

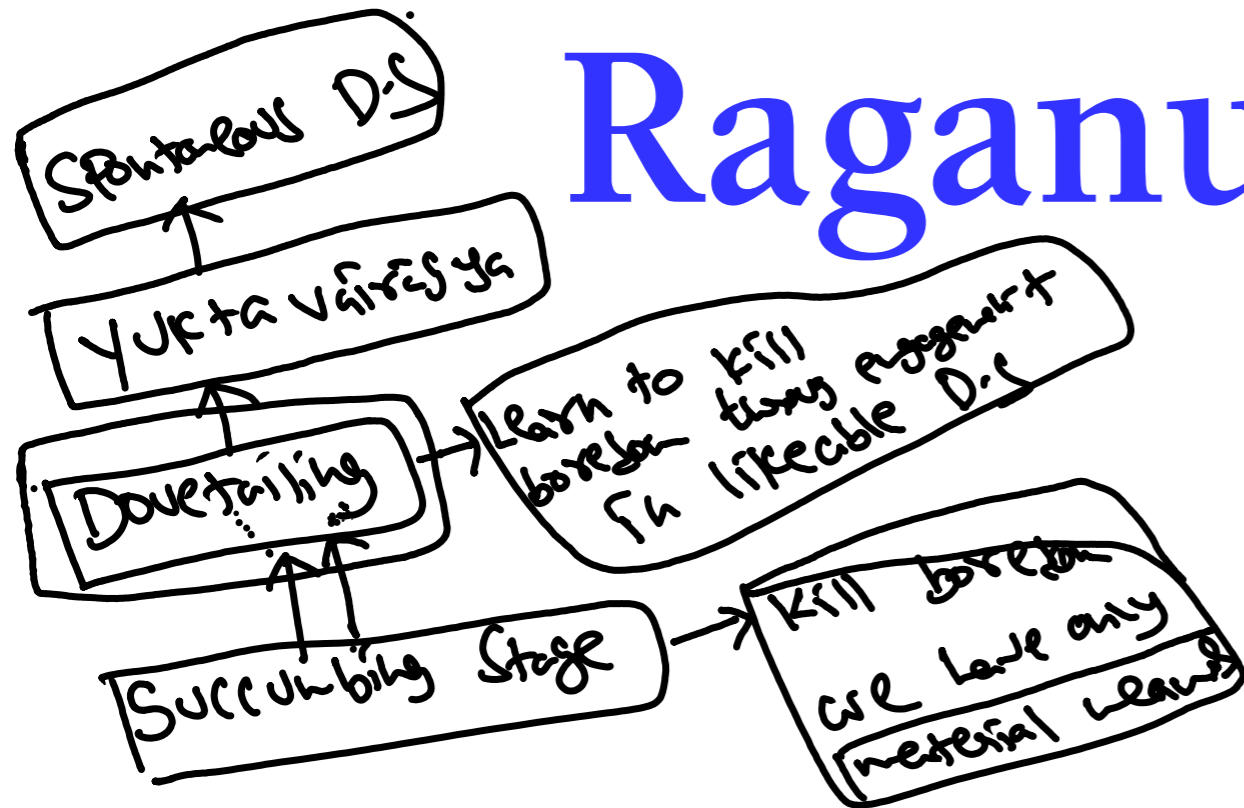
Śrī Caitanya-Śikṣāmṛta

Nectarean Teachings of Lord Śrī  
Caitanya

by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda  
Thākura

# Chapter – 4

## Raganuga Bhakti



# Part-11

## The History of Raganuga Sadhana in Gaudiya Vaisnavism

# 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.

→ severe disrespect

# 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: score ↑ vaidhi bhāvanā  
(in our Saṅgha)  
is till niṣṭhā
- 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-kāliya-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)

