



ŚRĪ  
MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

*Splendid Instructions to the Mind*

by Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

With the commentaries  
*Bhajana-darpaṇa* and *Manah-śikṣā Bhāṣā*  
by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Including commentaries of contemporary Vaiṣṇavas

# Śrī Manah-śikṣā

## Splendid Instructions to the Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī  
Ṭhākura and rāgānuga-  
bhakti

by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

# Purpose of Descent of Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

- Without any doubt, one of the key purposes for the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was to teach the path of spontaneous love, rāgānuga-bhakti.
- As Mahāprabhu said (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 4.33):

**vrajera nirmala rāga śuni' bhakta-gaṇa  
rāga-mārge bhaje yena chāḍi' dharma-karma**

Then, by hearing about the pure love of the residents of Vraja, devotees will worship me on the path of spontaneous love, abandoning all rituals of religiosity and fruitive activity.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

Purport by Śrīla Prabhupāda

Many realized souls, such as Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī and King Kulaśekhara, have recommended with great emphasis that one develop this spontaneous love of Godhead, even at the risk of transgressing all the traditional codes of morality and religiosity.

Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, has written in his prayers called the Manaḥ-śikṣā that one should simply worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with all attention.

Na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru,  
“One should not be much interested in performing Vedic rituals or simply following rules and regulations.”

**The Historical Criticism of Srila  
Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati  
Thakura**

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

Certainly Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, his disciples, grand-disciples, and followers are dedicated to this mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Yet, historically until the present day there has been a controversy regarding whether or not Bhaktisiddhānta made the rāga-mārga a core part of his teaching and practice.

A study of Manaḥ-śikṣā is pivotal to resolve this doubt.

To understand the importance of Manaḥ-śikṣā in this regard, we turn to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Jaiva-dharma. Here is the relevant section from chapter 39:



**Resolving the Controversy:**  
**Understanding the Internal and**  
**External Paths to Raganuga**  
**Bhakti**

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

**Gosvāmī:** The Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā has laid down a systematic procedure for one to enter into and become absorbed in the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; one should follow it without guile.

One should practice one's bhajana according to the bhāva of ecstatic love expressed in the Śrī Svaniyama-daśaka-stotram.

These five books have all been composed by Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has exhaustively elaborated upon the details of rasa-tattva.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally gave him this service and specially blessed him to fulfil the responsibility.

However, the methods by which an aspiring soul may develop such rasa in the intimate service of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa have been compiled by Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī from the famous diaries of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī.

All followers received their particular missions on the order of Śrī Caitanya and were empowered by the Lord for the successful fulfilment of their particular order.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

**Vijaya:** Gurudeva, I am very curious to know what further responsibilities were given to whom by the Lord.

**Gosvāmī:** 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: antaḥ-panthā, the esoteric, internal means of attainment; and bahiḥ-panthā, the exoteric, external means of attainment.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The esoteric process was entrusted to Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, as amply exhibited in his books, and the exoteric rasa-upāsanā was allocated to Śrīla Vakreśvara Paṇḍita, which is the treasure of our spiritual lineage.

This exoteric rasa-upāsanā was passed on to me by Śrīla Vakreśvara Paṇḍita and from me to Śrī Dhyānacandra who has compiled it in a book of which you are now the fortunate recipient.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura accepted as bona fide both the exoteric and esoteric paths.

He refers to each in his books and seems to combine the two to some extent.

Such a combination can be observed when reading his commentary to Manaḥ-śikṣā, in the many prayers and verses he quoted for meditation, especially in the later verses.

Such meditative prayers remind us of one of the main practices Dhyānacandra favors on his path.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The fact that Bhaktivinoda brought such prayers into his Manaḥ-śikṣā commentary should refute the sometimes-heard claim that the esoteric and exoteric paths are mutually exclusive.

Rather, we find in Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's writing and lectures, as well as his personal practices and the general practices among his disciples, the manifestation of both Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's verses and Bhaktivinoda's commentary.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Apparently, the controversy about whether or not Bhaktisiddhānta taught the rāga-mārga arose because he and his disciples, among them A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, mostly taught Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's inner path as outlined here in Manaḥ-Śikṣā, rather than the (equally bona fide) outer system of Vakreśvara Paṇḍita as described in Dhyānacandra's Śrī Gaura-govindārcana-smaraṇa-paddhati.

