

ISKCON

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS INC.
FOUNDER — ACARYA, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

June 17, 1976

ALL GLORIES TO SRI GURU AND GOURANGA!
TO ALL ISKCON CENTERS

Dear Prabhus,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your feet. All glories to Srila Prabhupada! Recently, during his visit of New Dvaraka Srila Prabhupada was disturbed to find that a group of devotees in Iskcon were misreading his books, and making a special attempt to fix their minds on Krsna's confidential pastimes with the gopis, so that they can be elevated to the position of gopis after they quit their present bodies. This unauthorized hearing attempt greatly angered His Divine Grace, who labeled it "sahajiya", and requested the GBC men to make a plan to save these devotees, and protect the others by holding isthagosis about the correct philosophy. After a careful investigation, Hridayananda Gosvami and myself discovered that they were holding special classes in the evening, talking about such things as changing one's rasa to madhurya rasa. Of course this is simply material ambition and foolishness - how can one discuss changing his eternal rasa before he has reawakened that original rasa?

So we feel it necessary, in order to please Srila Prabhupada, to make available some of Prabhupada's recent statements as well as some nice scriptural references, which can be discussed in a temple isthagosi. Prabhupada wants all our members to understand clearly all these points, and resolve any questions they may have about this point of discussing Krsna's confidential pastimes in a motivated way. His Divine Grace said that this sahajiya tendency threatens our preaching work, so please take this matter seriously and instruct the devotees on this subject.

Jai Prabhus, I hope this finds you well, and blissfully absorbed in serving Srila Prabhupada in the parampara, authorized manner.

Haribol,

Your servants,

Hridayananda dasa Goswami
(Hridayananda dasa Gosvami
G.B.C. Representative
Ramesvara dasa Swami
Ramesvara dasa Swami
G.B.C. Representative

PRABHUPADA'S STATEMENTS ON THE SAHAJIYA TENDENCIES IN ISKCON

Q. The philosophy is that your thoughts at death determine your next birth, so why not practice now thinking about Krsna and the gopis?
A. First deserve, then desire; no aspirations!

Q. You have written that Caitanya Caritamrita is superlative...
A. But are you superlative?

Q. The gopis are pleasing Krsna the most...
A. Gopi is the highest stage, but you are on lowest, beginner, rascal stage, so how can you understand. Don't become monkeys, jumping over to the gopis' rasa lila. There are already enough monkeys in Vrndavana, we don't need any more.

Q. Lord Caitanya came to teach the behavior of Vaisnavas. He is often discussing the intimate pastimes of Krsna...
A. Lord Caitanya only discussed about the gopis with 3 persons: Ramananda Rai, Svarupa Damodara Gosvami and Madhavidevi. He never discussed in public. Therefore we should not discuss in public, or even among ourselves. Have you become like Ramananda Rai already, that you are qualified to discuss such subject matter? Lord Caitanya never discussed the gopi pastimes with Prakasananda Sarasvati or Sarvabhoma Bhattacharya- have you already surpassed them? Even with Rupa Gosvami and Sanatana Gosvami, Lord Caitanya first discussed, "jivera svarupa haya, nitya krsna das"... first understand that. First become fortunate, then discuss rasa lila. Chant for 300 years, then in the 7th generation, you may understand!

Q. If this is not to be discussed, why is it in the books, and why are we selling these books?
A. Everything, all subjects, must be in the books. That is another thing. But different sections are meant for different stages. An example of the books containing everything is a drug store. A drug store must contain all varieties of drugs. But if you are sick, you cannot simply go to the pharmacist and ask, 'give me some medicine'. First the pharmacist must see what your disease, and what the doctor has prescribed. You must get special medicine for your particular condition

You are so concerned with reading about Lord Caitanya discussing the gopis, but why don't you read that when Lord Caitanya took sannyas, he became like a fool before his spiritual master, just to teach you rascals that you must first come to the platform of being fool before you can understand anything else. Why don't you read that, and follow His example. You have introduced some new thing, studying so much about the gopis, without taking permission from your spiritual master- where is the evidence that you have come to the fool stage! Follow Lord Caitanya's example first- don't jump over like monkeys to rasa lila. Do you think you're better than Lord Caitanya?

Why did Vyasadeva place Krsna's confidential pastimes in the 10th Canto? You must approach Krsna by going through the first nine cantos, step by step. The first two cantos are the two lotus feet of the Lord. Gradually you rise to the 10th canto, which is the Lord's smiling face.

