

# Who's Changing What?

## Contents

Who is Changing What?.....	1
The Paicaratriki-Vidhi Principal .....	2
The Dharma Of The Parampara .....	3
Misleading Facts Make for Great Excuses.....	4
A Mere Blip In Time = No Big Deal .....	5
More Double Standards .....	5
Srila Prabhupada... Not the Pinnacle Of Humility?.....	6
Exotic Longhaired Tibetan Yaks .....	7
Disregard the Example Krishna Set? .....	8
Here Comes the Yak Stampede! .....	8
Deceptive Logic.....	9
The Underlined Word Game .....	10
Route Canal By Dental Assistant.....	11
Call Me A Fool? Please Do... ..	12
Authors Note: .....	13
How To Contact The Author.....	13
Other Articles by This Author .....	13

## Who is Changing What?

The FO-Pundits adopted the slogan “*No Change*” and have embarked on a great campaign to broadcast it everywhere. What they contend is that Srila Prabhupada did not want to see anything related to the system of initiation changed after he left.

The “*No Change*” jingle is very effective because everyone knows how much Srila Prabhupada preached about accepting the Vedic Siddhanta without alteration. That was the whole reason why he deliberately added the subtitle “*As It Is*” to his translation of the Bhagavad Gita. His Divine Grace was very concerned about the possibility of rogue interpretations creeping into Gaudia Vaishnava philosophy and morphing the message he worked so hard to carefully present to the world.

Yet at the same time the FO-Sastra alleges that Srila Prabhupada himself makes several modifications during the short period of time he had to establish ISKCON. The examples given are that he reduced Japa from 64 to 16 rounds, performed marriage ceremonies, and allowed women to live in the temple.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “This can not be a reason to reject the July 9<sup>th</sup> order since Srila Prabhupada set many precedents – (Reducing the number of required rounds of japa from sixty-four to sixteen, performing marriages, allowing women to leave in the temples, giving gayatri mantra by tape, etc).” - Page 18. Section 9. Paragraph 5.

At this point any one paying attention would ask for an explanation to what appears to be a direct contradiction. Why would Srila Prabhupada say so frequently that his only magic was that he presents things as they are...without altercation, and then turn around and make the radical type of *changes* that the FO-Sastra efficaciously refers to as “*Historic Precedents?*”

*“But I do not know anything, miracles or magic. If there is any miracle, that miracle is that we present things as they are. That’s all. Without any adulteration. So that should be the principle. Present as it is. It will be accepted.- Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.11- Vrindavana, October 22, 1972*

Before we solve this contradictory riddle we must first recognize how crucial it is to the conclusion of the FO-Sastra to sell us on the concept that Srila Prabhupada had the “...*prerogative to do this; albeit in accordance with the sastric principals.*”<sup>2</sup> What is so tricky about this is it mixes two different concepts into one convenient necessary conclusion.

## **The Paicaratriki-Vidhi Principal**

Yes His Divine Grace does have the prerogative to give us unique instructions, based on time, place and circumstance as long as they are “...*in accordance with sastric principals*” and that is exactly what he did in relation to the examples that have been cited. The specific sastric principal that Srila Parbhupada said extended him those liberties was the *Paicaratriki-Vidhi* as he explains below:

*“But Pancaratriki-vidhi means although he is not born of a brahmana family, if he has got a little tendency to become a brahmana. Brahmana means brahma janati iti brahmanah. One who is inquisitive to understand Brahman—brahmeti paramatmeti bhagavan iti sabdyate [SB 1.2.11]- he should be given chance. Just like there is a little fire. Fan it. Fanning, fanning, fanning, and it becomes a big fire. So our process is that. Anyone, we pick up anyone, kirata-hunandhra-pulinda-pulkasa, what to speak of the sudra. Striyah sudras tatha vaisyah. In the ordinary way the stri, woman, sudra, the fourth-grade man, and vaisya, they are taken together, not very intelligent. But Pancaratriki-vidhi offers facility even persons who are lower than these striya, sudra, vaisya.”<sup>3</sup>*

*- Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.6.7 Vrindavana, December 9, 1975*

---

<sup>2</sup> “As acaryas, it is there prerogative to do this; albeit in accordance with sastric principles.” - Page 18. Section 9. Paragraph 5.

<sup>3</sup> I apologize to all the Vaishnava women, who have sacrificed so much to Srila Prabhupada for using this unusually harsh quote. I do not wish to perpetuate the way the ladies have been exploited in the past. Many have contributed generously towards establishing the dream of His Divine Grace and I have great appreciation for that sacrifice. I offer the reader the following reference to be given equal consideration.

