

## The Elephant in the Mandir

*A Critique in Three Parts c/o mayesvara dasa - Jan 2016*

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### Part One: Revising the Mahabharata?

*“Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility. –  
Proverbs 18.12*

Bravo to Purnaprajna prabhu’s excellent article: *“Who is the Real Moron.”* He has compiled an excellent analysis of the type of academic prestidigitation that Hridayananda has mastered to the bewilderment of all those who he brings under his spell. One must really stop to consider what the underlying, or perhaps subliminal reason is for him to challenge one of the

most well established pivotal portions of the entire Mahabharat story. The reference about Duryodana/Dushasana's attempt to disrobe Draupadi isn't confined to just the chapter where Yudhisthira lost the game of dice. It is echoed all thru the Mahabharata as the most graphic turning point in the whole story and it also provides an essential teaching moment on how overwhelming the urges of the senses can be.

It's therefore hard to imagine how anyone in their right mind can suggest that this most essential part of the Mahabharata never happened! Without the assault on Draupadi by Duryodana, the one of the most important core themes of the story is lost. Considering Hridayananda's so-called scholarship we are left to ask what his real motive is for attempting to interject such a monumental historic revision in one of India's most beloved and sacred stories. Is this a case of: *"Give the ahankara enough rope/attention and it will hang itself?"* What's really going on here? Is this a twisted version of the Frog-In-the-Well, whose ego was bigger than his ability to accept the boundaries of his own limitations?

Duryodhana was no doubt a very disturbed individual, but he had to have extraordinary discipline to become the tremendously powerful warrior that he became. Yet his rush to rape Draupadi of her dignity reflects a deep primordial condition that our Christian friends refer to as: *"Every Mans Battle."* To remove this incident from the Mahabharat is equivalent to cutting out the heart of the story. At numerous points throughout the epic tale the Pandavas unwillingness to do anything while Dushasana pulled on Draupadis sari is remembered as disgraceful. On several occasions we read how each of the Pandavas were overwhelmed by the shame they felt when recalling that day Draupadi was attacked. That shame boils into anger and consequently at numerous points in the plot Yudhisthira had to hold back the rage that boiled over from his brothers particularly Bhima. In effect he had petitioned them to patiently wait for their "Day in Court" when they could finally avenge Duryodhana's horrific command for Draupadi to be disrobed.

If Dushasana didn't attempt to pull off her sari then what did he do that was so egregious it caused Draupadi to throw up her hands in complete surrender and seek shelter from Lord Krishna? This very point is also one of the most instructive lessons to be learned from the Mahabharata. To remove this episode from the plot is to eradicate the concept of surrendering 100% to the Supreme Lord. Perhaps this is another casualty in the cultural changes being promoted by Krishna West?

### ***The Pride of the Powerful***

We learn from the faux-paus of Lord Indra and Lord Brahma that even the greatest personalities can become overwhelmed by their own prowess. It appears that Hridayananda Go-Swami's 40 years residence in the stratosphere of Krishna Conscious leadership has apparently affected his reasoning abilities. It sounds like his contempt for the current ISKCON management has bubbled over to a point where he must now engage in some carefully calculated damage control to retain his good graces with those he has already revealed he considered to be morons. He has become so entangled in his own ping-pong-like bloviating opinions that time finally caught up with him so now he must apologize. However, for many of his God-Siblings his apology is a bit too late. He lost his credibility with the greater assembled devotee community a long time ago because of a long history of reckless behavior and comments.

Hridayananda has developed a reputation for cleverly justifying a whole array of controversial things that have become synonymous with his name. He seems to believe that he can carry on like a male version of a Frat-Rat and then filibuster his way thru the consequential blowback from his philandering with the expertise of a very well-seasoned politician. What this scholar seems to repeatedly forget is that the foundational principal of the sanyasi order is based on renunciation not on how long he can pontificate about the etymology of a Sanskrit verb.

### ***The Curse of Hypocrisy***

The unspoken fact is that one should not even consider accepting the Sanyasa order if they still have the residual desire of pursuing the mundane pleasure of the senses. Only then should one accept the renounced order of life lest they make a mockery of it which has become all too popular lately. Unfortunately the saffron robed Western born go-swamis who don't leave home without their own American Express Credit Card have become so common we no longer find it peculiar. Our complacency in that regard is one of the most destructive foibles that plague the credibility of Srila Prabhupada's International Society for Krishna Consciousness. It's not just the members of the Hindu community who notice this social oxymoron, anyone who knows what the definition is of a Vaishnava Sanyasi can see it as clearly as the sun in the sky over the Sahara desert!

