

A Perverted Reflection of Reality

Letter from Sadananda 27 October 1959

Into English, within square brackets, footnotes and

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Vamandas, Hella, friends, [...]

In reply to Hella's question concerning the assembly hall¹: Everything that exists in Vaikuntha², all this exists in a distorted form in the world composed of the three guna-s³. – It is not as it looks like. The assembly hall etc., the lila [God's eternal play] and the places in Goloka are not "human", but what is human-locally located in this world is the perverted reflection, the unsound opposite of what consists of cit.

The Vaikuntha-Goloka-lila, with the lovely, tender and exuberant Krishna, Who asks His mother for permission to tend the cows etc., seems to be human, because the world of man is the perverted reflection⁴ (consisting of the three guna-s of maya) of this delightful Goloka-lila etc. As soon as one hears about the charming Goloka-lila, one rejects the world of the three guna-s quite spontaneously and effortlessly, just as one throws an inedible shadow picture of an apple to the ground as soon as one gets a taste of the delicious apple from the apple tree.

As soon as this Goloka-lila becomes visible on earth as Gokula-Vraja, it throws all human "values" so much into the background that everything that

¹ In the assembly hall in Goloka where God's eternal co-players meet every evening. Goloka is the form of God's eternal realm of enchanting beauty and unbounded exuberance which never becomes manifest in the world.

² In this context, *vaikuntha* means the complete cit world, consisting of sat-cit-ananda, i.e. eternal Being, pure Knowledge and true Joy. In its restricted sense it means God's realm of fullness of reverence, of dignified majesty, in contrast to His realm of fullness of intimacy, of charming beauty, loveliness and unbounded exuberance.

³ The three basic qualities, attributes of maha-maya: sattva, rajah and tamah.

⁴ There is some similarity between them, even though the former is a complete *distortion* of the latter, a reflection turned upside-down.

had a value is turned into a shadow. It is therefore characterized as “vidambanam”, i.e. it makes the world and all mundane values (as conjugal love, parental love, love between friends etc.) completely unappetizing, and compared with Goloka and its lila it makes them appear completely *trivial*, *ridiculous*. The [unmanifest] Goloka-lila and the revealed [manifest] Vraja-lila make the mundane values (of the three guna-s) appear as a mere parody; they make the most noble, human values simply *ridiculous*.

The Divine mother’s sending of cit-food to cit-Krishna is eternal play in the realm of charming beauty and unbounded loveliness; in comparison to this, a mundane mother, consisting of the three guna-s, and her sending of food, composed of the three guna-s, to a child, consisting of the three guna-s, is purely ridiculous – expression of an instinct, based on selfish love but *not* prema⁵. People don’t know this, considering this to be [true] love, and this is what makes them upset when they hear this!

The doctor, who just caught me sitting and writing again, instead of resting, asked me: “Except for your (and thereby my) friends in the West, will people there not stone you when you describe the whole modern world with its glorious performances as ridiculous, and thereby everything they consider to be good and noble?”

Hopefully, you can read my scribble.

Oh, may Krishna’s will be revealed to us and my endeavour bear the fruit He wishes.

Always Your Sada

⁵ Pure, unselfish love, which has no other purpose than to please the object of this serving, cognizant love, namely God Himself; or from His side, to please those who serve Him with this love.