Those who focus entirely on the exoteric path, without proper understanding of the esoteric path, then wrongly conclude that practical instruction in rāgānuga-bhakti is virtually absent from the Gauḍīya Maṭha and ISKCON.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

First we will examine the overall nature of each path, along with the differences and similarities between them.

Then we will consider the reasons why Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta did not at all favor the exoteric path, although he did bring in some of its elements.

Finally, we will discuss the specific ways in which the esoteric path is an integral part of the process Bhaktisiddhānta taught, and which A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda has so faithfully followed.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

The nature of the external or exoteric path is a series of mantras with corresponding meditations on various personalities.

There are some instructions about when to say which mantras, particularly in relation to waking in the morning, taking a bath, and doing formal external Deity worship. Indeed, the name of the manual includes the word arcana, meaning Deity worship.

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 IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Dhyānacandra Gosvāmī prescribes meditations on Lord Caitanya, the Paśca-tattva, one's guru, oneself as a pure sādḥaka, oneself in a siddha-rūpa of a young gopī, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Rādhā's eight chief friends (sakhīs) and eight chief maidservants (maṣjarīs).

There are also meditations on the holy places of Navadvīpa and Vṛndāvana, as well as the daily eight-fold activities of Lord Caitanya and of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, each very briefly.

The meditations are progressive and to be done in a particular order.

The book concludes with blessing anyone who follows the process with the attainment of service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The inner or esoteric path of Manaḥ-śikṣā 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.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, in many cases, describes corresponding external behaviors only using metaphor.

He also describes external behavior using general words such as: meditating, serving, glorifying, offering of obeisances, and worshiping.

However, he does not give any details of how to do those activities.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

His paddhati is very short and does not in any way prescribe a particular daily or regular routine of activities or mantras.

The book concludes by blessing anyone who sings the verses and applies them with the attainment of service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

Both the exoteric and esoteric paths as given in Śrī Gaura-govindārcana-smaraṇa-paddhati and Manaḥ-śikṣā have similar implicit parameters of qualification for following their instruction.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

In both cases, 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 esoteric path has a strongly implied template of the practitioner being a manjarī-gopī (or possibly a sakhī-gopī) in Rādhā's group.

The exoteric path has the same template, but very explicitly so.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

The main difference is that the outer, exoteric path is all about the details of what a practitioner should do, say, and think about.

The inner, esoteric path has brief and general prescriptions for what to do, say, and think about, being mostly about the deep inner changes of motive, drive and desire that occur within as the path is traversed.

The inner path has the additional explicit qualifications—in the beginning—of giving up pride, having rati, and already having spontaneous attraction (rāga) for Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, all of which are notably absent in Śrī Gaura-govindārcana-smarana-paddhati.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Certainly the two paths could be combined, with the exoteric path supplying the details for outer practice, and the inner path supplying the transformations which happen while engaged in that practice.

There is no doubt that the outer path is dependent on the inner path for success.

However, the inner path is not so dependent on the outer path.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

For example, as stated previously, we find that Bhaktivinoda's commentary on Manaḥ-Śikṣā often gives extensive prayers for meditation when discussing a verse that simply prescribes meditation.

However, those prayers are generally different from what Dhyānacandra Gosvāmī writes.

Nor does Bhaktivinoda ever stipulate that a practitioner must learn or recite the specific prayers he cites.

Rather, he cites them as examples.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The outer 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.

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 IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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.

Of great importance is the fact that the superficial behaviors of those on the inner path can be almost indistinguishable from persons who are practitioners of vaidhī-bhakti.

Therefore, those who are attached to the outer 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!

# The Historical misuse of the External Path

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

From the above analysis, it is readily apparent why Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī did not teach the outer path to his followers, but in many places and in many ways, gave instructions that parallel the inner path.

Let us examine the specific ways in which the outer path was misused in Bhaktisiddhānta's time (and still is today), prompting his emphasis on the inner path.

The first misuse is an exclusive, or nearly exclusive, emphasis on attainment of the mood of Rādhā's maṣjarī-gopīs.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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. 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 IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

A second misuse is defining rāgānuga-sādhana exclusively as solitary bhajana with specific prayers and meditation in a specific order.

