

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

### 1) Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

# Purpose of Descent of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu

prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādana  
rāga-mārga bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa

The Lord wanted to taste (**karite āsvādana**) the sweet essence of the mellows of love of God (**prema-rasa-niryāsa**), and He wanted to propagate (**karite pracāraṇa**) devotional service (**bhakti**) in the world (**loke**) on the platform of spontaneous attraction (**rāga-mārga**). (**CC Adi 4.15**)

# Purpose of Descent of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu

rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa parama-karuṇa  
ei dui hetu haite icchāra udgama

The Lord's desire to appear was born from two reasons (**ei dui hetu haite icchāra udgama**): Thus He is known as supremely jubilant (**rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa**) and as the most merciful of all (**parama-karuṇa**). (**CC Adi 4.16**)

# Purpose of Descent of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu

**aiśvarya-jñānete saba jagat miśrita  
aiśvarya-śithila-preme nahi mora prīta**

[Lord Kṛṣṇa thought:] “All the universe is filled (**saba jagat miśrita**) with the conception of My majesty (**aiśvarya-jñānete**), but love weakened by that sense of majesty (**aiśvarya-śithila-preme**) does not satisfy Me (**nahi mora prīta**). (CC Adi 4.17)

# Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

**āmāre īśvara māne, āpanāke hīna  
tāra preme vaśa āmi nā ha-i adhīna**

“If one regards Me as the Supreme Lord (**āmāre īśvara māne**) and himself as a subordinate (**āpanāke hīna**), I do not become subservient to his love (**tāra preme nā vaśa āmi**), nor can it control Me (**nā ha-i adhīna**). (CC Adi 4.18)

# Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

**mora putra, mora sakhā, mora prāṇa-pati  
ei-bhāve yei more kare śuddha-bhakti**

**āpanāke baḍa māne, āmāre sama-hīna  
sei bhāve ha-i āmi tāhāra adhīna**

“If one cherishes pure loving devotion to Me (**yei more kare śuddha-bhakti**), thinking (**ei-bhāve**) of Me as his son, his friend or his beloved (**mora putra, mora sakhā, mora prāṇa-pati**), regarding himself as great (**āpanāke baḍa māne**) and considering Me his equal or inferior (**āmāre sama-hīna**), I become subordinate to him (**sei bhāve ha-i āmi tāhāra adhīna**). (**CC Adi 4.21-22**)

# Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

**ei śuddha-bhakta lañā karimu avatāra  
kariba vividha-vidha adbhuta vihāra**

**vaikuṅṭhādye nāhi ye ye līlāra pracāra  
se se līlā kariba, yāte mora camatkāra**

“Taking these pure devotees with Me (**ei śuddha-bhakta lañā**), I shall descend (**karimu avatāra**) and sport in various wonderful ways (**kariba vividha-vidha adbhuta vihāra**), unknown even in Vaikuṅṭha (**vaikuṅṭhādye nāhi ye ye līlāra pracāra**). I shall broadcast such pastimes by which even I am amazed (**se se līlā kariba, yāte mora camatkāra**). (CC Adi 4.27-28)



# Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

**ei saba rasa-niryāsa kariba āsvāda  
ei dvāre kariba saba bhaktere prasāda**

“I shall taste the essence of all these rasas (**ei saba rasa-niryāsa kariba āsvāda**), and in this way (**ei dvāre**) I shall favor all the devotees (**kariba saba bhaktere prasāda**). (CC Adi 4.32)

# Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

**vrajera nirmala rāga śuni’ bhakta-gaṇa  
rāga-māрге bhaje yena chāḍi’ dharma-karma**

“Then, by hearing about the pure love of the residents of Vraja (**vrajera nirmala rāga śuni’**), devotees will worship Me on the path of spontaneous love (**bhakta-gaṇa rāga-māрге bhaje**), abandoning all rituals of religiosity and fruitive activity (**yena chāḍi’ dharma-karma**).” (CC Adi 4.33)

# Purpose of Descent of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu

anugrahāya bhaktānām  
mānuṣam deham āśritaḥ  
bhajate tādrśiḥ krīḍā  
yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet

“Kṛṣṇa manifests His eternal humanlike form (**mānuṣam deham āśritaḥ**) and performs His pastimes (**bhajate tādrśiḥ krīḍā**) to show mercy to the devotees (**anugrahāya bhaktānām**). Having heard such pastimes (**yāḥ śrutvā**), one should engage in service to Him (**tat-paro bhavet**).”  
(CC Adi 4.34)

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

### 2) The Historical Criticism of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura

# The Historical Criticism of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura

- Historically until the present day there has been a controversy regarding whether or not Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Thakura made the rāga-mārga a core part of his teaching and practice.
- Retracing the history resolves this contradiction.