Nobody likes hypocrisy and that is why the mass of people are losing respect for all the religious traditions. There have simply been too many religious leaders from all the great faiths that have spoken eloquently about their beliefs but behaved horrendously. The greater the double standard, the more repugnant it is to the public. To vow a simple life of renunciation while accepting all sorts of material comforts that go way up and beyond the need for preaching Krishna Consciousness is evident to anyone with even a limited education. As Lord Chaitanya's sankirtan movement continues to spread to every town and village the Hare Krishna movement comes under ever widening public scrutiny and if we don't practice what we preach how can we expect to earn the respect of the public?

### ***The Elephant in the Mandir***

The elephant in the mandir is the gross double standard between what we read about how a sanyasi is duty bound to act and how we look the other way when they don't live up to that standard. We are really a long way from properly establishing the Sannyasa Asrama, what to speak of the Varna-Asrama system. In all fairness the same is true for the other three ashramas as well. Those in the brahmachari, grhastha and vanaprastha orders have their own duties to fulfill as well, but when they fall short the consequences are not as severe as is the case when leadership breaks down.

*“An intelligent person does not take part in the sources of misery, which are due to contact with the material senses. O son of Kunti, such pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise man does not delight in them.” - Bhagavad Gita As It Is Chapter 5.22*

Everyone practicing Krishna Consciousness is struggling to tame their senses however many simply don't have the resources to indulge them. Real leadership is rare because it is incumbent on them to set the ideal spiritual example for the rest of the population. If they are unwilling or incapable of doing so then they should no longer be given the respect or the perks available to those who have been entrusted to lead.

It is because the Sanyasi/Brahmin casts are supposed to be undistracted by the lure of fame, fortune, and a comfortable lifestyle, that they are able to speak clearly and beneficially for ALL of society. Their decisions cannot be purchased by special interest groups nor are they prone to making back room deals for personal gain. That is how the Vedic system of government is designed to protect the people from our inbred human shortcomings.

*“O scion of Bharata [Arjuna], O conqueror of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, overcome by the dualities of desire and hate.” - Bhagavad Gita As It Is Chapter 7.27.*

When there are no checks or balanced on the delusionary throwing potencies of desire and hate, we end up with the type of corruption that has infiltrated virtually every other form of government just like that which can be easily observed in Washington today.

## **Part Two: The Soul of ISKCON?**

*“Until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.” - African Proverb*

In the fall of 2015 Bhadri Narayan wrote a serious paper that asks many questions about the soul and direction of ISKCON called: *"Who are we and where are we going? A Fight for the Soul of ISKCON."* We are all troubled by the issues he raises and now Hridayananda is campaigning for his own interpretation of ISKCON with his drive to present Krishna West propaganda. The new age movements attract huge followings because they mix some elements of the truth in with all their speculative nonsense. Hridayananda appears to have done the same thing. He is quite astute and offers some good observations, but unfortunately he packages them up in what many have said is a wacky proposal. Krsna West threatens to undermine the purity which has been the true force that makes ISKCON the powerful religious and cultural revolution that Srila Prabhupada intended it to be. Unfortunately, this pattern for building a newer and better ISKCON has been tried several times before.

### **The Gopi Bhava Club**

Even before Srila Prabhupada departed some leaders bonded together in an elite clique that soon became known as the Gopi Bhava Club. It was made up of a select few devotees that met to discuss the intimate pastimes of the gopis, artificially thinking that they can enter into the understanding of the gopis prematurely. As soon as Srila Prabhupada found out about it he immediately snuffed it out and chastised his disciples severely for interjecting their own speculative interpretations into his very straightforward and clear instructions. It was an insidious weed that sprouted from the hearts of senior devotees and threatened the creeper of devotion, bhakti-lata bija, so Prabhupada pulled it out strongly.

