

Dear Maharajas, Prabhus and Didis,

Dandavat pranamas. Jaya Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga. Please excuse this late report, due to both computer and internet mailing problems.

Srila Narayana Maharaja has just spent the last five days, from Aug. 11-16, at the Rupa-Sanatana Gaudiya Matha in Seva Kunja Gully, Vrndavana, during the celebration of Jhulan Yatra, the Swing Festival of Sri Sri Radha and Krsna. The neighborhood of the temple is perhaps one of the most important in all the three worlds, being surrounded on all sides by Prema Gully, Maan Gully and Dan Gully, where such lilas as Rasa Dance, Radharani's running from the Dance in transcendental loving anger, and Krsna's taking taxes from the gopis, are eternally taking place.

Within the time of this Swing Festival there were two others. There were three days of classes glorifying Srila Rupa Gosvami, whose disappearance day was Aug. 11, and without whom there would be no entrance into the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Vraja-prema, and the confidential service of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna. Along with Srila Maharaja, several prominent Vaisnava scholars and sannyasis from Vrndavana and Mathura offered their pusanjalis, their speeches of glorification.

Srila Maharaja's first talk was given in the sunny and pleasantly cool, open courtyard of the Radha-Damodara Mandira, in the early morning, just after he and over one hundred Indian and Western devotees offered respects at the samadhi mandiras of Srila Jiva Gosvami, Srila Krsna dasa Kaviraja, and particularly at the samadhi of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and then circumambulated the samadhi mandira and bhajana kutira of Srila Rupa Gosvami. Seated in front of the samadhi and looking up at the inscription on the outer wall, Srila Maharaja spoke on its significance. Because his lecture was more-or-less a combination of two lectures he had given in previous years, we are presenting to the respected readers those two classes, as they had already been transcribed before. In this way you can receive something right away. One class is presented below, and the other will come with the next report, along with new classes.

The other festival held during this 5-day Swing Festival was the occasion of the divine appearance of Sri Baladeva prabhu, without whom there would be no existence -- period. By the mercy of Baladeva we may be able to send some classes given by Srila Maharaja on His glorification.

Thanks to Srimati Surati didi for retyping the attached lecture.

Your aspiring servant, Syamarani dasi

TRIDANDI GOSVAMI SRI SRIMAD BHAKTIVEDANTA NARAYANA MAHARAJA

## The Divine Disappearance Day of

### Srila Rupa Gosvami

(A lecture given at the Radha Damodara Mandira in Vrndavana)

Today is very important for Gaudiya Vaisnavas. It is the disappearance day of Lord Caitanya's supreme object of mercy, who understood His manobhista, His desire. Sri Rupa Gosvami came to this world only to fulfill the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

I recall one verse written by Kavi Karnapura. He too received Mahaprabhu's mercy. When he was a young boy and wouldn't speak, Mahaprabhu put His own thumb in his mouth. As he began sucking it, he became decorated with various emotional ornaments. As bhava began to awaken in him, he became serious and began to recite a verse. The poetry that came from his mouth was like nectar for the ears, and thus Kavi Karnapura was able to write about Srila Rupa Gosvami's relationship with Mahaprabhu.

priya-svarupe dayita-svarupe  
prema-svarupe sahajabhirupe  
nijanurupe prabhur eka-rupe  
tatana rupe svavilasa rupe

What does priya-svarupe mean? Mahaprabhu's priya, dear friend, is Sri Svarupa Damodara. Svarupa Damodara is Lalita Devi, and Svarupa Damodara's dear friend is Rupa Gosvami. Rupa Gosvami is therefore anu-svarupa damodara, he who has all the qualities of Lalita.

Priya-svarupa: Mahaprabhu's own svarupa, form and nature, is that of Radha-Krsna. Actually His svarupa is that of Krsna and, as Krsna, Rupa Manjari is most dear to Him. Who is Krsna's priya-svarupa? Radhikaji. And Radhikaji's param priya, most dear one, is Rupa Manjari. Therefore from all perspectives -- Krsna's, Radhika's and everyone else's in Vraja -- she is param-priya.

Dayita-svarupa: In the form of Srila Rupa Gosvami, she is most dear to Mahaprabhu, Who is in the mood of Radhaji. Krsna's dayita is Radhaji, and her param-priya, most dear one, is Rupa Manjari, who knows her bhava. Because Rupa Gosvami is thus able to broadcast her bhava in this world, he is most dear to Mahaprabhu. Dayita means dear one. Rupa Manjari is Srimati Radhika's most dear one.

