

Mukunda Das

14 March

The members of Bhakti America which is a representation of the communities and Sangas of Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja in North America held a meeting to discuss the recent position paper which was posted to the public forum Facebook by the senior members of the Krishna Balaram Mandira Seva Kunja. This temple is under the leadership of Pujyapad BV Madhusudhana Maharaja, and Srimati Krishna Priya Didi.

We have not spoken to them personally and with all respect we are open to hear from them regarding the matter.

The post written by the sannyasi preachers BV Sadhu Maharaja and BV Damodara Maharaja, which is printed here reflects statements and conceptions which were not in line with the stated convictions of our Srila Gurudeva, Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja; and while we acknowledge the right of the members of the Krishna Balaram Mandira to accept conclusions born from their understanding, where that differs from Our Srila Gurudeva, we cannot accept.

The mutual decision of the sangas here was that at this time, we do not support the preaching of the members of Krishna Balaram Mandira in our temples, centers, and sangas in North America. We have no say over what happens in other places since everyone must act according to their own convictions in this matter. It should be noted that our decision carries no malice or personal ILL will, the decision was based solely on the public position adopted by the preachers and members of the Krishna Balaram Mandira which we found not to be what we heard from Srila Gurudeva.

Though it adds to the volume of this letter, we feel it important to post both the position paper in question and a written letter from Srila Gurudeva regarding his conviction in this matter.

The following is A Statement from Sri Krsna-Balarama Mandira (Seva-kunja) on the Svarupa of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja

March 4, 2015 at 10:02am

IN THE TRANSCENDENTAL WORLD ALL ARE VERY SWEET

All Glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga!

Dear devotees of nitya-lila-pravistha om visnupada 108 Sri Srila BhaktivedantaNarayana Gosvami Maharaja Srila Gurudeva, and nitya-lila-pravistha om visnupada 108 Sri Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, all over the world -

I offer my appropriate dandavat pranama to you, in accordance with your position.

The discussion of transcendental subjects is not merely brain exercise. By logic and argument you cannot prove anything; whatever you establish will later be destroyed by a bigger argument. To understand transcendental things requires balanced heart and mind. Sometimes we use only our mind but not heart, and sometimes only our heart but no mind, but to discuss properly we should be neutral, like a judge considering all evidence. Then a proper conclusion can come.

First of all, in whichever mood parampujyapad Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja is rendering seva in Goloka-Vrndavana, there is no question of that being lower or higher. There is pure adjustment in the transcendental world. Conditioned souls cannot understand that really everything there is completely cinmaya. Whether one is in sakhya, vastslya, or madhurya-rasa, all are transcendental, and so there is no differentiation. Only for lila is there division of rasas. From this world, the jivas have to respect all these transcendental relationships.

Our paramaradhyatama Srila Gurudeva, Srila Bhakti Vedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja said Srila Swami Maharaja's glory is that he is a Rupanuga Vaisnava, and that is certainly true.

Whichever bhava any of our acaryas has, he had to take from Srila Rupa Gosvami's moods and ideas, for any rasa. Therefore all acaryas in our parampara are called Rupanuga, although each one will not cross beyond the area of his own rasa; all follow Srila Rupa Gosvami, but there is some

special part or department that not all touch. We can see in the folio that Srila Swami Maharaja has mentioned “Rupa Gosvami” thousands of time in his books, but “Rupa-manjari” only five times, and “radha-dasyam” never once.

They can argue that “my Gurudeva said, so it is true!” but there is no sense in it. Such statements. Sometimes Srila Gurudeva also said that Srila Swami Maharaja is Rupanuga in the internal sense, “serving like Sri Rupa-manjari.” We can compare this with how Srila Swami Maharaja repeatedly told his disciples that his own god-brothers were all kanistha-adhikaris. That was not true, and anyone who insists to follow these statements on the pretext of guru-nistha will commit grave offense. of Srila Swami Maharaja were very bold and clear, but false. He spoke like that for his disciples’ welfare, to keep them from going here and there so he could keep them close and give proper nourishment. This is called preaching tactics.

