

Srila Prabhupad in Nitya Lila: Gopi or Gopa



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From Jan 1968 - winter of 1973 I lived with late puja Swami Bon Maharaj and his godbrothers and disciples of Gaudiya Math. Swami Bon told me about *siddha-pranali* and *Nitya Lila Manasa Seva*. He told me the Manjari names and details of some devotees including Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada, and previous acharyas. He also told about his own details. It was all in manjari bhava and Swami Bon's eternal service was "waking pastimes period" of Nitya lila, when the Divine Couple would get up, after sleeping alone together in an *ananda-kunja* and pass by down Madan Mohan Ghera. While the Divine Couple slept together they were guarded by intimate girlfriends, and no one would look. Bon Maharaj was fixed in that period alone, primarily, but there is lots of variety in the full 24 hours of the 8 fold pastimes, as described vividly by Kaviraj Goswami, down to the eternal minute.

Swami Bon Maharaj explained about *sadhana-siddhi* and *kripa-siddhi*. His wonderful godbrother Krishna Das Babaji Maharaj would come to reside with us 6 months of every year. I was there over 6 years, so I spent at least 3 full years living with Krishna Das Babaji Maharaj on daily basis. He always lead the kirtanas. And he would never do anything other than laugh and chant Hare Krishna. So I asked Swami Bon Maharaj about the spiritual identity of Babaji Maharaj. He told me that Babaji Mj was *sadhana-siddha*, in SAKHA RASA. There was no question of higher or lower. It was just matter of fact that Babaji Mj was a Krishna Sakha and not in Manjari seva. I could mention many more instances I directly experienced with Babaji Maharaj that all point to Sakha Rasa as well. But I won't take up space on a foregone conclusion: Prabhupada's dear godbrother

Babaji Maharaj was in Sakha Bhava. And it was normal for me to digest. So if Srila Prabhupada is in Sakha Rasa, as he told me, then he is not alone among his godbrothers.

In 1973 when I spent close time with Srila Prabhupada and helped him translate *Upadesamrita*, I discussed with him about Manjari bhava, as well as the *sadhana-siddha* names of Saraswati Prabhupada (Kamala Nayana manjari), etc. At that time Prabhupada appeared to take the position of a devotee expecting *kripa-siddhi* realization to come at the time of his death, and thus I was afraid to ask him his spiritual name. This was based on his words and insinuations. That was the situation then, now, after his disappearance, I have no doubt, and the previous question is irrelevant. The only problem is that HDG is not around to so easily ask anymore. So we have no choice but to "climb the mountain" to get that information now.

Vraja Mandala Nitya Lila also involves Lord Krishna often times with his friends. And other times Krishna sneaks away from his friends to be with Smt Radharani. So the friends of Krishna (sakhas) serve Radharani by being Krishna's friends.

But (in this material world) as soon as any one mentions the Gopis many devotees get angry and start bad-mouthing "gopi-bhava", like it was nasty. This is because by nature *madhurya* reflects in Maya as sex life, and devotees are afraid of *madhurya*. Many are embarrassed by *Madhurya Rasa* because of their own sexual conditioning complex.

Therefore Sakha bhava, being devoid of any tinge of females and sex life, is a very safe sadhana, and no one will criticize any devotee who gets in Sakha bhava. You will never hear that so-and-so is in the "sakha bhava club". Being devoid of sexual nature sakha bhava is also free of envy.

Sripad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada was a *siddha-purusha* fixed in manjari bhava. ACBSP told me that his Guru was already fixed in Nitya Lila before he started his mission.

It seems that in at least two cases, e.g., Krishnadas Bababji Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada, the disciple has a different Bhakti or *nitya-bhava* than their Guru.

Though all the 5 rasas share the same purpose, viz., to please Radha Krishna. Even a *Sakha* serves Krishna, that is still pleasing to Radha Rani. Even a flower blooms for Krishna, that is still pleasing to Radharani.

If Srila Prabhupada serves Krishna as a Sakha, still that is pleasing to Radha Rani, as She needs Krishna to have His friends.

In *Asta Kaliya Lila* by Kaviraj Goswami the *Sakha* pastimes of Krishna take up about as much time (of the day) as the Radha with Krishna madhurya pastimes. For example:

3. *tritiya-yama-kirttanam*: Chanting during the third period: (8:10 a.m. to 10:34 a.m.)

*purvahne dhenuamatrairvipina manusrtam gosthalokanuyatam
krsnam radhapti lolam tadabhisrtikrte prapta-tankunda-tiram/
radham colokya krsnam krtagrthagamanamaryaya 'rkarcanayai
distam krsnapravrtiyai prahitanijasakhivartmanetram smarami//*

purvahne --in the forenoon; dhenuamatraih --by cows and friends; vipinam -- towards the forest; anusrtam --followed; gostha-loka-'anuyatam --followed by cowherd people(i.e., Nanda and others); krsnam--Krsna; radhaptelolam -- anxious to find Radha; tadabhisrtikrte --for the purpose of secretly approaching Her; prapta-tankunda-tiram --who had gone to her pond (Radha-kunda); radham --Radha; ca --and; alokya --having seen; krsnam --Krsna; krtagrha-gamanam -- who had gone home; aryaya--by the mother-in-law; arkarcanayai --for worshipng the sun god; distam --ordered; krsnapravrtiyai -- to get news about Krsna's whereabouts; prahitanijasakhivartmanetram --who was casting her eyes toward the path by which Her friends would return; smarami --I remember.

I remember Sri Krsna in the forenoon. He was going toward the forest, followed by cows and cowherd friends. Others like Nanda Maharaja also followed Him. Because He was anxious to be with Radharani, Krsna went to search Her out on the banks of Sri Radha-kunda.

I also remember Sri Radha, who having caught a glimpse of Krsna, went home, where She was ordered by Her mother-in-law (Jatila) to worship the sun god. Radharani had sent Her girlfriends to discover Krsna's whereabouts, and thus She casting her eyes down the pathway by which they were likely to return.

The most important question I ever asked Srila Prabhupada, "Is Asta Kaliya Lila Smarana Mangala Stotram by Kaviraj Goswami the REAL nitya-lila details?"

Srila Prabhupad replied: "YES!"

I asked if that fact could be added to translation of Verse 10 of *Upadesamrita*, and Srila Prabhupada said, Yes! Put it! So I put it. And there it is. In case anyone is wondering what Srila Prabhupada's position was on bona fide Vraja Nitya Lila.