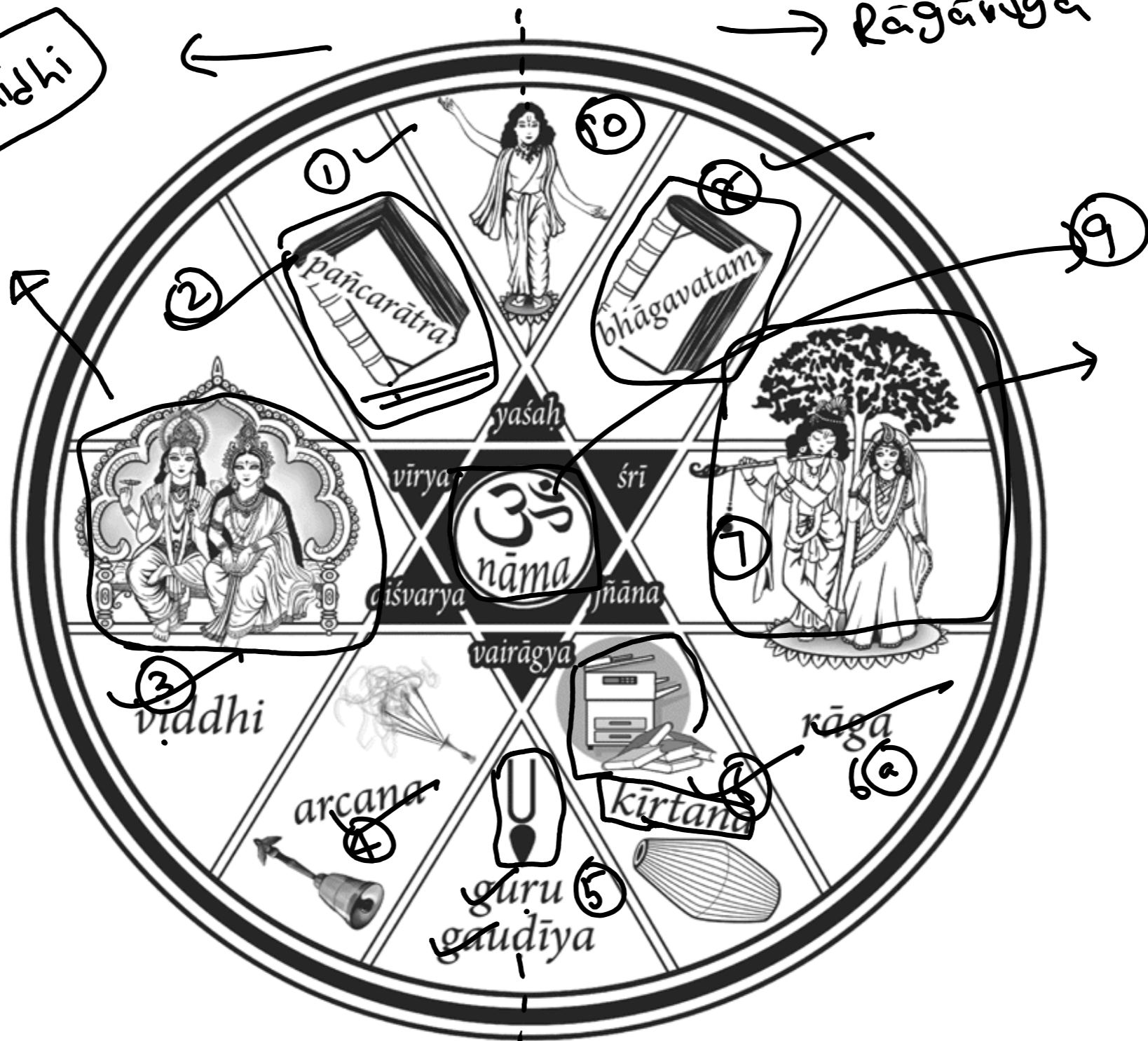


# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- 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.

Vaidhi

Rāgāṅga



# 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.

↓ In awe reverence  
↓ following the pāncarātri-  
vidhi

- Worship according to the pāncarātri-vidhi is  
called vidhi-mārga, and worship according to  
the bhāgavata-vidhi principles is called rāga-  
mārga.


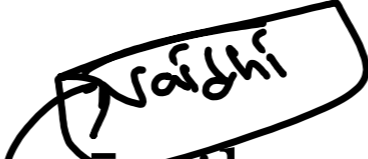
# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- The principles of rāga-mārga are especially meant for devotees who are elevated to the Vṛndāvana platform. → ṛāgānuga bhakti
- 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, he was the disciple of Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī, who taught him  
① the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in vipralambha, the mood of separation.
- ② 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.
- ③ • He revealed that Nayanamaṇī Manjarī is his ultimate spiritual identity.
- ④ • It is well-known that Śrī Vrajaṣṭhāna 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

⑤

- Bhaktisiddhānta consistently gave emphasis, as does Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī in Manah-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 asta-kāliya-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

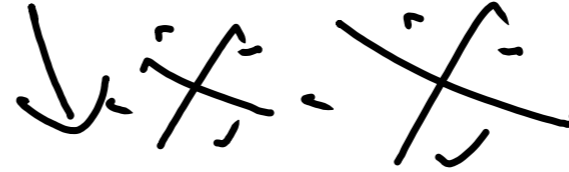
## Sarasvatī Thakura

- 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.   
 *Organic*   
 *through practice of Gaudiya vaiṣṇava vaidī sādhanā*
- 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.



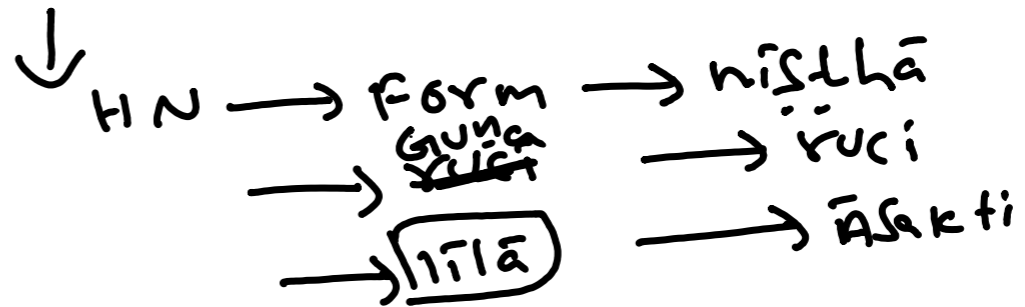
# Resolving the Controversy about Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura

- 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-praṇālī is not necessary.

# 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.”



# 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 Sikṣa.

# 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 Manah-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 Thākura 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.