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.

There are even many persons in the line of Bhaktisiddhānta who misunderstand rāgānuga-sādhana bhakti according to those two ways in which the external path has been misinterpreted and applied, as explained above.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

However, it is in this next, third, area of misunderstanding and misapplication where confusion has been compounded.

The third area where the external path has been misapplied is in how a person starts the rāga path, and the relationship among the path itself, the guru (or gurus), and the practitioner.

We recall that in both the external and internal paths, a relationship with a guru or gurus is required.

Instructions from, and meditation on, sādhus, whether physically present on the earth or departed, is also required in both paths.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

However, neither in Gaura-govindārcana smaraṇa paddhati nor in Manaḥ-śikṣā do we find clear or explicit instructions about what role, specifically, one's guru might or must play in the development of an individual's rāga-mārga, beyond the giving of the holy name and mantras.

We do find general statements, for example in the Śrī-muktā-caritram of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ

**nāma-śreṣṭhaṃ manum api śacī-putram atra svarūpaṃ  
śrī-rūpaṃ tasyāgrajam uru-purīm māthurīm goṣṭhavāṭim  
rādhā-kuṇḍaṃ girivaram aho rādhikā-mādhavāśāṃ  
prāpto yasya prathita-kṛpayā śrī-guruṃ taṃ nato 'smi**

I bow down to the beautiful lotus feet of my spiritual master, by whose causeless mercy I have obtained the supreme holy name, the divine mantra, the service of the son of Sacī-mātā, the association of Srīla Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī, and his older brother Sanātana Gosvāmī, the supreme abode of Mathurā, the blissful abode of Vṛndāvana, the divine Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Govardhana Hill, and the desire within my heart for the loving service of Srī Rādhikā and Mādhava in Vṛndāvana.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

From the word *prāpto* a reader could infer that the guru gives a *siddha-praṇālī* initiation, when the disciple is told his or her eternal name, form, dress, and so forth—the eleven items of identity.

However, one could just as easily infer that the awakening and realization of the eleven items of our eternal identity happen from following our guru's general or specific instructions.

There are statements in various places that a *rāgānuga-sādhaka* should consult with guru or *sādhus* as revelations unfold, and such could also be a reasonable meaning of *prāptah*.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Unfortunately, deviant persons and groups, some perhaps well-intentioned, 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 parody of siddha-praṇālī has had ill effects for the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava community in general.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Equating rāgānuga-sādhana with siddha-praṇālī and rejecting the latter leads misinformed persons to reject the former also.

Additionally, such equating prevents Vaiṣṇavas from recognizing a non-siddha-praṇālī path as bona fide.

Therefore, they do not adopt the inner path even when they are qualified to do so.

**Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī  
Thakura Followed the  
Internal Path**

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

In Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's time, Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in general identified rāgānuga-sādhana primarily with the above three perversions of the external path.

Bhaktisiddhānta, therefore, 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. Bhaktisiddhānta writes:

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

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....

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.  
(Gaudīya 13.214)



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Let us very briefly examine some of the strongest evidence that Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was teaching the inner path of rāgānuga-bhakti.

First, we can study the Gauḍīya Maṭha logo which Bhaktisiddhānta designed himself and which was on every issue of his official magazine.

Lord Caitanya is at the top, and the words guru and Gauḍīya (the latter indicating the saṅga, or group of devotees) at the bottom.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

In the middle is the holy name, om̐ nāma, as truly the center of everything.

Counterclockwise from the top, on the left half of the circle, is the word viddhi (devotional practice impelled by scripture and logic).

Clockwise from the top, on the whole right half of the circle, is the word rāga.

The viddhi half contains a book of paṣcarātra, the rules of Deity worship.