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

### 3) The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- “Śrī Caitanya instructed Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara to disseminate rasa-upāsanā, the process of bhajana inculcated with rasa.
- Accordingly, he composed his diaries on rasa-upāsanā comprising two sections:
  1. Antaḥ-panthā – Internal means of attainment
  2. Bahiḥ-panthā – External means of attainment

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- The Internal Path was taught to Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī
- He compiled these teachings in his books such as Manah-Siksa
- The External Path was taught to Śrīla Vakreśvara Paṇḍita



# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- Vakreśvara Paṇḍita handed it over to Śrīla Gopala Guru Goswami who handed it over to his disciple Śrīla Dhyānacandra Goswami.
- Śrīla Dhyānacandra Goswami compiled the teachings in a book called Śrī Gauragovindārcana-smaraṇa-paddhati.

↳ Śrīla - Paṇḍita

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- An examination of the overall nature of each path, along with the differences and similarities between them will help us understand this controversy better.
- The External-Path consists of a series of Mantras with corresponding meditations on various personalities such as Krsna, Radharani, Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Lalita, Vishakha etc.

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- It has specific details about when to chant which mantras, in what order, etc.
- The book is lengthy, and it would take quite some time each day to follow all the procedures, which are mostly in addition to what a practitioner would be doing already in terms of the aṅgas of bhakti.

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- The inner path of Manaḥ-śikṣā by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī describes a practitioner's internal states of desire, motivation, and emotion progressing from spiritual inclination and orientation, through increasingly deep and subtle purification, to fully realized spiritual service.
- This paddhati is very short and does not in any way prescribe a particular daily or regular routine of activities or mantras.)

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- In both the internal and external paths, the qualified practitioner would have a guru or gurus, have received the holy name and mantras from a guru, be aiming toward Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, and be in the line of Lord Caitanya.
- Meditation on Lalita, Visakha, and Śrī Rūpa are  
in both.

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- The main difference is that the External path mainly emphasizes the details of what a practitioner should do, say, and think about.
- The Internal path does not elaborate on such details, being mostly about the deep inner changes of motive, drive and desire that occur within as the path is traversed.

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- It talks about giving up Prajalpa, overcoming lust, anger, illusion etc., about giving up the desire for fame, adoration, hypocrisy and other such obstacles.
- The path mainly emphasizes on inner purification

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- The External path is very open to misuse and cheap imitative travesty.
- A person could become expert at the rituals and prayers, even expert at the meditations in a superficial way, without either initial qualification or on-going purification.



# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- This path is thus highly dependent on the personal presence and guidance of a guru who is both highly perceptive and scrupulously honest.
- Also, as it involves lengthy procedures, the outer path is most suitable for persons who have retired from the world.
- It cannot easily be followed in many different circumstances.

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

- The inner path, by its very nature, cannot be either imitated or ritualized.
- Also, as the external behaviors prescribed for this path are very general, there is broad scope for application to time, place, and circumstances.

# The Internal and External Paths to Raganuga Sadhana

*external*

- The superficial behaviors of those on the Internal path can be almost indistinguishable from persons who are practitioners of vaidhī-bhakti.
- Therefore, those who are attached to the External path, or do not know of the inner path, may then think that those who follow the inner path are not on the rāga-mārga at all!

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

### 4) The Historical misuse of the External Path

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

- There were three specific ways in which the External path was misused in Bhaktisiddhānta's time (and still is today).

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

## The First Historical Misuse

- These followers laid an exclusive, emphasis on attainment of the mood of Rādhā's manjarī-gopīs.
- Even the mood of Rādhā's sakhī-gopīs is usually excluded, often with some disdain, what to speak of the mood of parental, friendly, or servant love.

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

## The First Historical Misuse

- Instead of a guru aiding a practitioner to unfold and nurture an individual's own spontaneously awakened mood, a pseudo guru prescribes the same generic manjarī-gopī mood to everyone.