One would think that should be enough to snuff out that maya for good, but about 15 years later after Srila Prabhupada moved on, the Gopi Bhava club was resurrected at least partially due to the association of Narayana Maharaja who spoke much more liberally about the Gopis lila than Srila Prabhupada ever felt was appropriate. This time however, the GBC can be credited for disciplining those senior devotees who fell into that trap and sparing the greater devotee community from this deviation which Srila Prabhupada had clearly considered a sahajic tendency rooted in the hearts of those who promoted it.

### **Sri Dhar Swami of Navadwipa**

Sri Dhar Swami was one of Srila Prabhupadas most beloved Godbrothers. He suffered from several serious medical handicaps but he loved Srila Prabhupada dearly and was one of the few who stepped forward to help him when he asked for it after he came to the West. Shortly after Srila Prabhupada departed, Sri Dhar was consulted by many concerned devotees in an attempt to sort out all the confusion on how ISKCON should move forward. Krishna clearly stated that ALL his devotees are magnanimous souls (BG 7.18) so he naturally attracted several of Srila Prabhupada's disciples into his service. However, it was not too long before anyone who even mentioned Sri Dhar's name would be asked to find a different place to go. This was the first sign that our GBC leadership felt threatened by any outside source even if it happened to be a very exalted devotee of the Lord that Srila Prabhupada clearly trusted and respected greatly.

### **The ISKCON Monastery and Prabhupada the Monarch**

The next radical deviation to the core ISKCON teachings came shortly after Srila Prabhupada moved on. It was brewed up in the defiant mind of Keith Ham (Kirtananda) and manifested in the hills of West Virginia at New Vrindavan. He instructed his sycophants to replace the Indian dhoti with the brown robes of medieval Christian monks. He then dressed up the murti of Srila Prabhupad with a royal red robe, and a gold crown modeled to make His Divine Grace look like a king. It was the most ridiculous thing anyone who understood Srila Prabhupada's humble and servitor mood could ever imagine. Fortunately it did not take long for the GBC to act. Shortly after that Keith and his merry band of monk(ey)s were all exiled from ISKCON for how shamelessly he embarrassed the reputation of His Divine Grace. After Keith and some of his eccentric followers were hauled off to jail for crazy things like racketeering and conspiring to commit murder, what was left of New Vrindavan was welcomed back into ISKCON!

### **The Ritvik Reaction**

Then the Ritviks became alarmed by how many people were victimized after they got initiated from overly zealous individuals who accepted them as disciples but later fell down. The Ritviks leveraged the faux-paus of those individuals as indirect proof to assert that Srila Prabhupada didn't feel any of his disciples were qualified to initiate disciples into the ranks of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. They preached that His Divine Grace had the extraordinary vision to see how incompetent his disciples were before he moved on.

At that point they contend he radically changed the instructions he gave about initiation for over 11 years with a one page highly controversial letter dictated to Tamal Krishna Maharaj on July 9. In that short correspondence, the Ritviks propose that Srila Prabhupada changed the parampara system set up by Krishna in the Gita (Bg. 4.2) and there was absolutely nothing unusual about that because Srila Prabhupada was empowered to change what Krishna established!

### **Narayana Maharaja**

Those who took shelter of Narayana assert that he was appointed by Srila Prabhupada to carry on and lead his disciples into the future after His Divine Grace departed. Yet some of those individuals became just as openly antagonistic to the welfare of ISKCON as the most militant of the Ritviks. This led to a complete breakdown of good will in the Vaishnava community that should have been avoided but wasn't to the disgrace of all parties.

### **Sexist Language & Female Gurus**

More recently women have objected to some of the language that Srila Prabhupada used in his books and for a while there was a campaign to have all of those clauses to be rewritten using more politically correct language. Now there is a huge debate regarding if it is appropriate for women to accept disciples. Once again it appears everyone's intentions are also good, but that is obviously not an acceptable criterion for deciding such delicate issues. One thing that is evident however is that while this debate rages on it will further divide the Vaishnava community and may lead to yet another group defecting from ISKCON proper.

### **Sexual Distractions and Personal Preferences**

Those who are attracted to the same sex are also becoming more vocal about wanting to know where their place is within Lord Chaitanya's sankirtan movement. Will ISKCON acknowledge their plea, or will we exile them to the social equivalent of the leper colony? At the end of the day sex that is not exclusively for the purpose of bearing a child is distractive and inappropriate no matter how it is practiced. Who among us is so pure that they feel justified in casting out those who are more honest about admitting their shortcomings?

