

## Sastra Pramana -- Evidence From Sastra

[Submitted by Jadurani dasi, and based on the statements made by Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja in her conversation with him on the subject]

I have been asked by several devotees to write a reply in relation to the ongoing discussions regarding the transcendental identity of Srila Gadadhara Pandita. It may seem to some that there is a difference of opinion between Srila Kavikarnapura and Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, or between Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja and Srila Bhaktiraksaka Sridhara Maharaja, but this is not the case at all. The following is an example in our history, cited here as sastra pramana.

Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Jiva Gosvami are always of the same opinion. Srila Jiva Gosvami is always in the anugatya of Srila Rupa Gosvami; that is, he is always under his guidance. Outwardly, externally, it sometimes seems that they have different opinions, but they are actually never of different opinions. Similarly, we see outwardly that there is so much difference of opinion between Srila Jiva Gosvami and Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura. It appears outwardly that Jiva Gosvami is establishing svakiya-vada, the idea that Radha and Krsna or Krsna and the gopis are married, and Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura is doing the opposite -- establishing the conception of parakiya-vada, unwedded or paramour love. However, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura and all others in our disciplic line, our guru-varga or guru-parampara, have reconciled all these things. Srila Jiva Gosvami and Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura are not of two opinions. Both are Rupanuga, strict followers of the teachings of Rupa Gosvami.

Srila Jiva Gosvami will not say anything different from Srila Rupa Gosvami, and therefore Srila Visvanatha Cakravati Thakura has written that actually Jiva Gosvami is in the line of Rupa Gosvami. It only appears otherwise. The latter is the successor of the former. Therefore we should understand Srila Jiva Gosvami through the viewpoint of Srila Cakravartipada. In fact, Srila Jiva Gosvami himself has clarified this in his commentary on Ujjvala-nilamani (1.21). There he states that he was explaining something for the sake of unqualified persons who could not understand the superiority of parakiya-rasa. "Svecchaya likhitam kincit kincit atra parecchaya, yat purvapara sambaddham tat-purvam aparam param. Some of what I have written is by my own desire and some is by the desire of others. I have told something to satisfy the different opinions of my disciples who are not qualified, and some is my own opinion. The portions which are logically consistent throughout, those in which the conceptions of svakiya and parakiya have been reconciled, have been written by my own desire, whereas the portions which have not been thus reconciled have been written by the desire of others."

By sastric evidence, therefore, it can be seen that parakiya-vada is the real opinion of Sri Jiva Gosvami. There is no difference between him, Sri Rupa Gosvami and Sri Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura.

In the same way, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, Pujyapada Srila Bhaktiraksaka Sridhara Maharaja, Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja, and our Guru Maharaja Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada are all in the same line. Outwardly it may be seen that they have so many different opinions, but really this is not so. In some special circumstances they have written apparently conflicting statements, but we have to reconcile all these things, They are in the same line, not a different line. Those who are not on their level see circumstantial, outward,

and apparent differences in opinion, and in so doing may criticize one acarya and glorify another, but wrongly, not understanding either of their actual moods and siddhanta.

Several devotees, desiring to hear the reply of Paramapujyapada Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja, sent me the recent Sanga articles, along with the quotes from Paramapujyapada Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja regarding the identity of Sri Gadadhara Pandita. I read this quote to Srila Narayana Maharaja. I told him that, referencing Antya-lila, someone asked if Sri Gadadhara Pandita is compared to Rukmini. Srila Sridhara Maharaja replied in essence that, yes, that is the outer aspect. Rukmini means daksina, not vama. So when the spirit of Radharani, of that vama nature, was drawn out by Mahaprabhu, what remains is compared to that of Rukmini, a passive seer without any power to assert, an onlooker and bearing everything. A very pitiable condition, to awaken kindness and sympathy from everyone. Krsna took everything. He looted everything from Radha, leaving her as a beggar wondering in the street. Radharani, when looted to such a degree by Krsna, becomes Gadadhara, the pitiable figure. Her wealth of course, her mood, cannot go forever. She is the proprietor. The owner cannot be far off. After a long time that must come to her again one day...