*“Regarding lecturing by woman devotees: I have informed you that in the service of the Lord there is no distinction of caste or creed, color, or sex. In the Bhagavad-gita, the Lord especially mentions that even a woman who has taken seriously is also destined to reach Him. We require a person who is in the knowledge of Krishna, that is the only qualification of a person speaking. It doesn't matter what he is. Materially a woman may be less intelligent than a man, but spiritually there is no such distinction. Because spiritually everyone is pure soul. In the absolute plane there is no such gradation of higher and lower. If a woman can lecture nicely and to the point, we should hear her carefully. That is our philosophy.” - Letter to: Jayagovinda -- Los Angeles 8 February, 1968*

Based on this understanding, Srila Prabhupada was not really changing anything at all. He merely exercised the option given by Rupa Goswami in the Nectar of Devotion to do what ever is necessary to provide “One who is inquisitive to understand Brahmana,..” facility to develop their love for God. Srila Prabhupada made these adjustments, “...even to persons who are lower than ...sudra.” The payoff for doing so was that he enrolled the extremely restless, fickle minded, low born, culturally bereft, notably immature, hopelessly silly, and usually confused drop out hippies of the Viet Nam era into assisting him carry out the divine prophecy of Lord Caitanya! Wow! Our most beloved Spritual master was not only an incredible scholar and incomprehensibly compassionate, but he was also expert at the practical application of everything that he embodied! (*phalena pariciyate*)

All but the most stone hearted person can not help but be thunderstruck by how capable His Divine Grace was in engaging everyone in the service of Lord Caitanya. While the Smarta Brahmans back in India were criticizing him for performing marriage ceremonies and initiating sudras, Srila Prabhupada understood that the *Pancaratriki-vidhi* gave him full authority to do so regardless of the candidates birth, education, sex, or qualification etc.

## The Dharma Of The Parampara

Now let us change our attention back to what the FO-Sastra is asking us to consider. If we are objective we find that the type of change it claims Srila Prabhupada instructed us to do would radically mutate the core dharma of the parampara! Krishna clearly states that the very key to the proper transmission of transcendental knowledge is dependent on the disciplic succession and Srila Prabhupada stressed the same point over and over again.

We can get an idea of just how much His Divine Grace stressed what was important to him by how much time he spend talking about it. Computer transcripts of his recorded legacy are very helpful in this regard and although it is not a rigorously scientific study it is both interesting and revealing to consider the following table compiled from the Bhaktivedanta Archives Folio {Version 4.11 (Build 900)}.

The Priests	78	Initiated	260	Disciplic Succession	864
Rtvigbhih	2	Diksa	177	Parampara	837
Rtvigbhir	1	Diksadi	4	Paramparah	2
Rtvigbhyah	4	Diksady	2	Paramparam	3
Rtvigbhyas	1	Diksah	4	Paramparas	3
Rtvija	2	Diksam	7	Paramparaya	13
Rtvijah	30	Diskanam	1	Paramparayasvastas	2
Rtvijam	9	diksanujanmopas	1	Paramparaya	1
Rtvijas	2	Diksara	2	Paramparayagam	1
Rtvije	2	Diksasti	4	paramparayena	2
Rtvijo	4	Diksavasaro	1		
Rtvik	21	Diksavati	1		
		Diksayah	3		
		Diksayam	12		
		Dikseti	4		
		Diksha	1		
		Diksik	1		
		Diksisyamanah	1		
		Diksisyamano	11		
		Diksita	7		
		Diksitah	7		
		Diksitasya	6		
		Diksitasyapi	1		
		Diksitasyatamar	1		
		Diksito	1		

Priest	743	Initiate	190	"Disciplic Succession"	1151
Priestess	1	Initiated	1209		
Priesthood	25	Initiates	114	Disciplic	1198
Priestly	86	Initiating	75	Succession	1219
		Initiation	1301	Successions	31
Priests	461	Initiations	116	Successive	31

## Misleading Facts Make for Great Excuses

What is immediately obvious after studying this table is that Srila Prabhupada expended a lot more energy teaching us about the subject of *Parampara*, and *Diksa*, than the concept of *RtVik*. This chart actually raises a few important questions. The first one is in relation to a similar table presented in the FO-Sastra where the authors somehow come up with data that is so grossly misleading it takes all the tapasya I can summon from bursting out with accusations of malicious intent!<sup>4</sup> We are being told by the FO\_Research team that the word *Diksa* is found only 41 times in Srila Prabhupadas books and the word *RtVik* is found 32 times, "...only slightly less than the word *diksa*."<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the people doing the research were using a very old version of the Folio or perhaps they just made a big mistake. But in either case the reader is led in a very deceiving direction.