### **Knowingly Publish Errors? Or; Correct the Books?**

Another serious matter of contention is all the fury that surrounds the editorial changes in the books being published by the BBT. On one side of that campaign is a mystically sentimental idea that there are absolutely NO errors in any of the premier editions of Srila Prabhupada's books and therefore not a single letter should ever be changed. Yet the BBT feels the editorial responsibility to correct whatever typing, grammatical, and even context errors that crept into the text as the books went thru the publication process which in many cases was at a ferocious rate that invited all sorts of mistakes.

Both sides could use the Bhagavatam to support their position (SB. 1.5.11), but who will explain this detail to the new reader when they encounter an obvious grammatical error? (The simple compromise solution is to print the revised text with the original text included in the footnotes along with elaborate notes explaining why that particular text was changed. As a practical matter this solution would make that edition of the Gita twice the size it is now. While some would welcome this as a nice publication for the libraries of a few elite scholars, it isn't the primary mission of the BBT. The foremost task of the BBT is to flood the world with transcendental books as fast and as economically as is reasonably possible.)

### **The Wild West and Krishna Whoppee!**

Now Hridayananda claims he was appointed by Srila Prabhupada to "*Use His Intelligence*" to devise ways to make Lord Chaitanya's mission acceptable to the masses in the Western world. He apparently feels that the program Srila Prabhupada set up has failed and therefore justifies the interjection of the radical changes he has concluded will fix it. His apology to the GBC published by Sampradaya Sun on Jan 15 sounds very prim and proper... but I am sure I am not the only one to notice that no-where in his apology does Hridayananda say he intends to back off from his radical ideas. We can only assume he remains intent about stripping the Vaishnava culture out of the Hare Krishna movement. So all his letter really says is: "*I am sorry I got caught calling my Godbrothers a bunch of morons. I'll be more careful not to do that in the future if the GBC will no longer pose any objections to my revolutionary ideas about changing the dress, the food, and everything "Indian" about the Hare Krishna movement.*" I.e: Politics as usual.

I have my doubts regarding ISKCON management being able to resolve all of these divisive issues to the satisfaction of those who raise them. When the Ritvik revolution began I suggested that perhaps ISKCON could make some accommodation for those who wanted to take shelter of Srila Prabhupada's mercy until they felt comfortable surrendering to one of his disciples for diksha initiation. Perhaps those individuals would never do so in this life, but had the GBC offered a way to accommodate those with the RtVik sentiment we might have been able to prevent the huge conflict that now exists between that community and ISKCON.

It later became obvious that there was nothing the GBC could do because it was Krishna Kanta who boldly asserted that he would not tolerate ANY aspect of the traditional parampara system. Even if ISKCON leaders did try to accommodate his concept of a Ritvik membership within ISKCON it was clear that the self-appointed general of the RtVik camp would not accept it. He showed no good will and made no effort to cooperate on all the other things Vaishnavas readily agree on. It was Krishna Kanta's stubborn unilateral demands that forced the fracturing that has since led to a lot of unnecessary strife and ill will among the Vaishnava community.

This is the real tragedy and as new challenges come up, we should all strive to learn from this how to avoid similar breakdowns in the future. Despite our various minor differences we can remain bonded as one Vaishnava sanga to protect mother Bhumi and her inhabitants of the New Age nonsense, the Neo-Advaita sophistry the Buddhist voidism and the other demonic forces of kali in general.

### **Part Three: Willful Blindness**

*"Few love to hear the sins they love to act." — William Shakespeare, Pericles*

We all know how disturbing it is when we are lied to or someone deceives us. It is even more maddening when it's not even clear that the offender is aware of their own deceptive ways. Is it proper to call someone a liar when they aren't intentionally attempting to mislead but instead their self-deception originated as a learned coping pathology they developed as a survival mechanism due to the misfortune of a dysfunctional childhood? Strong consequences should be levied on those who are 1<sup>st</sup> degree liars that are knowingly and intentionally mendacious. However those who deceive due to emotional or mental health imbalanced need to be treated with compassion and understanding if they become healthy enough to acknowledge the chaos their actions have on others.

