, still bleary-eyed and languid with fatigue from the previous night's *rasa* festival? Bewildered by a mixture of lingering loving sentiments, feelings of eternal gratitude, and a stirring awareness of the urgency of my impending morning services, I will happily enter Your *kunja* wind-palace with a few of my friends to behold the boundless beauty of Your tightly embracing dark and fair sleepy forms.

When will You, hearing our softly arriving tinkling anklets amid the sweet early morning warbling, cooing, and twittering of Vrinda's waking chorus of many kinds of love-filled birds, my arrival gradually dawning upon Your still drowsy, half-open eyes, sweetly request of me just a few minutes more, anticipating the imminent distress of Your lover's pangs of

separation? Then and there I will worship you with an *aratrika* of ten million glowing smiles!

As the starry firmament slowly fades into the emergence of a new day, I, stealthily returning unnoticed to my in-laws' home, will burn with an overwhelming desire to constantly serve You in a myriad of ways throughout the day and night.

In no time, I will quickly come to assist Your morning bathing and dressing and help adorn your delicate limbs with what I know to be Your favorite, exquisitely fashioned, dazzling sapphire-spangled golden ornaments. After massaging Your delightful figure with exceptionally fragrant seasonal oils and helping to blissfully shower You with an abundance of refreshing flower-scented water, I will remove Your thin white bathing garment, carefully pat You dry with a luxuriant, soft silk towel, and, at Shrimati Lalita Devi's behest, gift You with new lavishly lacey undergarments lovingly made by me. I will then carefully dry and comb your long curly tresses and, in the dressing room, as my friends help to tie Your *sari*, I will, on the pretext of fastening Your jeweled ankle-bells, placing my head beneath Your skirt where no one can notice me secretly kissing the tips of Your sweet and delicate toes, offer my life's breath a million times over in the dust of Your lotus feet. With a happy heart, I will loosely place above Your incomparably gorgeous, shapely buttocks, which captivate the unruly eyes of Your beloved Shyamasundara, a sweetly tinkling crystal-belled *kinkini* belt. As my *priya-sakhis*, upon my request, place sparkling toe-rings on Your toes, jeweled rings on Your fingers, and many thin, delicately chiming alternating gold and sapphire bracelets on Your wrists, I will adorn Your lovely, pure, plump breasts with heavenly, fragrant *kunkuma* and dexterously paint upon them varieties of mind-alluring pictures with *kasturi* musk. I will place around Your beautiful neck delightful pearl necklaces, a *gunja-mala*, a fine and most meritorious garland of *tulasi* leaves, and aromatic garlands of *bela* and *campaka* flowers, all simply to mesmerize the already enamored heart of beloved Shyama! I will intertwine Your beautiful serpent-like braid with supra-celestial bakula and jasmine strands bearing divine redolence known only to the transcendental forest of

Vrindavana, and, with a smirky smile, I will intermittently place, wherever possible, the plumes of a peacock, knowing Your mind to be intently absorbed in happy thoughts of Shyama's embrace.

He Radhe! Knowing me to be well attuned to the inner ways of Your heart of hearts, You will tenderheartedly beam at me with the sweetest radiance. The sight of this will bring rippling waves of delightful moonbeam smiles to my *priya-sakhis'* moon-like faces! When I hold before You a glistening sapphire-framed, highly polished golden mirror, You will see how I so perfectly decorated Your charmingly lovely, rosy-cheeked honey-face with an exquisite honey-pearl nose-ring, dangling dark-blue crystal earrings, and a *kama-yantra-tilaka*. Noticing Your elegant hair part, marked with crimson mind-alluring *sindura* pretentiously proclaiming Your faithfulness toward Your so-called husband, You will gently smile, becoming absorbed in the veiled ecstasy of paramour love. With fondness, You will favor how I faultlessly ornamented your crest with an effulgent sapphire-bejeweled *candrika* along with a nicely placed blue-sapphire *mangtika*, dangling to border Your curly hairline. You will see how I carefully painted indescribably enchanting *gopi*-dots around the playful cupid-bow eyebrows adorning Your limitlessly compassionate *kajjala*-lined eyes and perfectly placed a splendid musk-dot on Your sweet chin. All these will have magnificently embellished the inexhaustible loveliness of Your luxuriant, deep-crimson *sari* which redoubles Shyama's insatiable passion to touch You. Thus beholding Your own boundless beauty in the mirror, You will all but swoon with a wish to be at once ravished by the lovelorn, reddish, lotus-petal eyes of Your dark honeybee-like lover whose supreme honey-love goddess is none other than my limitlessly lovable You! Kundavalli will then arrive with a message from Nandagrama. At that time I will solace You by encouraging You to comply with Mother Yashoda's request that You come quickly to cook for Krishna. Hiding my smile when You openly rebuke me for enthusiastically supporting such a potentially scandalous affair within the earshot of Your superiors, I will offer my eternal dedication to the service of Your lotus feet again and again!

He Radhike! When will my most merciful *guru-rupa-sakhi*, to whom I eternally owe my everything, invite me to accompany You and Your impassioned *sakhis* to the palatial home of Nanda Maharaja atop lofty Nand...shvara Hill? There, I will help You cook an incredibly sumptuous breakfast love-feast for the pleasure of Shyamasundara and His cowherd boyfriends. When Mother Yashoda greets us and requests the *kinkaris* to go to the *bhoga-mandira* to make necessary preparations for Your blissful cooking festival, I will build nicely blazing fires of first-class cedar wood and engage a few of my friends in helping to keep them ablaze. Moving like a fire brand, simultaneously cooking many varieties of tasty dishes, You, being too busy, will instruct me to quickly stir the pot of rich, creamy milk so it doesn't burn. As I am stirring, stirring, and stirring, the milk will suddenly become thick, thicker, and thickest, upon which You will order me to quickly add the pre-measured ground cardamom and rock-candy powder, take everything off the stove, spread the contents to cool on a marble slab, and roll it all into nectarean, buttery *burfi* balls. I will all the while marvel as You mercifully include Your loving milkmaid in Your loving services to Your very own beloved Shyama!

He Radhe! After honey-faced Shyamasundara returns with His friends from milking the cows and is nicely bathed and dressed, He will blissfully sit amidst all the boys and eat the fabulously fragrant breakfast feast, praising the amazing variety of tasty delicacies. Everyone will float on the waves of ever-hungry Madhumangala's unlimitedly humorous wit punctuated by the unabashed, intoxicating *hasya-rasa* of all the jovial cowherd boys. All the while, Shyama will search out the glowing golden treasure of Your fairest features through the kitchen window to offer You the nectar of His evocative sidelong glances. At that time I will do everything within my power to mitigate Your acute loving afflictions redoubled by the unfeasibility of intimately meeting with Him in the presence of His mothers and friends, let alone through the kitchen window.

Afterwards, I will relish a little of the ambrosial remnants of His *adharamrita-prasada* personally given to me by Your own munificent hand. Being especially kind upon me, You will take

me with You to the prearranged morning rendezvous with Your beloved Shyama within a cave on Nandishvara Hill. When, as I fan the two of You in the wake of Your luscious love play, will I shyly lower my smiling face upon hearing Him curiously ask You, “Who made those nectarean, buttery *burfi* balls?” To show special causeless mercy upon Your unworthy, insignificant milkmaid, You will silently tell about me to Your Krishna with the indications of Your cupid’s bow eyebrows as Your smiling eyes mercifully dance in my direction.

In the late morning, Shyama will leave His father’s house for cow-herding, along with all of His happy, playful *gopa-balakas*. He, in various ways, will politely persuade His anxious parents to desist from following Him to the forest, just to give His bosom buddies the opportunity to freely frolic with Him to their hearts’ content. When will I, greatly anticipating the distresses of Your heart, witness with my own eyes the torment of the whole of Vraja as they tearfully return to their respective homes? I will weep to see You collapse into the arms of Your *sakhis* as they mercilessly carry You back to the gloom of Mother Jatila’s jailhouse. I will again and again hear You anxiously beg to be born as a bird so that You may freely fly from the confines of household imprisonment to the company of Your beloved Shyama. Again and again I will hear Your desperate plea to be reborn as a bamboo to get the opportunity to drink the nectar of His honey-moonbeam smiling kissy-lips by becoming His hand-held playful flute. Again and again You will praise the fortune of His shark-shaped earrings that unabashedly kiss His soft, sweetly shining cheeks. Repeatedly engulfed by intense feelings of separation, You will sardonically eulogize Giri Govardhana as *hari-dasa-varya*, knowing full well the incomparably superlative satisfaction Shyama feels by placing His delicate lotus feet upon the supremely rapturous mountain slopes of Your firm, amatively swollen breasts. Again and again You will beg to become like the river Yamuna, that You might swiftly flow unchecked to the ocean of Shyama’s unfathomable sweetness. You will fervently pray to become a breeze, rushing unhindered to whisk away the fragrance of His person. As You place Your newly made garland of forest flowers

in the hands of the expert maidservant Tulasi to take to Your beloved, You will flood with a passion to become that very garland placed upon His broad, handsome sapphire chest. Plaintively pining but hardly solaced by the succor of Your *sakhis*, You will again and again languish by longing to become a *madhavi* creeper whose tender tendrils curl to enclasp the torso of a certain youthful Shyama *tamala* tree within a forest bower.

When will we, with renewed enthusiasm and happy hearts, escape the looming prison walls of insufferable separation? On the pretext of accompanying You and Your *sakhis* to pick flowers for worship of the Sun-god, I will take You to a *sanketa-kunja* by the side of Your limitlessly lovely lake. Anxiously anticipating the nectar flood of Your fabulously festive midday pastimes, I will lovingly reflect upon Your amorous delusions as I witness You flirtatiously feigning indifference toward a *tamala* tree as we hasten along the forest path!

In the suspense of Your lover's imminent arrival, You will see Him everywhere, in all directions. Again and again, listlessly rising up from Your exquisitely ornamented flowerbed within the jewel-bedecked bower-house, You will impatiently gaze from the doorway down the forest path, and again and again You will return to sink in the ever-rising tide of Your desperation to see Him. When will I bathe Your two exquisitely beautiful lotus feet with an incessant flood of tears as You, experiencing a moment as if a millennium, anxiously apprehend the failure of Your now-much-overdue beloved Shyama's arrival at our prearranged tryst? Repeatedly imploring You to patiently remain just a few moments longer, I will suddenly notice His rakishly smiling eyes winking at me through the window lattice of the *kunja* cottage.

"Not so fast, buster! She's our property! Don't touch! We just took so much time and trouble to exquisitely dress and ornament Her and You want to ravage everything in a moment! Do You think You can so freely have our *svamini* just because You desire Her? I know You! If You want to realize Your wanton wishes, You'll have to pay the price: unswerving loyalty to the service of the dust of Her limitlessly luscious lotus feet! Otherwise, go! Go to Shaibya's friend Candravali! She's easy! Her

maidservants will eagerly make all the arrangements!” *He Radhe!* Boldly asserting the truth of our preeminent proprietary status, I will pull You behind smiling Lalita, who will stand as a formidable fortress to ensure the intensification of Your pleasure pastimes.

Incorrigible Shyama, adopting a disdainful demeanor, will scornfully smile and flagrantly demand, “What did she say? Who is this insolent new *kinkari* anyway? Would she stand so valiantly if Kandarpa-*raja* forcibly waged war against her charming bodily beauty in a cave of Govardhana Hill? If he ever laid his hands on her, he would definitely teach her a dance or two!” At that instant, I will quickly hide my jubilantly blushing self behind my unlimitedly beautiful You to ensure the intensification of Your pleasure pastimes!

He Radhike! When inconceivably clever Shyama, to everyone’s astonishment, suddenly eludes the comprehension of all, somehow penetrating our impervious phalanxes to bind You in the stronghold of His tight embrace, I will, on Your indication, stealthily spirit away with His mischievous flute! Shyama, being mesmerized by the intoxicating fragrance of Your person, will not at all understand what has happened. At that time, I will beseech that best descendant of the bamboos, “O best procuress of the wants of He who loosens the hairbraids of the innocent *gopi* girls of Vraja! O you, who, empowered by our *svamini*, force the formidable fortresses of their bodices to give way under the sway of their impassioned recollection of His indomitable handsomeness! O you, who, guilty of drinking the ambrosial nectar of the lusty lips of Radha’s supremely libertine lover boy, wish to escape the discontent of the deer-eyed *gopis* to whom that nectar actually belongs by returning the stolen property a thousandfold! O wanton *vamsi*, I know you! The next time Shyama sweetly presses your mouth to His *bimba* fruit lips, in His quest to conquer the pride of the *kinkaris*, please mercifully whisper into His ear how we are burning with the desire to attain Him in the service of our *svamini!*” I will then secretly slip the *vamsi* behind my back to Ananga Manjari who will in turn covertly consign it to the custody of Lalita Devi. *He Radhe!* You will then, by the

strength of Your unblemished honor and reputation as a chaste housewife, manage to free Yourself after a little struggle. Glancing in all directions, You will sternly admonish all of the *sakhis* with Your tightly knitted eyebrows while earnestly endeavoring to retie the loosened sash about Your trembling hips.

As entranced Shyama playfully approaches and dexterously catches the corner of Your sari, You will coyly smile while looking askance, frowning Your restless, cupid's-bow-like eyebrows. Your soft, doe-like eyes will ambivalently rejoice and brim with tears. Your lusciously quivering *bimba* fruit lips will reveal Your intense inner joy. While strenuously struggling to resist the ambush of His brazenly adventurous fingers, You will outwardly reproach Your lover by lightly bopping Him on the head with the play lotus in Your delicate hand. "Don't touch me! We've just bathed for our worship of the Sun-god! How will our offerings be suitable if we are sullied by a rapacious rake like You?" When will I be so privileged with this sight of Your sweetest *kila-kincita* and *kuttamita* moods, which profoundly delight Shyama with an indescribable happiness millions of times over and above the bliss He obtains from complete union?

He Svamini Radhe! Just then, Vrinda Devi, smiling to see the fun, will intervene, saying to You both, "Hey You two *rasika* lovers! The *abhijita-muhurta* is quickly approaching! Best we not waste these auspicious moments with any unnecessary quarreling! If You want to soundly succeed in the consummation of King Cupid's loving game plan, then quickly come with all of Your *sakhis* to see the beauty of the monsoon forest! This forest is complimented by the jubilant dancing of many peacocks and is specially arrayed with a myriad of swings. These swings were just now fabulously decorated for the pleasure of Your eyes and the happiness of Your hearts by my expert *vana-devi* maidservants!"

At that time, You, being so petitioned, will relent and sweetly consent to happily traverse the dark monsoon-cloud-shaded forest path with Your arms about Your glorious dark monsoon-cloud-shaded lover. Eagerly intent upon climbing onto

the best of all swings with His best of all transcendental sweethearts, Ghanashyama will fill our hearts with ever-expanding transcendental bliss as He fills Your sweet ears with the ambrosial nectar of His flirtatious joking words.

When will I beam with pride as I shower Your splendidly rapturous dark and fair forms with fine, multi-colored, supremely fragrant flower petals as the *sakhis* begin to sing and push Your swing? Softly rumbling to congratulate You, the jubilant cloud friends of Krishna will momentarily sprinkle tiny rain droplets upon You to bring a cool exhilaration upon Your ecstatic swing festival! You and Your beloved, looking like incomparably pleasing lightning within a boundlessly beautiful monsoon cloud, will swing higher and higher as if to benevolently befriend the clouds and lightning in the sky!

That delightful day will certainly come when I will personally witness the overpowering magnitude of Your matchless, divine generosity toward Your multitude of happy girlfriends. Blissfully sharing Your loving Shyama with Your most trusted confidantes, You will gradually make all of them intimately sit with Him on various forest-flower-decorated love-swings! All glories to Your ever-expanding transcendental passion for tenderly reciprocating the love of Your fully surrendered friends and maidservants!

Vrinda will then come to You and secretly whisper something into Your ear. As I see a slightly mischievous smile appear on Your face, a blissful curiosity will flood my heart.

He Radhe! Still dizzy from so much exuberant swinging, everyone will slowly wander with You along the forest path into a charming spring-flower-filled meadow. There sweetly singing birds will be warbling in *ragas* befitting the festival of spring. Jubilantly smiling and agitated by rippling waves of *prema*, the *sakhis* will spontaneously compose complimentary Krishna love-anthems in the *vasanta-raga*. Vrinda's *vana-devis* will then present before You an amazing array of implements just suitable to facilitate Your forever famous *holi* pastimes with Your beloved Shyama. Before You will lay a large variety of delicate powder balls of fragrant *kunkuma*, *candana*, camphor, saffron, turmeric, and various flower pollens. There will also be excellent

forest-flower-bedecked bows with quivered flower arrows. Broadly smiling, we will see exquisitely ornamented jewel syringes for spraying assorted scented fluids produced from *aguru*, musk, *candana*, mud, and juices pressed from varieties of highly fragrant flowers. All these substances will excitedly wait in splendid gold-and-sapphire water pots.

Seeing all this, valorous Shyama will exclaim, “Aho! What is this? How is it that Madhava, the spring season, directly follows the monsoon season out of sequence? O Madhavi Radhe! I think it could only be because Your heart’s passion for conquering the kingdom of Madhava has emerged as this delightful springtime meadow replete with this formidable arsenal of superbly suggestive flower-power weaponry! Certainly there could be no explanation beyond this! Do all of Your wanton desires so aggressively appear as incontestable reality? O proud young lady with roguish eyes! Chivalrous warriors do not speak much but rather prove their prowess by courageous deeds! If You think Yourself heroic enough to withstand the onslaught of My flower bombs upon Your devastating beauty, then, armed with coquettish glances, stand and fight!”

Glancing confidently from the corners of Your unconquerably gorgeous *kajjala*-lined eyes, You will boldly counter, “*Bho* bombastically boastful *brahmacari*! It appears that it is You who are doing all the superfluous chatter! We will see how You maintain Your equilibrium and sense control when You are totally demoralized and devastated by the indomitable bodily splendor of My *sakhi* soldiers and *manjari* bodyguards!” At that, we will all quickly change into thin white garments suitable for the occasion. Then Your *holi* love-assault will commence in earnest!

He Radhe! When will I have the blessed opportunity to supply You with Your desired weaponry as You smilingly pelt Shyama’s unlimitedly handsome chest with powder balls of *sindura* and *gulala*? The *sakhis* will all simultaneously reciprocate Shyama’s continuous streams of colored juices by blissfully pulverizing Him from all directions with a barrage of colorful powder balls!

Some very fortunate girls will immerse themselves in the nectar of transcendental musical accompaniment, exuberantly singing and playing varieties of stringed *vinas* such as *kacchapi*, *vicitra*, *rudra*, *svara-mandalika*, and *tampura*. Others will blissfully play on various kinds of flutes, *shenais*, and *nagasimhas*, creating an inestimable exhilaration. Still others, with amazing dexterity and potency, will zealously play different *mridangas*, *pakawajas*, *damarus*, and *nagara* drums in many varieties of rhythms, together with various bells, chimes, gongs, and *karatalas*, all periodically combining to make an incredibly tumultuous musical uproar!

As multi-colored powders flying in all directions cloud the air with a dense, colorific confusion, triumphant Shyama, revolving with great alacrity like a blazing firebrand, will appear before each overwhelmed *sakhi*, besmearing one girl's face, another's breasts, and still another's beautiful belly! Embracing one happy girl to His heart, catching another girl's braids, holding another's hands, drinking another's nectarean kisses, and pinching yet another's buttocks while biting her neck – in this way, Your *svayam-rupa* Gokulananda Shyamasundara will blissfully befriend each and every one of us by the influence of Your ever-resplendent, ever-victorious munificence!