The observant reader will also note that the authors make the distinction that these references are only from the Srimad Bhagavatam. Why has that distinction been made? Perhaps there is no hidden intent here but considering how meticulous the authors of the FO-Sastra are about the analysis of every word in a given sentence, we can not help but wonder why they are limiting the research to just the Bhagavatam? Are Srila Prbhupada's other books, lectures, morning walks, letters, and various conversations not useful for painting the picture the authors want the reader to get? What is the strange *RtVik* explanation for why these other works have been clandestinely omitted? Are they of no value to the FO-Research team at this particular point in their thesis? Whatever excuse the FO-Pundits will dream up to explain the glaring misrepresentation of this evidence, the conclusion remains the same: "*The FO-Sastra does not present the facts accurately!*" This is becoming a reoccurring theme.

This chart begs the observant reader to ask another question. His Divine Grace was very thorough about instructing us on what he wanted us to do. The *RtVik* "No Change" jingle is another emotionally charged deceiving mantra that suits the *RtVik* agenda. But to do what they are suggesting means either we must change all the tradition that Srila Prabhupada spent 12 years preaching to us about the *Parampara*, or change what amounts to no more than a politically charged interpretation of his instructions on July 9<sup>th</sup>. What the FO-Sastra is trying to persuade us of is that Srila Prabhupada intended to make the most monumental changes to the dharma of the *Parampara* ever to be known and all they have is a few things to base that hypothesis on using very twisting up interpretations. The question an intelligent person wants answered before they accept this idea is: "*Why would His Divine Grace speak so much about the traditional *Parampara* structure, and so little about *RtVik*, if he wanted us to adopt the type of convoluted, and completely unprecedented *RtVik* system suggested in the *Fo-Sastra*, for the next 9500 years?*"

In the paragraph that follows the FO-Sastra analysis of the word *RtVik*, we are offered some more completely misleading statements. We are told: "Srila Prabhupada *NEVER* defined *diksa* in terms of any

<sup>4</sup> The Analysis that we are referring to is found at the top of page Page 27. Related Objections, Section One.

<sup>5</sup> The word 'RtVik' (meaning priest') and its derivatives actually have 32 separate references in Srila Prabhupada's books, only slightly less than the word *diksa* and it's derivatives, which has 41 separate references in Srila Prabhupadas books." - Page 27. Section 1. Paragraph 2.

ritualistic ceremony...<sup>6</sup> and then we are offered a long litany of quotations meant to convince us that: “Diksa normally involves a ceremony, but it is not absolutely essential, more a formality.”<sup>7</sup> Are we to assume the authors of the FO-Sastra do not feel any need to consider what Sanatan Goswami has to say about their conclusions?

*“Sanatana Gosvami says that as bell metal can turn to gold when mixed with mercury in a chemical process, so, by the bona fide diksa, or initiation method, anyone can become a Vaishnava. One should take initiation from a bona fide spiritual master coming in the disciplic succession, who is authorized by his predecessor spiritual master. This is called diksa-vidhana. Lord Krishna states in Bhagavad-gita, vyapasritya: one should accept a spiritual master” - REF. SB 4.8.54*

## **A Mere Blip In Time = No Big Deal**

The FO-Sastra tries to pass this point off with an attitude that is accurately described as *NO big deal!*<sup>8</sup> But messing around with the essential methodology that Krsna himself says is the whole basis for understanding transcendental knowledge is a very big deal indeed! (Bg. 4.2) If Srila Prabhupada intended to advocate such a strange, new, and unprecedented approach to the continuation of the Parampara, why would he give us just a few pieces of highly controversial evidence to base it on and write virtually nothing else about his intent to do so anywhere else? If he had plans of instituting such a radically different and unconventional initiation system for the next 9,500 years why did he clearly state “there is no new formula” in the following public lecture?

*“So the same thing, it is chalked out by Krishna, and by parampara system we have understood this philosophy. Evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo viduh [Bg. 4.2]. So keep this parampara system. This Vyasa-puja is parampara system. Vyasa-puja means to accept this parampara system. Vyasa. Guru is the representative of Vyasadeva because he does not change anything. What Vyasa-puja... What Vyasadeva said, your guru will also say the same thing. Not that “So many hundreds of thousands of years have passed away. Therefore I will give you a new formula. ”No. There is no new formula. The same Vyasa-puja, the same philosophy. Simply we have to accept it. Then our life will be successful. Thank you very much.” - His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Prabhupada’s Disappearance Day, Lecture -- Hyderabad, December 10, 1976*

## **More Double Standards**

The only evidence the author’s give us to support their capricious suggestion that “Big Gaps” in the parampara aren’t a problem is a single citation from a personal letter sent to Dayananda in 1968.<sup>9</sup> Let us

---

<sup>6</sup> “Srila Prabhupada NEVER defined diksa in terms of any ritualistic ceremony, but as the receipt of transcendental knowledge that leads to liberation.” – Page 27. Section 1. Paragraph 3.

