

Goloka and Gokula

The Unmanifest and Manifest Realm

Comments on the third chapter of
Shrimad-Bhagavata-Mahatmyam

Svami Sadananda Dasa

Into English and within square brackets: Kid Samuelsson;
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[...] (comment on III.8) “Under the influence of Yogamaya not even the nitya-parishada-s [eternal co-players], like Vajra and the [16 100] queens, are aware of their own eternal nature.”

When are they unaware of this? When Krishna becomes avatirna [descends]. Otherwise they know this (i.e. in His [unmanifest] realm).

There are two prakasha-s or appearances, forms of being and expression, of Bhagavan, His realm and His eternal co-players:

1. ***The a-prakata-prakasha*** – or the form of being and expression of His realm, Vraja, which *never* becomes manifest or prakata in history, on earth; in other words, is unmanifest. In the case of Krishna and His realm, this a-prakata-prakasha is called Goloka.

In this prakasha everyone is aware of who they are. It is, so to say, the realm of absolute existential *security*. This is the realm that Krishna showed the gopa-s (Bha.X.28), the realm Krishna led back His Own co-players to, after “killing” Dantavakra (and his brother Viduratha, Bha.X.78.1–15) in Datiha near Mathura.

They are the well-known Hiranyaksha and Kumbhakarna in Varaha- and Rama-lila; shortly after Pandava-s’ loss in the game of dice and before their 12-year exile in the woods. The Bhagavatam does not give these lila-s in chronological order, they are given in thematical order, i.e. following the order in which particular problems are discussed, which are necessary for the understanding of the nature of the lila etc.

II. ***The prakata-prakasha*** – or *the* form of being and expression of His realm, Vraja, that becomes manifest or prakata in history, on earth, at the end of the 28th dvapara-yuga of the 7th

manvantara (age of Manu), i.e. only once in *each* kalpa or “day” of Brahma. Since the three worlds: Earth [Bhu], Bhuvar and Svar are destroyed at the beginning of Brahma’s “night”, the prakata-prakasha occurs on *our earth*, in the history of our earth, only *once*. This prakata-lila, which becomes prakata or manifest on our earth, is brought about by Hari’s will, His will to let the curtain of Maha-maya be raised, the curtain that conceals the true Vraja for human beings; in other words, He and His realm become avatirna.

The land of Vraja, fully filling time and space, becomes, so to say, accommodated within the geographical area of Mathura, whose periphery covers 168 miles [270 km]. This is possible because Yogamaya, who is acintya, beyond reason, is capable of producing everything that is necessary for the lila. Just as she makes the time- and spaceless Reality seem and experienced as something restricted by time and space in the geographical Vraja, she also makes all the participants, who are pure cit-forms, look and feel like mere human beings of flesh and blood.

This is what constitutes the wondrous loveliness of the prakata-lila and its attraction. This lila makes everyone who perceives some of its mystery amazed – yes, it also makes Krishna Himself astonished, as Uddhava so beautifully expresses it in Bha.III.2.12.

1) In addition to that, the prakata-prakasha has the advantage that certain human beings etc., who are *not* consisting of cit and who are not descending from Goloka, can experience something of this lila;

2) Yes, among those eternal parishada-s, who know themselves and are experienced as humans in the prakata-prakasha in Vraja (manifested in the district of Mathura), gopa-s and gopi-s are born, who really *are* mere humans, as for example *the* gopis, who could not rush to the rasa-lila, but discarded their body consisting of Maya’s guna-s, and then entered the rasa-lila in their new parishada deha (cit-body of an eternal co-player).

Another example is the fathers and mothers of particular gopa friends of Krishna, who in a previous life desired to serve Krishna in the sentiment [bhava] of parents, and in their present life, during the one year long Brahma-mohana-lila, under the impression that they [the boys that Krishna manifested directly from Himself] were their own boys, experience the joy of directly having Krishna as their child.