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

## The Second Historical Misuse

- The second misuse was in defining rāgānuga-sādhana exclusively as solitary bhajana with specific prayers and meditation.
- Even a preacher or teacher of Kṛṣṇa consciousness would be disqualified from being a practitioner of rāgānuga-bhakti in this concept, what to speak of a householder with a job or business.



# The Historical misuse of the External Path

## The Third Historical Misuse

- The role of a Guru has been historically misunderstood by the practitioners of the External path to just give the disciples a siddha-praṇālī initiation.
- There are statements in various places that a rāgānuga-sādhaka should consult with guru or sādhus as revelations unfold.

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

## The Third Historical Misuse

- This injunction was historically rejected by both the disciple and the Pseudo-Guru giving the siddha-praṇālī initiation.

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

- Unfortunately, deviant persons and groups, turned siddha-praṇālī into a farce by giving unqualified persons a generic list of the aspects of their so-called spiritual identity.
- However, meditation on a pseudo spiritual identity not only has no value, but also impedes the awakening of one's real identity.

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

- Most unfortunately, over a period of time, this perverted form of the External path was only accepted to be Rāgānuga-Sādhana and the Internal Path was comfortably forgotten.

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

5) Resolving the Controversy  
about Bhaktisiddhānta  
Sarasvatī Thakura

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura, taught the inner path of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī.
- He denounced the false practices that imitated the external path, resulting in much confusion as to whether he taught rāgānuga-sādhana at all.
- Most certainly, he did so.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Bhaktisiddhānta writes:
- You should not mistakenly consider anartha-nivṛtti as prayojana, for one thus surmising can never enter into artha-pravṛtti.
- Therefore, I will begin speaking about aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā...
- Let those who have chanted harināma for fifteen or twenty years hear such topics....

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

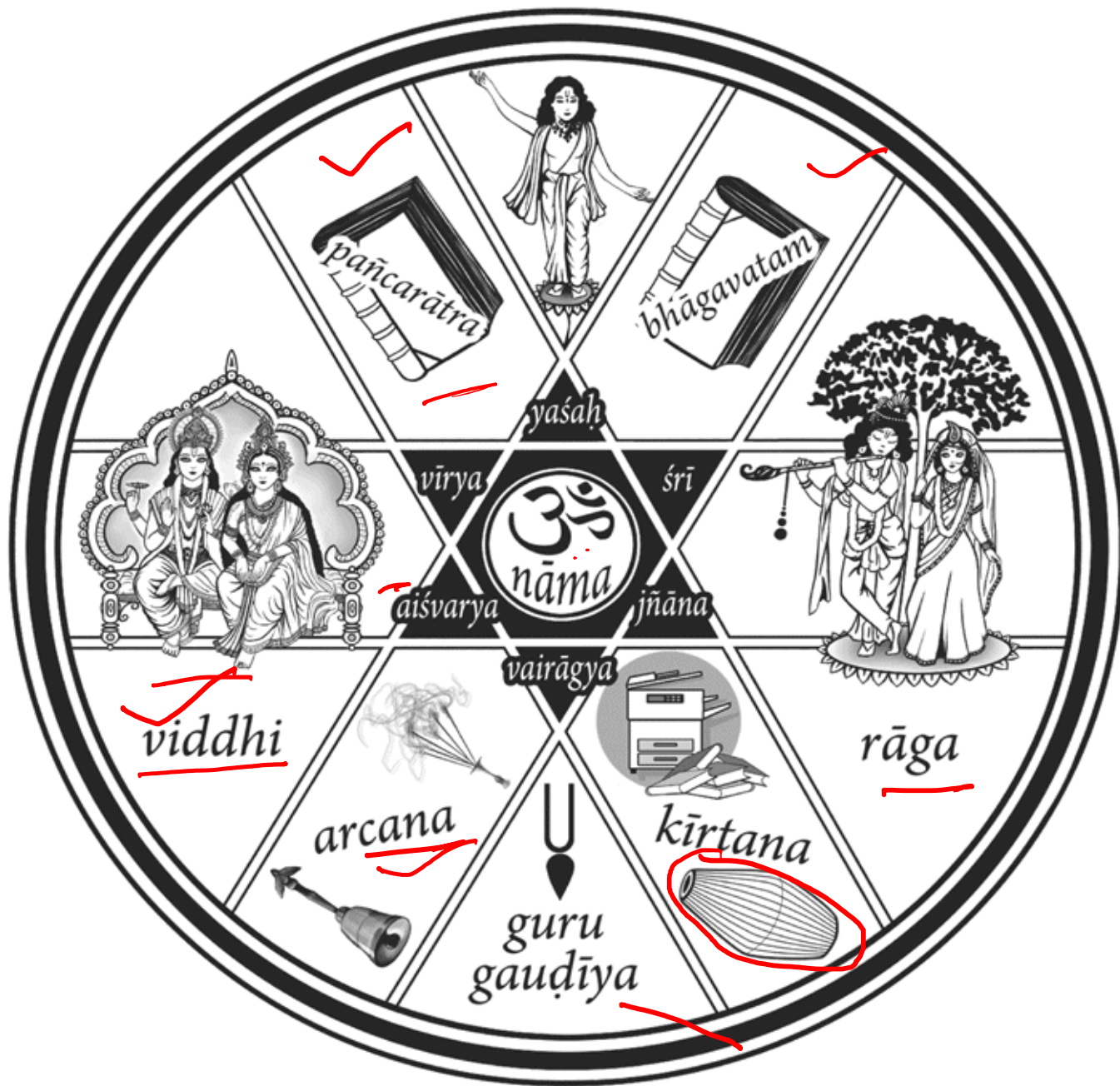
- Do not think that aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā is the property of prakṛta-sahajiyas; it is actually our affair.
- It has to be retrieved from the hands of those cheaters. (Gauḍīya 13.214)



# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- A study of the Gauḍīya Maṭha logo which Bhaktisiddhānta designed himself and which was on every issue of his official magazine clearly indicates that he did not reject the Raganuga Path.

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# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- From the logo, it is clear Bhaktisiddhānta's process of rāgānuga-sādhana bhakti is based on the holy name and on śāstra such as the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, with the aim of pleasing Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and obtaining their shelter.
- Srila Prabhupada also writes about the principle behind the logo and then speaks about the logo itself in his Bhagavatam purport and class:

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Neophyte devotees worship the Lord according to pāncarātrika-vidhi, or the regulative principles enjoined in the Nārada-pancarātra.
- Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cannot be approached by the neophyte devotees; therefore, temple worship according to regulative principles is offered to Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Although there may be a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa vighraha, or form, the worship of the neophyte devotees is acceptable as Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa worship.
- Worship according to the pāncarātrika-vidhi is called vidhi-mārga, and worship according to the bhāgavata-vidhi principles is called rāga-mārga.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- The principles of rāga-mārga are especially ~~meant for devotees who are elevated to the~~ Vṛndāvana platform.
- The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana...are actually on the rāga-mārga or bhāgavata-mārga platform.
- They participate in five basic rasas: dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya, mādhurya, and śānta.  
(**Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.24.45–46, purport**)

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- My Guru Mahārāja introduced... You have seen the, what is called? That signia?
- One side, pancarātriki-vidhi, one side bhāgavata-viddhi.
- That is... I have seen that Gauḍīya Maṭha emblem.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Yes. And, so actually, bhāgavata-mārga is very strong. That is sufficient.
- But without pancarātrika-vidhi this polluted body, polluted mind of the devotee, cannot be purified. (lecture Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.2.24–25, February 13, 1971, Gorakhpur)



# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Regarding his own practices, <sup>1</sup> he was the disciple of Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī, who taught him the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in vipralambha, the mood of separation.
- Bhaktisiddhānta especially liked one song of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī expressing separation from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- He copied those songs of separation and made them the basis of his personal meditations.
- He revealed that Nayanamanī Manjarī is his ultimate spiritual identity.
- It is well-known that Śrī Vraja-pattana was the place of his intense bhajana where he had performed the vow of chanting a billion names.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Therefore, rather than receiving formal siddha-praṇālī, we find evidence that Bhaktisiddhānta himself, under the guidance of his guru, accepted at least some of the major practices of the External path.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Bhaktisiddhānta consistently gave emphasis, as does Raghunūnātha Dāsa Gosvāmī in *Manaḥ-śikṣā*, on an internal change of motive and consciousness that must occur when traversing the path of rāga.
- It is on this point more than any other where we find firm evidence for Bhaktisiddhānta teaching the inner path of rāgānuga-sādhana.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- The following letter encapsulates Bhaktisiddhānta's teachings and view on Raganuga Sadhana:
- The aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā and related topics that you have heard about from Vaiṣṇavas in Vṛndāvana is undoubtedly worshipable.
- Yet how these pastimes are conceived in the state of infestation by anarthas is not at all worshipable.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- By repeated chanting, a special individual is capable of knowing these matters, which is the identity of the svarūpa.
- By attaining anartha-nivṛtti, one's svarūpa is automatically awakened, and the eternal mode of thinking that is innate to it manifests.
- Those who profess to teach or reveal this identity are deceitful, for it cannot be done.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- On the other hand, if a devotee receives some inspiration after sincerely chanting for a long time, he should go to the sad-guru or an advanced devotee and ask that it be confirmed and purified by him.
- The svarūpa has eleven (ekādaśa) aspects.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- There are many cases of unscrupulous gurus who artificially force-feed these topics to unqualified practitioners, yet that cannot be called a symptom of spiritual perfection.
- Those who have achieved svarūpa-siddhi gain such realization through internal revelation; the guru's only involvement is to assist his disciples' ongoing advancement.



# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- As a sādḥaka progresses toward siddhi, all these things are naturally revealed within the sevān-mukha heart. (Bhaktisiddhānta's letter, 17 November 1930 Patravali 2.89–90)
- So, by the grace of guru and advanced devotees all is revealed, but a formal siddha-pranālī is not necessary. → optional

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- In a letter on 18 December, 1932, Bhaktisiddhānta similarly wrote:
- “Only the holy name can reveal the spiritual form of the living being and cause him to be attracted to Kṛṣṇa’s form, qualities, and pastimes.”

↓  
HN → Form → nīṣṭhā  
→ Qualities → Ruci  
→ Pastimes → āśakti

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- The ultimate conclusion is that Bhaktisiddhānta taught purification of anarthas through chanting the holy name, Deity worship, study of the śāstras, visiting the holy places, serving the devotees, and helping others to take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all under the direction of guru.
- This is also the teaching of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in his books like Manah Siksa.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura accepted as bonafide both the external and internal paths which Svarūpa Dāmodara had imparted to Vakreśvara Paṇḍita and Raghunātha Dāsa, respectively.
- However, in Bhaktisiddhānta's time the external path had, generally, become a mockery due to unqualified persons' imitative methods.

# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- Bhaktisiddhānta and his faithful followers, therefore, emphasized the internal path of Manaḥ-śikṣā, which is almost impossible to counterfeit.

# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

6) Don't let the Pendulum Swing  
to the other end. The issue of  
Ultra-Conservative Approach

# Don't let the Pendulum Swing to the other end

- Because the Gaudiya Vaisnava history is fraught with nasty deviations due to a premature acceptance of the Raganuga Path, many may wrongly deduce that Raganuga is something from which to protect practising devotees.
- They may think, “Let devotees practise regulative devotional service and find out about spontaneous devotion when they are liberated.”

# Don't let the Pendulum Swing to the other end

- This ultra-conservative attitude may appear valid to some devotees, but it is not the attitude of the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas, including Śrīla Prabhupāda.
- True, many people have been led off the path of pure devotion in the name of rāgānuga-bhakti; that phenomenon should not be ignored or allowed to grow.



# Don't let the Pendulum Swing to the other end

- But Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura reasons that the fault is not with spontaneous devotion but with its false teachers.
- Ignoring rāgānuga-bhakti, he writes, has “not made it unimportant.”
- Indeed, he goes on to say that “preventative and discouraging methods do not offer any positive cure [for such abuse] and have, as a matter of fact, been found to be practically useless.”

# Don't let the Pendulum Swing to the other end

- This comment is relevant to ISKCON, particularly in light of recent unsuccessful attempts by our leadership to restrict the study of spontaneous devotion.
- Resolutions have done nothing to stem the tide of growing interest in the subject; if anything, they have done the opposite.