Srila Narayana Maharaja replied, "I am not different from him. I am in the same line. I try to follow his instructions as I do my Gurudeva. They are both disciples of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, so they must be in one line. Sometimes it may appear that the wordings of both are not the same, but the mood is the same." This is told correctly. This was spoken according to the qualification of the person who was asking the question". With concern that the actual deeper mood of Srila Sridhara Maharaja be preserved, he then added, "Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Krsna, took all the moods of Srimati Radhika and Radhika became a street beggar? This is impossible. At the same time that She appears as Sri Gadadhara Pandita Prabhu, She Herself is still in Goloka Vrndavan, playing in all Her moods with Krsna. And still there is Gadadhara Pandita. So how She can be a street beggar? According to the degree of devotion of the questioner, he has told like this."

When one of the devotees present told Srila Narayana Maharaja, "It is important to note here that Srila Sridhara Maharaja is saying that this is the outer aspect or outside idea", Srila Maharaja replied, "Yes, outside. This is correct. No harm. He is our line. I think that some of his disciples have not touched the mood of Srila Sridhara Maharaja."

Then I told him, "Because you say that Sri Gadadhara Pandita is watching 'to see if Krsna is playing my role properly or not', some say that there is a difference in your conception of 'outer' and Srila Sridhara Maharaja's conception of 'outer.' Srila Narayana Maharaja replied, "Never, never. So many things can be said. In Brhat Bhagavatamrta Sankhara told Narada, 'Prahlada Maharaja is superior to me.' No harm. On the other hand Sankhara is Sadasiva himself. He is Visnu-tattva and he is also Gopisvara Mahadeva. Then who will we consider to be superior? Gopisvara Mahadeva. So Srila Sridhara Maharaja has told this in a certain context. Not for always."

Srila Narayana Maharaja then added, "I may say, 'Some of my sannyasis are superior to me in intelligence. They remember more slokas than me.' What is the harm in saying this? We have to reconcile all these things."

A devotee asked, "Why does Sri Gadadhara Pandita act in such a submissive way with Caitanya Mahaprabhu? In Navadvipa, but especially in Jagannatha Puri, we see him being so humble and very submissive to Caitanya Mahaprabhu." Srila Narayana Maharaja replied,

"Sometimes not. Not always." The devotee then said, "Mahaprabhu was going to Gadadhara Pandita and hearing Bhagavatam from him."

Someone may try to promote an imaginary scenario in which Srila Narayana Maharaj or his followers are against or disrespect Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja, but this is without grounds. If this were true, there would not be an ever-growing list of harinam, diksa, siksa and sannyasa disciples of Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaj finding inspiration and a deeper connection with their Guru Maharaja under the shelter of Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja. Here are just a few of them: Bhakti Sar dasa, Braja Vallabha dasa, Brajanath dasa, Champakalata devi dasi, Lila Suka dasa, Paramananda Puri dasa, Prana Kisora dasa, Radha Sundari devi dasi, Ramai dasa, Ramesh dasa, His Holiness Hrisikesa Maharaja, Taruna Krsna dasa, Tirthapada dasa, Syamala devi dasi, Uddhava dasa, and Urakrama dasa.

Great Acaryas like Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaj and Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja have spent their entire lives chanting lakhs of harinama every day. Thus their words are so profound that it would be safer to follow in their footsteps before condemning either of them as vague or not supported by our "dictionary" understanding of sastra.

In conclusion, the subject matter is very easily reconciled by accepting the 'bereft or empty' Gadadhara Pandita to be, as Srila Bhakti Raksaka Maharaj puts it, 'the outer aspect', while the Gadadhara Pandita, as Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayan Maharaj states, who is fully Srimati Radharani and therefore eternally the prema-guru of Krsna, is the inner aspect. This siddhanta is very beautiful.

I thank Sripada B.V. Tripurari Maharaja for raising this subject for the attention of the Vaisnava community.