<sup>7</sup> - Page 27. Section 1. Paragraph 7.

<sup>8</sup> “Compared with eternity 9,500 years is nothing, a mere blip in cosmic time. This would appear to be the time period during which Srila Prabhupada shall remain the ‘current link’ within ISKCON...” - Page 36. Section 10. Paragraph 9.

<sup>9</sup> “Regarding parampara system: there is nothing to wonder for big gaps. Just like we belong to the Brahma Sampradaya, so we accept it from Krishna to Brahma, Brahma to Narada, Narada to Vyasadeva, Vyasadeva to Madhva, and between Vyasadeva and Madhva there is a big gap. But it is sometimes said that Vyasadeva is still living, and Madhva was fortunate enough to meet him directly. In a similar way, we find in the Bhagavad-gita that the Gita was taught to the sun-god, some millions of years ago, but Krishna has mentioned only three names in this parampara system--namely, Vivasvan, Manu, and Iksvaku; and so these gaps do not hamper from understanding the parampara system. We have to pick up the prominent acaryas, and follow from him. There are many branches also from the parampara system, and

stop here for a moment and recall how the authors conveniently reject the contents of personal letters when they don't happen to support the position they wish to convince us of. *"If such letters really held the key to how he (Srila Prabhupada) planned initiations to be run for up to ten thousand years, surely Srila Prabhupada would have made their publication, and mass distribution, a matter of utmost urgency."*<sup>10</sup> But here we find that when a personal letter has material that appears to support their hypothesis the authors are more than willing to cite it. Looks like the compilers of the FO-Sastra are guilty of practicing a double standard again doesn't it?

But even if we disregard this embarrassing fact an astute reader will also notice the pieces of the quote have been intentionally omitted. Further research indicates that when these parts of the text are restored it raises serious questions about whether or not the authors have interpreted this comment by Srila Prabhupada properly. The FO-Sastra presents this verse to try and convince us that Big Gaps in the parampara are no big deal but the parts that have been left out could change their interpretation entirely. When the missing sections are restored we learn that what appears to us as gaps may not really be gaps at all and could be explained by the fact that Spiritual Masters like Brahma, Narada, and Vyasadeva have such long durations of life. The likeness that the authors may have really missed the boat is even more strongly reinforced in the second part of the reference that has also been intentionally omitted. We are not told that in the very same quote Srila Prabhupada said: *"There are many branches also from the parampara system, and it is not possible to record all the branches and sub-branches in the disciplic succession."* I will let the readers decide for themselves why the FO-Research Team left these two parts of the quote out.

In legal terms this type of deception would be referred to as *"hiding evidence"* or *"leading the witness."* Both are considered to be shady tactics at best and would be objected to by any half decent attorney. In a trial where a lot is at stake this type of maneuvering could lead to a legal action and a judge who thinks the evidence has been tampered with might even reject it altogether.

And yet there is still one other question that the casual reader might completely fail to ask simply because of the way the document has been crafted. We are led to believe that there were gaps in the parampara between Vivasvan, Manu, and Iksvaku, but we are not told that any of these personalities *intentionally declared themselves to reign for the duration of each gap.* There is no explanation for how or why these *apparent* gaps may have occurred. But the FO-Sastra presents this statement to support the hypothesis that Srila Prabhupada *intentionally posted himself as the sole representative of the parampara for the next 9,500 years!* Now let's look at that suggestion a little more closely to see where it leads.

## **Srila Prabhupada... Not the Pinnacle Of Humility?**

The FO-Sastra insists that in the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter Srila Prabhupada instructed his disciples to initiate as RtVik priests *"Henceforward"* for the next 9,500 years.<sup>11</sup> Considering how strongly we all feel about AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada the sentiments for this type of reasoning seem appropriate, acceptable, and even reasonable... at first glance. But further examination of this conclusion requires assumptions that are actually offensive to the spirit, nature and memory of His Divine Grace.

---

*it is not possible to record all the branches and sub-branches in the disciplic succession. We have to pick up from the authority of the acharya in whatever sampradaya we belong to."* - Letter to: Dayananda -- San Francisco 12 April, 1968. - Page 36. Section 10. Paragraph 10.

