

Sree Radhika

The Harmonist¹ (Sree Sajjanatoshani)

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Within square brackets and footnotes:

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[...] Sree Radhika is not explicitly mentioned in the Srimad Bhagavatam. But in the description of the Circular Amorous Dance, viz., the Rasa Pastime, Sree Krishna is represented as leaving the circle of the dancing milk-maids in the company of a Female Who is more favoured than all the rest. The milk-maids who were then abruptly abandoned in the very midst of the dance praised the genuine devotion of the unnamed Female Who could induce Sree Krishna to prefer Her sole company to the combined attractions of all the others. But although the Srimad Bhagavatam mentions the above incident, the subject is not further developed in that work. This has been explained by the Goswamins as due to a deliberate resolve on the part of Sri Sukadeva, who is the narrator of the Bhagavatam, to avoid disclosing to his miscellaneous audience the ‘hidden matters’ of the

¹ Here and at some other places, ”The Harmonist” does not give the name of the author of the article. Many articles were the result of collaboration between Shrila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati and some of his closest disciples, like Ananta Vasudeva, Sundarananda Vidyavinod and Nishi Kanta Sanyal. Most of the time, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati spoke and lectured in Bengali but also in English. Some of his disciples then took notes (some of them knew shorthand), which were worked through and presented to him in the way he was expressing himself, before they were examined by him. Some of his disciples also wrote texts of their own, like Nishi Kanta Sanyal, who wrote his monumental work, *Sri Krsna Caitanya*, which was crucial to Svami Sadananda Dasa after his encounter with Svami Bon in Berlin, 1933. For several years, under the editorship of his Spiritual Master, Shrila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, Prof. Sanyal also conducted “The Harmonist”, Gaudiya Math’s fortnightly English journal. See also other related articles in this journal, for instance, “Sree Radhika” (Nov. 1932), “Transcendental Amour” (Dec. 1935), and Sanyal’s “Spiritual Progress” (Sept. 1934) “Love in Separation” (May 1935) and his booklet, *The Erotic Principle and Unalloyed Devotion*, Gaudiya Math, 1932 (and in “The Harmonist”, Nov. 1928).

Scriptures. The ‘hidden matters’ can only be known by the special grace of Sree Krishna and not otherwise. They are not to be divulged to all persons indiscriminately.

This explanation offered by the Goswamins is not opposed to the open treatment of the same subject by Sri Jayadeva and other writers. [But] in spite of the *Geeta Govinda* and its companion works the subject of the relationship of Sree Radhika to Sree Krishna remains shrouded in impenetrable mystery. No language can convey to the lay reader any but a wholly misleading idea of the nature of the subject on which Sri Sukadeva maintained such discrete silence. This result is hailed with unmistakable joy by Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami, author of *Sri Chaitanya Charitamritam*. Kaviraj Goswami pertinently observes that no joy can excel that of the narrator of the hidden subject when he realises that those very persons are wholly and automatically debarred from all knowledge of the subject who are sure not to appreciate the same and for fear² of whose neglect the writer is afraid to narrate it fully.

Sri Sukadeva’s hesitation to divulge the secrets of the Vedas is well-founded. The conduct of Sri Jayadeva Goswami in speaking out without reserve is equally in order if we remember that his book cannot be understood at all by those who are lacking in the highest spiritual culture.

Certain uncritical writers have not, indeed, scrupled to throw mud even at the author of *Geeta Govinda*; but they are the exceptions. The generality of writers has thought it wise to avoid all reference to the subject for the honest enough reason that they have failed to understand how a book which has a most obscene exterior could be cherished by all the great devotees of the country whose conduct is universally admitted to have been free from any taint of casualness. It is this paradox that has always exercised a salutary restraining influence on the saner sections of writers in regard to the treatment of this unintelligible subject.

So much by way of preface. Coming to the subject-matter itself we find it impossible to throw any light on it that would be of real help to the average reader. We would, therefore, confine ourselves to the more useful task of exploring the distant philosophical approaches instead of attempting to describe the relationship itself.

² The writer fears that those contemptuous persons would harm both themselves and others (who hear those words) by committing aparadhas, spiritual transgressions.

Sree Radhika is realisable as the Counter-Whole of the Personal Absolute. She is the Predominated Moiety of the Absolute Whole. Sree Krishna, in regard to Sree Radhika, is the Predominating Moiety. The conception of Male and Female refers to the principle of Personality. As both Personalities are fully Divine no grossness or inadequacy of the corresponding mundane conception need be imported into the subject. But it is imperative to admit The Absolute logical validity, under the reservation of inconceivability by our present understanding, of the conception of the Divine Pair, possessing actual Male and Female spiritual³ Forms.