Moreover, there are certain deva-s, who in their former lives made particular aradhana [service] for Krishna, and who now, as their essential nature, experience the boundless joy of really being allowed to enter into certain eternal parishada-s, and with them and as them

experience the lila, as for example, Prishni-Sutapa and Aditi-Kashyapa, who entered into Devaki-Vasudeva; or Dhara-Drona, who entered into Yashoda-Nanda; Candrakanti, who entered into Radha; and in the Dvaraka-lila Vasu in Uddhava (Bha.III.4.12); Dharma, Vayu, Indra and the two Ashvins in Yudhishtira, Bhimasena, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva etc.

At the end of each prakata-lila these deva-s etc. are separated from the eternal parishada-s again and return to their original positions. This return takes place according to the method of the maushala-lila, i.e.: In the prakata-prakasha everything supernatural remains hidden to the superficial observer, and in order to make it possible for it to remain hidden, the *seeming* war between the Yadava brothers is arranged in the Dvaraka-lila; a *pretext*, because in reality, as parishada-s, they return to the eternal Dvaraka, i.e. enter the a-prakata-prakasha.

The truly subordinated tattva-s, devas *in* the parishada-s, go to the Himalayas, or Uddhava, i.e. only Vasu in him, goes to Badari.

3) Furthermore, in the prakata-prakasha an interpenetration of the dhama-s [realms] and forms takes place. That is: whereas in the a-prakata-lila, the unmanifested realm of Dvaraka and Goloka, the parishada-s and Krishna *do not* emerge from, come out of the dhama (realm) in question, Krishna *seemingly* moves from Mathura to Dvaraka etc. in the prakata-lila, Uddhava from Mathura to Vraja, Balarama from Dvaraka to Vraja.

Everything according to the rules of the prakata-lila, in which everything is brought about by Yogamaya so that it seems and is experienced as a unity of time and geography, corresponding to human thinking, restricted by time and space – and not only to the uninitiated, but to the eternal co-players as well.

Often enough, however, a breakthrough through the seeming restrictions of time and place takes place in this prakata-lila, as for example the accommodation of the population of Gokula-Vrindavana etc. under the only 7 miles [11 km] long Govardhana; or Krishna's absence is experienced as half an hour or even less by the cowherd boys, who are waiting for Him on the bank of the Yamuna, even though it lasted for about a year.

Another example: In a small corner of Vrindavana infinite universes with Vaikuntha etc. become apparent (Brahma-mohana-lila); or, while the gopa-s are closing their eyes (by the forest fire), they are moved from one place in Vraja with all the cows etc. to another remote place; or, the *one* night *rasa-lila* lasts for a long time, like whole "nights" of Brahma.

In Vraja's prakata-prakasha this takes place gently and cautiously and the impression of particularity is cautiously aroused by Yogamaya, so that the madhurya-lila [play of exhilarated loveliness] is not disturbed by the experience of the aishvarya [majestic feature] in madhurya-Krishna. The interest in the serving love of madhurya-Krishna is so strong that in spite of all experience of the aishvarya, it is often no longer taken into consideration. And where it is *too* strong, Yogamaya sees to it that it is quickly blurred.

In the prakata-prakasha of Dvaraka the breakthroughs of the time- and spaceless reality into that which is governed by time and space occur almost continuously: Krishna's simultaneous marriage with 16 100 queens in 16 100 different palaces; in the court of Nagnajit of Koshala, Krishna in seven different forms conquers the seven bullocks as the condition for marrying Satya-Nagnajit (Bha.X.58) etc. etc.

Everything demonstrations of aishvarya that appear quite natural and hardly arouse great astonishment among the parishada-s in Dvaraka.

It is the same with Krishna's age, for example. In the Goloka-lila including the age of kishora (16th), in the Dvaraka-lila yuvaka [17th]. In the prakata-lila, however, He leaves for Mathura in His 12th year, according to *our* concepts of time, i.e. with our concepts of time the age of kishora has already almost come to an end in His 12th year. According to our time Dantavakra badha takes place when Krishna is 44 years old, in reality, however, when He is in His 16th kishora.