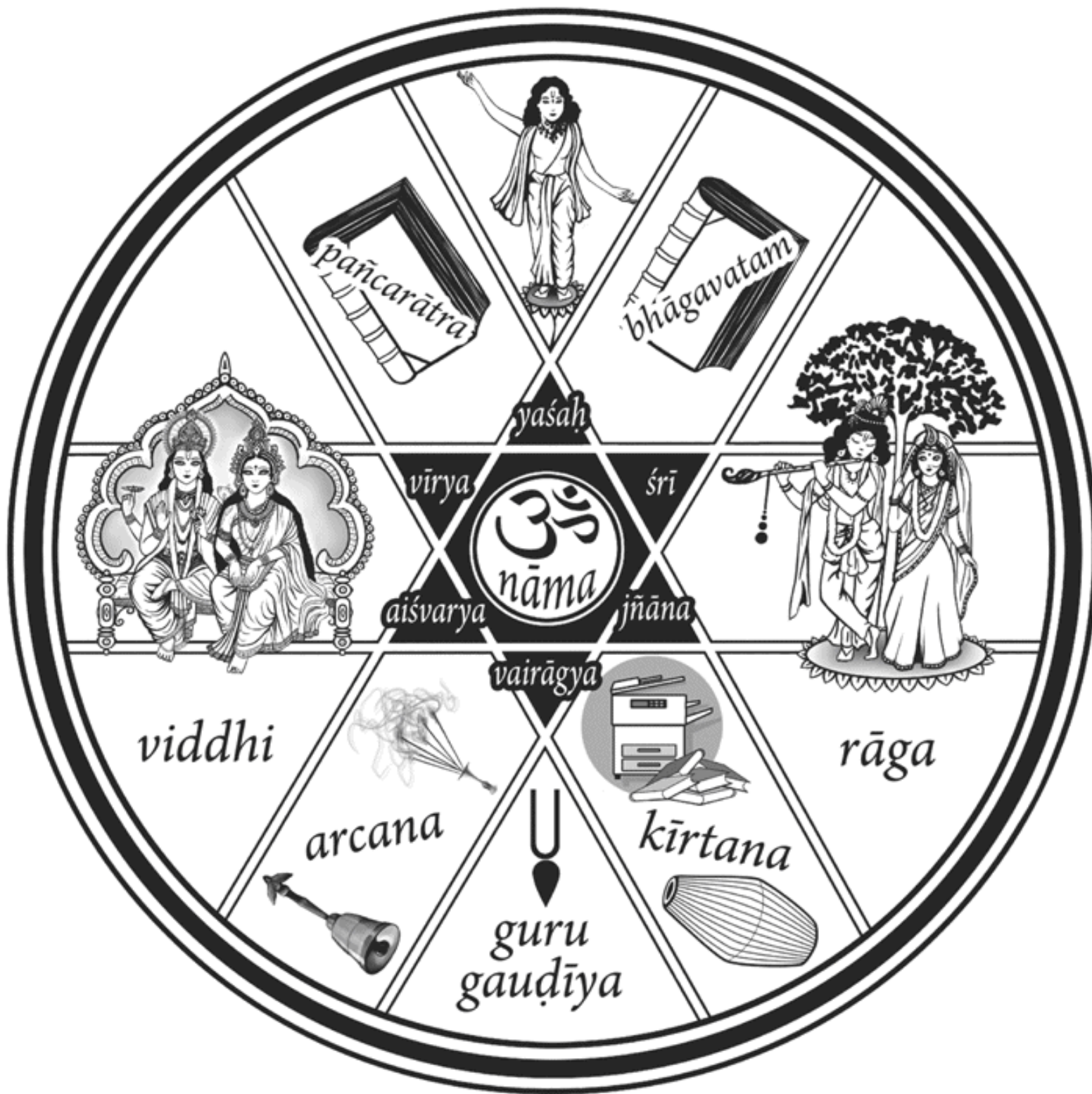
## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The Lord and his consort are pictured on this left side as Lakṣmi-Nārāyaṇa, followed by a bell, incense, and the word arcana (Deity worship).

The rāga half contains a book of Bhāgavatam, the stories and philosophy of Kṛṣṇa, his devotees, and his incarnations.

Then there is a drawing of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, followed by a mṛdaṅga drum and printing press alongside the word: kīrtana (chanting the holy name).

The inner points of the star have the words yaśaḥ (fame), śrī (beauty), jñāna (knowledge), vairāgya (detachment), aiśvarya (wealth, opulence) and vīrya (strength, power, or potency).



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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.

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda used the same Gauḍīya Maṭha logo on the gate of the ISKCON property in Māyāpura, West Bengal.

Here he writes about the principle behind the logo and then speaks about the logo itself:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Neophyte devotees worship the Lord according to pāscarātrika-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.