Srila Bhaktisiddanta Sarasvati is sri varsabhanavi-devi dayita, the servant of one who is dear to Sri Varsabhanavi, Srimati Radhika -- namely Sri Rupa Manjari. In this way we worship Srila Bhaktisiddanta Sarasvati Thakura. Attainment of the shelter of the lotus feet of Rupa Manjari is the highest perfection of life. We pray for nothing else.

Priya-svarupe dayita-svarupe prema-svarupe sahajabhirupe: Rupa Gosvami is the embodiment of Mahaprabhu's ecstatic love of Godhead. And how did he give that love? First of all, in the Upadesamrta he instructed the living entities how to become free from anarthas. By accepting even one instruction one can get priti. Vaco vegam manasah krodha-vegam; atyahara prayasas ca; and after that, utsah and so on.

He gave all this and, step-by-step, he gave the definitions of all the stages of bhakti -- sraddha, anartha nivritti, ruci sadhana, bhava, prema, sneha, mana, pranaya, raga, anuraga, bhava, mahabhava, madana, modana, and mohana. He has defined all.

Just as Srimad Bhagavatam defines Krsna as 'ete camsa-kala pumsah krsnas tu bhagavan svayam', so Rupa Gosvami has defined bhakti:

anyabhilasita-sunya jnana karmady-anavrtam,  
anukulyena krsnanu-silanam bhaktir uttama

Previously no one had given such a beautiful and complete definition of bhakti. There are also definitions of bhakti in Srimad Bhagavatam, sarp rang paranurakti, and there is also sarvopadhi vinirmuktam. These were the only definitions known before anyabhilasita sunyam. Paranurakti is fine, but if independent of the injunctions of the sastra and not free from anarthas it is not paranurakti. Srila Rupa Gosvami's definition, however, includes everything from anyabhilasita sunya to bhakti uttama.

What is sadhana? Sadhana does not mean whimsically doing harinama or reading books or performing arcana. Sadhana means to practise with the goal in mind. The goal is priti. Bhakti is nitya-siddha bhava. When we do sadhana with our senses and adopt anyabhilasita-sunyam to awaken bhava, then it is sadhana-bhakti. Therefore it is nitya-siddha bhava. Continuous cultivation of uttama bhakti is nitya-siddha bhava. Practicing to awaken these things in our heart, chanting with the desire to attain bhava, is sadhana. In order to awaken bhava, sadhana should be anyabhilasita sunyam jnana karmadi anavrtam, executed with the body, mind and words and senses. With the ears we hear, with the tongue we chant, and with the mind we meditate – only to awaken bhava. We should follow in the footsteps of nitya-siddhas.

After teaching about sadhana, Srila Rupa Gosvami taught about bhava. What did he teach? One should have the sentiments of the eternal associates. However, bhava is not a process of the mind. The stage of mental activities comes before bhava. Engagement of the mind in meditation alone is not bhava. In the stage of bhava the mind follows the atma, which follows the eternal associates. They are Mahaprabhu's associates like Rupa Gosvami, and in Krsna's pastimes, Radharani's most dear maidservant Rupa Manjari. Who are recipients of Rupa Manjari's suddha-sattva? To those in whom bhava has arisen, this suddha-sattva descends. This bhava is suddha-sattva; it is not a process of the mind. It is much, much higher. The activities of bhava go to Goloka Vrindavan, to the heart of dearest Rupa Manjari.

Thus performing bhajana under her guidance and protection, Rupa Gosvami's anyabhilasita sunyam will become manifest in the heart. Then, doing such bhajana by Rupa Gosvami's mercy:

suddha-sattva-visesatma  
prema-suryamsu-samya-bhak  
rucibhis citta masrnya-  
krd asau bhava ucyate

“When devotional service is situated on the transcendental platform of pure goodness, It is like a ray of sunlight of love of Krsna. At such a time, devotional service causes the heart to be softened by various tastes, and it is called bhava [transcendental emotions].”

After this, prema will appear in the heart, first in the form of stayi bhava, permanent ecstasy, and then in the form of vibhava, anubhava, sancari bhava, etc. They all mix and become rasa (transcendental mellow or relationship). This is what Rupa Gosvami has revealed.

Who has experienced prema? A man once said that the previous night he had darshana of Radharani and Krsna, and They blessed him. We may think that he is advanced, but did he die or go mad? No such thing happened, and therefore this is not prema. When one has prema one becomes mad after Krsna.

At the stage of bhava, anarthas are almost gone, but sometimes they may surface though they cause no disturbance. At the stage of prema, however, anarthas have completely disappeared. When bhava becomes intensified it becomes prema. At the stage of prema the asta sattvika bhavas are fully manifest and the heart becomes completely melted. If we sometimes experience tears or jubilation now, in our present stage, it is an abhasa, a shadow or semblance. It is not purified. Because it may be devoured by anarthas, it is temporary.