<sup>10</sup> In this paragraph the authors insist that personal letters addressed to individuals are not a reliable way of determining what Srila Prabhupada wanted. In the very next verse they even say. *"...any attempt to modify the July 9<sup>th</sup> order on the basis of these handful of letters can only be deemed recklessly inappropriate."* - Page 13. Section 7. Paragraph 9.

<sup>11</sup> *"As previously mentioned, the July 9<sup>th</sup> order states that the RtVik system should be followed 'Henceforward' The specific word used, 'Henceforward'; only has one meaning, viz 'from now onwards'.* Page 3. The Evidence. Paragraph 8.

To accept this opinion we must envision that Srila Prabhupada saw himself as the *ONLY* one qualified to deliver the conditioned souls for the duration of the next 9,500 years! When we consider how many extraordinary devotees appeared in just the last 2,000 years we can begin to understand how incomprehensible it is for anyone to believe that Srila Prabhupada would place himself in such a lofty position! What is so strange about this suggestion is that it is both simultaneously proper for a disciple to see His Divine Grace with that much respect while at the same time finding it completely incomprehensible to think he would place himself in that position. Those who really got to know his personality knew he was the pinnacle of humility. It's just not possible for devotees who appreciated this quality of Srila Prabhupada to accept that he intentionally parked himself as the fulcrum of the parampara for the next 9,500 years!

***“I am neither a great scholar nor a great devotee; I am simply a humble servant of my spiritual master, and to the best of my ability I am trying to please him by publishing these books, with the cooperation of my disciples in America.” - SB 8.1 Summary***

Yes, he could have done that, along with so many other things, but this suggestion is so inconsistent with his character it's impossible to really believe he would have. To accept the conclusion of the FO-Sastra we must dramatically re-adjust our understanding of what Srila Prabhupada has written here. His Divine Grace saw himself as the humble servant of his spiritual master and always deferred the outcome of his efforts to whatever Krishna desired. The only way we can adopt the RtVik conclusion is to radically change how we remember Srila Prabhupada and the mood he expresses here.

***Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura used to say, “If I could perfectly deliver even one soul back home, back to Godhead, I would think my mission—propagating Krsna consciousness—to be successful.” The Krsna consciousness movement is spreading now all over the world, and sometimes I think that even though I am crippled in many ways, if one of my disciples becomes as strong as Dhruva Maharaja, then he will be able to carry me with him to Vaikunthaloka. - SB 4.12.34***

We are being asked to accept that at the last moment Srila Prabhupada had a radical mood change and superceded all his previous instructions about parampara and *placed himself* in the position of being the only *savoir of the world for much longer than all of recorded history!* This suggestion changes his disposition from one of extreme modesty to something very unpalatable and out of character for His Divine Grace! In the end the RtVik proposal reduces Srila Prabhupada from the extraordinary combination of power and demure, that attracted us so much, to just another Guru who came from India to lock in his own fame and recognition... *for the next 9,500 years!*

## **Exotic Longhaired Tibetan Yaks**

The quote used to rebut the “*Big Gap*” problem and prop up the hypothesis that Srila Prabhupada intended to park himself at the hub of transcendental knowledge for the next 9,500 years is one very *unconvincing quote*. The reference isn't even presented fairly for the reader to fully consider and it is found in a *letter*, the same type of evidence that the FO-Authors dismiss as “*not relevant to how Srila Prabhupada planned initiations*” when ever it is useful to do so. When an objective person considers all the flaws in the FO-Sastra, they can not help but question the heuristic nature of the entire document, the scholastic competence of those who support it, and the integrity of those who wrote it.

It is really quite remarkable that anyone who actually understood the personality and demeanor of His Divine Grace could phantom such an unpalatable suggestion like the one put forth in the FO-Sastra. But then those who advocate these conclusions have no shortage of creative imagination. We have seen how even the most simple and straightforward things can be given some of the most ingenious and unexpected interpretations! Although this sort of thing is sometimes quite entertaining, it has become the nemesis of our society in the form of very bad hermeneutics. When the mask of apparent authority is pulled off the Fo-Sastra it becomes very apparent that the authors have failed to understand even the simple truth behind a Persian proverb that advises; “*When you hear the sound of hoof beats, think of horses not zebras.*” If we were to apply hard core RtVik thinking to the sound of hoof beats, we would shoot right past the conclusion that zebras were on the loose and immediately conclude that exotic

longhaired Tibetan yaks were stampeding! It makes for a great movie script, creates a lot of drama, and when considered in relation to the grand scale of things, it just doesn't demonstrate very much common sense.