Although there may be a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa vigraha, 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.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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, mādhyura, and śānta. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.24.45–46, purport)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

My Guru Mahārāja introduced... You have seen the, what is called? That signia? One side, paṣcarātriki-vidhi, one side bhāgavata-viddhi. That is... I have seen that Gauḍīya Maṭha emblem. Yes. And, so actually, bhāgavata-mārga is very strong. That is sufficient. But without paṣcarātrika-vidhi this polluted body, polluted mind of the devotee, cannot be purified. (lecture Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.2.24–25, February 13, 1971, Gorakhpur)



# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

From Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's logo, we find both his emphasis on rāgānuga and the means to follow it.

Let us examine his own personal practices and what he taught his disciples.

Regarding his own practices, he was the disciple of Gaura Kīśora 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.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

He copied those songs of separation and made them the basis of his personal meditations.

He revealed that Nayanamaṇī Manjarī is his ultimate spiritual identity.

It is well-known that Śrī Vrajabattana was the place of his intense bhajana where he had performed the vow of chanting a billion names.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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 outer path.

However, the bulk of his life was as an active preacher, establishing temples, distributing the holy name, and printing books.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Bhaktisiddhānta's critics claim that printing and preaching is merely preparation for private meditation.

Yet, Bhaktisiddhānta's equating of book publishing with kīrtana, and both with rāga-bhakti, is firmly based on the esoteric path of spontaneous love.

Let us consider these verses from Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.211–214 (verse 211 is quoted from Govinda-līlāmṛta 10.16):

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

sakhyaḥ śrī-rādhikāyā vraja-kumuda-vidhor hlādinī-nāma-  
śakteḥ

sārāmśa-prema-vallyāḥ kisalaya-dala-puṣpādi-tulyāḥ sva-tulyāḥ  
siktāyām kṛṣṇa-līlāmṛta-rasa-nicayair ullasantyām amuṣyām  
jātollāsāḥ sva-sekāc chata-guṇam adhikaṁ santi yat tan na  
citram

yadyapi sakhīra kṛṣṇa-saṅgame nāhi mana  
tathāpi rādhikā yatne karāna saṅgama  
nānā-cchale kṛṣṇe prerī' saṅgama karāya  
ātma-kṛṣṇa-saṅga haite koṭi-sukha pāya  
anyonye viśuddha preme kare rasa puṣṭa  
tān-sabāra prema dekhi' kṛṣṇa haya tuṣṭa

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Rāmānanda Raya explains here how the gopīs, including Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, feel more happiness when bringing others to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa than when enjoying directly with Kṛṣṇa themselves.

This attitude of feeling more happiness at the happiness of others brings Kṛṣṇa great satisfaction.

Lord Caitanya himself, Kṛṣṇa in Rādhā's mood, spent a large portion of his manifest time on earth as a public preacher and teacher, bringing many persons to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Many of his disciples who were the chief examples of rāga-bhakti spent much of their time both studying and writing books.

It is entirely fitting that a person who follows Śrī Rūpa (rūpānuga) and who is aspiring for, or already on, the rāga-mārga would use a mṛdaṅga and printing press to nurture their attachment to the divine couple.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-SIKṢĀ

Bhaktisiddhānta consistently gave emphasis, as does Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī in Manaḥ-sikṣā, 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.

He does not deny the role of guru and sādhus in understanding one's spiritual identity.

Rather, the following letter encapsulates Bhaktisiddhānta's teachings and view:



## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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.

By repeated chanting, a special individual is capable of knowing these matters, which is the identity of the svarūpa.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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.

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 IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The svarūpa has eleven (ekādaśa) aspects.

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.

As a sādḥaka progresses toward siddhi, all these things are naturally revealed within the sevan-mukha heart. (Bhaktisiddhānta's letter, 17 November 1930 Patravali 2.89–90)

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

So, by the grace of guru and advanced devotees all is revealed, but a formal siddha-praṇālī is not necessary.