In both cases however one thing is for certain. Great leaders don't rely on manipulation, deception, exploitation or fear to motivate their constituents. We are guilty of codependent willful blindness if we see this type of behavior going on and say nothing regardless of where these tendencies originated from. It is a managerial science that everyone in the organization will assimilate the level of morality practiced at the top of the organization. Therefore Krishna makes it very clear that whatever a great man does, common people will follow in their footsteps. (Bg. 3.21) and that is why it is absolutely imperative that house cleaning must begin at the top.

*"If the king is virtuous, then the subjects are also virtuous. If the king is sinful, then the subjects also become sinful. If he is mediocre, then the subjects are mediocre. The subjects*

*follow the example of the king. In short, as is the king so are the subjects.” - Chanakya Pundit Niti Sastra 13.8.*

Those who rise to the top of an organization should not remain there if they haven't mastered these basic human interactive skills. Anyone who expects their disciples to survive on gruel while they are served the finest subjects and hot chapatis by a staff of gourmet cooks is not the type of leadership that will win the hearts of the masses. Whether this is done knowingly or unknowingly, all the rest of us are guilty of willful blindness if we see a leader manipulating their subordinates for personal gain and do nothing about it. Srila Prabhupada said our movement must be built on "Love and Trust" but for too many the experience they have encountered has been: "Fear and Repression." What many have observed is that when a tyrant wiggles their way into a management position everyone had better support them fully or they may find the door to the ashram is locked the next time they attempt to come in. Without an independent brahminical class to protect those who blow the whistle on fraud, waste, abuse or any number of other severe injustices perpetrated by bad leadership, no one will ever feel safe at home or protected while living in the ashrama.

ISKCON will continue to experience serious growing pains until there is a clear separation between the ecclesiastical guidance provided by the brahmins and the ksatria class whose duty it is to carry out their decisions. The qualifications of those brahmins are demonstrated by a lifestyle which is obviously renounced and not preoccupied with the pursuit of the pratishtha. (Mundane Fame.) Admittedly there are not many today who meet this rigorous standard so it will take generations to ameliorate the current charade. But the sooner we start to address these issues the better it will be for everyone. Those who put profit, adoration, and distinction before the brahminical principals of personal honesty and integrity can never be trusted. If they are unchecked we can expect more scandals, schisms and defectors. The first step in setting up the Varn-Ashrama system is to identify who is actually comfortable living the renounced lifestyle. Those are the real brahmins qualified to work in tangent with the Ksatria Class who are recognized by their wealth, managerial resources and willingness to hear properly and carry out the good council of the saintly brahminical class.

### ***Woman! Bring me my Danda!***

This is the Elephant in the Mandir that goes ignored and unspoken about. It will continue to plague ISKCON more than all these other schisms put together until it is rectified. You don't have to have a PHD in philosophy to observe the gross disconnect between the lifestyle that is prescribed for the Sanyasa order, and the charade that many of those who have accepted that role have turned it into. Of course I am not condemning all those who have taken the vow of renunciation. I have tremendous respect for several of my Godbrothers who have repeatedly demonstrated that they are very deliberate about not blurring the lines between the sexes. They do not surround themselves with the expensive cars, homes, toys, comforts or other accouterments that rival the opulence of the wealthy. Those respected sanyasi read the same books that the rest of us do and actually strive to uphold the standard Lord Chaitanya sets for the renounced order:

*"Since I am in the renounced order, it is as dangerous for Me to meet a king as to meet a woman. To meet either would be just like drinking poison." – CC. Madhya 11.7*



Unfortunately these advanced souls are also not prone to throwing their weight around as “Big” leaders. They may have their own disciples and retain the basic necessities to keep their body and soul properly nurtured, but they are very wary of the mainstream attention that can fog the mind and pervert their thinking. How can we expect anyone to take us seriously when they read about how strict Lord Chaitanya was in his dealings with wealth and the opposite sex when they see the example being set by the lifestyles of the rich-and-famous monks in the Hare Krishna movement? The word is celibacy, not celebrity.