Cf.: Yudhishtira receives the kingdom when he is 60 years old. Krishna has the same age as Arjuna, who is 3 years younger than Yudhishtira, i.e. 57. 13 years have passed with Pandava-s' exile in the woods, and Dandavakra badha happens *before* that. According to this calculation Krishna is thus 44 years old when He returns to Vraja.

That He really has returned to Vraja is clear from what Krishna tells Uddhava in Bha.XI.12, where He describes the gopi-s' condition when He was *not* in Vraja. (XI.12.11) He speaks of His absence from Vraja as something in the *past*, even though He as Dvaraka-Krishna at the time of this conversation is *not* in Vraja, but with Uddhava in Dvaraka. There are many examples like this of the rasika language of the Bhagavatam (parokshvada: cryptical language).

At the end of each prakata-lila, Vraja after 44 years, Dvaraka after ca 125 years (Dvaraka becomes manifest when Krishna leaves Mathura), the prakata-prakasha merges into the a-prakata-prakasha and the parishada-s, who feel that they are human beings, now know

themselves to be nitya-parishada-s and are now *one* prakasha again. It is not two different Krishna-s, two different Radha-s, Yashoda-s etc. in the prakata- and a-prakata-prakasha, but one person, one tattva, who has two prakasha-s or forms of expression of his/her own being and who now becomes one prakasha again.

Already before Krishna returned to Vraja and the prakata-prakasha merged into the aprakrita-prakasha, He had shown the gopa-s the a-prakata-prakasha and through Uddhava taught the gopi-s that they are only separated from Him in *one* prakasha, i.e. the prakata-prakasha. In the a-prakata-prakasha there is no separation at all.

As fire already is present in the wood, and to make it known one only has to know the method of rubbing it, through another profound “method” the a-prakata-prakasha, where Krishna and all the others are eternally present, becomes known. Then the peculiarity happens that in the moment when the a-prakata-prakasha is experienced, the individual parishada, in this moment in a-prakata-prakasha, sees everyone else, [and] experiences himself as *one*, i.e. as long as this darshanam lasts. When it disappears, he experiences himself and the others in the prakata-prakasha again, and nothing but a faint recollection of what was experienced in the darshanam remains.

This being of Himself in the a-prakata-prakasha was what Krishna taught the gopi-s by the message He sent through Uddhava, the message Uddhava *did not* understand, but the reaction of which he observed. And Krishna taught Uddhava what He had taught the gopi-s, when Uddhava asked Him about instructions before His approaching departure [from the world].

On the basis of prema, when it intensifies into raga, the gopi-s experience a sphuranam [shining forth]; in anuraga a visphuranam, i.e. a completely clear sphuranam of the eternal, always present Krishna, but without directly playing with Him.

In mahabhava, however, following what Krishna said in His message, they experience His avirbhava, i.e. they play with Him exactly like when they play with Him before His departure for Mathura or Dvaraka.

Prema does not always remain static on the stage of unfolding called mahabhava, however; again, it fades away into anuraga, raga and prema itself. Then again, viraha is experienced, interrupted by sphurti and visphurti, until prakata-prakasha Krishna finally returns. Before this, when the gopi-s came to Kurukshetra, Krishna Himself had once again given the instructions

about the a-prakata-prakasha (almost the same language as in the message He sent through Uddhava).

His return initiates the turning back of the prakata-lila into the a-prakata-lila and all the parishada-s know themselves as the eternal parishada-s; to feel and experience oneself as mere humans has come to an end, everyone goes into the a-prakata-prakasha, and Mahamaya's curtain falls again.

Uddhava was amazed, he could not comprehend *how* the message that Krishna sent through him could have such tremendous impact upon the gopi-s. To him the message does not seem to be very much different from the frequently expressed philosophical-metaphysical instructions, but to a certain extent he has some idea that it could be about the a-prakata-prakasha. But as he does *not* have and *cannot* comprehend the prema that can be intensified into mahabhava, the effect was like a wonder to him. Not even Rukmini and Satyabhama have the extreme form of prema called mahabhava as the highest intensification of their prema.