For his own preaching, Srila Gurudeva also used tactics for the welfare of those he was helping. I heard he told one devotee who was very attached to Jesus that Jesus was also in manjari-bhava, and took birth in our parampara to perfect that. We should understand that before Srila Gurudeva traveled to foreign countries this mood was not present anywhere in the western world at all. He brought this manjari mood to the western world, and it was a shock, a surprise for many. Therefore in the beginning stage of his preaching at that time he had to do things very carefully. Some statements can take your preaching very high, and some can immediately destroy your preaching. For this reason, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura also says, “Oh my dear preachers, if you want to propagate the mission of Sriman Mahaprabhu then sometimes you must hide the truth if that will make a big quarrel and disturb your preaching.”

Wise persons know that by catching hold of a supremely exalted personality’s feet, one’s desires can be quickly fulfilled. In this way, whichever rasa one has intrinsically will very quickly come to siddhi by following Srila Rupa Gosvami's ideas and taking shelter of Sri Radha. Satyavrata Muni ultimately prays “namo radhikayai” at the climax of his Damodarastakam prayers, but his mood is not manjari-bhava. Sri Suradasaji has vatsalya mood, but so extensively extols madhurya-rasa in his poetry. Sri Uddhavaji prays for the dust of Srimati Radharani’s lotus feet (10.47.63), and Sri Bhismedeva also offers prayers touching the mood of the gopis even at the last moment of his life (SB 1.9.40). None of them have gopi-bhava, but they take support of that highest mood to attain their own perfection. Similarly, there is no problem for someone in sakhya- rasa to receive and chant sannyasa-mantra (gopi-bhava-mantra), any more than it is inappropriate for him to chant gopala-mantra or kama-gayatri. For example, Srila Gurudeva also gave gopala-mantra even to some devotees he confirmed were intrinsically Rama bhaktas, because these highest mantras nourish all rasas.

Our Srila Gurudeva is a very high personality. He is transcendental and knows everything - what is good for all jivas and how to distribute this highest mercy, but very few persons can actually understand him. If Srila Gurudeva had said, “I am in madhurya-rasa but Srila Swami Maharaja is in sakhya-rasa,” a big battle would have come. Then how could he fulfill the order of Srila Swami Maharaja, his siksa-guru and bosom friend, to help his ISKCON devotees? They and the whole world would have been deprived of very important things.

Parampujyapada Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja said that Srila Swami Maharaja was in sakhya-rasa and following that this type of attack came from a neophyte section of Srila Swami Maharaja’s followers. So Srila Gurudeva knew very well, “If i give a correct statement about this then my preaching will be disturbed.”

To defeat Buddhism and accomplish Bhagavan’s purposes, Sri Sankaracarya also used wise preaching tactics. Where the Buddhists said truth is sunya, nothing, he said “no it is something, but that something is nothing,” and thus played both sides for fulfilling his mission. Srila Jiva Goswami also apparently established svakiya-bhava in vrndavana-lila, but if there is svakiya, what is the need for preparing any kunjās for Sri Radha-Krsna? They can just go to Their house. Srila Jiva Gosvami made such statements only to pacify a certain section of stubborn persons who could not accept his own mood of parakiya. In Sri Sridhara Swami’s commentaries on Srimad Bhagavatam we sometimes find a smell of mayavada, and it appears as if he gives support to the doctrine of

impersonalism. By this 'smell' he gradually attracts mayavadis to the devotional conception. When a fisherman puts bait on his hook, it appears he is giving fish something to eat, but his intention is to catch them. An acarya's inner mood can be very difficult to understand. When Srīman Mahāprabhu was crying in front of Śrī Jagannāthadeva, many people were there but only very few persons like Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī could understand His heart. The common people were perhaps thinking He has some family problem, and is praying to the Lord for material help. Only by so much sadhu-sanga, so much deep study, and by keeping a peaceful mind can you one day realize a Vaisnava's heart. An acarya's own writings and activities are the biggest evidence indicating his mood. The prayers of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja in his diary are proof of what he wants: "Oh Brother, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when will I graze the cows and sport with You and the cowherd boys. Vane khai lutaputi - we will steal each other's lunches and have picnic in the forest." This has been accepted as Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's eternal sakhya mood by parampujyapad Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Puri Mahārāja and parampujyapad Śrīla Sridhara Mahārāja. Many times he plainly indicated that he was in sakhyarasa, and longed to enter these pastimes, enjoying laddus and kacauris with the cowherd boys. All of this evidence has already been compiled before by his disciples*.