*“Attraction and repulsion for sense objects are felt by embodied beings, but one should not fall under the control of senses and sense objects because they are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.” - Bhagavad Gita As It Is, Chapter 3. Text 34.*

### **The Kink in the Yantra**

Those who have accepted the renounced order are to give instructions to the Ksatria class who are then duty bound to follow those instructions. The kink in the yantra is that the sanyas order by definition is for those who do not indulge in *“more than what is necessary”* while simultaneously restricting association with the opposite sex. They are not to hold significant personal wealth or indulge in the type of flagrante opulence that is permitted in the householder ashrama. The rebuttal that is often heard is that for preaching purposes the Sanyasis in the Hare Krishna movement need to have their own personal vehicles and keep their own place of residence to meet the public and receive guests. But that often gets somehow inflated to the ownership of luxury cars and in some cases very upscale living quarters. The same type of willful neglect is even more blatant in regards to how much subtle sex life is evident in the way too many Vaishnavas appear to openly flirt and associate with the opposite sex as if nobody notices or would dare to comment.

It will no doubt take several generations of ISKCON devotees to evolve into manifesting the Varn-Ashram system the way it is clearly described in Srila Prabhupada’s books. Meanwhile the plebeian class of devotee must patiently tolerate the type of embarrassing behavior that has become commonplace with those who have taken a vow to be renounced rise to the position of leadership despite their ability to set the proper example incumbent on their title.

### **Memorized but Not Realized**

There is no immediate solution to this gross double standard. Everyone knows who the bank rolling swamis are. They are the same ones who often have a staff of females to take their dictation, wash their cloth, or cook their meals. They stand out like huge white elephants in the mandir when they position themselves in the front of the temple room to greet the deities. This is not to trivialize or deny some of the extraordinary service these devotees have given to Lord Chaitanya’s glorious movement, but neither does acknowledging them for that service give them license to pervert the Sanyasa ashram. There is absolutely no excuse for sanyasis to shamelessly flirt with the opposite sex and we all know that is what is going on when we see it. When that is allowed to go unchecked it sends the message that there is nothing wrong with such behavior. Nor is it proper for leaders to waste thousands of hard earned congregational dollars to satisfy their bourgeois tastes. Many of the rank and file devotees continue to struggle to barely maintain a poverty standard of living. Yet we know that in the Vedic tradition the powerful ksatria kings were held personally responsible for any disparity that would arise. That type of leadership will continue to elude us when organizational decision makers line up to glean the benefits of their own decision making at the expense of others.

As long as ISKCON is led by leaders who continue to ignore this type of gross class distinction, then we offer nothing different to the current corrupt system of Kali Yuga government. Those legislators see nothing wrong about making laws for the general public that they shrewdly exempt themselves from! The only real difference is that in ISKCON we make a big deal about how scripturally wise, personally sensitive and consciously austere the devotees of the Lord are whereas most politicians don't generally use those terms to describe themselves in their election campaigns. Therefore it is not uncommon when new people who read about the wonderful qualities of Maharaja Pariksit, Arjuna, or Lord Rama are put off when they move in and discover that the demeanor of many temple devotees are somethings very different. There just seems to be too many senior devotees who lack the basic qualities of being cordial, patient, sympathetic, truthful, humble and honest... as in keeping their word etc. They may have the third and fourth verses of the Siksastaka prayers memorized ... but it's often hard to see how the ones who can cite those verses forward and backward are setting the examples cited in those clauses. It's not so easy to set one's false prestige aside, practice tolerance, respect others and not be enamored by the desire for thousands of followers, beautiful women or wealth etc. But it is those very qualities that our leaders must have before the greater population will take us seriously.

### ***What Does Istagosti Mean?***

I find no pleasure in writing this article. In fact it is very painful to do so. However I am perhaps one of the few who have the freedom of being able to do so with little reprimand because I have worked hard to be able to stand on my own. There are many wonderful things the members of ISKCON are to be lauded for yet the fact remains that many are held in check by the unofficial code of silence. They are trapped like indentured servants and are unable to speak like the constituents of the king who paid a grand sum to a swindler fraud for new clothes that were nonexistent! Just how comfortable are the resident devotees to speak their mind or question what might be a poor decision? How many of the devotees who work hard to keep the temple doors open even know what the word Istagosti means? It is intended to glean the ideas and concerns of all members of the community, not just an elite few from high levels of management in distant places.