- Q. Prabhupada, we have heard them say that the adi rasa, the highest rasa is madhurya lila. Therefore they conclude that mother Yasoda is not 100% complete in Her devotional service...
- A. Anyone who says like that is rascal. Anyone who says Radharani is better, higher than mother Yasoda, cowherd boys or even trees of Vrndavana, he can never understand the gopis.

You are misreading so many things in my books. It is just like in school, the goal is to graduate with M.A. degree. But when you are neophyte beginner, what can you understand about M.A. First you learn a.b.c's, or 1+1=2, etc. When you're on that platform why try to understand what to do when you have passed your exams etc. for M.A.? Trying to understand the conjugal rasa in the conditional stage is like a child asking about sex life. When a child asks about sex life it is very bad. In India they're dressing themselves up as gopis and thinking that now, Krsna will come to embrace me. This is not real gopi mood of selfless loving service. So this thinking so much about the gopis, this is simply your sex desire. You are trying to impose sex on Krsna, and for that you will go to hell. If there is still sex desire, then don't think of siddha deha.

- Q. It is stated in the Krsna book that if one is very lusty he can become purified by reading rasa lila.
- A. If one is very lusty, instead of becoming purified, he becomes putrified. (purport- don't try to dovetail sex lust or engage it in Krsna's service by imposition).

- Q. In the spiritual world you have written that one can change his original rasa, so everyone may aspire for the highest rasa...
- A. That is possible, but not generally done. Anyway, first one must develop his siddha deha, before he can imagine such things.

- Q. To develop our ideal spiritual body in the next life, we should have a strong desire for thinking of the gopis...
- A. First there must be no lust or sex desire, otherwise you go to hell. To think of Krsna while lusting for sex is sahajiya life. This contamination comes from the babajis in Vrndavana. No devotees should talk with any of them! No devotees should wander around Vrndavana apart from our organized program. If this sahajiya nonsense continues, then all preaching will stop!

- Q. Srila Prabhupada, I never understood why you wrote so much about sahajiya's in your books. Previously I thought this applied only to a small group of babajis in India. Now I understand that this tendency, to take a "short-cut" to Krsna is very easy to adopt, and it is very poisonous.
- A. Yes.

SELECTIONS FROM SRILA PRABHUPADA'S
BOOKS REGARDING SAHAJIYAS

SB 1.8.36 (First Canto, Volume 2, Queen Kunti's prayers, purport)

"The Supreme Lord Sri Krsna cannot be seen by our present conditional vision. In order to see Him, the present vision has to be changed by developing a different condition of life full of spontaneous love of Godhead... even though the Lord may be present before our eyes, it is not possible to see Him unless we have the necessary vision. This necessary qualification is developed by the process of devotional service only, beginning with hearing about the Lord from the right sources... There are different transcendental activities of the Lord, and each and every one of them is competent to bestow the desired result, provided the hearing process is perfect. In the Bhagavatam the activities of the Lord begin from His dealing with the Pandavas. There are many other pastimes of the Lord in connection with His dealings with the asuras and others. And in the Tenth Canto, the sublime dealing with His conjugal associates, the gopis, as well as with His married wives at Dvaraka, are mentioned. Since the Lord is absolute, there is no difference in the transcendental nature of each and every dealing of the Lord. But sometimes people, in an UNAUTHORIZED HEARING PROCESS, take more interest in hearing about His dealing with the gopis. Such an inclination indicates the LUSTY feelings of the hearer, so a bona fide speaker of the dealings of the Lord never indulges in such hearings. One must hear about the Lord from the very beginning, as in the Srimad Bhagavatam or any other scriptures, and that will help the hearer attain perfection by progressive development..."

NECTAR OF DEVOTION, Ch. 16 "Varieties of Love for Krsna", pp 127-128

"In the attitude of the denizens of Vrndavana, such as Nanda Maharaja and Mother Yasoda, is to be found the ideal transcendental concept of becoming the father and mother of Krsna, the original Personality of Godhead... Spontaneous love of Krsna, as exhibited by the Vrsnis and the denizens of Vrndavana, is eternally existing in them. In the stage of devotional service where regulative principles are followed, there is no necessity of discussing this love, for it must develop of itself at a more advanced stage... We must always remember, however, that such eagerness to follow in the footsteps of the denizens of Braja (Vrndavana) is not possible unless one is freed from material contamination... Therefore in the beginning everyone should strictly follow the regulative principles of devotional service according to the injunctions of the scriptures and the spiritual master. Only after the stage of liberation from material contamination can one actually aspire to follow in the footsteps of the devotees in Vrndavana."

In this connection, we should remember that following the footsteps of a Vrndavana resident, for all disciples, means following Srila Prabhupada's footsteps! He is that resident of Vrndavana!