## Disregard the Example Krishna Set?

The RtViks accuse the GBC of changing Srila Prabhupada's instructions yet we find in his books numerous examples that substantiate his intent to keep the traditional Spiritual Master-Disciple approach to the Parampara system un-adulterated. Srila Prabhupada even goes out of his way to describe how all the acaryas and saints of the world accepted *living spiritual masters* even including Lord Krishna and Lord Caitanya.

*“Even Lord Caitanya, although He is Krishna Himself, accepted a **spiritual master**; even Lord Krishna accepted a **spiritual master**, Sandepani Muni, in order to be enlightened; and all the acaryas and saints of the world had **spiritual masters**. In Bhagavad-gita Arjuna accepted Lord Krishna as his **spiritual master**, although there was no necessity of such a formal declaration. So, in all cases, there is no question about the necessity of accepting a **spiritual master**. The only stipulation is that the **spiritual master** should be bona fide; i.e., the spiritual master must be in the proper chain of disciplic succession, called the parampara system.” - SB 3.7.39*

This quote clears a lot of things up. We find elsewhere that the reason why these great personalities accepted a *Diksa guru* is for the purpose of *setting the proper example*. The most important thing to notice is that Srila Prabhupada uses the term “*Spiritual Master*” six times in this paragraph. It happens to be the exact same term he used when he instructed his disciples: “*You become **spiritual master**.*”<sup>12</sup> There is no ambiguity here and anyone who attempts to create some is either poorly educated or could only have strange reasons for doing so.

Another thing that this quote clears up is the simple way Srila Prabhupada defines a bona fide spiritual master: “...*the spiritual master must be in the proper chain of disciplic succession...*” Notice that Srila Prabhupada emphasises the concept of “*proper chain of disciplic succession*” NO hint of RtVik soup here! When this is considered with the previous quote it is clear that His Divine Grace wanted the disciplic succession to be carried on *just the way it has always been*. If he had any plan for us to set up something different this would have been an excellent place he could have indicated those intentions but he did not.

What is so pitiable about the FO-Extremists is that they are asking the rest of us to support the concept of “*NO-Change*” while advocating the most monumental change in the history of the entire Gaudia Vaishnava siddhanta! What we are being asked to endorse here is not just another way of encouraging a few Kali yuga, neophyte, sudra born, bhakta's to chant the Maha-Mantra. We are talking about something that goes way beyond the liberties given within the jurisdiction of *Paicaratriki-Vidhi*.

In light of all these anomalies it's hard not to conclude that the FO-Sastra relies way too much on bad research, questionable evidence, and maybe even deceitful methods to lead the reader to the conclusion the authors are hell bent on making. When we read the document with all the flaws and tricks exposed it becomes clear who is attempting to change what... and yet there is still more.

## Here Comes the Yak Stampede!

We will now turn our attention to the idea that the Spiritual Master need not be physically present to effectively guide the disciple. The FO-Sastra begins by acknowledging the basic building blocks that make up the relationship between Guru and Student. It is understood that the student: “*approaches, inquires, and render service to a guru*”, while the Guru reciprocates by “*Observing, and imparting knowledge*” to the student.<sup>13</sup> What is really sad about the pitch that follows this introduction is that it takes

<sup>12</sup> Please see my previous Paper entitled: “*Accepting the Challenge*” Available from VNN.

<sup>13</sup> “This question arises from the stated requirement that a disciple must ‘*approach*’, ‘*inquire from*’, and ‘*render service*’ to a guru.(BG 4.34), and that the Guru must ‘*observe*’ the disciple (C.c.

the most beautiful and essential component of the Gaudia Vaishnava tradition and morphs it into a completely impersonal experience.

Unlike other theologies Krishna Consciousness is founded completely on the concept of personality. Srila Prabhupada taught us all about the personalities of the demigods, the personalities of great avatars and sages, and of course the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Krishna. There are also endless references and songs that point to the extraordinary relationship that develops between the Spiritual Master and the disciple. But in the process of trying to convince us that Srila Prabhupada wanted a RtVik priest to act as his “representative” after his departure, the authors have completely removed the possibility for that type of loving exchange to develop at all. The building blocks that make up the essential elements of the Student/Teacher relationship are each dismantled using Yak like reasoning. The straight forward way to understand the act of “inquiring” and “rendering service” is clear, just as well as the reciprocal response of the spiritual master “observing” the student is clear. But here our imaginative authors are clutching at straws again to come up with the suggestion that none of these things “...necessitates direct physical contact”<sup>14</sup> So? The fact that it isn’t necessary doesn’t provide a legitimate reason to jump to the conclusion that it is NEVER necessary nor does this comment add any additional proof to the basic argument that the FO-Sastra is attempting to convince us of. It’s not necessary to brush our teeth everyday either but one would be a fool to NEVER do so!