I have always been an ISKCON man and will always strive to do what I can to promote Srila Prabhupadas vision. Yet I realize that in writing an article of this nature I run the risk of being scorned as a disrespectful heretic. Yet it is super soul that tells me I would be negligent in my duties to not point out the obvious when it needs to be said.

*“A bad action committed by a great man is not censured (as there is none that can reproach him), and a good action performed by a low-class man comes to be condemned (because none respects him). Just see: the drinking of nectar is excellent, but it became the cause of Rahu's demise; and the drinking of poison is harmful, but when Lord Shiva (who is exalted) drank it, it became an ornament to his neck (nila-kanta) .” - Chanakya Pundit Niti Sastra 15.7.*

### ***Krishna West! Or: Krishna Less?***

If I understand the concept correctly the mission statement for Krishna West is to remove the “India” stigma from the Hare Krishna movement. Personally I consider this idea to be a tragic smoke-screen. It is a diversion concocted to obfuscate the fact that Hridayananda simply doesn't want to feel obliged to dress like a sanyasi anymore. I base that on how many photos I

have seen of him over the recent years where he is dressed in civilian clothes. Why would that hardly be necessary for a sanyasi? Having known Hridayananda for many years the answer seems to be quite evident. It's incongruent to wear the garb of a monk when doing many of the things he enjoys doing.

OK. Perhaps that is a bit prejudicially unfair for me to assert. But why then is it that Tik Nat Han is always seen dresses like a monk? The Pope feels it is important to where his robes and Archbishop Desmond Tutu always dressed like a member of the clergy along with thousands of other priests across America. They don't feel a need to dress like common people. Yet one of the most senior men in our movement feels a need to merge into the crowd like Joe Incognito?

I am sorry, but it appears that at least a part of what is driving the push for Krishna West is Hridayananda's personal contempt for Indian culture. Those of us who have known him for many years know he has never really liked India or anything about it. It's easier to make ISKCON wrong then come to terms with his own prejudices and loss of commitment to dress like a member of the renounced order of life. Hridayananda simply doesn't want to have to act like a Sanyasa 24/7 but he wants to preserve the perks and the prestige of his title by pulling his danda out from the moth balls on the occasion when he wants to impress someone. Donning the Sanyasi robes and applying tilaka is not just a Halloween costume. This type of dress is an essential part of the tridandi lifestyle.

*"There are sixty-four kinds of rendering service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, out of which to accept the uniform dress of a tridandi sannyasi is also an important item." - Vedabase, Sannyasa Initiation -- February 20, 1970, Los Angeles Also: Initiation of Sudama -- April 30, 1972, Tokyo*

*"Prabhupada: Necessarily it is... Just like if you become a policeman, the uniform is necessary." - Lecture -- March 1, 1973, Jakarta*

*"Therefore, the army of Krsna consciousness must have at least the tilaka on the forehead in all conditions." - SPL to Robert Hendry, 3rd August, 1969*

### ***Just How Much Committed?***

Hridayananda may prefer pizza and pasta over paneer or pakoras but the real problem is why should we continue to prop up those who are intoxicated with the respect naturally extended to the Sanyasa order when they are clearly not willing to uphold the standards of that ashram? Hridayananda should be encouraged to continue contributing to his spiritual masters glorious movement despite his mayayapahrta-jnana, but is the GBC so stymied that they can't simply ask him to drop the suffix Goswami, and replace the saffron lungi with the standard issue white dhoti or yogi pants if that is too challenging?

It seems now is the time to make that request, considering Hridayananda's declaration: *"I am committed to do all that I can do to restore full peace and harmony among ISKCON devotees."* It's a small gesture that would ameliorate a lot. He can still enjoy the title of professor Harold Resnick if he likes because that superlative places no restriction on his obvious tendency to flirt with the ladies and carry on like the Hollywood moguls often seen on the cover of People magazine or reported about in the National Enquirer.

Thank you,

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William G. Roberts MBA/MIS, CCP  
Owner: 687 Villanova Road  
Ojai, California 93023  
(805) 640-0405

mayesvara dasa ACBSP

**AKA:** William Roberts MBA/MIS, CCP

**Director:** American Vedic Association

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687 West Villanova Road

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(805) 640-0405 [mdjagdasa@gmail.com](mailto:mdjagdasa@gmail.com) & [Jagannatha.com](http://Jagannatha.com)