The message that Uddhava delivered (three months after Krishna had left for Mathura) was the Bhagavatam, which Narayana gave Brahma and which in another chain of tradition [sampradaya] came from Garbhodaka-Shayi-Vishnu-Samkarshana to Brahma in Padmakalpa, from Sanatkumara to Sankhyayana, and then to Brihaspati and Uddhava. It is almost the same language in the 4-shloka Bhagavatam, the message to the gopi-s and Krishna's words to the gopi-s in Kurukshetra.

The meaning that is essential to Brahma:

Bhagavan does not exhaust Himself as Vishnu (the indirect origin of emanation, maintenance and dissolution), He has His Own independent existence, without any connection to the world. Purusha Vishnu still has some connection to Mahamaya, whereas Bhagavan Svayam does not. Where He is and is experienced, neither Mahamaya, the world nor God's connection to the world is experienced. He is *in* the world – as Vishnu-Paramatma, as the five elements in the things of the world. He is *not* in the world – as Bhagavan, as the five elements do not exhaust themselves in the things of this world but are also outside them. He is in the elements, in the senses and hearts of true bhaktas, and is seen, is experienced in “the heart”, in antah-sakshatkara (in bhakta-s' samadhi, sphuranam), and He is also outside, as a manifest form that can be experienced in His Own eternal realm.

And the meaning to the gopi-s:

I *am* in the manifest prakata-prakasha. But I am also outside of the prakata-prakasha – where you are missing Me – i.e. in the a-prakata-prakasha, where there is no separation from Me. This deep meaning of the Bhagavatam in the form of the 4-shloka-s and Uddhava's message, is explained in all details to Uddhava by Krishna Himself and gives Uddhava knowledge of his own self and the experience of himself as Krishna's utsava[feast]-form.

Parikshit, Vajra and the 16 100 queens remained on earth for quite a long time after the return of Dvaraka's and Gokula's prakata-prakasha into the a-prakata-prakasha (of Dvaraka and Goloka). They now find a deserted land. In *this* respect their situation is similar to ours. They need the Bhagavatam, through which Krishna's prakasha takes place (i.e. Krishna's a-prakata-prakasha). Without Krishna's prakasha they cannot know who they are. With the prakasha of Krishna and His lila, which they see, the queens and Vajra know themselves. The human-Vajra and the human-queens are suddenly not visible anymore. A piece of trickery, magic? Not even their bones are visible anymore! No – they were no humans.

Vajra and the queens cease to know and experience themselves as humans, and Vajra knows himself as thunderbolt, as a lovely sign on Krishna's right sole of the foot, and the queens know themselves as gopi-s. That they felt and knew themselves as humans had been a trick arranged by Yogamaya to fit the cit-a-prakata-lila as cit-prakata-lila into the human-geographical world of space and time. And everyone, from Krishna to the blade of grass, experience in this prakata-lila a particular heightening, a particular attraction, an intensification of prema as it is not experienced in the a-prakata-lila, and infinitely more beautiful, more attractive. And as a side effect of this prakata-prakasha the world is given an insight into the nature of the time- and spaceless realm of Goloka etc. and Krishna's lila.

Vajra's and the queens' situation is *different from ours*, however: Our ignorance is brought about by Mahamaya, through our aversion to God, and we are not parishada-s, who in accordance to the rules of the prakata-lila and under the influence of Yogamaya for a certain period of time have to feel that they are human beings. Therefore it says in our text (III.9) that the prakasha – prakata as well as a-prakata – permanently remains hidden to the jiva-s through Maya. It is not until we, by the grace of the bhakta-s, receive bhakti-shakti, which is the same potency through which He knows and experiences Himself, that we can hear the Bhagavatam and serve Him without ulterior motives, nirguna (see chapter 4), and with prema-bhakti finally

experience His prakasha (in accordance with the nature of our bhakti and sadhanam), i.e. Him, Krishna of Goloka or Dvaraka, Who *is* forever present everywhere, namely in Goloka-prakasha. Then we may discard our carnal body and be admitted to the eternal Reality. [...]