As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote:

**pūrṇa vikaśita haiyā, braje more jāya laiyā,  
dekhāya more svarūpa-vilāsa  
more siddha-deha diyā, kṛṣṇa-pāśe rākhe giyā,  
e dehera kare sarva-nāśa**

Blossoming fully, the flower of the holy name takes me to Vraja and reveals to me his own love-dalliance. This name gives to me my own eternal spiritual body, keeps me right by Kṛṣṇa's side, and completely destroys everything related to this mortal frame of mine. (Śaraṇāgati: Śrī Nāma-Māhātmya: The Glories of the Holy Name, verse 7)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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.” Indeed, the potency of the holy name is one of the key teachings of Lord Caitanya himself, as we see in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 4.71): tāra madhye sarva-śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana, niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

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.

Let's look, very briefly, at the inner path of Manaḥ-śikṣā and compare Bhaktisiddhānta's teachings on rāga-bhakti with it.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that a practitioner must have *ratim apūrvām atitarām* (unprecedented, excessive attachment for Kṛṣṇa and all related to him) at the very beginning of the path.

Similarly, Bhaktisiddhānta writes: “When you are sincerely eager to serve Kṛṣṇa, your eternal connection to him in one of five rasas will be opened to you.” (Śrīla Prabhupādera Vaktṛtāvalī 1.134)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Throughout Manaḥ-śikṣā, especially in verses 8–11, there is an emphasis on serving the svarūpa-śakti, Rādhārānī.

Similarly, Bhaktisiddhānta writes: “Without serving Rādhā, no one can ever be eligible to serve Kṛṣṇa. May you be overwhelmed with desire to be situated in your eternal individual serving position in mādhurya-rasa as an eternal maidservant of Rādhā’s pālya-dāsīs.” (ibid)



# THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

One of the prime methods of purification given in Manaḥ-śikṣā is to cry out for help from the Lord and his devotees.

Bhaktisiddhānta writes: “By sincerely calling out to Bhagavān the jīva may attain anartha-nivṛitti; there is no other means.” (Śrīla Prabhupādera Bokṛtābalī 2.176)

If we want to show ... the real glory of rāgānuga-bhakti, we ourselves must become expert in the art of bhajana.... Bhajana is not an external activity.... Loudly call out nāma; then the spirit of enjoyment in the form of laziness will not be able to devour us. (Letter 13 December, 1928)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ

Following Manaḥ-śikṣā, the practitioner must give up pride, interest in mundane talks, sinful behavior, deceitfully using Kṛṣṇa for one's own sense gratification, and the desire for honor.

Only then does Giridhārī allow the jīva to fully worship Gāndharvā, and only then does a jīva fully enter into realized spiritual service.

Bhaktisiddhānta writes, in Prākṛta-rasa Śata-dūṣiṇī:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

**nā uṭhiyā vṛkṣopari phala dhari' ṭāne nā  
rūpānugā krama-patha vilopa ta' kare nā**

One should never climb into a tree, grasp the unripe fruits and forcibly pull them off. Similarly, the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī never abolish the initial systematic process of devotional service. (57)

**sevāya unṁkha ha'le jaḍa-kathā haya nā  
natuvā cin-maya kathā kabhu śruta haya nā**

When one is enthusiastic for constantly rendering unalloyed devotional service, there is never any possibility for becoming distracted by idle talks related to the mundane world. Otherwise, if one is not enthusiastic, then confidential topics about the all-conscious spiritual world should never be heard. (78)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

The essence of the inner path involves getting rid of even the finest traces of anarthas, like the second cleaning out of fine (sūkṣma) dust and sand in the Guṇḍicā temple as described in Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 12.93–94:

**sūkṣma dhūli, tṛṇa, kāñkara, saba karaha dūra  
bhāla-mate śodhana karaha prabhura antaḥpura  
saba vaiṣṇava laṣā yabe dui-bāra śodhila  
dekhi' mahāprabhura mane santoṣa ha-ila**

Bhaktisiddhānta also describes the awakening of rāga as a gradual process of internal purity:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

Nāmāparādha-kīrtana is not nāma-kīrtana.

As the bud of the holy name begins to sprout just a little, the supramundane forms of Kṛṣṇa and his associates become manifest, and when it reaches the flowering stage, the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa's sixty-four qualities is experienced.

When the lotus of the holy name fully expands, Kṛṣṇa's aṣṭa-kālīya-nitya-līlā, although beyond material nature, manifests within this world. (Gauḍīya 13.213)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ

As is evidenced in this chapter, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī taught the path of spontaneous love for Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, rāga-bhakti.

He 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.

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