Later the suggestion is made that the representative of the guru can do the observing for the Guru as well.<sup>15</sup> The hidden assumption here is that the observing representative will have the same level of interest, concern, and veracity to watch over the student as much as a formal Spiritual Master. But there is absolutely no reason for anyone to believe such a preposterous thing. As soon as a student becomes uncomfortable with the instructions given by a local RtVik authority there is nothing to keep him from seeking out different Vaishnava association to avoid an unpalatable instruction. Instead of being held accountable to one person, the process of spiritual life becomes similar to someone who is free to bounce around looking for a lawyer who will support his own personal legal/spiritual agenda.

## Deceptive Logic

The FO-Sastra sounds very authoritative but it doesn’t end up saying very much when it’s looked at more closely. As with much of the FO-Sastra what we have here is more diversions and Yak like deceptive logic to clear the way for the hypothesis that a RtVik system is what His Divine Grace wanted. This is more obvious when we break down what the authors have presented into a simpler format as follows.

A: The Spiritual Master has the option to request a representative to observe a disciple on his behalf.<sup>16</sup>

B: The spiritual Master must study the disciple for no less than six months or a year.<sup>17</sup>

C: This is how mutual examination between the disciple and the guru can be achieved without physical contact.<sup>18</sup>

---

24.330)...The ‘inquiring’ is done so the ‘Spiritual Master’ can ‘impart knowledge’. “ – Page 29. Section 2. Paragraph 3 & 6.

<sup>14</sup> “There is no mention that this ‘inquiring’, ‘rendering service’ to and ‘observing’ necessitates direct physical contact.” - Page 29. Section 2. Paragraph 4.

<sup>15</sup> “The observing is simply the agreement by the prospective disciple to follow the regulative principles and can be monitored by the representative of the Guru.” - Page 30. Section 2. Paragraph 4.

<sup>16</sup> “In this way the disciple renders devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master or his representatives for at least six months to a year.” C.C. Madhya 24.330. Purport - Page 30. Section 2, Paragraph 5.

<sup>17</sup> “The Spiritual master should study the disciples inquisitiveness of no less than six months or a year” C.C. Madhya 24.330. Purport - Page 30. Section 2. Paragraph 7.

D: So?

This is what Srila Prabhupada did because he had so many disciples all over the world but once again there is nothing here to help convince us that he wanted to establish a RtVik based ISKCON. Then the FO-Authors ask a very cunning rhetorical question to cast the web of illusion even thicker. *“If personal (as in him being physically involved) pariksa by the guru was an inviolable sastric principle, why would Srila Prabhupada have purposely set up a preaching mission (with disciples and centers all around the world) that rendered such personal examination impossible?”*<sup>19</sup>

Yak attack on the loose again! The answer is obvious yet the FO-Sastra is trying to intimidate the reader into believing that this is some type of supporting evidence that Srila Prabhupada wanted a RtVik system! If we begin with a clear slate and consider the whole picture, without the agenda of trying to find more straws to support the RtVik hypothesis, we must ask: *What else should he have done?* Just forget about having the senior devotees guide his newer disciples and let them do whatever they wanted? Or perhaps he should have asked all his disciples to come live with him in Vrindaban? Then again he could have had everyone fly around the world with him as he preached so he could continue to observe them personally but that would be a little impractical don't you think? Of course if His Divine Grace did one of these other things then the FO-Authors would not be able to use such a silly argument to clear the way for establishing their theory.

But a more serious answer to the rhetorical question they ask is actually very simple and has already been explained earlier in this paper. Srila Prabhupada took full advantage of the *Paicaratriki-Vidhi* to do many things simply to be more effective in spreading Krishna Consciousness. Just like a doctor who relies on the observations of a nurse to watch over a patient, Srila Prabhupada relied on assistants to help him build this great movement. It may also be worth pointing out that while a nurse is entrusted to care for a patient she doesn't have the same degree of training or authority to prescribe drugs for the patient nor is she ultimately responsible for the patient's recovery process.

## **The Underlined Word Game**

The hallmark style of the FO-Sastra is to take a normal English sentence and then pounce on one or two words to build up a dissertation intended to support the RtVik agenda. This is readily obvious because the authors are fond of underlining the words they really want the reader to focus on. Under normal conditions this is fair enough and an acceptable practice however the excessive use of it in the FO-Sastra is another symptom of the authors trying to force their point down the reader's throat.