When the colorful clouds of *ananda* dissipate somewhat, Vrinda and Her *vana-devis* will approach to offer varieties of refreshing nectar drinks. Shyama will then take You by the hand to a private garden, and the selfless *sakhis*, intoxicated with the ecstasies of their own amorous afflictions, will stumble off into their various individual *kunjās*.

My dear slender-waisted Radharani! I have heard from the lips of great saintly persons that Your honey-moon-faced rakish lover, Shyamasundara, has expanded His innumerable energies through His various agents to manifest all the spiritual and material worlds, intelligently accommodating the various desires and attitudes of unlimited varieties of living entities. Is that really so very wondrous? All the *vibhutis* of the entire cosmic creation are said to have sprung from a mere spark of His splendor! Am I supposed to be very much impressed? So what if daily He skillfully killed so many terrible *raksasa* demons,

liberating them by merging them into His *brahman* effulgence! Was His bewildering of Lord Brahma by expanding into duplicate forms of thousands of cowherd boys and calves truly a display of His mystic opulence? Was His exhaustive dancing on the hooded heads of Kaliya-naga really very artistic or graceful? Perhaps if He at that time would have invited You and Your friends on board for *rasa* dancing, I would be somewhat appeased. I have heard of His having devoured devastating forest fires in His childhood, but what about the now-raging fires of our desires to see His sumptuous, supramundane, confidential *prema-keli* union with You? Some people might think His instructing the wives of the *yajnika-brahmanas* to return home to their husbands and patiently wait for some future opportunity a most noble and noteworthy display of *kripa*. Is it really so wonderful or important that He defied unduly puffed-up Indra-deva by easily holding up Govardhana Hill with just the single pinky of His left hand? Couldn't He recognize any worthier mountains (mountain-like breasts) to uphold in this land of Vraja? I dare say He would not ably do the needful in this regard without the arduous exploits of all the fingers on both His hands! He may have been able to somehow lift a little mushroom like Giri Govardhana, but how, under the present circumstances, will He be able to lift the weighty *vama-giri* mountain of Your contrariness? I have heard that in His previous life as Raghupati Ramacandra He wrathfully killed Ravana, supposedly to give protection to Sitā Devi. Soon after, however, He insensitively banished Her to the forest, giving Her unlimited distress merely for the fame and namesake of His Raghu dynasty. Were these deeds really so commendable or considerate? How glorious was His ungrateful arrest of Bali Maharaja or His confining him to the prison of his palace in the netherworlds? Bali had given to Him everything in the three words, including his own person, yet Krishna, as Vamanadeva, in return, only rewarded him with a mere post-dated position as an insignificant Indra. By that are we to think Him very high-minded and magnanimous? How heroic was His deliverance of the elephant Gajendra from the crocodile-jaws of all-devouring death? How victorious was He when dismantling the

insignificant wasp Hiranyakashipu or when dealing a death blow upon the demon Hiranyaksa while delivering Mother Earth from the depths of the Garbhodaka ocean? Let Him now consider the crocodile of all-devouring time upon us, as if we have any more of this fleeting afternoon to waste! Let Him, upon a charming plush flowerbed within a secluded, ornately gilded *kunja* cottage, victoriously dismantle the hair-knot of Your loving anguish in a raging battle against Your tantalizing feigned belligerence! Let Him, dealing a death blow to the pride of the most liberal lovers in the three worlds, most mercifully deliver You from the fathomless depths of Your vast ocean of deepest, innermost *premika* distresses (desires) to please Him in every way!

He Radhe! Only when I see Him carefully placing the tender arches of Your delicate lotus feet upon the contours of His blissfully shining cheeks, kissing them with His quivering coppery lips as streams of tears glide down from His half-closed all-alluring lotus eyes, will I consider Him to be even a little intelligent! *He* Priyeshvari! Shyama is known as *bhusana-bhusanangam*, the ornament of all ornaments. His ornaments are beautified by dint of their being worn by or associated with Him, the best of all ornaments. Yet, He alone, with or without ornaments, is not particularly beautiful. Only when He humbly begs to become Your faithful *purusa-bhusana*, to selflessly ornament (be beautified by) Your matchlessly elegant and splendorous lovely limbs, will He meritoriously attain the apex of magnificence! Only when I see Him totally overwhelmed and defeated by the intensity of Your lavishly luscious loving ecstasy and unconscious, fainted beneath Your bountiful bosom, will I consider Him to be at all heroic or skillful! All glories to Your solitary love play within the bumble-bee-bedecked, blossoming bowers of Vrindavana! *He* Svadhina-bhartrike Radhe! Only when I see Him afterwards, at Your beck and call, deliriously enraptured and amorously turbulent, unsuccessfully attempting, with uncontrollably trembling hand, to repaint the smudged *kasturi* pictures I previously painted on Your pleasingly plump and beautiful mind-bewitching breast, will I consider Him to be at all graceful or artistic! Only when I

see Him, upon Your order begging to become the surrendered servant of Your unalloyed maidservants, taking the dust of their feet upon His head, will I know Him to be very opulent and fortunate! Such are the winsome ways of Your immaculately selfless, love-fascinations! I will attain the pinnacle of bliss upon witnessing Your peerless pride and joy as You lay Your own dearly beloved Shyamasundara to rest by the side of she who is dearer to You than Your own life's breath, Your darling, most treasured, incomparably delicate younger sister, Shrimati Ananga Manjari. At that time, Rupa Manjari, Rati Manjari, Rasa Manjari, Mani Manjari, and Guna Manjari along with their associates will come to her supremely opulent Anangambuja Padma-mandira, eminently ornamenting the heart of Your love-saturated lake to lovingly serve her lotus feet. I offer my heart billions of times over in the dust of her lotus feet! When will I attain even a dust particle of her eternal loving service? In this way I will surely become especially dear to You. This is the most cherished aspiration of my heart! In reality, I have no other. Understanding this, You will always arrange what is best for me. That is my firm conviction.

He Praneshvari! After some time, all of the *sakhis* will then gradually arrive from their various *kunjas*, having in their own ways satisfied the Lord of their honeyed hearts. While either shyly smiling or overtly scowling, endeavoring to cover the many symbolic inscriptions of Cupid upon their enchanting loveliness, they will delight You and beloved Shyama with an exchange of many joking words indirectly insinuating the depths of their intimacy with Him! Meanwhile, playfully preoccupied Shyama will suddenly remember . . . and reaching to check His cummerbund and looking here and there, He will discover the absence of His . . . “Whe . . . Where is My . . . When did My . . . Who . . . Who stole My flute?!”

I will inwardly delight to see His nonplussed astonishment at that time.

He Radhe! In a demanding mode, Shyama will search here and there, leaving no *gopi* unturned until He notices me fearfully glancing toward You for protection!

“I . . . I . . . I didn't take it! I swear to God, I didn't!”

“Well, who took it then?!”

“O Shyamasundara! I’m just an insignificant maidservant who has no separate interest than the interest of my mistresses! Why do You think the peerless Housewives of Vraja would want to steal Your useless, old fault-filled flute anyway? We wouldn’t condescend to even look askance at Your flute! Even if we were sneak thieves, as You surmise, do You think there are no better things to steal in this forest than Your inconsiderate, degenerate, hypocritical and shameless ol’ flute? O ravager of innocent women! Rupa Manjari is right! It was most probably You who purposely stole Your own flute, just to have an excuse to give us all unlimited trouble! That’s precisely what I think too!”

“Sure, I believe you! You can say whatever you like, but don’t think I’m such a fool that I couldn’t notice Your fascinating fearful countenance!” Saying this, Shyama, playing the part of a police inspector, will mercilessly arrest me in His snake-noose-like arms! As He relentlessly frisks every nook and cranny of my helpless, horripilating person, I will revel in the enchantment of Your beaming smile.

At that interval, Lalita will “Crack!” break the flute and “Splash!” throw it in the *kunda*, exhorting, “*Arī* Mr. Womanizing Policeman! There is no use wasting time looking for Your wanton flute in that way. She who actually inspires all of these blissful pastimes challenges You to a water war within the nectar waters of Her limitlessly enchanting lake. If You can valiantly conquer the irresistible kingdom of Her unfathomable beauty and skill in conjugal affairs as She sports amidst Her lotus-like lady friends within the blissful waters of Her lotus-filled *kunda*, only then will we consider the purpose of the flute and all Your gallant aggressions to have been served!”

Hearing these daring words of Shrimati Lalita Devi and considering them reasonable, beloved Shyama will relinquish His previous pursuits and nobly accept the challenge. He will then cheerfully proceed along with You and all the *sakhis* to the ornately bejeweled banks of Your incomparable liquid-*prema*-filled Radha-kunda.

He Radhe! When will that happy day come when, by some unimaginable good fortune, I will be so blessed to have even the slightest opportunity to serve Your splashingly exuberant Radha-kunda water-warring pastimes? After helping You and some of Your *priya-sakhis* prepare for battle, I will blissfully stand with a few of my friends on the steps of a gorgeously engraved sapphire bathing *ghata*. There we will clearly witness the unsurpassed delight of Your beloved Shyama as He enters the crystal-clear waters like an unruly elephant encircled by His elated she-elephant *gopi* love-mates. The rippling reflections of the glowing *gopis'* goldenness will mingle with the reflected bluishness of resplendent Shyama, generating within the water's waves a mesmerising emerald greenness to immerse the minds of all the onlooking *gopis* at the water's edge.

“Is He a dark *rasa*-filled rain cloud floating on the *rasa*-filled waves of transcendental enchantment within Your blissful *rasa*-filled splendid reservoir of nectarean ever-increasing happiness amidst the fickle lightning-flash *gopi* embodiments of *shringara-rasa*? Is He a boundlessly beautiful bouquet of blissfully bluish lotus flowers, brazenly breasting the onslaught of unabashedly blossoming lotus-like water-warring golden *gopi* goddesses? Is He an autumnal moon, descending from the heavens in the middle of the day to boldly plunder the pride of the *cakravaka*-like floating breasts of His enthralled, charmingly contrary, strenuously resisting, honey-moon-faced delightful *sakhi* sweethearts?”

Excitedly musing in this way, I will blissfully behold the inconceivable, all-attractive playfulness and handsomeness of beloved Shyama as He expands His beauty in an attempt to forcibly subjugate the sweetness of His countless *sakhi* combatants while simultaneously assailing each one of them with reciprocal volleys of *prema-rasa*. Amorous Shyama will wantonly wrestle them hand to hand, chest to breast, neck to neck, cheek to cheek, mouth to mouth, tooth to tooth, and finally, dueling tongue to dueling tongue! In an instant, He will teasingly steal away their wealth of garments and ornaments, allowing His honey-thirsty bumble-bee eyes to madly drink the luscious nectar of each *sakhi's* eternally resplendent, blissful

lotus-like delicate limbs as they coyly retreat to hide amid the multitudes of lilies and lotus flowers.

Lalita Sakhi, noticing the rising waves of secret amative infatuation splashing the lakeshore of my heart, will near the water's edge, and after jokingly showering me with splashes of *premamrita*, she will quickly catch the corner of my skirt to playfully pull me in.

“*He Lalite!* Do you want to make all of your girlfriends corrupt like you? Misery loves company!” Frantically laughing and strenuously struggling to free myself from her forceful grip, very much afraid of what Shyama might do to me if she actually succeeded, I will somehow deftly manage to escape. As I hastily recoil my feet from the peripheral waters of the *kunda*, laughing Lalita will heartily splash at me again and again. Ananga Manjari, knowing my innermost intentions, will lovingly glance upon me with beaming approval.

He Shyameshvari Radhe! At that time my heart, splashed by waves of amorous amusement, will marvel, “Have the glistening *gopi* goldfishes plunged into a play-pool of ever-increasingly nectarean *shyama-rasa*, just to become caught in the love-net of their own boundless amorous obsessions by the fishermen of Shyama's ever-enchancing playful glances? Have they now become utterly overwhelmed and captivated by encountering His incessant spirited splashing showers of love-drenched handsome delightfulness? Has Jayashri, the glamorously glowing, gorgeously golden goddess of victory, now intervened to totally overwhelm and incapacitate a mortally mesmerized Shyama? Has She not victoriously vanquished His every hope of superceding the indomitable preponderance of Her ever-resplendent, ravishingly curvaceous, triumphantly transcendent boundless bodily beauty?”

Preoccupied in this way, I will joyously shower volleys of fragrant flowers to celebrate the ascendancy of vivaciously playful You, my supremely victorious, water-warring *svamini!* Then, along with Your friends, You will delight in making music by rhythmically slapping the water with Your reddish lotus-like hands. Just as lotus-like *sadhakas*, deeply rooted in the nectar-pool of hearing, chanting, and remembering the *gopi's* pastimes

with Your lover, rise to exuberantly dance, celebrating the festival of *sankirtana* with the hope of attaining Your eternal loving service, the happy lotus flowers emerging from Radha-kunda's agitated waves will jubilantly dance to the sway of Your amorous midday pastimes, swaying to and fro as if agitated by the intense desire for a felicitous festival in the tender touch of the lotus petal finger tips of Your Shyamasundara's lotus-like conjugally clever hands!

He Praneshvari! When, after witnessing the conclusion of Your blissful water-play, will I be so privileged to catch hold of Your delicate lotus-bud hands to carefully help You up onto a beautifully bejeweled bathing platform near the water's edge? Rati Manjari and others will then assist in Your massage and bath. Meanwhile, I, anticipating the confidential flow of Your heart, will, upon Your sweet indication, go to help Rupa Manjari gently anoint and bathe Your all-enchanting lover. Upon quickly bathing and emerging from the nectar mellow waters of Your *kunda*, my blissful shapely juvenescent features will become all but conspicuous through my dripping thin white bathing-garment. At that time, the sight of my delicate loveliness will, for Your absolute delight, make the unrestrained, roving eyes of Your incomparably handsome Shyama savor an inspiration ten million times greater than that which He achieves from the mutual fascination of His pure, supramundane direct *anga-sanga* with me! Hiding from His view, I will don fresh, thin dry clothes handed to me by one of my friends. We will then all enter an indescribably gorgeous temple of jewels within a grove of *kalpa-vriksa* trees. There I will joyfully help You and the *sakhis* dress and decorate our beloved Lord Shyama. We will offer varieties of charming, ornately fashioned flower dresses and ornaments made from various forest flowers, leaves, twigs, and peacock feathers. Beholding His charming features, I will blissfully muse, "How sweet! How cute! How lovable! How irresistible! No wonder She becomes so incredibly impatient!"

He Radhe! Knowing the flow of my heart, You will indicatively instruct me with the hints of Your assuring, ruthless eyes. At that opportune moment, I, with a happy heart, will shyly present effulgently smiling Shyamasundara with the new

bamboo *vamsi* flute I secretly made for Him at home the previous day. With Your beaming consent, He will happily accept. Then, with His lotus eyes blooming, He will cheerfully inspect its excellence, sweetly flutter a few notes to be sure, and carefully tuck it into His flower belt. I will blissfully marvel at how my most merciful You, along with Shrimati Lalita Devi, so cleverly orchestrated Your sublime *lilas* to incorporate the fulfillment of my own heart's cherished aspiration.

We will then ornament both You and the *sakhis* with many varieties of gorgeous, intricately designed, sweetly scented flower dresses, anklets, belts, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, and *candrika* crowns. Vrinda will then invite everyone to assist in serving a superbly sumptuous forest picnic that she has just arranged for Your beloved Shyamasundara, Subala, Ujjvala, and two or three other of His most intimate *priya-narma-sakhas*. Ever-hungry Madhumangala will also miraculously appear on the scene just in time to fill his bottomless belly. The *vana-devis* will then bring forth many varieties of deliciously prepared fruits, roots, and nuts gathered from the forest, and You and all Your girlfriends will carry various milk-sweet preparations brought from home. I will also bring the homemade succulent *gulkanda-laddus* and creamy cashew *burfi*, which I secretly prepared with the hopes that Shyama may at this time accept and delight in them. I will be overjoyed to see Him happily relish all of our offerings. Thereafter, I will please You and the *sakhis* by helping to distribute His nectarean *prasada*. Thus, I will make You once again savor the sweetness of His *adharamrita* kisses! As Shyamasundara and His friends recline on soft, spacious flower beds, resting and relaxing while chewing sweet *tambula*, You will, out of inestimable gratitude and love for Your ever-surrendered maidservants, benevolently expand the compass of His compassion by personally sharing the remnants of His mercy-kisses with each and every one of us!

Dear most merciful Shrimati Radharani! I will ever attach the desires of my heart, the activities of my perfect spiritual body, my eternal life, the transcendently situated soul of my very being, my everything, and my all and all to the shoreless nectar-ocean of the pastimes of Your tender lotus feet. By the

unfailing influence of Your special causeless mercy upon me, my heart will be ever-increasingly overwhelmed with undeniable, transcendently passionate loving attraction to the Lord of Your life. Still, I will never, abandoning the consideration of Your ultimate satisfaction, independently endeavor to please Your beloved Shyama, even if He, in a secluded grove, unceremoniously tries to force Himself upon my frail existence. Shyama belongs to You, and You, by Your boundless benignity, belong to me. Therefore, Shyama, bound by Your gracious desire, automatically belongs to me within the context of my loving service to the extended mercy feature of Your pleasure pastimes. Without Your consent, I will not, and therefore cannot, do anything. Taking absolute refuge at Your lotus feet and giving up all egocentric motives, I will do anything and everything for Your pleasure. You will always be my supreme *svamini*. My enthusiastic singing of His Holy Names, my earnest glorification and recollection of His form, qualities, and pastimes, my sincere friendships with His devotees, my ardent longing for His occasional encounter, and my acceptance of His mercy upon Your ever-loyal, incorruptible, unalloyed maidservant will be done exclusively with the aim of satisfying You. Instrumentally acting upon Your expressed wishes or, when required, simply doing the needful upon anticipating the flow of Your inner feelings, I will delightfully serve to satisfy the senses of Your laudably libidinous lover! I will do so not so much to mitigate His distress but to relieve the *para-duhkha-duhkhi* heartfelt anguish You feel when apprehending the disconsolate condition of His ever-insatiable, transcendently impassioned heart. *He Svamini Radhe!* I will thus have no separate interest apart from Your own. Regardless of whatever deeds I may apparently enact for the pleasure of Shyama, my *bhavollasa-rati* will remain forever intact and immaculate by dint of my heart's constant vicarious absorption in the pleasure of my *yutheshvari*. Ultimately, whatever actions I may perform in Krishna consciousness will be eternally governed by the satisfaction of my *guru-rupa-sakhi*.

My dearmost beloved Shrimati Radharani! You undoubtedly relish ten million times the happiness of Your own

intimate meetings with Shyama by sharing Him with Your confidential companions! Who can fathom the limits of Your divine inspirations? Moreover, it is a profound truth that Your infinitely indomitable beloved Shyamasundara derives a special, ineffable bliss by agreeing to be astonishingly overwhelmed and conquered by the love of Your infinitesimal, eternally separated *vibhinnamsha* protigē. Therefore, from time to time You are thrilled to facilitate such a variety of happiness in Him. The individual soul's endearing preferential *prema* for Your lotus feet causes Your kindness upon her to increase to the highest degree. Actually, it is her deep love for You and Your amplified *ananda* expressed as consequent compassion upon her, more than anything, that profoundly impresses Him and forces Him into submission. Thus, some of Your *sakhi-snehadhika* maidservants, will certainly, under special conditions prearranged by You, sometimes agree to meet with Your beloved when wholly convinced of Your absolute delight. In doing so, they never breach Your confidential trust and are thus never deprived of their supremely privileged access to Your most intimate *nikunja-sevas*. The amplified *ananda* within Your heart spontaneously inundates their intensely absorbed *tad-bhavecchatmika* consciousness. This makes it possible for them, in all circumstances, to relish a pleasure ten million times that which they could ever access by direct *sambhogecchamayi* association with the Lord. There is nothing very astonishing about that, for they are most affectionately, if not ever exclusively, committed and selflessly surrendered to the happiness of Your heart.