Another consideration is that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has established the deities Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa everywhere in the world, but that is out of preference for the pleasure of his spiritual master, just as our Śrīla Gurudeva established his own Guru Mahārāja's istadevas Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-vihārī everywhere. However, in Vṛndāvana, where in his own nitya-siddha svarūpa he performs his seva, there Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja established Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarama in Rāman-reti, the place of cow-grazing pastimes. He has placed Them centrally, and Śrī Rādhā-Syāmasundarā to one side. No Vaisnava can place his istadeva on the side, or tolerate that they be placed so by anyone else. In this way, the sakhyarasa of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja is supported by Hari (Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarama), Guru (his own writings and words), and Vaisnava (his exalted, omniscient, maha-bhagavat senior god-brothers). What Śrīla Gurudeva has told in apparent contradiction to this has also been clearly reconciled. We are presenting this matter before the devotees to consider for themselves. Some people are criticizing us for this, but that is normal. We accept. But if in our Śrīla Gurudeva's name they speak like this they will bring bad reputation to him, and for this reason we present these ideas. Finally, everyone should understand that in whichever rasa Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja is doing his eternal seva, he is the worshipable deity for the whole world, and that sakhyarasa is no small thing. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's masterpiece Śrī Brhad-Bhagavatāmṛta establishes the glory of sakhyarasa. No seva is higher or lower in Goloka-Vṛndāvana - all are fully transcendental. We should not try to pull Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja from his own rasa to another position, or he will not be happy. Whichever deity one serves must be worshipped with the mantra and paraphernalia appropriate to him. Datura flowers are only for offering to Śiva, and java flowers are only for Durgā. If by ignorance or by force you offer them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, He will not be satisfied. Similarly, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja should be worshipped in his own mood. If someone has a small brain and a small heart then this understanding cannot enter. For bhajana, we need so much sadhu-sanga and such a broad, bright mind and heart. Only those pure bhaktas for whom the lotus feet of Śrī Guru, Vaisnava and Bhagavan are everything, can understand, enter, and taste bhakti-rasa (dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, madhurya).

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarama Mandira Seva-Kunja, Vṛndāvana

Now our Śrīla Gurudeva expresses his own conviction in regard to the Svarūp of Śrīla Prabhupada. Especially important is that this was a personal letter to PP Tripurārī Mahārāja which he made public, Śrīla Gurudeva would have no reason to so call use a "preaching tactic" here as he was speaking to a mature devotee in a private setting who holds the same conviction you are saying is held by the members of KB temple.

Dear Śrīpad B.V. Tripurārī Mahārāja,

Please accept my heartily dandavats pranams. All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅgā, all glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Vinode Bihārījī.

I received your letter and became very happy to hear from you after a long, long time.

Regarding the contents of your message, if you have strong belief that your Gurumaharaja was in sakhya mood, I have no objection. I do not desire to enter into debate - argument and counter argument. You should understand that I know Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja from beginning, since 1946. He is my siksa guru, also he is my bosom friend; many times we were laughing and joking together. So, I know him and I have a strong belief that he is in gopi bhava, following the mood of Sri Rupa Manjari. You will not be able to change my conviction and I request that you will not try to do this. I am satisfied that you have a strong faith that your Gurumaharaja is in sakhya bhava. But I want to inform you that Rupanuga means that he follows Srila Rupa Gosvami and Sri Rupa Manjari.

I also know that he was familiar with this sloka:

'aradhyo bhagavan vrajesa tanayas tad dhama vrndavanam / ramya kacid upasana vraja vadhu
vargena ya kalpita / srimad bhagavatam pramanam amalam prema pum-artho mahan / sri caitanya
mahaprobhor matam idam tatradaro nah parah'

He has also read Sri Bhaktirasamrta Sindhu and Sri Ujjvala Nilamani; thus he was able to select the best method of worship. Also he was familiar with:

'anarpita-carim cirat karunayavatirna kalau samarpayitum unnatojjvala rasam sva bhakti sriyam

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has come to give raganuga marg and especially within this raganuga marg the mood of Sri Rupa Manjari.

Thus I cannot admit anything else, but I appreciate your belief that he was in sakhya bhava.

Vaisnavadasanudasa,

Swami B.V. Srila BV Narayan Maharaja

This is offered in the humble service of Our Srila Gurudeva
Bhakti America Seva Team

Direct link: <https://www.facebook.com/mukunda.das.1042/posts/1563439383909149>