At the stage of bhava there is mamata rati, feelings of possessiveness. When these feelings become intensified and condensed, it is then called prema. At that time the devotee thinks, "Krsna is mine and I am His". Srila Rupa Gosvami has carefully examined the symptoms of the different stages and explained them.

After prema he explains sneha, the condition in which the heart is constantly melting. After sneha comes pranaya and then mana, though sometimes these two streams merge. Then he has described the wonderful symptoms of raga and anuraga, the extreme stage of the visaya and asraya. When anuraga reaches its own extreme limit, it becomes mahabhava. Then there are rudha, adirudha, modana, madana, etc. Rupa Gosvami has explained all.

Before Caitanya Mahaprabhu, nobody knew these stages. Although people had some idea, nobody had really explained prema, madana, modana, and so forth. The real explanation was given by Caitanya Mahaprabhu to Rupa Gosvami, and Rupa Gosvami was so powerful that his teachings influenced not only our sampradaya but other sampradayas as well.

Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, Jiva Gosvami, Krsna dasa Kaviraj Gosvami, and all the acaryas in our sampradaya have written in the line of Rupa Gosvami. Raghunath das Goswami is known as the greatest rupanuga. In his Vilapa Kusmanjali he begins by first offering pranama to Rupa Manjari:

tvam rupa-manjari sakhi prahita pure smin  
 pumsah parasya vadanam na hi pasyasiti  
 bimba dhare ksatan anagata-bhartrkaya  
 yat te vyadhayii kim u tach chuka pungavena

And he offers so many other pranamas thereafter. Srila Jiva Gosvami studied all the writings of Rupa Gosvami and then wrote Gopala Campu, Sat-sandarbha and commentaries on Srimad Bhagavatam, Ujjvala-Nilamani and Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu. In his Prema Bhakti Candrika, Srila Narottama dasa Thakura has simply expressed Rupa Gosvami's teachings. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura is also known as rupanuga varayata te, the greatest among the followers of Rupa Gosvami, and his Jaiva Dharma follows exactly the line of Rupa Gosvami's teachings.

Mahaprabhu met Rupa Gosvami at three places: First in Ramakeli, then in Prayaga and finally in Puri. Seeing Rupa Gosvami, Caitanya Mahaprabhu thought, "He is fit to broadcast My innermost feelings." And He told everyone, like Sri Nityananda prabhu, Sri Adwaita Acarya, Sri Svarupa Damodara and Sri Ramananda Raya, to bless him. Why? So that by their mercy he could give all the rasas: santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya and madhurya. If someone comes to him for madurya, that is best; but he can give all the other rasas also. In this way Rupa Gosvami gave very beautiful and novel books revealing for the first time what Mahaprabhu had come to give.

Today is the disappearance day of Rupa Gosvami. This is where he used to do bhajana, and this is his samadhi. Who gave him samadhi? Jiva Gosvami, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami, and all the other gosvamis. Actually they did not give him samadhi. He took samadhi himself. Here he used to serve in so many ways. Here he wrote Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu, Ujjvala-nilamani, Vidagdha-madhava, Lalita-madhava, Hansadutta, and many other books. Vidagdha-madhava was completed in Gokula around the same time Caitanya Mahaprabhu departed to Gokula Vrndavana. Five years later Lalita-madhava was completed. Every book began in his heart, and so they actually all began here. Sri Sanatana Gosvami and all the other gosvamis also used to come here.

In the beginning of Brhad-Bhagavatamrta Sanatana Gosvami prays for the mercy of Rupa Gosvami. He prays to the Rupa of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and the Rupa of Srimati Radhika. The Rupa of Srimati Radhika -- Rupa Manjari -- is as beautiful as She is. Only Srimati Radhika, Visakha devi, and Rupa Manjari have the same form [rupa]. Radhika and Visakha were born on the same day and they have the same qualities and characteristics. But Rupa Manjari has the same form because she is most dear to Srimati Radhika. Therefore Sanatana Gosvami and others pray, "O Rupa, give us your mercy. You know the heart of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Radha Krsna". There are many places where our acaryas have prayed like this. Thus Sri Rupa is most dear to Mahaprabhu.

Today we have come here, and now we should offer pranama at his lotus feet and ask for his mercy. In this temple are the deities worshipped by Jiva Gosvami, the Giriraj-sila of Sanatana Gosvami, and a small deity worshipped by Rupa Gosvami. This is the best place in the whole world. This the most potent place in the whole of Vrndavana. Although Vamsivata is Krsna's lila-sthana and we can try to go there by sadhana, without Rupa Gosvami's mercy we cannot go there. So we should offer our prayers and then return.