O Radhike! When oh when, as the *pasha-khela* dice board is placed before You, will I happily hear with my own lucky ears Your *sakhis* jestingly humiliating playful Shyama by insolently declaring, "This is not the forest for tending cows, playing macho muscle-games, and killing *raksasa* demons! This is a brain-game to test the sagacity of skillful persons before the learned assembly!" To my sudden trepidation, the both of You, dice in hand, will then unexpectedly decide to stake me alone as the winner's prize! Shameless Shyama will cunningly vaunt His farcical triumph, inciting a riotous dispute among the *sakhas*

and *sakhis*. Kundalata, siding with Him, will advocate on His behalf, prattling so many promiscuous presumptions. In an instant, eminently erudite Nandimukhi, famous as Purnamasi's foremost disciple, will push her way to the forefront. Boldly asserting Your obvious upper hand, she will dismiss all opposing arguments with a single retort. She will then promptly pull jubilantly laughing me by the arms to You. Catching the base of my braid, my unlimitedly merciful *ganeshvari*, Shrimati Lalita Devi, will then force me, whose gladdened heart is already Yours, to surrender my head at Your lotus feet, like a sold-out animal.

He Radhe! When, as the waging of the flute, kisses, embraces, ornaments, and clothing begins in earnest, will I, with great apprehension, hear Vrinda's panicky messenger parrots suddenly report the nearing of Mother Jatila to the vicinity of the Surya-mandira? Being so alerted and helping to quickly change back everyone's clothes and ornaments, I will hastily grab the flower basket and go with You and the *sakhis* to the temple of the Lord of the day. Shyama will appear so charming, returning on the scene disguised as a highly intelligent, supremely sense-controlled, gentle *brahmana* boy. How humorous! When Jatila unsuspectingly accepts Him as Your priest for the now-very-late worship of the Sun God; when she credulously instructs You to wholeheartedly surrender to His lotus feet; when Shyama pleasingly bewilders her with His outrageously illusive astrological declarations, convincing her of Your "unblemished" fidelity toward Your imbecile eunuch of a so-called husband; when she unwarily beseeches Him to become the permanent priest of her household deity; when greedy, comical Madhumangala rapaciously appropriates the *daksina* and sweets upon Shyama's pompous refusal to accept – how will I be able to contain my insuppressible laughter?

How will I be able to bear the sudden, overwhelming swell of veiled agony within the core of Your heart as You reluctantly traverse the return path to Yavata? "Has the condensed milk of Her heart's jubilation, sweetened by the ever-enchanted sight of His ever-increasing handsomeness, now curdled at the prospects of virulent *viraha*?" Thus deliberating, I will reel with

despair. As we enter the citadel of Your in-laws' home, Your intensely distressful feelings of separation will reach insuperable proportions. How will mere camphor, sandalwood paste, wet lotus stems, and conciliatory chicanery suffice to alleviate the conflagration consuming Your heart at that time? Only when You carefully make *manohara laddus*, *amrita keli*, *karpura keli*, *ananga gutika*, and other nectarean sweets for Shyama's supper will You become even a little cooled and pacified. Then, as we return to Your private chamber, You, engaddened and sweetly smiling, will mercifully sit me down on an exquisite couch and, reclining to rest for a little while with Your head upon my lap, softly intimate to me the longings of Your Shyama-infatuated heart as other maidservants fan You and gently massage Your delicate limbs.

He Radhe! After we have bathed, dressed, and decorated You nicely for the evening festivities, You will desperately beseech me to mercifully show You the Lord of Your life. When I cheerfully pull You to the top of the *candra-shalika*, You, anticipating the quickly approaching evening sky, will see the clouds of dust upraised by the hooves of the cows. I will then enthusiastically take You, on some pretext, to a thicket by the side of the path. There You will have the opportunity to exchange in an unseen way profoundly ecstatic, meaningful glances with Your beloved. Shyama, swaggering like an inebrious elephant, will intoxicate the whole of Vraja as He returns rollicking home from the pastures with His uncountable jovial cowherd boyfriends and cows.

“Is He a lordly elephant parading into Vraja with a host of rapt attendants? I hardly think so, because when have we ever seen an elephant herding a myriad of cows? Is He a *tamala* tree moving on a pathway between the Ganga and Yamuna? No! It could not be, because *tamala* trees don't play sweet, mind-alluring songs on the flute, and the rivers Ganga and Yamuna don't moo like cows and buffaloes! Is He a walking, talking, playful sapphire deity of divine love benedictions? Maybe, but why has this one lost His equilibrium upon glimpsing the sparkling rays of the toenails of Your lotus feet? *He Krishangi Radhe!* Just once more, see His charm! His peacock-feathered,

forest-flower crown; His *vraja-dhuli*-dusted, sweetly curling locks of hair; His fascinating, sweetly smiling, unlimitedly kissable honey-moon face with gracefully dancing, elongated lotus-petal eyes; His ever-victorious, flirtatiously frolicking cupid's-bow eyebrows; His shark-shaped earrings sweetly swinging alongside His gorgeous glistening cheeks which are splendidly adorned with *candana* and mineral pigments from the slopes of Govardhana Hill – O Radhe, just see! His handsome lion's neck and beautiful broad shoulders tastefully draped with a flowing reddish-gold silk-chiffon *cadar* and a rope for tying cows; His charming flower-bracelet-bedecked, snake-like reassuring arms with teasingly tender lotus-like hands pressing His new *vamsi* flute to His *bimba*-fruit lips; His magnificent Kaustubha-mani adorned chest, a desperate, slender-waisted *gopi's* only wish-fulfilling asylum – just see! His lion-waisted torso covered with elegant garlands of *gunja* and *tulasi* and a swaying *vaijayanti* garland reaching down to His knees; His whirlpool nectar navel drowning the helplessly enraptured hearts of whoever ventures to view; His generous, handsome hips wrapped with a crimson brocade sash; His powerful thighs covered with a glistening golden-yellow *dhoti* hiked-up above His auspiciously visible shanks – just see! Just see and hear His blissfully jingling ankle bells complementing His limitlessly delicate, soft, and gentle lotus feet now traversing the pathway to Vraja! Are the concave arches of those two lovely lotus feet not fittingly contoured to perfectly complement the rotundity of Your two big and beautiful breasts?" Hearing these cheerfully expressed amorous infatuations of mine, intended solely to inspire Your love-thirsty heart, You will sweetly smile upon Your happy handmaid, all the while eagerly drinking in the ambrosial sweetness of Your homecoming Shyama from the moistened corners of Your overjoyed eyes.

He Shyama-priye Radhe! Upon returning You to Your quarters, I will, on Your tenderhearted command, gather all the various previously prepared sweets and go along with two or three of my closest friends to Nandalaya. There Mother Yashoda will be overflowing with maternal affection as she sees her adolescent Shyamasundara returning the cows to the *goshala*.

With a little persuasion, Shyama will enter His father's palace for refreshments, with Batu and Balarama. At that time I will happily deliver the sweets to Vrajeshvari and humbly bow before her.

When will that blessed day come when I will be fortunate enough to be mercifully engaged by Yashoda Mata to help bathe, dress, and ornament Your beloved Shyama in the company of her house maidens as she and Mother Rohini return to the kitchen to continue cooking the evening meal? When I massage His limbs with pure nicely scented oil, He, unseen by others, will tug on my veil. In response, I will silently protest by sternly knitting my creeper-like eyebrows. We will then perform His *abhiseka* by pouring pleasantly scented Yamuna water from exquisite jeweled pots. When I dry Him off with a soft silken towel, He will secretly pinch my trembling left arm. I will silently ignore Him, as if I didn't notice.

Radhe! Is the freshly donned, gleaming golden *dhoti* embracing His handsome hips now audaciously posing as a rival of You who yearn to lovingly envelop their pride in the fury of Cupid's erotic embrace? I think Your all-attractive *nagara* will surely abandon that rival of meager sway in the progress of Your culminating intimacy.

As I fasten His ankle bells, He will mischievously tease me by tugging again and again on my plaited hair. At that time, I, steeped in the remembrance of Your painful separation, will take the opportunity to secretly kiss His lotus feet. *He Radhike!* When ostensibly dissatisfied Shyama repeatedly removes my artistically painted *gopi*-dots from around His ever-enchanted lotus-petal eyes, I, flustered, my bodily hairs standing on end, will many times softly appeal to You in restless apprehension.

Just as I finish my perfect final touches, suddenly, to my sheer astonishment, roguishly playful Shyama, with His two wayward lotus hands, will shamelessly seize my two firm, freshly blooming breasts! I will skillfully retreat while vociferously rebuking Him, exclaiming, "*Ari!* What are You doing, Shyama? You know I'm just an insignificant maidservant. I belong to that girl for whom Your avariciousness is actually meant! Without Her permission, You are not allowed to even so

much as lay a hand on any of us, so why do You bother Yourself so?"

Beaming broadly, jestfully winking at my shyly smiling friends, and looking just like sweetness personified, cunning Shyama will rejoin, "Hey *kinkari!* I was just demonstrating to you what I'm going to do to your *svamini* when we rendezvous this evening. Why are you so upset? I'm not lying. When you return to Her lotus feet, just tell Her everything that has happened."

Just then, as we, like dry scattered leaves blown by a whirlwind, quickly retire from sight, cheerful Nanda Maharaja and Balarama will arrive, taking Shyamasundara to the dining hall for dinner. When will I be blessed with the occasion to blissfully behold the sweet manner with which beloved Shyama heartily accepts His evening meal? Sumptuously feasting upon and praising the many varieties of tasty delicacies offered to Him at the insistence of Father Nanda, Balarama, Mother Yashoda, Rohini, and other superiors, Shyama will happily relish the four types of foodstuffs with great gusto.

Finally, the greatly fortunate Yashoda-mayi will offer all varieties of sweet preparations saying, "O Lala, happily eat all these delicious sweets prepared by the peerless hands of the daughter of Maharaja Vrisabhanu and You will live a long, healthy, and happy life!"

He Radhe! As charming, quintessentially delicious Shyama begins to taste one of Your succulently delicious *manohara laddus*, He will become suddenly overwhelmed by the indescribably delicious thoughts of Your incomparably delicious form, qualities, and *nikunja-lilas*. When I see His unexpected loss of appetite perturbing the mind of His mother; when I notice His love-stricken listlessness, His pretentious muffled belch overtly indicating the conclusion of His meal, and His persistent parents' total inability to persuade Him to eat even a morsel more; and when I see His affectedly cheerful request to retire to His *shayana-mandira* with a few of His intimate friends, I, slightly smiling, will understand everything!

Unseen by others, I will go to learn from Him the venue of our evening tryst. When will that auspicious moment come when I will find Him lying on His spacious bed, His lotus eyes

brimming with suppressed tears of fathomless, overwhelming love for You? Seeing His condition, I too will be submerged in a welling stream of love-filled tearfulness as I recall the untold afflictions of Your inconsolably lovelorn heart!

He Radhe! Receiving the remnants of His repast from the hands of thoughtful Dhanistha, I will then return to make You happy by joyfully recounting every detail of what happened at the house of Nanda. I will inform You about Shyama's proposed tryst; feed You His remnants, His ambrosial *adharamrita* kisses; excitedly help to ready You for Your *abhisara*; and blissfully take You into the night, down a secret forest path to meet the Lord of Your life!

He Shyama! The enchanting Shyama *kasturi* musk anointing Your unlimitedly beautiful body will stealthily rob Your in-laws of the power to persist with their moral wakefulness! Your stifled anklets will render their notice of Your stealthy departure conspicuous by its sonorous slumber! Your dark bluish-black Shyama-colored dress; Your deep-Shyama-blue sapphire ornaments; Your beautiful Shyama-bluish-black braided hair; the dense, dark, nocturnal Shyama-expectant forest of Shyama-bestowing *kalpa-vriksha* trees; the Shyama-dark current of the Yamuna flowing along the side of Govinda Sthala; and the Shyama-ness of the moonless *amavasya* night will all envelop You, every step of the way, at every turn, in inestimably profound, ecstatically exhilarating Shyama-exuberant love fascinations! All glories to Your rapturous, madly Shyama-anxious evening *abhisara*! I, assiduously anticipating Your course, will find myself running ahead to carefully brush aside the ominously obstructive brambles and branches along the forest pathway to the *sanketa-kunja* palace.

O Radhe! When will I, overwhelmed with insuperable distress upon seeing Your incessant torrents of tears, overhear the sharp rebukes of Lalita Sakhi: "Utkanthita Sakhi Radhe! It has been hours since our coming to this hard-hearted forest grove and You still think it wise to wait for Him? You might as well be happy with Your own disappointment! I've told You time and again not to make any more friendships with that bogus blackish boy, but You just don't listen! That nonsense, morally

debased, deceitful, debauched cheater-number-one is black not only outside – He’s black through and through! No doubt He will show up at the end of this unbearable night, sporting *kajjala* upon His coppery lips, kiss marks on His cheeks and arms, and a host of *candravali* crescent-moon fingernail marks on His chest, along with smudges of *kunkuma*, won while gallantly pressing the breast of the girl who is Your constant competitor! You should angrily take no notice of Him; turn Your face away! Don’t be so gullible as to believe any of His lamebrain excuses! And, if You actually want Your ultimate good, don’t, even for a moment, abandon the dignity of Your disdainful demeanor!”

Hearing these discouraging words from Your dearest *sakhi* and feeling inconsolably dejected and let down at heart, You will indignantly order me to promptly remove anything and everything that in any way reminds You of unreliable Shyama! Your Shyama-blue sapphire ornaments – discarded; Your Shyama-bluish-black clothes – cast aside; Your enchanting Shyama-*kasturi* musk body-unguent – disdainfully wiped away; Your beautiful Shyama-bluish-black hair – bound up and imprisoned in an anguish-knot behind Your head; the lovely Shyama-blue lotuses pushed over Your ears – flung afar wilted – distraught and disappointed! The Shyama-bluish-sapphire-studded drinking goblets, *pan* boxes, and spittoons – good riddance! Has the removal of the elegantly embroidered Shyama-dark draperies not revealed the absolute Shyamishness of the darksome night through the window lattice of the *kunja* palace? Shall we now throw away the earlier-thought-to-be-favorable dark’s duration? Unable to discard the diminutive remainder of the already irretrievable night and helplessly engulfed in Your inability to forget inconstant Shyama even for a moment, You will futilely attempt to escape by retreating behind the closed windows of Your Shyama-darkened eyes! Seeing nothing but Shyama within and without, exasperated to the point of total devastation, and collapsing, fainted upon Your now withering bed of stemless flowers, Your every attempt will be baffled as You become overwhelmingly sunken in an ocean of Shyama-blackish oblivion!

He Radhe! When will I, posted by Rupa Manjari at the pastime palace gate, eyes drowsy with sleeplessness, relentlessly ignore Your lover who, clasping my ankles with His two lotus hands while crying and crying streams of tears upon my feet, blubbers plaintive supplications, wishing to glimpse even the rays of Your effulgently sparkling toenails! At long last, unable to any longer suppress my hot tears of yawning indignation, I will reproach Him mildly, saying, “O Shyama! What is the use of Your crocodile tears now? The night has already come and gone! When were You ever in Your whole life sincere about anything other than Your own madcap infidelity? She is now peacefully resting and does not want to be disturbed. Your mother is calling You. Just go! It’s time to go home and milk the cows!”

My dearmost kindhearted Shrimati Radharani! When, one morning, as the pitiless crimson shafts of sunlight pierce upward through the unsuspecting ruby cloudbanks along the eastern skyline, will I, upon arriving at the palace of Nanda Maharaja, see nearby with my own two tear-filled eyes, the flag atop the chariot of Gandini’s son, Akrura? How will I, with my scorched existence, protect You from the malevolent grip of imminent providential calamity? How will I have the strength to withstand the weight of Your inestimable desperation? How will I ever have the power to console Your infinitely disconsolate heart?

“When insolent Indra inundated the land of Vraja with torrents of rain and hail, was that not a stroke of unprecedented good fortune? She then had the opportunity to relish His matchless sweetness, beauty, and handsomeness without any distraction as He held up Govardhana Hill continuously for seven days! Is ill-tempered Indra now revenging his defeat by withholding his devastating deluge at this dire hour of need? Why, now, do the hard-hearted cloud friends of Krishna not rain torrents of tears to daunt His departure?” Thinking thus, will I not then witness the magnitude of the *gopi’s* love as they despondently muddy the ground with their dispirited Samvartaka-cloudburst constant torrents of tears? Will the tender creepers of their hopes of somehow permanently sinking the wheels of the chariot now prepared to at once abscond with

the Lord of Your life not bear fruit? Has not the water of Vrindavana now become exceedingly salty on account of their perpetual weeping? Are we to believe His cheating words as He cunningly promises His early return? We know what “Just now coming” means in the land of Vraja! “Just now” never comes! Incessantly crying and crying to no avail, I will throw my parched self down before the cruel one to supplicate his mercy upon the denizens of Vraja!

Ha Radhe! The measure of my everlasting love for You, the outcome of lifetimes of dedicated devotional practices, the consequence of having served and satisfied many spiritual masters, the effect of having progressively evoked the causeless compassion of innumerable Vaishnavas, the result of having earnestly scrutinized untold volumes of scriptural texts, the ultimate point of my many lifetimes of determined *sankirtana* and transcendental book distribution, the mark of Your matchless mercy upon Your minuscule me, the degree of my highest *prema* – all will be tested by my ability to somehow solace your hopelessly heavy heart as cruel, inconsiderate Akrura mercilessly takes Him away. As You stand stunned, robbed of the very life of Your life, like a painted picture of a totally traumatized, inconsolable Radha, we will helplessly behold the last traces of the dust clouds upraised by the wheels of the chariot as it quickly departs and disappears toward the precincts of Kamsa’s capital. *He Praneshvari!* I will ever consider it my supreme constitutional *dharma* to carefully minister to the heart-rending desperations of my *gopi* mistresses as they, unable to tolerate Shyamasundara’s absence for the mere twinkling of an eye and thus cursing the Creator for designing their bodies with eyelids that blink, become inimitably maddened with severe *su-dura-pravasa* feelings of separation in total disappointment upon His leaving the sweetest land of Vraja to reside in the opulent city of Mathura.

“Ha Prana-natha! Ha Priyatama! Ha Madhava! Shyama! Please return again to the path of My eyes! Out of jealous anger, contrariness, or sheer capriciousness, I would indignantly refuse to see You or would prankishly play hard to get. Taking You for granted, we thought You would always stay with us in

Vrindavana to enjoy in our company. Now You have forsaken us and gone afar! Only now have we come to fully appreciate the value of a moment of Your company. O Krishna! If I could just have back all those priceless moments in which I scornfully denied You, I would never refuse to see You again. Please return to the tear-worn path of My eyes!" *Ha Radhe!* When will I, hearing You submissively sob these wistful words of utter remorse, be submerged by the irresistible influence of Your special causeless mercy in an ocean of ever-swelling waves of *prema* for Your lovelorn lotus feet.