## Don't let the Pendulum Swing to the other end

- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura recommends “intensive counter propaganda”; we should present the right conception of spontaneous devotion and thus stem the tide of immature practice.
- He explains that spontaneous devotion is part and parcel of the soul and cannot be ignored.
- Instead it should be understood through the teachings of Rūpa Gosvāmī by devotees surrendered to the lotus feet of their spiritual masters.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga- Bhakti

## Qualification of this Practitioner

- ① At least 175 hrs
- ② Has developed labha
- ③ Has his <sup>future</sup> ~~his~~ ~~svayam~~ revealed through intense practice
- ④ Confirmed this with a bonafide guru.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

### 1) Four Essential Elements of Raganuga Practice

# Four Essential Elements of Raganuga Practice

① kr̥ṣṇam smaran janam cāsyā  
② preṣṭham nija-samīhitam |  
tat-tat-kathā-rataś cāsau  
③ kuryād vāsam vraje sadā ④ Vraja  
-vāsa

③ attraction to hearing

Remembering the Vṛndāvana form of Kṛṣṇa (kr̥ṣṇam smaran) and His dear associates (ca asyā preṣṭham janam) who have inclinations for service similar to one's own (nija-samīhitam), absorbing oneself in hearing topics related to them (tat-tat-kathā-ratah), one should always live in Vraja (kuryād vāsam vraje sadā). (BRS)

# Four Essential Elements of Raganuga Practice

- Now starts the description of the method of rāgānuga-sādhana.
- One should remember the most dear form of Kṛṣṇa (preṣṭham kṛṣṇam), the son of Nanda of kaiśora age, and the devotees of that particular form of Kṛṣṇa (asya janam), who have the same type of desires (for serving Kṛṣṇa) as oneself (nija-samīhitam).



# Four Essential Elements of Raganuga Practice

- Remembering such devotees, one should live in Vraja.
- If possible, one should physically live in Vṛndāvana, the place where Kṛṣṇa resided as Nanda's son.
- If one cannot do that, one should live there mentally.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

2) The Right kind of  
Meditation for a Raganuga  
Sadhaka

# The Right kind of Meditation for a Raganuga Sadhaka

- The bona fide meditation is to remember the activities of the Vraja-vāsī to whom one has become attracted.
- For example, devotees attracted to the service of the cowherd boy Śrīdāmā may meditate on Śrīdāmā's beautiful features, how he jokes and plays with Kṛṣṇa, how he tends cows during the day, and so on.

# The Right kind of Meditation for a Raganuga Sadhaka

- Devotees attracted to the service of Rūpa-mañjarī, the siddha-rūpa of Rūpa Gosvāmī, may meditate on how Rūpa-mañjarī accompanies Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī to Her meetings with Kṛṣṇa, how she anoints the Divine Couple with sandalwood paste and how she fans Them with a whisk.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

3) How will I know which  
Vraja-vāsī to follow?

## How will I know which Vraja-vāsī to follow?

- The truth is that devotees qualified to cultivate such a relationship would not ask this question.
- The devotees' original relationship with Kṛṣṇa is dormant within them.
- It is not something that is whimsically adopted.

## How will I know which Vraja-vāsī to follow?

- A natural and special appreciation for the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa awakens in qualified devotees as they hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.
- By continuously hearing and chanting, a sincere devotee is naturally drawn to a particular mood of service and to a particular Vraja-vāsī.

## How will I know which Vraja-vāsī to follow?

- In this regard Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “Special natural appreciation of the descriptions of a particular pastime of Godhead indicates the constitutional position of a living entity.” [Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.34]



# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

4) Prerequisites for  
Remembering Krsna and  
the Vrajavasis

# Prerequisites for Remembering Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavasis

- How does a devotee remember Kṛṣṇa and His associates?
- Since one cannot practise remembrance (smaraṇa) artificially, one must have two prerequisites:
  - ✓ 1. Purity of Heart
  - ✓ 2. Suitable knowledge.

# Prerequisites for Remembering Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavasis

- Purity of heart makes the mind peaceful enough to enter thoughts of Vṛndāvana.
- Knowledge of the Vraja-vāsīs' pastimes, features, and qualities provides the subject matter in which to immerse the mind.
- In this regard Śrīla Prabhupāda was fond of quoting the following two verses from Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura:

# Prerequisites for Remembering Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavasis

viṣaya chāriyā kabe śuddha ha'be mana  
kabe hāma heraba śrī-vṛndāvana

“When the mind is completely purified, being freed from material anxieties and desires, then I shall be able to understand Vṛndāvana and the conjugal love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and then my spiritual life will be successful.”