If this is not admitted the Absolute Realm is at once divested of the supreme cementing principle for holding together its diverse atomic [indivisible] personalities. In this phenomenal world the personality of man is defective in many ways. But all other personal relationships are found to be less intimate than that between male and female as pair. If the worlds had been entirely peopled by males or females there would be no intimacies of the family relationships. Parenthood and Consortherhood supply the conditions of the specific forms of the most intimate of all personal relationships in this world. This is the general rule, although there may be apparent exceptions. But even the most intimate friendship of this world, outside the family circle, does not bring about the complete identification of the interests of two persons on an agreed indissoluble basis as the pair relationship has been allowed to do.

In the pair relationship the constancy of the partners in their loyal and exclusive attachment to each other is regarded as all-important. This ideal is sought to be satisfied and perfected through the institution of marriage. But the ideal is incapable of realisation in this world because on account of the presence of inevitable opposing factors. The fear 'lest one good cause may corrupt the world'⁴ is true of the apparently best of earthly causes. The very laudable conditions of the marriage relationship preclude the fullest exercise of individual choice of the sex-partners. In proportion as male and female become capable of an effective desire to live their own

³ In this text *spiritual* is that which belongs to the category of *Cit*, that which consists of *Sat-Cit-Ananda*, true Existence, pure Cognition, and true Joy, in contrast to *material*, that which belongs to the category of *Maya*. The world of *Maya*, the world we live in, constitutes the distorted, inverted reflection of the *Cit* world. The eternal, bodily forms of the Divine Pair consist of *cit-shakti*.

⁴ Alfred Tennyson: "lest one good *custom should* corrupt the world". In the text above it says: "lest one good *cause may* corrupt the world". (Wikipedia)

independent individual lives by their unhampered choice those institutions which were found essential for their happiness at an earlier stage of their progress towards the full individual and social life, are found to be an actual obstacle to their actual advancement. It becomes thereupon necessary to get rid of the most cherished older institutions after they have outlived their usefulness.

The burning question of the day for empiric moralists relates to the position of females. The males have been left free to follow their inclination within their mutual voluntary agreements, i.e., without unduly encroaching on the freedom of one another. The same degree of freedom is being demanded for females and is on the point of being conceded by universal consent. The institution of marriage is likely to be remodelled to be brought in line with the requirements of the equality of the sexes. This reform will react on all domestic relationships. It is yet impossible to forecast the moral consequences on society.

If man and woman strive to be really independent of one another the degree of intimacy of the pair is bound to be materially lessened. The virtues of constancy and loyalty is likely to go by the board as being inapplicable to the changed position. The sexual relationship will drop much of its wholesome and unwholesome present obligations. Not a few persons are beginning even to dream of a possible desire to return to the unconventional sexual promiscuity of the hypothetically happy 'state of nature' minus its animality. But the physical body is identical with the principle of animality and as long as the body will continue to claim its needs animality will stay. To restrain animality it is necessary to regulate the bodily activities.

Two physical bodies can have only animal relationship to one another. Two mental bodies can be related to one another by the needs of the physical body in a more subtle form. In both cases it is material relationship through and through. If the superior intellectual powers of man are dedicated on principle for the elaboration of the physical relationship the mere possession of such powers does not raise man above the level of the brute, but on the contrary, tends to sink him lower than non-moral animals.

These considerations point to the true ideal of human life. The needs of the physical body require to be subordinated to a higher purpose. This higher purpose must be other than the needs of the physical body. The empiric moralists suppose that the needs of the mind supply this desideratum. They think that if the refined needs of the mind are substituted

instead of the gross needs of the physical body human life is necessarily raised above the level of brute life. Yes, but in the sense that the human life is thereby made only more elaborately and charmingly brutal. That is all. Both occupy the same plane, one of them being only clearer in securing their common animal purpose by a pretty common method. Man is made a clever animal, but is not raised above the plane of the brute, by his empiric intellectual achievements.

But so long as the needs of the physical body and of its auxiliary mind remain the determining factors of human choice, man can never hope to rise above the level of the brute, and greater freedom in such condition would only sink him deeper into the sloughs of the grossest forms of animalism. From this point of view all institutions that act as a restraint on the fuller indulgence of his animal nature should be regarded as conducive to the welfare of man's truly higher personality which has no affinity whatever with the potential animal moiety of himself.

But the negative function cannot satisfy the needs of the higher self. There is a positive function which aims at the satisfaction not of the negative needs of the physical body and the materialised mind but of the positive needs of the soul⁵ who is substantively different from both. The solution of the sexual problem is not attainable within the mental and physical scope in as much as it really and substantively concerns the soul. None of the problems of human life can be solved by the deluding temporary satisfaction of the apparent needs of the flesh.

Can they be solved on the level of the soul, and if so, in what manner? Is there a problem of sex on the spiritual plane? How can the soul be male or female? If the masculine or feminine needs of the soul are satisfied would such a solution settle the problem of the sexual needs of the physical body and mind?