Ha ha Radhe! Could the young city ladies of Mathura ever express, in their anxiousness to see Him, a love in any way comparable to the immaculate *kevala-madhurya-prema* of Your incomparably beautiful *sakhis* of Vrindavana? How *rasika* was His display of mercy toward Kamsa's scentless pumpkin flower of a maidservant, Kubja, anyway? Was His breaking Kamsa's sacrificial bow such an act of chivalry? Let us see Him break the all-powerful bow of Cupid, which incessantly pierces our hearts with the painful shafts of *premika* cupidity for His eternal life-long loving service! Krishna easily killed the enormous fearsome elephant, Kuvalayapida, but what about the more than formidable maddened elephants of our excruciating fears of being endlessly downtrodden and neglected by Him? Okay! So He triumphantly killed Kamsa, fear of death personified, but how will He kill our dread of the fateful demise threatening our ruthlessly abandoned You, without His penitent return to this land of Vraja?

Ha Radhe! In the madness of *prema*, I will hear Your mesmerizing *maha-bhava*-spirited speeches to the black Krishna bee who mischievously poses, incognito, as His own messenger just to savor the delirium of Your piteously impassioned heart! How encouraging were Uddhava's notorious *jnana-maya* messages, the recollection of which only redoubles our distress? How considerate was Shyama's drastic decision to further dissociate Himself from us by relocating to His cleverly constructed, far-off island fortress of Dvaraka? How valorous was His kidnapping princess Rukmini from the midst of a few insignificant jackal-like so-called princely men of this world? So

what if He miraculously created nine hundred thousand skyscraper palaces within the twinkling of an eye. Was that actually so wondrous and magnificently majestic? Was His simultaneous expansion into sixteen thousand one hundred and eight husbands, one for each of His sixteen thousand one hundred and eight queens, really so very astonishing? Did He not inimitably expand His original form by the millions to synchronously sport with His millions of *gopi* wives in Your most charming realm of Vraja? His love for the exalted queens of Dvaraka may certainly appear to be very wonderful, but it could never compare with the concentrated amorous intoxication He relished in the company of even the least of Your *vraja-gopi* girlfriends. In this land of Vrindavana the supreme prankster, Krishna, made His self-willed adolescent shenanigans successful by deftly stealing away the garments of the unmarried *vraja-kumaris*. Is he now trying to amend His wicked ways by conversely contributing an unlimited measure of sari cloth to protect the dignity of the Pandavas' queen, Draupadi? I have heard of Shyama's occasionally condescending to become the humble order-carrier, servant, and messenger of Yudhisthira. That, in some way, may appear to endow His character with slight dignity and appeal . . . until we reflect upon the pitiable plight of the people of Vraja. All this far-off news sounds so strange and grating to my aching ears that earnestly long to hear the bitter-sweet songs of His now heartlessly abandoned flute!

Rolling on the ground with straw between His teeth, tears flooding His lotus eyes, His peacock-feathered crown fallen in the dust of Vraja, He, fawning in this way, would again and again beg each and every maidservant for the smallest dust particle of service to the dazzling dust of Your delicate foot-soles. O Radhe! Did He not mean well by all these antics? Was there not even a scrap of sincerity? Will Shyama not soon reappear to revive the people of Vraja and make You happy with His merciful sidelong glances, sweet love talks, and passionate embraces?

I will never, not even for a moment, accept that our beloved Shyamasundara is the son of anyone other than Mother Yashoda and Nanda Maharaja! That He ever left Vrindavana to

save the lives of His “real” parents, Vasudeva and Devaki, is merely a *mayic* myth, a ruse! That Satyabhama and the other thousands of princesses married by Dvaraka-natha are really none other than You and the other *gopis* of Vraja is only so much conciliatory phantasmagoria. How could it be otherwise? For You and all of Your associates ever remain here to decorate this sweetest land of Vraja with Your nectar pastimes. *He* Radhe! Neither You nor Your Vrajendranandana Shyama ever take a single step out from the borders of Vraja-bhumi! His apparent absence is simply His playfulness, which occasions Him to camouflage Himself against the blackened background of Your loving delusions so as to shroud the whole of Vraja in a Ghanashyama monsoon cloud of confusion! Do You think that when Shyama now exuberantly dances with You at night in the *rasa-lila*, it is just a dream? Do You think that when He stands before You with a smirky smile, when He passionately pulls at Your sash of *kinkini* bells, when He forcibly folds You into His tight embrace, drinking the ambrosia of Your *bimba*-fruit lips, or when He piquantly plunges into Your nectar pool of amorous deliciousness within a cave on Govardhana Hill, He is just a figment of Your imagination?

He Radhe! In Your land of Vraja, by the influence of His inscrutable attraction, nectar and poison become indiscernible; meeting and separation are integrally interconvertible, co-existing substantialities. Reality becomes illusion and illusion becomes reality. Stone-like hearts melt, and the softest hearts break to pieces like brittle stone. Wakefulness is taken as dream, whereas one’s innermost cherished dreams awaken to tangible existence beyond one’s wildest dreams! *He* Karunamayī Radhike! Shyama, in this way, even to this very day, augments the intense loving attachments of the residents of Vraja to the point of sublime supramundane excruciation! You should, please, kindly not blame Him for this, for after all, from the standpoint of His absolute, masculine autocracy, He is unable to factually fathom by direct experience the deep nectar ocean of loving devotion to His lotus feet.

My dear most lovable and merciful Radha-Shyamasundara! May the broad-minded, forward-thinking souls

evermore respect these deliberations, which are replete with profound concerns for advancing a more progressive culture of *antaranga-bhakti* in the lives of Your seriously dedicated *sankirtana* devotees. Please let those essence-seeking, deeply introspective, softhearted individuals who patiently and sincerely read or hear these verbose utterances very soon attain the highest transcendental happiness (*paramananda*) in the spontaneous loving service of Your lotus feet according to their innermost heart's aspirations.

Fourth Heartfelt Effusion

My dear Shri Shri Radha-Shyamasundara! Crying at the lotus feet of Shri Guru, one very fallen and destitute soul humbly offers to You the following unrestrained stream of prayerful outpourings for Your kind and considerate audience.

He Radhe! I long to directly witness how delinquent Shyama repays His unrequited debt to His beloved *gopis* by donning the various moods and characteristics of His own intensely attracted *ragatmika* devotees in His form as Lord Gauranga!

When will I be permitted to personally play a part in the progressive extension of Your *vraja-lilas*, the *audarya* pastimes of my most merciful Nimai Candra?

Please let me eternally serve, in any small way, the lotus feet of my dearest beloved Shaci-suta in the company of the followers of Nitai and Jahnava Mata. He, the most beautiful of all, more enchanting than millions and billions of cupids, will eternally dance in the core of my heart!

My dear unlimitedly gorgeous Shaci-suta-sundara! When will Your magnificent Gosvamis of Vrindavana, headed by Shri Rupa, leniently bestow upon this fallen derelict the priceless treasure of loving service to Your *prema-nama-sankirtana-lilas* in the Nitya-navadvipa sector of Goloka-dhama? I will happily serve in any small way to help augment Your blissful relishment of the moods of Vraja throughout the day and night.

I yearn to not only see, but to also get, by Your supremely merciful divine dispensation, the chance to actually participate in Your blissful nocturnal *kirtanas* at Shrivasangana in the company of Your eternal associates. I will ever immerse my ever-youthful anti-material body, mind, voice, and heart in the ever-expanding ocean of Your *prema-nama-sankirtana* pastimes! Dancing ecstatically while wearing blissfully chiming ankle bells about my feet, I will at different times play various kinds of

karatalas, whompers, and gongs to help exhilarate Your heights of *premananda*! Sometimes I will play on the snakelike *nagasimha* horn or conch shell; other times I will play happily upon the *vamshi* flute, joyfully generating a festive mood to encourage Your rapturous dance! At times, I will play on stringed instruments, and occasionally I myself, exhilarated with divine exuberance, will blissfully dance, raising my trembling arms in transcendental delight! At other times, I will again and again roll in the dust of the feet of all the Vaishnavas, profusely crying streams of tears in unbounded happiness! I hope and pray that someday I, at the behest of Your eternal associates, may sweetly sing the Holy Names of Krishna for You in a voice overflowing with intoxicating *madhura-rasa*! At that time You will recognize me as Your long lost eternal servitor.

Dear honey-faced dancing Lord of my life! When will that blessed moment arise when You, drenching my entire body with the torrents of tears gushing from Your incomparably love-laden lotus eyes, will mercifully enfold my insignificant yet fully love-saturated person into Your most magnanimous bosom? My Shaci-suta! My Prana-natha! There is no one more dear to me than You. Let us always stay with each other, through thick and thin, and keep each other company! Please don't deprive me of Your all-delightful association! Please always stay with me and never ever abandon me! Kindly let me always have You and You always have me, and I always dearly love You and You always dearly love me too! I have none other than You! Without You, I have no one! Please don't let anyone, even in a dream, ever take You away from me! May my heart ever recall Your indescribably captivating countenance, Your enchanting gestures, and Your ruthful, reassuring words of love to me in the privacy of my own dreams! Please let me never, even for a moment, ever forget You! Since my beloved Srila Prabhupada revealed to me the enchantment of Your sublime personality, I have cherished an indelible desire to – in an eternal, unhindered spiritual body – forever serve the dust of Your lotus feet.

Anyway, what need is there for me to further disclose the treasures of my troubled heart? After all, they are almost certainly no more than the overly optimistic self-delusions of a

miserable madman, notorious for his eccentric absorption in the dreamland of pensive spiritual delirium. When will all my ungodly *anarthas* flee far away from my rascal mind? For now, in my shamefully fallen, condemned condition of material existence, I am helplessly incarcerated in this vile cesspool of a mortal stool bag, struggling in this world to do any kind of devotional service at all. Practically, in my present state, I have nothing nice to offer. All of my heartfelt hopes and aspirations for eternal loving service to Your *nitya-lilas* in the lands of Navadvipa and Vraja, as also the verbose utterances burdening the pages of this book, seem to me like so many sky flowers. I have written these words in response to a dream in which Srila Prabhupada moved me to do so. *He* Shaci-suta! Although I would generally feel disinclined to voice these few inner thoughts and feelings, at his behest I have inspirationally done as was prompted by You from within. It is as if You, like a highway robber, stealthily assailed me along the way, plundering whatever little wealth of words I was carefully keeping to myself, only to haphazardly scatter them over the pages of this book in Your haste to escape my prudent circumspection!

If I could not somehow or other ultimately achieve the fulfillment of all these hopes for divine service, then what would be the meaning of my having joined the Hare Krishna movement? What would be the value of my having unassumingly sacrificed by altruistically distributing thousands and thousands of transcendental literatures in the earlier years of my devotional career? What would be the purpose of my having, in my own shameless way, embraced the severe austerities of the renounced order of life? What would be the sense of my ongoing struggle to loudly sing the Holy Name? What would be the point of my living and dying in the holy land of Vraja? What would be the significance of all these toilsome, long-winded sentences? What would be the sanity of my maintaining all these lofty aspirations? What would be the proof that the Supreme Lord is most merciful to the fallen?

Anyway, my dear Shaci-suta, under the circumstances I see no option but to remain ever determined to somehow or

other serve the mission of my spiritual master, though I am hardly able to do anything very substantial. Even if I never become one of his stalwart “big” book distributors, I could at least try to assist by humbly helping to keep the bathrooms clean. I could help wash the pots or carry out the trash when needed. Then again, I could help by nicely dressing the Deities with plenty of fragrant flowers. Maybe I could even try to lead a *kirtana* from time to time, or perhaps I could help load the buses with books or help distribute *prasada* to the devotees and guests, man the shoe room, or anything, recognizing the absolute nature of all varieties of devotional service. At least my lowly insignificance could manage to daily complete a measly sixteen rounds of *hari-nama-japa*. I regard any “big” or “small” position within the *acarya*’s institution as the post of a menial servant. I consider any “big” or “small” menial service to Your *sankirtana* movement to be tantamount to the exalted service of Radha’s lotus feet. I pray that my *guru* will kindly see my meager attempts in that light.

I pray to the lotus feet of my beloved Srila Prabhupada that he may forgive my laughably inadequate and sometimes rather blunt statements presented in this small volume. I am most certainly a despicable reprobate of a so-called disciple. I cunningly pretend to be some kind of a devotee just so the illustrious leaders of what now passes as his Hare Krishna movement don’t kick me out on my ass.

Dear Srila Prabhupada! Even though I am a contemptible offender and surely don’t deserve any consideration, I have no other shelter than the shade of your lotus feet. I am really not at all very much advanced, and I don’t have much longer to live within this one miserable, presently flapping dead body. My erstwhile sinful life of material sense gratification was so abdominal! Now the cruel black-snake time factor is mercilessly devouring the feeble remaining span of my mouse-like existence. Yet somehow, by the influence of your graceful words, in spite of everything, an undeniable burning anxiety to attain the lotus feet of supremely handsome and beautiful Lord Krishna has surged within my heart – a dwarf hoping to catch the moon. By divine revelation, my internal self-acuity and

heartfelt lofty aspirations for spiritual perfection were aroused by you in the course of my resolute endeavors to please you by my pounding performances of *nama-sankirtana-yajna*. By your special causeless mercy, the fruition of all my deepest desires, in good time, will certainly come to pass.

In a dream, you spoke to me the following profound and particularly meaningful instructions:

“Actually, Aindra, book distribution is not enough. Our real business is to become *bhajanandi*; and, by our personal example, try to encourage as many others as possible to also become *bhajanandi*. Book distribution simply facilitates this.”

In a subsequent dream, you spoke to me again:

“Aindra, I want you to write a book about how to distribute books.”

Dear Srila Prabhupada, I really don't know what kind of book you expected your insignificant, unworthy Aindra Dasa to write. Whether my attempt is brimming with great hope or overshadowed by dire hopelessness I can't really say. Whatever came from the core of my heart I have submitted with the hopes that you may smile, even if only ever so slightly (or at least not get too mad at me). I pray that my verbose outpourings may in some small way instrumentally serve the purposes of our predecessor *Acaryas*.

I don't expect that many will be interested in troubling themselves to seriously study the contents herein – yet another bundle of pages to impudently clutter the increasing shelves of so many volumes of comparatively greater consequence than my own that we would hardly have time to read in an eventful lifetime. Among the few who make even a cursory attempt to go through this treatise, still fewer may very deeply appreciate or for that matter actually grasp the essence of what I have endeavored to present. How compelling could the words of a minuscule microbe like me be anyway?

In attempting to openly present my personal inspirations as I have done, I intend not that the reader necessarily embrace the details of my particular *bhava*, given that each individual soul will seek and ultimately realize a unique angle of loving reciprocation with the Lord according to the individual's natural affinity and personal capacity. Rather, the intent is to encourage one to deepen one's own *bhajana* so as to gain an enhanced internal devotional experience of one's own. It is not that divine revelation is beyond the scope of contemporary feasibility. The Holy Name of Krishna is as real today as ever. *Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham*. "As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly." One should prudently think, "If it can happen to insignificant Aindra Dasa – if that rascal can do it – anyone can do it! Then what the hell are we waiting for! Let's go for it!"

If, out of fear of being ostracized, I were to ignore my heart's calling to responsibly discuss, for others' benefit, the subject matter expressed in this book, I would consider myself to be a faithless misanthropist, a godless nihilist. I am not unaware of the inevitability of my words raising a few eyebrows. Still, I have risked writing down these ideas simply with the hope that I may somehow serve to augment or perhaps even catalyze an intensified quest for the ultimate aim of Krishna conscious self-discovery among the non-envious. Faithful persons who have a glimmer of greed for the attainment of the realm of Vraja will value this attempt. Let the *jata-rati* Vaishnavas assess my merits and demerits. Those who are unfit to discuss the substance herein perhaps should avoid going through this book lest they become lamentably confused, contemptuously censorious, or unduly enmeshed in endless shallow argumentation.

To the esteemed reader, who has bothered to expend invaluable human life's time and energy to peek into these pages, I offer my humble obeisances again and again. I beg to place before you a few closing words for your kind deliberation.

It is an incontestable matter of fact that the mass distribution of transcendental literatures unfolding the principles of *bhagavata-dharma* for the propagation of *raga-*

bhakti throughout the world is the number one missionary “business” of the Krishna consciousness movement. Only a dull-headed ecclesial anthropoid would speciously conclude otherwise. Still, it should be borne in mind that there is really no mundane dichotomy between the essential message of the scriptures so proliferated and the application of the primary methodology promoted by the scriptures themselves, the congregational chanting of the Holy Name. In fact, the main function of any scripture propagated by the Gaudiya Vaishnava *sampradaya* is to convincingly induce the fallen souls to take up the practice of the *yuga-dharma*, *hari-nama-sankirtana*, without doing which, one could hardly expect to make much tangible spiritual progress in this present age. This book also seeks to pointedly propound the same principle. We should always remember that Veda Vyasa compiled and wrote down the scriptures with a view to facilitate the less intelligent, fallen people of this Age of Kali, who have relatively short memories and therefore require books as reference material. In previous *yugas*, there was no pressing need for the written word. The *shruti-dharas* upon hearing only once could immediately memorize for life the knowledge disseminated through *guru-parampara*, which specifically emphasized the appropriate process of self-realization appurtenant to the respective *yuga* circumstantially in progress. Given that scriptural texts were presented specifically for this present Age of Kali, it would be ludicrous to surmise that Vyasadeva’s ultimate conclusion would be in any way divergent from the interest of the *kali-yuga-avatara*, Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in the matter of widespread propagation of the currently appropriate *yuga-dharma*, the congregational singing of the Holy Name. One who with great effort obsequiously goes out to bear the task of transcendental book distribution without recognizing this essential intention of the scriptures is like an ass that, lacking much good sense, simply carries the burden of heavy loads of paper and ink.

In Kali-yuga no other devotional activity supersedes the currently prescribed *yuga-dharma*, *hari-nama-sankirtana*. Indeed, all other *dharmas* and all the various adjunct *angas* of *bhakti* must subordinate themselves to the service of the *yuga-*

dharma to be deemed at all conducive, so far as the proper progress of the Krishna consciousness movement is concerned. All doings connected with Lord Caitanya's *sankirtana* movement may be accepted as *sankirtana*, or facets of the *sankirtana* principle, to the extent that they factually inspire, promote, and facilitate or at least positively complement direct performances of *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*.

Temple Deity worship in this age can be seen as *sankirtana* only when we recognize the Deity's intention that His devotees regularly assemble to satisfy Him by their splendid performances of *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*. The highest worship of the Deity in Kali-yuga is undoubtedly the performance of *sankirtana-yajna*, the congregational singing of Krishna's Holy Names. We nicely care for the Deity, making all the best arrangements for His pleasure and comfort, simply to inspire Him to remain with us and glance favorably upon our performances of *nama-sankirtana* and thus enjoy in our company. Even if we don't feed Him very nicely, He will still be pleased to stay with us if He sees our keen interest to perform *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana* for His satisfaction. In fact, all regulative temple functions basically aim to induce novice devotional aspirants as well as the general public to systematically associate with the primary devotional process, *nama-sankirtana*.

Sweeping or cleansing the temple can be considered *sankirtana* in that they serve to facilitate the performances of *hari-nama-sankirtana*. No gentleman likes to come to a dirty place. So if the temple is nicely cleansed, people will be happy to congregate there to engage in *sankirtana-yajna*.

Prasada distribution is useful to the extent that it encourages people to assemble together for the purpose of congregational chanting and dancing with the devotees. When the aroma and enchanting taste of Krishna's *prasada* inspires them to get a taste for chanting the Holy Name, then only has *prasada* distribution served its highest purpose.