# Prerequisites for Remembering Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavasis

rūpa-raghunātha-pade haibe ākūti  
kabe hāma bujhaba se yugala-pirīti

“When shall I be very much eager to study the books left by the Six Gosvāmīs, headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī? By their instructions I shall be able to properly understand the loving affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.” (Prārthanā 1.3–4)

# Prerequisites for Remembering Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavasis

- Devotees must first achieve freedom from material contamination by practising the step-by-step process of regulative devotion outlined by Rūpa Gosvāmī.   
↳ *vaidhi sādhana*
- The mind then purified, they can gain knowledge of Vṛndāvana from the books of the Six Gosvāmīs and their authorized followers in the line of our founder-ācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

5) Development of  
Attraction to Vrndavan is  
Gradual

# Development of Attraction to Vrndavan is Gradual

- Attraction to a resident of Vr̄ndāvana develops in stages.
- First, a general attraction for a particular devotional mood arises—perhaps friendship or conjugal love.
- Next, a specific attraction to devotees who render service in that mood develops.



# Development of Attraction to Vrndavan is Gradual

- The last to awaken, when taste and attachment have matured, is attraction to a specific Vraja-vāsī.
- When devotees reach the stage of bhāva-bhakti, they are no longer at the stage of practice.
- Revelation confirms or modifies their spiritual identity and the particulars of who they are following in Vraja.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

6) Genuine Raganuga Bhakti  
Cannot be Imitated

# Genuine Raganuga Bhakti Cannot be Imitated

- Even after cultivating mountains of knowledge, however, devotees cannot remember Krsna and His associates without mental purity. → ~~✗~~
- The mind plays an essential role in remembrance and hence in spontaneous practice.
- Therefore genuine rāgānuga-bhakti cannot be imitated.

# Genuine Raganuga Bhakti Cannot be Imitated

- Devotees either have control of the mind or they do not.
- Mental control and meditation are pillars of the eightfold yoga system, and as such they play important roles in bhakti-yoga.

# Part-12

## Practice of Rāgānuga-Bhakti

### 7) Internal and External Practices

# Internal and External Practices

sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa  
siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi |  
tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā  
vraja-lokānusārataḥ

Following after the inhabitants of Vraja (vraja-loka anusārataḥ), one should perform service (sevā hi kāryā) in one's physical body (sādḥaka-rūpeṇa) and in one's siddha body (siddha-rūpeṇa ca), with a desire for a particular bhāva (tad-bhāva-lipsunā).  
(BRS)

# Internal and External Practices

- Sādhaka-rūpa refers to the physical body of the practitioner.
- Siddha-rūpa refers to the body which is suitable for one's desired service, and which has been developed by internal meditation.

# Internal and External Practices

- The idea here is it is simultaneous in rāgānuga-  
bhakti, not at the same instant, but during the  
same period.

- For instance, for some hours he will meditate,  
and the rest of the day he will chant, read, and  
do deity services.

Śiṅḍa rūpa-savā  
↑

↓  
Śeṅḍaka rūpa  
seva



# Internal and External Practices

- The siddha-rūpa is given by a guru on the path of rāga-bhakti when he sees the qualification for rāgānuga-bhakti and a particular inclination in a particular disciple.
- Theoretically this would be a form of an associate of one of the prominent devotees in Vraja with a specific rasa—dāsyā, sakhya, vatsala or madhura.

# Internal and External Practices

- Along with the form, specific dress and service for Kṛṣṇa throughout the day would be given.
- However, forms of mañjarīs, assistants to the sakhīs of Rādhā, seem to be the most prominent forms given.
- The details are given in works by Gopālaguru Gosvāmī, Dhyānacandra Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura.

# Internal and External Practices

- One serves with a desire for the particular bhāva or rati of an associate of Kṛṣṇa situated in Vraja (tad-bhāva-lipsunā).
- One should follow in the footsteps of the dear associates of Kṛṣṇa in Vraja (vraja-lokā) and others loyal to them.

# Internal and External Practices

- One should follow after the dear devotees of Kṛṣṇa such as Rādhā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Śrī Rūpa-mañjarī and those following after them—persons such as Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī (vrajalokānuṣārataḥ).
- Accordingly, one should perform mental service in one's siddha-rūpa, following after the examples of Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Śrī Rūpa-mañjarī and others.

# Internal and External Practices

- In one's physical body, one should perform services using one's body, following after persons such as Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī situated in Vraja.
- By the word vraja-lokā, one should understand persons situated in Vraja — Rādhā, Candrāvalī and others.
- Following after them, one should perform service using one's physical body also.