The case should be put in another way. It is not possible to supply the animal needs of the physical body and mind in a permanent or satisfactory manner. Neither is it necessary to try to do so because it is no concern of our real selves. The physical body and mind have no conscious feeling of their own needs. They are galvanized into an abnormal kind of conscious endeavour by the requirements of the soul who alone possesses real consciousness. Therefore, the so-called claims of the physical body and mind are really needs of the soul in this abnormal state. For this reason, it is never possible to fully satisfy those needs. The abnormal needs only require

⁵ In this article, the term 'soul' refers to the individual atma.

to be replaced by the natural needs of the soul if a real solution is to be sought.

The sexual aptitude, therefore, represents also a need of the soul. The abnormality of the need in its present unwholesome manifestation need not to be supposed to be without any basis for the existence of the corresponding spiritual need in the proper nature of the soul. It is necessary to get rid of the abnormality but not of the principle itself which it misrepresents. The abnormality is due to the necessity of the employment of the physical body and mind on the mundane plane. The natural function of the soul is located on the transcendental plane. Just as the soul can be dragged down to the level of the flesh it should be possible in an analogous manner to lift the employment of the flesh to the level of requirements of the soul. The soul should be allowed to predominate, neither the flesh nor the material mind.

In order to establish the natural supremacy of the soul it would be necessary to reclaim him from his present state of self-ignorance. This is the paramount duty of man in this world towards himself and his fellows. As soon as the necessity is really admitted the way is found to lie open to the view of the awakened soul. Then begins the positive spiritual function which is inconceivable to the dormant soul for the simple reason that he does not want to know it at all by following the only process.

There is a function for the corresponding sexual principle on the spiritual plane. The nature of that function is not intelligible to us so long as we are not established on the spiritual plane. That function is categorically different from the corresponding physical and mental activity. The appearance of the natural spiritual function should be allowed to replace the abnormal activity. The two have nothing in common except their incompatible correspondence due to the difference of plane. In the real function male and female have distinctive natures who may be described as complementary personalities. They are the two reciprocal Halves of the whole conscious Personality. But the Two are nevertheless One. This supplies the clue to the nature of the wholesome relationship between the two Halves. One is the Predominating and the other the Predominated Moiety in the Absolute Cognition. The Predominated Moiety is simultaneously distinct from and contained in the Predominating Moiety. The Predominating Moiety can be but One. The Predominated Moiety alone may possess a plural nature without upsetting the principle of real

Monotheism. The individual human⁶ souls are dissociable particles of the Predominated Moiety. The Predominated Moiety is of the nature of the power of the Predominating Moiety Who is the Possessor or Proprietor of Power. The Predominating Moiety is the Male Absolute. The Predominated Moiety is absolute Female possessing the aptitude for obeying every direction of the Predominating Moiety for supplying all conditions of the Activities of the Predominating Absolute.

This is the dry philosophical idea so far as it is possible to express the ultimate transcendental reality by means of the language of mundane thought. The real entity lies entirely off the plane of all mental speculation. Sree Radhika is the Eternal Associated Counter-Whole of Sree Krishna, Her Male Consort. Sree Radhika is the Source of all individual souls whose function is to be employed in the service of Sree Krishna by the alternative methods of loyal conscious submission, neutrality or actual opposition.⁷ The individual souls serve Sree Krishna as constituents of Sree Radhika. When they forget that they are constituents of Sree Radhika they forget the natures of their own selves, and engage in the abnormal activities of the mundane plane.

The relation between one individual soul and another is that of obeying each other as constituents of Sree Radhika in the performance of their allotted service of Sree Krishna. To use mundane analogy all individual souls are spiritual females in a subordinate position to Sree Radhika Whose service of Sree Krishna they naturally share by their nature as constituents. The objects of endeavour of the individual souls are to learn to obey Sree Radhika. Only by obeying Sree Radhika they can serve Sree Krishna.

Sree Krishna is the only Object of all worship. Sree Krishna alone is the Recipient of all service. No individual soul can be the recipient of any service on his own account or on account of any other individual soul. This points to the true significance of the Scriptural injunction to abstain from all sexual activity and avoid the company of all sensual persons, for qualifying for the service of Krishna on the spiritual plane. No idea of the positive nature of the function on the higher plane corresponding to the sexual

⁶ The attribute 'human' may be misleading to a lay reader, who is not aware of the fact that the individual soul, the *atma* is present in *every* living being, not only in human beings.

⁷ These different methods of service correspond with different groups of gopis, *sva-paksha*, *tatastha-paksha* and *vi-paksha*. See letter from Svami Sadananda Dasa dated 12 December 1961.

activity of this world can be conveyed to those who are not completely freed from the diseases of the mundane sexual desire. It is for this reason advisable to abstain from all empiric study of the descriptions of the Amorous Activities of the Divine till one has been freed from every form of worldly passion by the preparatory service of Sree Krishna under the direction of the bona fide Acharya.