Cow protection is important in human society because the cow gives her milk to increase the human being's good brain substance for understanding subtle spiritual values. If that good

brain substance (*su-medhasah*) is used for understanding the importance of performing *sankirtana-yajna*, the congregational chanting of the Holy Name, for the satisfaction of Lord Caitanya, then only can cow protection be said to have served its true domestic function. Otherwise, cow protection in and of itself would be a relatively mundane affair of very little pure devotional consequence.

Unless all *varnas* and *ashramas* are aimed at the process of *nama-sankirtana*, in pursuit of the highest *nitya-dharma* of the soul, then *varnashrama* could hardly boast an evolved human dignity.

Making babies can be considered as *sankirtana* when the children produced from the coition of the father and mother become fixed up in pure devotional principles by gaining a profound taste for practicing the *dharma* meant for the rescue of all Kali-yuga conditioned souls, namely *nama-sankirtana*. Then the progeny actually does the work of *putras* and *putris* by delivering the parents from the hell-hole of material existence to the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet.

Temple management is *sankirtana* to the extent that the managers intelligently recognize the real congregational function of the temple and purposefully do the needful in the matter of favorably fostering the performances of *hari-nama-sankirtana*, both inside the temple and outside as well. The temple must also serve as a base from which *sankirtana* parties go out to publicly propagate the *yuga-dharma*, the congregational chanting of the Holy Name.

Book distribution is also *sankirtana*, primarily because it serves to widen the scope for large-scale acceptance of the process of spiritual elevation most recommended in this age, *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*.

Institutional administration may also be considered *sankirtana* to the extent that its influence positively motivates the devotees of the *sankirtana* movement to get out of their doldrums and engage their life's energies as much as possible throughout the day and night in the performance of the *yuga-dharma, hari-nama-sankirtana*.

Kali-yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana is the *yuga-dharma* for this entire *yuga*, please. *Kali-yuga* lasts a total of 432,000 years, of which only a mere 5,000 years have passed. The understanding should be that the process of *nama-sankirtana* is applicable to all souls appearing on Earth, particularly in the human form of life, during this entire 432,000-year period. The *yuga* cycles functioning on this planet are not effective on other higher or lower planetary systems. Hence, it is we who have presently appeared on Earth who are expected to take full advantage of the golden *nama-sankirtana* opportunity for easily going back home, back to Godhead. It is not that hardly any more than 500 years after the Lord and His associates descended to inaugurate the system of sacrifice for this entire age some other scheme should take precedence. If we don't have complete faith in the congregational chanting of the Holy Name, if we have very little taste and attraction for chanting and dancing and are thereby relatively disinterested or diverted to other engagements, leaving ourselves little if any time to seriously take up the religion of the age, if we don't recognize the beauty and value of *hari-nama-sankirtana*, and if we are not intent upon practically helping to push forward that most sublime *dharma* emphatically prescribed by Lord Caitanya, then we should simply understand that we are cursed by Yamaraja, that we have not realized the purpose of the Krishna consciousness movement, and that we have not truly comprehended the highest mercy aspect of the Lord's ongoing *audarya-lila* of preaching the *sankirtana* movement all over the world. The highest mercy aspect of the Lord's ongoing *audarya-lila* is to elevate fallen conditioned souls to the topmost perfection of relishing eternal spontaneous loving *madhurya* service to Radha and Krishna on the platform of *vraja-prema*. There is no doubt about this. *Golokera prema-dhana, hari-nama-sankirtana*. Any *goloka-rasa* may be awakened by the performance of *vipralambha-rasa-maya hare-Krishna-maha-mantra-sankirtana*. However, as *rasaraja-mahabhava* Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu mainly descended to this world to freely distribute the supremely nectarean mellow of *radha-dasya*, it should not astonish anyone that *sankirtana* of the ultimate,

matchless *maha-mantra* – Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare – would primarily appear to distinguishedly stimulate and nourish that *unnatojjvala-vraja-rasa*.

Na mam duskritino mudhah prapadyante . . . But who are the *mudhas*? The term *mudha* does not exclusively portray the other guy. As much as we ourselves, like beasts of burden, continue to blunderingly bear the encumbering heaps and piles of corporeal egoism, material attachments, and misconceived notions about the recommended processes by which the ultimate philosophical conclusions of the Gaudiya-sampradaya’s teachings may be practically implemented and realized, that much we ourselves can be considered *mudhas*.

*naham prakashah sarvasya
yoga-maya-samavritah
mudho 'yam nabhijanati
loko mam ajam avyayam*

“I am not manifest to everyone. Because I am concealed and guarded by My internal deluding potency (*yoga-maya*), dull-headed ass-like individuals cannot recognize Me as the unborn and inexhaustible Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (*Bg.* 7.25)

Kaviraja Gosvami has stated in his *Caitanya-caritamrita* (*adi* 17.22), *kali-kale nama-rupe Krishna avatara*: in this Age of Kali, Krishna descends from His eternal abode in the form of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*. *Paritranaya sadhunah* – it is Shri Hari-nama Prabhu who descends to deliver the *sadhus* by augmenting their faith in the process of *sankirtana-yajna* while granting a profound taste for its performance, thus mitigating their pangs of separation. *Vinashaya ca duskritam* – it is Shri Hari-nama who annihilates the demonic *anartha*-congested mentality that generates the unfortunate reluctance, disregard, and sheer disinterest concerning the performance of *nama-sankirtana*. In Kali-yuga, not to engage one’s energies in the performance of *yuga-dharma nama-sankirtana* can be considered the primary form of irreligion. Whenever and wherever there is a decline in its performance – *yada yada hi*

dharmasya glanir bhavati – and a predominant rise in the negligence of such – *abhyutthanam adharmasya* – then, *tada*, at that time – *dharmasamsthapanarthaya* – it is only Shri Hari-nama, appearing through the lips of the Lord’s pure devotee, who can forcefully restore the *jivas* to their eternal occupation, *shuddha-nama-sankirtana*. So also, it is Shri Hari-nama who descends to graciously bestow unalloyed love for Himself through the culture of *nama-sankirtana-yajna*. Even so, Krishna-nama reserves the right to either expose or conceal Himself in response to an individual’s quality of faith. Regrettably, disoriented neophytes possessed of persistent *mudha*-like tendencies do not recognize the true nature of the Holy Name, who, though unborn, inconceivably takes birth from His mother, who takes the form of a pure devotee’s tongue. The beginning, middle, and culmination of *sharanagati* (surrender to the Lord’s shelter) as a practical expression of one’s level of *shraddha* are actualized in this age by surrendering to the service of the Holy Name. And the prime methodology for such surrender is the propagation of the current *yuga-dharma*, the congregational chanting of the Holy Name. This truth was profusely demonstrated by Shri Gauranga throughout His manifest earthly pastimes.

Only *prema-ruruksu* devotees, who are considerably advanced on the path of pure devotion, can truly understand the power of the Holy Name and the need to wholeheartedly take shelter of the process of *nama-sankirtana*.

*bhaktya tv ananyaya shakya
aham evam-vidho 'rjuna
jnatum drastum ca tattvena
pravestum ca parantapa*

“My dear Arjuna, only by undivided devotional service can I [as *nama-rupa avatara*] be understood as I am, standing [dancing] before you [on your tongue], and can thus be seen directly [in the proper light]. Only in this way can you enter into the mysteries of My understanding.” (*Bg.* 11.54)

*atah shri-Krishna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah*

“No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality, and pastimes of Shri Krishna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental names, forms, qualities, and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him.” (*Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu* 1.2.234) Here again, in Kali-yuga, “transcendental service to the Lord” connotes primarily the congregational chanting of His Holy Name.

Unfortunately, ass-like (*bhara-vāh...*) externally absorbed *kanistha-bhaktas* of meager spiritual standing, though socially established through Gaudiya-religio-institutional affiliation, have very little if any true cognition of the eternality, infallibility, and omnipotence of Krishna’s self-same names, forms, qualities, and pastimes. Owing to residual sinful reactions, insufficient accumulation of piety in this and previous lifetimes, and a tendency to commit *nama-aparadha*, they are unable to worship the Holy Name with the determination required to gain much tangible experience of the efficacy of *nama-sankirtana*. On that account, their faith in and concomitant surrender to the direct prosecution of the *yuga-dharma* largely lacks firmness. For want of spiritual insight, they do not clearly ascertain what is and what is not to be done. Their pursuit of Krishna consciousness lacks proper prioritization. They disregard scriptural injunctions even while giving lip-service to the importance of following scriptural injunctions. They thus fail to submit to the prescribed process recommended in the scriptures for this age and so give little importance to the practice of congregational chanting and dancing. Hence, their degrees of faithlessness in the matter of congregationally chanting the Holy Name relegate their way of thinking to the domain of assorted *mudha*-isms. *Shrimad Bhagavad-gita* has it that four kinds of faithful neophyte devotees begin the process of devotional surrender with the

hope of gaining the Lord's favor – the distressed (*artah*), who are to some extent *mukti-kami*, hoping to get peace of mind by chanting the semblance of *nama*; the inquisitive (*jijnasuh*), who are curious about the effects of chanting the Holy Name; the fortune seekers (*artha-arthi*), who are to some extent *bhukti-kami*, hoping to fulfill desires for material gain by performing *sankirtana*; and the wise (*jnani*), who actually know things as they are and dutifully perform *sankirtana* of the Holy Name with an aspiration to pure devotional progress. All these people are considered to be more or less pious (*sukritinah*), eligible for elevation to the *madhyama-adhikara* through the association of pure devotees. Conversely, there are those of us who, even though posing as devotees, relentlessly decline to acknowledge the need to intently adhere to the process of *nama-sankirtana*. On the pretext of various other devotional engagements and institutional “responsibilities,” they platitudinously declare themselves to be exempt from the need to seriously prosecute the *yuga-dharma*. Due to miserly weakness under the influence of the Lord's deluding potency, they are hard put to see the connection between the *sankirtana* performances and the fulfillment of all material and spiritual exigencies. To the extent that we fail to appreciate and earnestly actualize the propagation of *nama-sankirtana*, residues of the demonic tendencies persist in our hearts. Correspondingly, the terms *duskritinah*, *mudhah*, *naradhamah*, and *mayayapahrita-jnanah* found in the *Gita* also indicate our own individual and collective devotional shortcomings. So, who are the *mudhas*? We are the *mudhas*! Why? Because even though the truth of the importance of prosecuting the *yuga-dharma* as the only viable method by which the goal of life can be practically achieved is staring us in the face, we continue to ignore the obvious and attach ourselves to so many superfluous strategies. On the plea of various Krishna conscious pursuits, we are primed to die losers, without ever having truly understood or appropriately applied the science of self realization. *Yo va etad aksaram gargy aviditvasmaꣳ lokat praiti sa kripanah*. “He is a miserly man who does not solve the problems of life as a human and who thus quits this world like the cats and dogs, without understanding

the science of self-realization.” (*Brihad-aranyaka Upanisad* 3.8.10) This very brief human form of life is a most valuable asset for allaying the tribulations of conditional existence, which revolve around the quest for ultimate happiness. Therefore, one who does not utilize this golden opportunity properly for the achievement of *vraja-prema* via the process of *nama-sankirtana* is a miser.

Unless our lives uphold the performance of *hari-nama-sankirtana*, the end of all our endeavors will sport like ornaments on a lifeless aborted fetus or resound with the efficacy of a misfired blank bullet or a dud fire cracker. All other spiritual practices may be considered legitimate to the extent that they actually enhance the performance of *hari-nama-sankirtana*. As much as we engage our time in activities other than *hari-nama-sankirtana* or activities other than those that support, inspire, or facilitate the direct performance of *hari-nama-sankirtana*, that much our human form of life may be considered a devotional wasteland. The Krishna consciousness movement is not Lord Caitanya’s *arcana* movement. It is not Lord Caitanya’s “kitchen-religion” *prasada*-distribution movement. Neither is it Lord Caitanya’s management-meetings movement, nor is it Lord Caitanya’s *varnashrama* movement, nor is it a cow-protection movement. It is not Lord Caitanya’s money-scamming movement; nor Lord Caitanya’s computer-junkie; social-development; community-service; international-matchmaking; child-protection; or eating, sleeping, baby-buggying, and mutual back-scratching or backbiting movement. We would do very well to clearly mark that the Krishna consciousness movement happens to be Lord Caitanya’s *sankirtana* movement, please. A movement that does not primarily inspire, promote, and facilitate its members’ concerted absorption in *kali-yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana* is hardly a *sankirtana* movement. Moreover, a *sankirtana* movement that neglects to purposely encourage the pursuit of *raga-bhajana* for the attainment of *vraja-prema* is not the *sankirtana* movement of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In this Kali-yuga, there’s no question of pleasing Lord Krishna without pleasing Lord Caitanya. Human beings with good brain

substance (*su-medhasah*) intelligently recognize that Lord Caitanya is immensely pleased by the *lobha-maya* performance of *sneha-samyukta-nama-sankirtana*. There is no universally viable *dharma* in this age save the congregational chanting of the Holy Name.

To reiterate as well as emphasize a point briefly mentioned in Chapter Two, it should be doubly re-affirmed that in this Age of Kali the success of any other limb of devotional service – not excluding the execution of *bhagavata-shravana-kirtana*, of which transcendental book distribution (*brihat-kirtana*) is an extension – largely depends upon one’s isochronous absorption in the direct practice of *nama-sankirtana*. It is seen, with reference to *acarya-vani*, that the most highly elevated, self-surrendering devotees doubtlessly prefer to exclusively embrace the congregational singing of the Holy Name rather than rely on other devotional processes for the evolvment of *prema*. In the *bhakti-shastras* the efficacy of *nama-sankirtana* is well established above all other *angas* of *bhakti*. In fact, *nama-sankirtana* stands alone as the greatest devotional practice (*maha-sadhana*) and therefore reigns supreme as the only infallible means of attaining love of Godhead (*vraja-prema*). It is not that other forms of devotional service are as good as *nama-sankirtana*, but somehow or other *nama-sankirtana* is not really good enough (financially viable or whatever), obliging us not to highlight its performance in any way. If we are to propose that *nama-sankirtana* is not good enough to merit our concern, then any engagement allegedly “as good as” *nama-sankirtana* should also be equally ignored. Beyond that, the proposition that any devotional activity is in any way better than prosecuting the *yuga-dharma* should be deemed sheer madness. Any other *anga* of *sadhana-bhakti* deserves to be lauded as *sadhana* only if it in some way facilitates one’s active absorption in *nama-sankirtana-rasa*. Further, any *sadhana* that fails to promote but rather tends to detract from one’s progressive attachment to the process of *nama-sankirtana* is simply an *anartha*, an impediment on the path of ultimate perfection – even if in the broader sense it is computed to be some sort of *sankirtana*.

As one covets a particular mellow of loving relationship with Krishna (*nami*), so also one's reciprocal *rasa* in rapport with Hari-nama will manifest. Krishna's name is the living embodiment of all transcendental *rasas* (*caitanya-rasa-vigraha*). As Krishna is *bhava-grahi janardana*, so too is Shri Hari-nama. The *madhurya-bhaktas* will cherish a conjugal attitude toward the Holy Name, the *vatsalya-bhaktas* will serve the Holy Name in light of their parental affection, the *sakhya-bhaktas* will befriend the Holy Name as they would their best friend, Krishna, and so on. Merciful Shri Hari-nama Prabhu will appropriately answer to each individual devotee's unique approach. Knowledge of *vrajendra-nandana-Krishna-sambandha-tattva*, *vraja-bhakti-abhidheya-tattva*, and *vraja-prema-prayojana-tattva* along with *vraja-lila-vicara* and so forth, as taught through the *shastras*, is essentially required to give shape to one's worship of the Holy Name. It is supplementary information, facilitating the unobstructed attainment of one's constitutional internal devotional mood (*bhava-siddhi*). Although not reliant upon the force of scriptural injunctions, even one prompted by a spiritual greed (*lobha*) for the attainment of the moods of Vraja naturally seeks favorable guidance, inspiration, and nourishment from relevant scriptural information. As stated in the *Bhagavatam* (11.14.26): "The more one's heart becomes purified by hearing and chanting about My beautiful pastimes, the more one can ably discern the subtle reality of the Absolute Truth (*vastu*) . . ." The words *tatha tatha pashyati vastu suksmam* in this *Bhagavatam* verse are significant in that they refer not only to a proportionately realized perception of the non-material, eternally substantial existence of the absolute, infinite Godhead and His infinite integrated counterpart internal spiritual potencies, but also to the simultaneous, gradual identification of the *svarupa* of the *sac-cid-ananda-siddha-deha* eternal spiritual body of the integrally existing infinitesimal part-and-parcel living entity. God-realization and self-realization go hand in hand just as the sun's appearance in the firmament simultaneously facilitates one's seeing both the body of the sun and one's own body. As such, this important instruction spoken by Lord Krishna to Uddhava undeniably indicates the feasibility of

gradual self-discovery (understanding and perfectly realizing one's *vraja-svarupa*) by internal revelation through the purifying processes of hearing and chanting, without which *vraja-lokanusaratah* (following the moods of the Vrajavasis) and qualified *lila-smarana* could hardly be achievable.

Although recognized as a principal feature of *raganuga-sadhana*, *lila-smarana*, particularly in Kali-yuga, is nevertheless inescapably dependent on *kirtana*. Endeavoring to separately practice *asta-kaliya-lila-smarana* without doing *kirtana* is simply an inane attempt to besmear oneself with the hog stool of worldly illustriousness before the Vaishnava community. Of all types of *kirtana* (*nama*, *rupa*, *guna*, and *lila*), *nama-kirtana*, the loud singing of the Holy Name, is said to be primary and most efficacious. Furthermore, among the varieties of *nama-kirtana*, *hari-nama-maha-mantra-sankirtana* is esteemed as the most potent. The thirty-two-syllable *maha-mantra* – Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare – is affirmed by the *shastras* to be the approved *taraka-brahma kirtana-mantra* for this Age of Kali. The *taraka-brahma kirtana-mantras* prescribed for the previous *yugas* (Satya, Treta, and Dvapara) are *aishvarya*- or mixed *aishvarya/madhurya-maya mantras* bestowing the attainment of the Lord's majestic realms as their fruit. The Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*, however, is a *kevala-madhurya-maya radha-Krishna-yugala mantra*, which integrates both *taraka* and *paraka* potencies, granting to the *lobha-maya-shraddhavan jana* liberation from material existence and, beyond that, the sweetest fruit of *vraja-prema* and the attainment of the eternal realm of Vraja. It is not at all fortuitous that the *taraka-brahma kirtana-mantra* corresponding to the present age, in which the most munificent Lord Gauranga advented to broadcast the sweetest of all the *madhurya* mellows of Vraja (*radha-dasyam*), be absolutely in consonance with the very thrust of His mission. Much stress is therefore given to Hare Krishna *maha-mantra sankirtana*. In truth, Lord Gauranga, cutting to the point, inaugurated the *yuga-dharma* for the present age, the congregational chanting of the Holy Name (primarily the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*), which, unlike the *dharmas* established in

other *yugas* by Visnu *avataras*, is the eternal occupation (*jaiva-dharma*) of the soul, inherently possessed of the capacity to culture the moods of Vraja. In this age everyone, upon invoking the mercy of the Panca-tattva (*shri-Krishna-caitanya prabhunityananda shri-advaita gadadhara shrivasadi-gaura-bhaktavrinda*) by the grace of *sat-parampara*, can best access the course of concentrated *vraja-bhakti-bhajana* through the medium of Hare Krishna *maha-mantra-sankirtana*, which easily and powerfully promotes vibrant, all-round *nama, rupa, guna, and lila* absorption in Krishna consciousness. ns a husband is the life and soul of his wife (*vadhu*), so *hari-nama-sankirtana* performed with a greed to taste the nectar (*vraja-bhakti-rasa*) for which we are always anxious is, in fact, *vidya-vadhu-jivanam*, the very life and soul of all transcendental knowledge found in the scriptures. What is the validity of a wife (*adhyatma-vidya*) without her husband (*nama-sankirtana*)? We read about it. We (armchair) philosophize about it. We distribute millions and billions of books about it. But to what extent are we actually living it? Let us take account; how much of it do we actually do?

Consider another point: although *Krishna-nama-rupa-guna-lila-kathamrita* is relished by the Lord's devotees both here and in the spiritual world, any form of preaching to reclaim wayward, corporeally engrossed *jivas* is only done in this material world, which is sometimes manifested and sometimes not. Just as Paramatma, the Supersoul, is a temporarily manifested feature of the Lord, appearing only occasionally with the creation of the cosmos, so also, Shri Guru's function as external representative of the Supersoul is a temporary manifestation. Similarly, preaching cannot really be said to be an eternal occupation of the Lord and His devotees. The function of Shri Guru as pertaining to the eternal abode (*sanatana-dhama*) as well as the activities or pastimes of the spiritual world are in the true sense *nitya* or eternal, whereas, although regularly resumed again and again with each successive cosmic creation, the pastimes unique to this realm, such as the birth of the Lord, the actual killing of demons, and even preaching to deliver the fallen conditioned souls, should for all intents and purposes be seen as *naimittika* or occasional

lilas. Preaching through the medium of mass transcendental book distribution as we have seen in recent years does not exist in the spiritual world. It has temporarily manifested in this material world with the aid of the recently invented printing press and will continue only as long as “high-tech” accoutrements grace the face of our so-called “modern” technological civilization. The performance of *prema-rasa-maya-nama-sankirtana* for the Lord’s pleasure, however, is an eternal function of the soul and is ever featured in the highest realm of Goloka. It should be noted with utmost interest and deference that it is this most powerful, eternal aspect of devotional service which has directly descended from Goloka Dhama as the *yuga-dharma* for this terribly fallen age. Only when *prema-nama-sankirtana* descends to this dark material world does that eternal golden *sankirtana* principle appear to assume a preaching demeanor as *hari-nama-pracara*. By such divine appearance of the loudly broadcasted *raga-maya-maha-mantra*, the brightest Holy Name and the darkest Kali-yuga display an extraordinary contrast, unseen within this world during previous ages. Thus this Age of Kali and the Holy Name enhance each other’s value. Actually, however, it is the *rasika* relishment of *nama-sankirtana* which is the eternal occupation of the *jiva*. The highest preaching demeanor of *nama-sankirtana* is circumstantially (temporarily) manifest according to time (Kali-yuga) and place (the material world). Mass transcendental book distribution is not the eternal occupation of the living entity, though when done in full Krishna consciousness, it in every respect perfectly accords with the essential *sankirtana* principle of pure devotional surrender, in keeping with its ultimately realizable internal *nitya-lila* countertype.

The ultimate purpose of all “temporary,” circumstantially manifested features of God, *guru*, and various utility-based forms of devotional service associated with this external field is to awaken our innate loving service tendency toward the eternally substantial parallel *nitya-lila* features of *guru* and Godhead. The details of the featured forms change, whereas the essential ideological substance remains perpetually intact. For example, in the worship of the *arca-vigraha*, as found in this

world, the *pujari*, when decorating the Deity, circumstantially needs to stick the Deity's rings and other ornaments on His limbs with the help of sticky substances like beeswax and Blu-tack. Undoubtedly, the idea of ornamenting the Lord's body is an eternal reality – but the use of Blu-tack? It is not enough to merely move on the temporarily useful physical platform, barring any internally reflective counterpart *nitya-lila* notion about our externally corresponding pure-devotional engagements.

The culture of *hari-nama-japa-yajna* is said to be a disciple's first and foremost essential obligation at the feet of Shri Guru. Though apparently bearing a relatively small radius of *para-upakara* audibility, a disciple's offenseless chanting of at least a fixed minimum number of Holy Names daily unquestionably constitutes the top-priority, most substantial service to Shri Guru and his institution. In fact, the *guru* imposes no more imperative order than to regularly complete one's prescribed personal *japa-vrata*. Such is the incontrovertible status of *nama-japa's* enormous significance. Personal absorption in *nama-bhajana* is well ascertained to be a far more weighty devotional responsibility than a devotee's transcendental book distribution of any amount. Qualitative and quantitative increments in the chanting of *nama-japa* appreciably augments one's personal purity. Moreover, *shuddha-nama-japa* dynamically establishes one's internal spiritual link with Krishna's *antaranga-shaktis*, through which alone one can ever hope to receive the empowerment required to effectually broadcast the Holy Name. In the same way, one should properly assess the collective value of congregational chanting. One must not witlessly underestimate, discount, or ignore the individual and communal spiritual worth and weightiness of earnestly executed *prema-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*. It is not that because *kirtana* performances done with *khol* and *karatala* can be heard for only a relatively short distance (as is even more so the case with *nama-japa*) *shri-hari-nama-sankirtana* should be viewed dismissively or its concerted community performance in any way be slighted or abandoned as if it were in some way outmoded. If such were the intention

behind the instructions of any institutional founder in deference to the avail of the printing press, then perhaps, referring to the very scriptures so globally proliferated, we should by and large incisively question or even prudently decline the validity of such advice. *Nama-japa* is the vital force and invigorator for the Vaishnava individual. In the same way, *hari-nama-sankirtana* is the spiritual strength, sustenance, and inspiration for the collective Vaishnava community. Transcendental book distribution certainly boasts the capability of heroically broadcasting knowledge of pure devotional principles to the remotest corners of the world. It makes for a better mouse trap, so to speak, only in terms of the amplitude of the word's propagability. This, however, does not in any way pose to overshadow or diminish the greater relative importance of community-stimulating *nama-sankirtana* in terms of the latter's in-house value, any more than it would overshadow or diminish the spiritual worth and paramount consequence of the responsible completion of one's individually honored *nama-japa-vrata*. Thus, when we say book distribution is "better" in terms of propagability, we should not misconstrue that to mean "better" or more important in terms of a clearly dissimilar reference point, namely the in-house value of communal *sankirtana*.

No doubt, the dissemination of Vaishnava philosophy via the medium of transcendental book distribution is for the classes (intelligentsia). Nonetheless, readily accessible Krishna-conscious involvement and direct spiritual experience by way of purely and powerfully performed congregational hearing and chanting of the Holy Name is markedly elevating and enlivening for both the classes and the masses! It is not that because *hari-nama-sankirtana* is said to be "for the masses" it is not also meant for the classes. If anything, those who are intellectually fit to discuss the values of life should be able to gain a more profound philosophical grasp of the *sankirtana* principle and quickly achieve *nistha* for its sublime application. Beyond that, the advanced inner circle, the *rasika* relishers of *lila-katha*, will most ably value the thing in the deepest manner. Direct, localized *sankirtana* performances with *khol* and *karatala* may

not be so extensively audible in the world, having less potential global mobility than proliferated literatures. Still, on account of its special inspirational efficacy, far greater importance should be attached to the nourishing cultivation and maintenance of a strong individual and collective relishment and appreciation of eternally nectarous *shuddha-nama-sankirtana-rasa* within the Vaishnava community (and beyond) than to the “business” of transcendental book distribution (*brihat-kirtana*), notwithstanding the latter’s useful, temporarily manifest far-extendable outreach. *Hari-nama-sankirtana* is not to be taken as a curiously quaint holiday novelty, a blast from the annals of Gaudiya Vaishnava history, something we anthropologically study about in the books. *Sankirtana* (the congregational chanting of the Holy Name) is forever the life and soul of Lord Caitanya’s *sankirtana* movement! Faith in the process of *hari-nama-sankirtana* is the fundamental root of the tree of Krishna consciousness, the strength of the Krishna consciousness movement – its essential foundation. If the foundation is weak – if the root is starved or rotten – then what outcome could we expect from the whole affair? The philosophy of half the hen . . . We want the golden eggs, but it’s more economical if we don’t have to feed the thing. And anyhow, *hari-nama-sankirtana* don’t make no money! We have our huge establishments with their huge attendant overhead expenditures to agonize about. \$0 . . . just pick it to the bone and bring it on home!

For years together, I have observed among many of the esteemed members of the Krishna consciousness movement (from top to bottom) the regrettable misconceptions, oversight, sheer disinterest or total neglect surrounding the token importance (if any) assigned to the performance of *hari-nama-sankirtana* within the society of devotees. I am thus compelled to humbly remind all concerned that this soul-stimulating, dynamically absorbing, congregational preaching mode of self realization, *nama-sankirtana-yajna*, should increasingly complement transcendental book distribution and all other aspects of devotional life with a serious view to bringing the bliss back into the lives of the bungling *bhaktas*. It is not that just because we have joined Lord Caitanya’s *hari-nama-*

sankirtana movement we therefore don't need to bother ourselves to go out on *hari-nama-sankirtana*. How can we expect to get *ruci* for something we scarcely do? *Shuddha-nama-kirtana-ruci* is not so cheap that merely by official, institutionally regimented token gesture or lame lip-service we should expect to achieve the thing. We have to go deeper, beyond the call of duty, beyond the ceremonious filing in and filing out of the stipulated "temple programs." When Mother Yashoda was trying to bind Bala Krishna to the grinding mortar, she was mystified to find that she was again and again two fingers short of success. One finger represents a devotee's steadfast extra endeavor, the other Krishna's divine dispensation, His special mercy. Alongside whatever other services we may be doing on any level, all of us, irrespective of organizational echelon, would do well to assiduously find or make the time to both privately and publicly do more *hari-nama-sankirtana* and see the long-lasting internal (personal/communal) and external (outreaching/*para-upakara*) results. If our authorities disallow, discourage, disparage, or in any way hamper our focus on the performance of *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*, then they are not our authorities. If our *gurus* instruct us not to concentrate our energies and resources on the performance of *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*, then, with all due respect, they are not our *gurus*. We should be prepared to disobey the instructions of millions of "gurus" who in any way dissuade us from surrendering to the *yuga-dharma*. *Hari-nama-sankirtana* is the best and most powerful process for awakening one's taste and attachment for the Holy Name. One who fortunately gains authentic *shuddha-nama-ruci* and intelligently amasses stockpiles of solid background experience in the matter of relishing the nectar of *nama-sankirtana-rasa* will most likely never depart from the path of unalloyed devotional *bhajana*.

Without having the impulse to enthusiastically practice the religion of this age, *hari-nama-sankirtana*, what Vaishnava or Vaisnavi can claim to have *shuddha-nama-ruci*?

Without having extensively engaged in vigorous, daily protracted performances of the *yuga-dharma*, *hari-nama-*

sankirtana, what Vaishnava or Vaisnavi can honestly claim to have ascended to the terrace of *prema*?

Without purposely promoting the daily promulgation of the *yuga-dharma*, *hari-nama-sankirtana*, what devotional community can viably proclaim its intent to elevate its members to life's ultimate perfection?

Without deliberately stimulating and fostering the worldwide daily promulgation of the *yuga-dharma*, *hari-nama-sankirtana*, what institution can claim to be truly representing the *sankirtana* movement of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu?

Distribute books. Distribute books. Distribute books. But who is reading the books? Read books. Read books. Read books. But without practically implementing by sensibly dedicating a substantial portion of life's time and energy to the direct performance of *yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana*, what individual or group of individuals can claim to have rightly comprehended and applied the devotional science enunciated in the scriptures proliferated by the Gaudiya Vaishnava *Acaryas* through disciplic succession?

When deeply considered from the standpoint of a *madhurya-bhakta*, *hari-nama-japa-yajna* can be likened to the most intimate *nikunja-seva* of Yugala-kishora. It is tantamount to Radhe Shyama's mercifully coming to personally accept one's solitary services and enjoy Their pleasure pastimes at one's own *kunja*. *Sankirtana-yajna* performed privately behind closed doors, as was done by Lord Gauranga and company at Shrivasangana, can be compared to Radha and Krishna's more intimate *rasa-lila* relishment among Their inner circle of friends. Similarly, public *nagara-sankirtana* smacks of the less intimate *maha-rasa-lila* performances, where outsiders (rivals) and newcomers (*sadhana-siddhas*) are admitted. *Rasa-lila* delight (*nama-sankirtana*) essentially serves as a kind of foreplay, an "appetizer" to profoundly stimulate in both Krishna and His beloveds a mutual attraction for more advanced, deeply amorous, most esoteric private conjugal pastimes (*nama-japa*). The *rasa-lila* performances (*nama-sankirtana*) can never be complete or very meaningful without ultimately arousing the Lord's intensified passion for reciprocating the individual *gopis'*

desires for most confidential sequestered loving services (*nama-japa*). Such consummate experience of the deepest personal reciprocation with the Lord naturally inspires His lovers to replay nightly the *rasa* dance in such a way so as to further more and more intensified intimacy with Him again and again. Likewise, the consummate experience of genuine, unvitiated solitary absorption in *shuddha-nama-japa* unsurprisingly promotes in a true *sadhaka* a powerful impetus to exuberantly dance and chant in ever-inspirational *hari-nama-sankirtana* on a daily basis. Such is the synergic correlation between *nama-japa* and *nama-sankirtana* that both reciprocally serve to enhance the value of one another. *Rasa-lila*, as a cooperative group effort to please the Lord, truly tests as well as reveals to Lord Krishna the enchanting beauty and sweetness of the selfless loving service attitude of a *gopi*. As He sees and increasingly appreciates the beauty and purity of her unstinting, transcendently altruistic or *para-upakara*-punctuated love, Krishna naturally feels especially inclined to intimately share Himself with her in ways otherwise unimaginable. Such beatified cognition of the extent of her beloved Lord and Lady's special mercy upon her own unique person naturally moves the *sakhi* to share her exhilaration with her confidential associates and maidservants. Without gaining the advanced experience of such intimacy, she would hardly have very much to impart to anyone. The proof of her advancement is seen in her redoubled purposeful compulsion, on the basis of her own loving ecstasies, to extensibly encourage others to embrace the same success formula as she embraced.

In other words, when Krishna notices a *sankirtana* devotee's concerted endeavors to magnanimously share the priceless treasure of Krishna consciousness with others via the congregational chanting of the Holy Name, then from within He dynamically enhances to the profoundest degree an individual's personal confidential relishment of *hari-nama-rasa* through the medium of *nama-japa*. *Hari-nama-sankirtana*, when enthusiastically performed to satisfy *guru* and Gauranga, dynamically dissolves any residual scraps of egocentricity within the heart of a pure devotional candidate, enabling one to

deeply endear oneself in all intimacy to the Holy Name. When Hari Nama Prabhu becomes attracted to the benevolence and sweetheartedness of a devotee, He becomes naturally inclined to constantly keep the devotee's company. Krishna-nama is an all-blissful, all-sentient person. We must always remember that love is a two-way street. Constant chanting of the Holy Name is a matter of mutual attraction. Love-birds of a feather flock together. It can never be a forced affair. The internal revelation of the beauty and sweetness of reciprocal loving *radha-Krishna-nama-bhajana* certainly further enthuses a softhearted devotee to repeatedly share with others the nectar of the Holy Name through the medium of loud congregational chanting and dancing. When, as a pure-hearted *hari-nama-bhajanandi*, one dives into the ambrosial ocean of *hari-nama-japa*, one progressively surfaces in the nectarous ocean of *nama-sankirtana* – and then resurfaces with renewed strength, relish and realization in the ocean of *japananda*. Thus, *Hari-nama-sankirtana* dynamically promotes the selfless sacrificial service attitude essentially required for profoundest absorption in *vraja-radha-Krishna-nama-bhajana*.

Although it is seen that self-sacrificing *shuddha-nama-japa* and empowered *hari-nama-sankirtana* stand alternately as inspirational impetuses to each other, it must further be recognized that *nama-bhajana* ultimately finds its profoundest, most exuberant exaltation in the loud congregational chanting of the Holy Name. This statement, made with reference to the consideration of the supramundane expansion of Krishna's transcendental bliss, is not at all intended to undermine or sidestep the fundamental importance of an individual's regular chanting of *nama-japa*. Rather, the intention is to illustrate how *nama-bhajana* achieves magnified power from the interpersonal support gained by doing *hari-nama-sankirtana* in the association of saintly swan-like devotees. Analogously, the consummate union of the Divine Couple forms the central jewel in the necklace of all conjugal pastimes of the Lord. Nevertheless, *lila-vilasa*, as described in Rupa Gosvami's *Ujjvala-nilamani*, though preludial to the impending fulfillment, the final conclusion of the whole affair (*samprayoga*), nevertheless transcendently

tantalizes the Lord with a pleasure far surpassing that of the ultimately achieved conjugal union itself. The appetizers are, in certain respects, transcendently more powerfully stimulating and super-excellently flavorful than the forthcoming feast.

From another angle, it may be remembered that, in the course of Her pleasure pastimes, wherein Shyama's happiness is the very foundation of Her own, Radha's personal endeavor to mercifully engage the other *sakhis* rewards Her with a happiness far more relishable than the happiness derived from Her own private meetings with Her beloved Lord. The simple truth is that Lord Krishna is far more easily attracted, pleased, and conquered by the cooperative group effort to congregationally petition His benevolence upon an assembly of individuals through the process of *sankirtana* than by an individual's solitary or separatistic endeavor. All these things are simply beyond material calculation and have to be appreciated and realized by practical *samadhi*, or pure devotional absorption. Any experienced self-sacrificing *kirtaniya* can positively attest to the greatly encouraging *ananda-maya* influence and, even more, to the intensity of internal heartfelt spiritual enrichment noticed upon the sincere qualitative and quantitative performance of *nama-sankirtana-yajna*. It is for this reason that within the society of devotees more stress should be given to *hari-nama-sankirtana*, in pursuit of an enhanced Krishna conscious love, trust, and enlivenment among the groups of individuals who make up the society. Again I emphasize: As *hari-nama-japa* is required for strengthening the individual devotee, so *hari-nama-sankirtana* is essential for strengthening, revitalizing, unifying, and purifying the Vaishnava community. Moreover, such cooperative group endeavor to uplift and enliven the Vaishnava community further enhances the breadth and depth of the Krishna conscious experience in the community's individuals.

If we sincerely desire to deepen and redouble our taste for chanting the Holy Name, then we would do very well to faithfully consign our intelligence to the instructions of our predecessor *Acaryas*, take shelter of Gaura-Nitai, and **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana*!** If we recognize the enormous need to practically expand the ocean of transcendental fortune and bliss

to touch the lives of other pious souls, in the matter of increasing and maintaining Krishna's family of devotees, then we would surely do well to take shelter of Gaura-Nitai and **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana***! If we at all acknowledge the intermutual need to expedite the purification of our Vaishnava relationships then we would all do very well to concertedly take shelter of Gaura-Nitai and **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana***! If we seriously want to go well beyond the bodily concept of life, to realize the highest constitutional spiritual identity of the self (*vraja-svarupa*), then we would do very well to set all worldly considerations aside, take shelter of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana***! If we truly desire the perfection of the *vraja-bhavas*, by which we could ever hope to attain the pleasure pastimes of the Lord in the topmost realm of Vraja, then we would do very well to **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana***! If we at all see the need to expedite our progress to the terrace of *vipralambha-bhava-maya-vraja-prema* for the pleasure of *guru* and Gauranga, in consonance with the very purpose of Their mission, then we would do very well to **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana***! If we, honestly confessing any delinquency in the matter of its performance, sense a deficiency in the evolvment of our individual and collective pure devotional experience as per insight, revelation, and realization, then we would, by all means, do very well to abandon all apprehensions about the thing and simply **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana***! If we want the lifelong inspiration to carry on with our transcendental book distribution in a most viable way, then we would certainly do very, very well to **do more *hari-nama-sankirtana*** in order to deeply appreciate and enthusiastically share the very essence of what the books are, in so many words, purposely promoting! Given that we might, with a view to accomplish the as-yet-to-be-realized final half of Srila Prabhupada's mission, deem the reestablishment of *varnashrama-dharma* in present-day human society to be of paramount importance, even still, we would do very, very well to intelligently put the horse before the cart and concertedly, all the world over, **do more mass *hari-nama-sankirtana*** – to practically increase the piety and spiritual consciousness of the

masses in order to even hope to make possible that which is virtually impossible under the present so-called “for the people, by the people” heinously roguish, demonic, world-domineering corporatist governmental misleadership. Godless multi-national money-mongering corporate elitists and other hard-core, ruthless, *raksasa*-like terror-breathing global tyrants are not going to politely wait for us, the members of the Krishna consciousness movement, to finally, all over the world, wake up to our inalienable right and responsibility to **do more and more mass *hari-nama-sankirtana!*** Institutional management has neither the authority to sanction nor the right to interdict or in any way inhibit the performance of the *yuga-dharma*. The will of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu ultimately pulls rank on institutional authority. Please remember that in Kali-yuga the Supreme Personality of Godhead descends from Goloka-dhama to protect the *sadhus* and annihilate the demons by resoundingly manifesting as His Holy Name on the tongues of His pure devotees. The divine descent of *kali-yuga-Krishna-avatara shri hari-nama-rupa* alone can effect the downfall of such insidiously scheming, media-manipulating murderous men of Kamsa’s class! Even if we prefer to pursue variant paths of spiritual perfection, or even if our all-devouring exigencies cannot go beyond the transitory urgency to “put food on the table” and “give peace a chance,” all the same, we would definitely do very, very well to have faith in the *yajna* for this age and simply **do more and more *hari-nama-sankirtana!*** Let us not wait until the fag end of life, when varieties of physical and mental decrepitude will render our bodies inoperative, to wisely recognize this principle. The urgency is enormous. The time is now! Now is the time for revolution – a revolution of consciousness, a revolution of priorities. All individual, communal, institutional, and inter-institutional devotional inadequacies, anomalies, and inequities – as well as all domestic, public, socio-political, governmental, and inter-governmental irregularities of this age – can be positively surmounted simply by intelligently administering “heavier,” more frequent medicinal doses of life-giving *yuga-dharma shri-hari-nama-sankirtana*. Once again, if we’re not part of the solution, we’re part of the problem. We have busied

ourselves over the years, trying so many other ideas. Why not sincerely concede to this one and be pleasantly surprised? We hardly expect to revamp the mental climate of an entire society. It is unlikely everyone will be genuine enough to rise to the occasion and seriously implement, but the faithful individuals who do will beyond a shred of doubt be recognized by Lord Caitanya and immensely benefited.

The proliferation of transcendental literature is certainly the best advertising front of the Krishna consciousness movement. The idea is to canvass in such a way as to persuade human society's literate intelligentsia to join the fold of Lord Caitanya's *sankirtana* movement on the basis of convincingly sound reason and philosophy. Transcendental book distribution can be compared to a *sakhi's* campaign to enlist new girls to become dedicated followers of Maha-bhava-svarupini, Shri Radhika. Certainly, no book distributor in the line of Rupa Gosvami would be caught dead canvassing on behalf of Candravali! Raga Manjari is perhaps the Lord's best and most reliable messenger, having opted to become His *vamshi* flute. Knowing the purposes of her *svamini's* inner heart, Raga Manjari serves, in the form of the flute, to mercifully break the resolve of Radha's *mana*, or jealous pouting, forcefully facilitating the fruition of her mistress's deepest desires to intimately satisfy Her beloved Shyama. She similarly serves to satisfy Radha's cupidity for expanding the sweet empire of Shyama's love dalliances, by artfully calling all the new *sadhana-siddha-gopis* for *maha-rasa* at Vamsivata, near the Yamuna's shore. The *sadhana-siddha-gopis*, possessed of their fully actuated *sac-cid-ananda-siddha-deha* and the *adhikara* for directly participating in Lord Krishna's *prakata-lilas*, having risen from the status of ordinary human beings, for the first time enter the sacrificial arena of confidential love dalliances with their beloved Lord through the Vamsivata "gateway" at the time of *maha-rasa*. It is well known that Krishna's flute has manifest in Kali-yuga as Shri Mridanga. The *mridanga* principle has expanded its influence by appearing as *brihat-mridanga*, the printing press, which facilitates mass production and proliferation of Vaishnava scriptures. Broadcasted *bhagavata-katha* by means of

transcendental book distribution could, therefore, be suitably likened to the call of Krishna's flute, which purposely serves to arouse intensified *purva-raga*, or preliminary attraction in the hearts of the damsels of Vraja. The mercifully extended flute-call (book distribution) magnetically allures the *vraja-sundaris* (fortunate souls) away from their so-called husbands (all superficially binding mundane considerations) to excitedly dash off to join the *rasa* dance festivities (*hari-nama-sankirtana*). Hence, they become progressively more and more qualified and inspired to enter deeply into the intimate *nikunja-sevas* of the Divine Couple (*nama-japa*). Again and again they anxiously hearken to the overtures of the flute (*bhagavata-kathamrita*) and become ever-more-irresistibly enchanted. Again and again they skillfully shake the shackles of household encumbrances to exuberantly sing and dance in *rasa-lila* delight (*hari-nama-sankirtana*) in order to transcendently enrapture the Lord of all supramundane conjugal beatitude. Again and again they blissfully receive and personally serve the Divine Couple at their private pleasure groves within the all-enchanting forest of Vraja (*hari-nama-japa*).

What a disappointment! What a let-down! What a treachery! What a sham! If after so much canvassing, if after answering to so much flute-calling (transcendental book distribution), the excited *vraja-sundaris* (*bhakta-gana*) find, to their disillusionment, upon arriving at *rasa-mandala* (the Hare Krishna movement), no *rasa-lila* festival (invigorating, publicly demonstrated *hari-nama-sankirtana*)! If, upon reading the advertisements (books) and expectantly joining Lord Caitanya's *hari-nama-sankirtana* movement, having been philosophically persuaded to faithfully surrender to the idea of prosecuting the *yuga-dharma*, *hari-nama-sankirtana*, one chances to notice a pitiful dearth of *hari-nama-sankirtana* painfully persisting among the vast majority of the movement's members in most corners of the world, would one not wonder as to whether one had in fact actually found Lord Caitanya's *sankirtana* movement of the Holy Name? Was it false advertising, or what? The *vraja-gopis* were not satiated by *rasa* dancing for the duration of an entire night of Brahma. Similarly, anyone who has gained a grain of

regard for *kali-yuga-dharma hari-nama-sankirtana* would not very much appreciate the extent to which *hari-nama-sankirtana* has been side-lined and so irresponsibly de-emphasized over the years in Lord Caitanya's *hari-nama-sankirtana* movement. Advertising and advertising . . . but what are we advertising? Do we have any idea? Have we actually understood? Chanting, dancing, feasting, and philosophy. The philosophy in the books is basically to convince us to chant and dance. Feasting is to energize our chanting and dancing. Chanting and dancing is required for getting a taste for chanting and dancing. Chanting and dancing with a taste for chanting and dancing is actually required to progress to the position of chanting and dancing on the stage of preliminary love of Godhead, *bhava-siddhi*. And chanting and dancing in spontaneous devotional ecstasy on the stage of *bhava-siddhi* is an absolute prerequisite for chanting and dancing in Lord Caitanya's eternal *prema-sankirtana-lilas* in the spiritual sky.

The current bustle about writing, publishing, distributing, and reading transcendental literatures expounding the science of Krishna consciousness, though brilliantly facilitating the widespread inculcation of spiritual values upon the ignorant populace, is nonetheless a temporarily manifested, externally oriented phenomenon. Yet, it unquestionably finds its internal original timeless counterpart in the messenger services and *nama-rupa-guna-lila-katha* done by Shri Shri Radha-Krishna's *nitya-parikara gopa* and *gopi* associates of Goloka Vrindavana. We must always remember that the real purpose of the scriptures' outreach is to advance a purified *raga-mayi* inreach in both the receptive reader and the progressive preacher. The printing press can be considered a *raga-marga* implement only to the extent that whatever is printed by the press actually promotes attraction to and deep attachment for the principles of *vraja-bhakti-bhajana*. A printing press in and of itself is not a *brihat-mridanga*. If the press is hijacked by materialistic entrepreneurs to produce volumes and volumes of crow-infested-garbage-dump-like mundane novels, poetries, and porn, are we to laud the printing press as a *brihat-mridanga*? Would it be at all unreasonable to suggest that the status of the printing

press actually depends on the quality of the service rendered – the purpose for which the thing is being used? Human life is meant for purposefulness. Krishna consciousness is like a razor’s edge. If a razor is utilized as an instrument for shaving, then it serves its true purpose and may rightly be called a razor. If it is purposely used to slash another’s jugular vein, however, one might call it a razor, but in effect it is actually a lethal weapon. A *mridanga* exists to enhance the *kirtana* of the Lord’s Holy Names. If the *mridanga* is used to enhance mundane cinema songs, is it still to be deemed a *mridanga*? It may look like a *mridanga*, it may sound like a *mridanga*, but is it truly a *mridanga*? It is a *mridanga* in name only. Similarly, if the “preachers” of the Krishna consciousness movement use the printing press to present volumes and volumes of articles exclusively moralizing on the all-importance of *varnashrama* and *vaidha-marga* correctitudes, while evading, suspending, suppressing, disparaging, or altogether denouncing topics regarding the practical implementation of the principles of *raga-marga-sadhana*, is their printing press still to be deemed an implement of *raga-bhakti*? What makes using the genuine *brihat-mridanga* printing press a part of the *raga-marga* process of devotional service is its use as a tool to propagate the principles of *raga-bhakti*. If the press were to be used exclusively for the purpose of extolling the importance of *vaidhi bhakti*, without emphasizing *vidhi*’s role in the evolvment of *raga*, it would no longer boast its pride of place on the path of *raga*. Preaching can only be considered a symphonious feature of *raga-marga-bhajana* if the aim of one’s preaching is to progressively awaken a resolute greed for the ultimate attainment of *raga-maya-prema* in the hearts of those to whom one preaches. Are there not innumerable “preachers” of various sectarian denominations tirelessly “preaching” their wearisome religio-moralistic dogmas dismally devoid of the slightest scent of even the least of Vrindavana’s flowers? Are their preach-preachidy-preachments to be regarded as *raga-marga-bhakti*? Alternatively, there are others, well equipped with esoteric *shastric* data, who fraudulently make a show of preaching *raga-marga-bhakti* in the world to satisfy their self-establishing lust for *labha*, *puja*, and

pratistha. Is their preaching to be regarded as instrumental to anyone's *raga-marga-bhajana*? Once again, we scrutinize the mind-set that backs our activities in "Krishna consciousness."

In truth, no external action – preaching, book publication, book distribution, *nama-sankirtana*, *nama-japa*, *sadhu-sanga*, *vrindavana-vasa*, *arcana*, *prasada-seva*, pot-washing, or whatever – can be considered an aspect of either *ajata-ruci* or *jata-ruci-raganuga-sadhana* if it is not prompted by a greed to attain the perfection of one's *abhista-bhava*. If one does not recognize within oneself a specific attraction to any one of Krishna's *nitya-parikara vraja-bhava* exemplars – if one does not have a desired *bhava* – then there is no question of one's external engagements in devotional service being prompted by *lobha*. Hence, one's devotional activities can never be accepted as *nija-abhista-bhava-maya*, *-sambandhi*, *-anukula*, *-aviruddha*, or even for that matter *-viruddha*, simply because there is no *nija-abhista-bhava* reference point involved to merit the consideration of such judgements. If one has neither the prerequisite *lobha* nor the inclination toward relevant internal devotional absorption, the very substance that establishes one's eligibility to pursue the path of *raga*, and if one feels no urgency, on the basis of such *lobha*, to propagate *raga-marga-bhakti* in the world as per the will of the Lord, then one may preachidy-preach till one is blue in the face or distribute innumerable volumes and volumes of transcendental literatures till the cows come home and still one's actions will never be deemed any sort of *raga-marga-sadhana* nor engender *raga-marga-bhava* as their direct outcome. One could hardly expect to gain the outcome of *raganuga-sadhana* on the strength of one's external devotional engagements if the inward and outward features of one's devotional performances do not assume *raga-marga* characteristics. If a *sadhaka's* action is prompted merely by *shastra-vidhi* and *guru's* order, then such action is relegated to a status no loftier than *vaidha-marga-sadhana*, *¶ropa-siddha-bhakti*, or perhaps *niskama-* or even *sakama-karma-yoga*, depending on the quality of the motivation. For the deserving *lobha-maya-sadhaka*, however, who unpretentiously endeavors to conscionably cultivate the moods of Vraja, differentiating

between favorable and unfavorable practices while inwardly musing upon the eternal *vraja-lila* archetype features of all culturally transfigured varieties of external devotional engagements, practically anything done as well as any apparatus employed to internally or externally advance Lord Gauranga's mission to flood the world with *vraja-bhakti-rasa* can be accepted as part and parcel of the *raga-marga* dimension.

Much of the paraphernalia diversely utilized in "modern-world" Krishna consciousness (automobiles, jet airplanes, amplifiers, computers, cameras, printing presses, cell phones, audio/video recording and broadcasting devices, refrigerators, gas burners, electric blenders, neon lights, singing alarm clocks, disposable diapers, etc., etc.) may be circumstantially accepted in the attempt to facilitate or expedite the solid external preaching progress of the Krishna consciousness movement, but in the end it would be preposterous to think that we could take these temporarily useful accoutrements with us when we go to the spiritual world. No doubt, as long as the present-day oil-based techno-industrial "civilization" holds up, we really ought to take full advantage of all these gorgeous Kali-yuga arrangements as far as possible. We must, however, scrupulously avoid the inanity of becoming unnecessarily attached to or reliant upon the service methodologies and preaching paradigms generated by the inclusion of these various external trappings, to the point of spinelessly minimizing or even blindly excluding the essential internal culture of *radha-Krishna-prema-bhakti-rasa* through the eternally viable process of *nama-sankirtana*. Although we should doubtlessly make our lifelong plans for disseminating Krishna consciousness through the medium of transcendental book distribution, we should not naively overlook the inevitability of various God-sanctioned upheavals in material nature. The sudden demise of our demonic technologically "advanced" "civilization" is not a karmic impossibility. If such were to occur at any time, we would hardly expect to see the continued feasibility of mass book distribution as we know it today. Will we be left with our gas-tanks empty, our book-bags empty, our piggy banks empty, our minds empty, our hearts empty, our lives empty, and our

mouths empty – having never gained a tangible taste or attachment for the congregational chanting of the Holy Name? Will such a fate ever force us to finally acknowledge (by default) the sublime shelter of *hari-nama-sankirtana*? All of our computers will have long since crashed. No more e-mail! No more Internet! No more television! No more printing press! No more newspapers! Damn, man. None of our mp3 players and iPods will sing for us any more! You mean we'll have to do it ourselves? We may have to close the temples. We may lose our cozy *ashrama* habitats. We may have to live – and die – under the trees! But despite the extreme miseries of life, we must never desist from our determination to chant the Holy Name of Krishna, though we are hardly able.

Anyway, as you ramble on through life, dear reader, whatever fancy be your goal, keep your eyes upon the doughnut and not upon the hole! Kali-yuga is an ocean of innumerable hole-like faults. Yet, there is one tremendous redeeming doughnut-like quality – *sankirtana* of the Holy Name of Krishna. The Holy Name is the emporium of all *rasas*. “There is nothing to be had in the fourteen worlds but the Holy Name.” Don't think these words to be mere cliché or *sampradayaic* platitudinous mumbo-jumbo. “Don't think this chanting and dancing will not lead to the desired goal. It will!” I speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me Krishna! . . . so help me Gaura! . . . so help me Srila Prabhupada!

I have no knowledge; I'm no scholar and I have no devotion. I am not a Bhaktivedanta. I'm not even a Bhakti-shastri. I'm not a Bhakti-anything. For all the decades of whatever little sorry service I have managed to muster to the Hare Krishna movement, I have never really ever amounted to very much. Moreover, how very meager is my every kind of so-called *sadhana*! All my endeavors are fraught with a myriad of imperfections. Practically, I have no recourse, no other hope, no other *sadhana* than to pitifully cry for the special causeless mercy of the Lord and His devotees. I continue to stand as an insignificant very low-class so-called disciple of a very high-class *guru*. Indeed, fool that I am, I have not even the slightest remorse for that. Still, by the grace of my beloved spiritual

master, Srila Prabhupada, within me has somehow grown an exceptionally profound regard and attachment for Krishna's Holy Name. Without pretence, I beg my esteemed readers to mercifully bless me with even so much as a (*vraja-dhuli*) dust particle of *raga-mayi* loving service to the Holy Name, which ever-exaltedly reigns as the very heart of transcendental book distribution.

My dear most lovable and merciful Radha-Shyamasundara! I end these effusive outpourings in the dust of Your lotus feet on this twenty-fifth day of August, 2008, corresponding to the 112th appearance day anniversary of my beloved spiritual master, Nitya-lila-pravistha Om Vinṇupāda Paramahaṁsa 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedanta Swami Mahārāja Prabhupāda Srilaai Srilaai, in the year Gaurabda 522 at the Krishna-Balarama Mandira, situated in the blissful, wish-fulfilling pleasure sands (*Ramana-reti*) of Your resplendent land of Shri Vrindavana-dhama. May the broad-minded, forward-thinking souls evermore respect these deliberations, which are replete with profound concerns for advancing a more progressive culture of *antaranga-bhakti* in the lives of Your seriously dedicated *sankirtana* devotees. Please let those essence-seeking, deeply introspective, softhearted individuals who patiently and sincerely read or hear these verbose utterances very soon attain the highest transcendental happiness (*paramananda*) in the spontaneous loving service of Your lotus feet according to their innermost heart's aspirations.

Om Tat Sat!

Please greedily chant

HARE Krishna
HARE Krishna
Krishna Krishna
HARE HARE
HARE RaMA
HARE RaMA
RaMA RaMA
HARE HARE

from the heart – and be happy!

Appendix

Meaning of the Hare Krishna Maha-Mantra

HARE: O Radhe! Mistakenly leaving aside the shelter of Your soft lotus feet, I have come to this world to suffer unbearable material pangs and continuously offend You. Please forgive me.

Krishna: O Krishna! You are the supreme husband, attractive to all living entities. I surrender at Your lotus feet. Please grant me the matchless gift of Your unalloyed devotional service and mitigate the piercing pain of our separation.

HARE: O Radhe! Now, abjuring the worldly vanity of male egoism, I beg to eternally remain as Your female friend and maidservant in the land of Vraja. You are my supreme goddess and the mistress of my heart. Please uplift me and protect me.

Krishna: O Krishna! You are unlimitedly handsome and thus naturally enchant the hearts of all young girls. Please accept me as a maidservant of Your maidservant's maidservant.

Krishna: O cupid of Vrindavana! You are Radharani's *priyatama* and my *priyatama* also. I offer my everything to You. Please accept me and be satisfied with whatever little I can offer.

Krishna: O cunning boy! Is it to Your liking to neglect me? Please don't discourage my long-cherished desire to have You as my supreme husband.

HARE: O Radhe! Please tell about me to Your Krishna and pacify my heart.

HARE: O Radhe! Please save me!

HARE: O Radhe! You are very merciful to Your devotees. Please shower unprecedented mercy upon me, Your insignificant maidservant.

RaMA: O Radhika-ramaAa! O Shyama! You are pleased by devotion to Your devotees. Please find some reason to be pleased with me and shower me with Your special causeless mercy.

HARE: O Radhike! Your pleasure pastimes are unfathomable! Please accept me as Your own and engage me in any fitting service as You please.

RaMA: O lover boy! Why are You looking at me like that? There are millions of girls much more beautiful than me in this land of Vraja.

RaMA: O debauchee number one! Don't touch the delicacies! Do You think we are up for grabs? Don't think we can be gotten so easily.

RaMA: O You nonsense! Let go of my sari! Get back! Stop grabbing me!

HARE: *He* Radhe! Your lover is incorrigible! Please subdue Him with Your infinite charms.

HARE: O Radhe! Please save me!

Glossary

A

abhasa-nama—the semblance of the Lord’s name.

Abhidheya-vicara—consideration of appropriate devotional practices by which one may attain the ultimate perfection (*prayojana-siddhi*), *prema-bhakti*.

Abhijita-muhurta—the eighth *muhurta* of the day (12:09 pm – 12:33 pm Vrindavana standard time).

Abhisara—a lover’s journey to meet the beloved.

acarya-parampara—a disciplic succession of fully self-realized spiritual masters who teach by practical example.

acarya-svarupa—the form of the spiritual master seen in this world.

acarya-vaAi—the words of a spiritual master who practices what he preaches.

Adharamrita-prasada—*prasada* infused with nectar directly from Krishna’s lips.

Adhikara—devotional eligibility.

adi-vrajavasis—original eternal Vrajavasi associates of Krishna.

adya-shakti—unprecedented, original internal spiritual potency – Shri Radha.

Aishvarya-jnana-mayi—consisting of knowledge of the Lord’s opulence.

Aishvarya-maya mantra—a *mantra* imbued with a sense of the Lord’s opulence and grandeur.

ananda-maya—endowed with or consisting of transcendental bliss.

Antaranga-bhaktas—internally oriented devotees.

Antaranga-bhakti—internal devotional service.

Antaranga-shaktis—internal spiritual potencies.

Antaranga-vraja-bhakti-bhajana—worship performed internally in consonance with the principles of *vraja-bhakti*.

Apasiddhantic—based on wrong conclusions.

Aparadha-nama—the offended name of the Lord.

Aprakrita-bhava—transcendental ecstatic emotion.

Artha-pravritti—engagement in transcendental affairs.

Asta-kaliya-lila-smaraAa-seva—internal devotional service performed through remembrance of the eightfold daily pastimes of Radha and Krishna in the land of Vraja.

Audarya-lilas—the pastimes of Lord Gauranga in which He humbly accepts the roles of His devotees to more deeply appreciate the intensity of their love and to more effectively teach the process of unalloyed devotional surrender to the fallen conditioned souls.

B

Bhagavata-dharma—the transcendental eternal function of the living being – service to the Supreme Lord in accordance with the conclusions of *Shrimad-Bhagavatam*.

Bhagavata-sampradaya—the school through which the teachings of *Shrimad-Bhagavatam* are disseminated.

Bhagavata-siddhanta—the ultimate conclusion of *Shrimad-Bhagavatam*.

Bhajana-kutiras—cottages for performing personal devotional service.

Bhajanandi—a devotee who experiences *ananda* in personally worshiping the Lord's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes.

Bhakty-unmukhi sukriti—pious activities that give rise to pure devotion.

Bhara-vāh...—burden-bearing, with reference to 1) those materially encumbered by superfluous ephemeral goals under the gross bodily concept of life or 2) those who, like beasts of burden, feel the weight of regulative devotional practice as a great drudgery.

Bhauma-lilas—earthly pastimes.

Bhava-deha—the spiritual mental body comprised of perfect supramundane emotions.

Bhava-grāhi janardana—Lord Krishna who appears before His devotee in response to the devotee’s desire to see Him in a particular way.

Bhavapana-dasha—the stage of attaining *bhava*.

Bhava-siddhi—the perfection of one’s desired ecstatic devotional mood in one of the five primary *rasas* (*shanta*, *dasya*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya*, and *shringara* or *madhurya*) – the attainment of *bhava*.

Bhavollasa-rati—the love of a maidservant in which the ecstatic moods of the *yutheshvari* (*gopi* group leader) awakens within her heart producing intense joy.

Bhoga-mandira—the kitchen in which the Lord’s meals are prepared.

Bhogya-darshana—a sight that is to be exploited for material gratification.

Bhukti-kami—one possessed of desire for sense enjoyment.

C

Candra-shalika—a turret atop a *gopi*’s palace specially meant for viewing the moon (Krishnacandra). Alternatively, it may be understood in this sense: a turret atop the palace ascended by the *gopis* to give Krishnacandra an opportunity to view the beauty of their moon-like faces.

Candrika—(sometimes called *keri*) an ornament shaped like a small mango worn like a crown.

D

Dana-keli—a pastime in which Krishna extemporaneously extorts various amorous tolls from the *gopis* along a footpath at the base of Govardana Hill.

Dharma-dhvajis—people who wave the flag of religion but who are actually hypocrites.

Duskriti—impiety.

E

Ekadasha-bhava—the eleven aspects of one’s *vraja-svarupa*: name (*nama*), complexion or form (*rupa*), age (*vayas*), dress (*vesha*), relationship (*sambandha*), group (*yutha*), order (*ajna*), service (*seva*), divine cherished ambition (*parakastha*), maintainer (*palyadasi*.) and residence (*nivasa*).

G

GaAeshvari—*sakhi* party leader under a particular *gopi* group leader.

Gopa-balakas—cowherd boys.

Gosthy-anandi—a devotee who experiences *ananda* by sharing Krishna consciousness with the greater family of living entities.

Gulala—a fragrant powder made from flower pollen.

Gunja-mala—a necklace of white, red-black, or alternating white and red-black berries of the *gunja* creeper.

Guru-daksiAa—a disciple’s tribute (often in the form of money) to the spiritual master.

Guru-rupa-sakhi—the eternal *kinkari-svarupa* of the spiritual master as a maidservant of Shri Radhika.

Guru-tattva—the *guru* principle.

H

Hasya-rasa—mellow of uproarious laughing.

Hari-dasa-varya—the best of Lord Hari’s devotees.

I

Ishvara-bhava—the mood of being a controller.

J

Jaiva-dharma—the eternal function of the *jiva*.

Jata-rati—one in whom *rati* has awakened.

Jata-ruci—one in whom *ruci* has awakened.

K

Kaitava-bhaktas—cheating “devotees.”

Kajjala—black eyeliner.

Kali-cela—disciple of Kali-yuga’s influences.

Kama-yantra-tilaka—*tilaka* in the shape of Cupid’s mystic symbol, having a small dot of red *kunkuma* in the center surrounded by eight short *candana* lotus petals and encircled by a thin black line of musk.

Kanistha-bhakta (Kanistha-adhikari)—a devotee of the lowest order, generally under the sway of material influences and therefore possessed of pliable faith.

Karma-yoga—linking with Godhead through either the sacrifice of one’s actions or the sacrifice of the fruits of actions, either with or without a desire to enjoy the results of sacrifice.

Kasturi—musk.

Kevala-madhurya-maya mantra—a *mantra* purely possessed of the unadulterated sweetest loving characteristics exclusively attributable to the realm of Vraja.

Kevala-madhurya-premika—possessed of pure *prema* based on Krishna’s sweetness (uncontaminated by knowledge of the Lord’s grandeur).

Kila-kincita—an ecstatic mood symptomatizing great internal jubilation upon meeting Krishna, wherein a heroine exhibits a bouquet of concurrent natural transcendental expressions like pride, intense desire, envy, fear, and anger, along with simultaneous laughing and crying, knitted eyebrows, shrinking away, horripilation, and other such supramundane exhilarations.

Kinkari—maidservant.

KinkiAi—small bells.

Kirtana-karis—*kirtana* performers.

Kishora—an adolescent boy between ten and fifteen years of age.

Kishori-gopi—an adolescent *gopi* between ten and fifteen years of age.

Krita-puAya-punjah—having performed many lifetimes of pious activities (see *Bhagavatam* 10.12.11).

Kuttamita—when a heroine puts on an outward show of anger, although inwardly pleased by her gallant’s bold advances.

L

Labha, puja, and pratistha—profit, adoration, and distinction.

Lila-vilasa—transcendental foreplay.

Lobha-maya-shraddha—faith (*shraddha*) possessed of greed (lobha) to attain the moods of the Vrajavasis.

Lobha-maya-shraddhavan jana—persons endowed with lobha-maya-shraddha.

M

Madhyama-adhikari—an intermediate practicing devotee.

Maha-bhagavata—a swan-like devotee of the highest order.

Maha-rasa—the *rasa* dance in which all the different kinds of *gopis* are allowed to participate.

Mahima-jnana-yukta-prema—*prema* accompanied by knowledge of the Lord’s grandeur.

Mang-tika—an ornament placed upon a lady’s hair-part, often flanked with decorative chains attached to the hair on both sides of her head.

‘Mukhya’-vraja-janas—the preeminent eternal Vrajavasi associates of Lord Krishna.

Mukta-carita-kathamrita—the nectar of talks about the pastimes in which Krishna grew pearl trees.

Mukti-kami—one possessed of desire for liberation.

N

Nagara—amorous hero.

Nagara-sankirtana—*sankirtana* performed in the public places of a village or town.

Nija-abhista-bhava—one's own desired supramundane mood -
maya—absorption in, **-sambandhi**—connecting to, **-anukula**—
favorable for, **-aviruddha**—not against, **-viruddha**—against.

Nikunja-lilas—intimate pastimes in secluded forest groves.

Nikunja-sevas—services to the *nikunja-lilas*.

Niskincana bhajananandis—devotees without any material
possessions who take pleasure in performing personal
devotional service.

Nitya-dharma—the ultimate intrinsic (eternal) nature of the
soul.

Nitya-lilas—eternal pastimes of the Lord.

Nitya-muktavatara—an emancipated *sadhana-siddha* or *kripa-
siddha* who returns from the spiritual world to the material
world for preaching on the Lord's behest.

Nitya-parikara—eternal entourage.

Nitya-siddha avatara—an eternally perfect devotee who
descends from the spiritual world to assist in the Lord's mission.

Nitya-sukriti—indelible transcendental piety.

P

Palya-dasi—a maidservant who is always maintained and
protected by her *gopi* mistress.

Panca-samskara—the five purificatory rituals.

Para bhakti—real, highly evolved spontaneous devotion.

Para-dukhha-dukhhi—one who is distressed to know of the
distress of others.

Paraka—the spiritual potency that bestows *Krishna-prema* and
situates one as an eternal resident of the *dhama*.

Parakiya-bhava—a *gopi's* mood of unfortunately belonging to
another (her lawful husband) while remaining attached to Shri
Krishna (the supreme husband), her paramour.

Paramahansa-nirjana-bhajananandis—greatly elevated
swan-like devotees who avoid the materialistic masses in order
to deeply absorb themselves in undisturbed, concentrated
internal worship of Radha and Krishna's eightfold daily
pastimes.

Paramarthika—related to the supreme goal.

Para-upakara—doing good for others.

Prakata-lilas—pastimes of the Lord manifested on earth.

Prakrita-bhaktas—materialistic devotees.

PraAa-sakhi—a girlfriend as dear to Radharani as Her own life (one of the five kinds of *sakhis* described in *Ujjvala-nilamaAi*, particularly characterized by her greater affection for Radharani than for Krishna).

Prasannatma—joyful soul.

Prema-keli—love play.

Premamrita—the nectar of *prema*.

Prema-rasa-maya-nama-sankirtana—*nama-sankirtana* endowed with the taste of *prema*.

Prema-ruruksu—those who earnestly strive for ascending to the region of *prema*.

Prema-seva—loving service.

Premika—possessed of *prema*.

Priti-bhajana—loving devotional service.

Priya-narma-sakha—a younger, most confidential boyfriend of Krishna.

Priyatama—most dear beloved one.

Purusa-bhusaAa—male ornament.

Purva-raga—preliminary attraction (with the hope of meeting the beloved).

R

Raga-margabhidheya—the activities to be performed on the path of spontaneous devotional service.

Raga-marganugamana-prema-dharma—the religion of love for Vrajendra-nandana Krishna following the path of natural spontaneous attraction.

Raga-maya-maha-mantra—a *mantra* that awakens natural attraction (*raga*) following in the wake of the Vraja-vasis' spontaneous loving sentiments toward Krishna.

Raga-mayi—endowed with spontaneous attraction.

Raganuga-bhava—*bhava* achieved through the process of *raganuga-bhakti*.

Ragatmika—one whose *atma* is imbued with *raga* – complete, overwhelming attraction with an indelible thirst to selflessly serve Lord Krishna exclusively for His and His devotees' absolute pleasure. A characteristic ontological feature of the original counterpart eternal associates of Krishna as well as of those who, as emancipated *jivas*, attain a similar status in the association of Krishna's eternal associates.

Rasa-vicara—analysis of *rasa*.

Rasika—one who has advanced to the level of relishing *rasa*.

Raso vai sah—an emporium of varieties of flowing mellows.

Rupanuga-dharma—the religion of the followers of Rupa Gosvami.

Rupanuga-sampradaya—the school of Gaudiya Vaisnavism following and propagating the teachings of Shrila Rupa Gosvami.

Rupa-sanatananuga—follower of Rupa Gosvami and Sanatana Gosvami.

S

Sac-cid-ananda-siddha-deha—perfect spiritual body comprised of eternity, knowledge, and bliss.

Sadhu-bhusaAa—saintly qualities.

Sadhu-sanga—association with pure-hearted saintly devotees.

Sad-guru—one's eternal spiritual master.

Sakhi-snehadhika—a girlfriend who has more affection for her group leader than for Krishna.

Sambandha-abhidheya-prayojana-vicara—deliberation on the principles of relationship with the Personality of Godhead (*sambandha*); activities leading to the realization of perfect reciprocation with Krishna in terms of that relationship (*abhidheya*); and the ultimate necessity (*prayojana*), the perfection of *Krishna-prema*.

Sambhogecchamayi—an aspect of *kamanuga-bhakti* (*raganuga-bhakti* in the *madhurya-rasa*) in which a devotee cultivates the mood of a *nayika*, or mistress, characterized by a purposeful desire for one's own independent supramundane conjugal union with the Lord, keeping exclusively His pleasure in view.

Sampradayaic siddhanta—a school's ultimate conclusion.

Sanga-kirtana—congregational chanting, *sankirtana*.

Sanketa-kunja—a *kunja* appointed as a meeting place.

Sara-grahi—a devotee who relishes drinking the essence of unalloyed devotion.

SharaAagati—pure devotional surrender.

Shastra—Vedic scripture.

Shayana-mandira—sleeping-temple (bedroom).

Siddha-deha—perfect spiritual body.

Sindura—red vermilion.

Shisya-praya—the mere semblance of a disciple.

Sneha-samyukta-nama-sankirtana—when, out of deep affection for Nami (Shri Shri Radha-Krishna) coupled with keen aspiration to attain the *prema-sevas* of Their lotus feet, one concentratedly engages one's mind, body, and voice in loudly singing the Holy Names of the Lord.

ShravaAa-dasha—the period of acquaintance through the devotional process of hearing.

Shringara—another name for the *madhurya-rasa*.

Sthayi-bhava—permanent ecstatic emotional disposition (in one of the five primary *rasas*).

Shuddha-nama—the pure Divine Name, identical to Krishna Himself.

Shuddha-sattvika—having the spiritual nature of pure goodness.

Su-dura-pravasa—feelings of intense separation when Krishna leaves Vrindavana to take up residence in a far-distant place (Mathura and on to Dvaraka).

Sukriti—piety.

Svadhina-bhartrika—one whose lover is under Her control.

Svamini—mistress.

Svananda-kami—one possessed of desire for one's own spiritual bliss.

Svara-maAdalika-viAa—a thirty-six-stringed harp-like instrument belonging to the family of *viAas*.

Svarupa-shakti—the Lord's personal internal spiritual potency.

Svayam-rupa—the original form of Godhead, Radharaṅgi's Krishna, who exhibits one hundred percent of the Lord's beauty, sweetness, and loveliness, in contrast to the less attractive expanded forms of Godhead.

Shyama-rasa—the liquid mellows of Shyama's sweetness.

T

Tad-bhavecchatmika—an aspect of *kamanuga-bhakti* (*raganuga-bhakti* in the *madhurya-rasa*) following in the wake of the *sakhis'* service attitude in which the devotee takes the greatest pleasure in creating favorable conditions for the *prema*-union of the Divine Couple, in contrast to one cherishing a desire for one's own independent supramundane conjugal union with the Lord. This is considered the preeminent, primary path of *kamanuga-bhakti*.

Taraka—the spiritual potency that delivers the conditioned soul from material bondage.

Taraka-brahma kirtana-mantra—a *kirtana-mantra* comprised of transcendental nomenclature imbued with the *taraka* potency.

U

Unnatojjala-vraja-rasa—the most resplendent mellow of Vraja – the amorous love of the maidservants of Shri Radha.

Upadhi—false designation.

Upa-manjari—the “other” *manjari* second-in-command (in a particular *sakhi*’s group).

UtkaAthita—eager to meet her lover.

Uttama-Vaishnava (Uttama-adhikari)—a pure devotee of the highest order at the stage of perfection.

V

Vaidha-sadhana—rudimentary devotional practices strictly by the book.

Vama-giri—a mountain of contrariness.

Vama-madhya—a left-wing *gopi* whose qualities place her midway between the *prakhara* (“harsh girl”) and *mridvi* (“soft, gentle girl”).

Vana-devi—forest goddess.

Vana-vihara-lila—the pastime of enjoying roaming in the forest.

VaraAa-dasha—the interval during which one comes to the position of accepting as fitting the revelations concerning one’s eternal spiritual identity (*svarupa*) in terms of the eleven aspects of the internally conceived *siddha-deha*.

Vasanta-raga—springtime melody.

Vastu-siddhi—the ultimate perfection of gaining Krishna’s direct shelter upon achieving the actuation of one’s supra-substantial *sac-cid-ananda siddha-deha* (perfect spiritual body) in the *bhauma-lilas* of the Lord.

Vibhinnamsha-jivas—infinitesimal, eternally separated living beings.

Vibhutis—opulences.

Vilasa-kunja—pastime grove.

Vipralambha-maha-bhava—the pinnacle of *prema* in feelings of separation, manifesting the transcendental *divyonmada* emotional outpourings *prajalpa*, *parijalpa*, *vijalpa*, *ujjalpa*, *sanjalpa*, *avajalpa*, *abhijalpa*, *ajalpa*, *pratijalpa* and *sujalpa*.

Vipralambha-rasa-maya—that which is imbued with mellows of love in separation from the beloved.

Vraja-bhakti-rasa—the mellow of devotional service in Vraja.

Vrajadhiva—empress of Vraja.

Vraja-dhuli—dust of Vrindavana.

Vraja-prema-bhakti-rasa—the devotional mellow characteristic of a Vrajavasi's love for Krishna.

Vraja-svarupa—one's own ultimate constitutional spiritual form as a devotee of Radha-Krishna in the realm of Vraja.

Y

Yukta-vairagya—renunciation of the false notion that anything of this world belongs to or is to be enjoyed by anyone other than Lord Krishna, practically demonstrated by engaging (*yukta*) that which belongs to Krishna in Krishna's service.

Yutheshvari—*gopi* group-leader.