The question here is will those who pray to the FO-Deity accept the same type of pernickety dissection of the English language when it undermines their agenda? I'm sure I will find out in a few days after this is published. Let's give them a taste of their own medicine and see what happens...

In the previous section we illustrated how the FO-Sastra took what Krishna said in the Fourth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita and broken down into neat little activities that were then delegated to the RtVik priest. But now let's look at the whole verse and then we will interpret it using the same type of Yak like FO-Sastra analysis.

*“Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master, Inquire from HIM submissively and render service unto HIM. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.” – Bg. 4.34*

1. This verse clearly states: *“...approach a spiritual master.”*
2. This verse does not state: *“...approach a representative of the spiritual master”*

---

<sup>18</sup> How can pariksa (mutual examination between disciple and guru), an essential element of diksa, be achieved without physical contact?” - Page 29. Section 2. Paragraph 2.

<sup>19</sup> - Section 2, Page 30, Paragraph 8.

3. This verse clearly states: "...Inquirer from HIM submissively..." Him is a pronoun referring to the noun "Spiritual Master."
4. This verse does not state: "Inquire from a RtVik Priest until he gives you a Sanskrit name."
5. This verse states one should "...render service unto HIM..." which is a pronoun again referring to the noun "Spiritual Master."
6. This verse does not state "...render service unto a Siksa Guru".

Later Jiva Gosvami clearly tells us that the initiation is done **by** the Spiritual Master:

*"Srla Jiva Gosvami comments that the spiritual master is to be considered the atma, or the very life, of the disciple, since real life begins when one is initiated **by** a bona fide spiritual master." - SB 11.3.22*

Notice that it *does not* say the initiation is done by a representative of the Spiritual Master. He also says that: "...the Spiritual Master is to be considered the atma, the very life of the disciple..." Therefore it is clear that the Spiritual Master being referred to here is *not* a Siksa guru, or stand in representative of the Guru, but the Diksa Guru (Spiritual Master).. the same one who performs the initiation.

Even though this type of obscene hairsplitting runs all through the FO-Sastra, I expect the authors will respond to this example of their own forced technique from their stock of routine, distracting, and evasive clauses like: "We didn't say that,.. the term "Spiritual Master" used here means "Siksa Guru",.. Read the Final Order (Again),.. Mayesvara is a fool, he hasn't addressed modification a or b,.. This is a straw man argument,.. blah, blah, blah, etc. The anticipated response is as predictable as a barking dog.

Srla Prabhupada was furious whenever mundane wranglers would interpret the Bhagavad Gita and reduce the role of Krishna down to a non-existent impersonal presentation. Relationship and exchange is the very foundation for personal growth and it is particularly essential in the process of growing spiritually in Krishna Consciousness. The highest degree of interpersonal exchange culminates in the relationship between the Spiritual Master and the disciple but in the FO-Sastra this inspiring and wonderful concept gets watered down to the equivalent of a lukewarm alter-call at a local Christian church.

## **Route Canal By Dental Assistant**

It is understandable why the FO-Sastra has gathered so much support. It's very sad the way some ambitious devotees have misused the position of spiritual master. There is absolutely no excuse for some of the horrendous things that have been done under that authority and the situation *MUST* be cleaned up. But what is lost in this very dark cloud is the fact that there are also thousands of devotees who still have very meaningful relationships with their Spiritual Masters today. It is difficult for those who were initiated by Srla Prabhupada to grasp the fact that many of the disciples of our God brothers have sentiments for their guru similar to how we felt about His Divine Grace. For them the suggestion of transferring all the intimate exchanges they are now having with their Spiritual Master to what amounts to no more than "an assistant guru" is just completely unacceptable. There sentiments can be better understood by considering how enthusiastic one would feel if they went to their dentist and discovered that his *assistant* would be performing the route canal and capping your tooth? Or perhaps the reader can recall how seriously they took the instructions of the substitute teacher in grade school? As much as the FO-Sastra tries to minimize the difference, there is no way of avoiding the fact that a serious relationship with a serious teacher can not be replaced with a stand in *representative* personality.

This is the real issue. This is what is really being debated, not all the smoke and mirrors that are always used to change the discussion to a few highly controversial, strategically interpreted, words in a letter written on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977.

Where I do agree with those promoting RtVik ideas is in need for restoring the respect that ISKCON has lost because of eccentric and charismatic individuals who have corrupted the sanctity of the position we promote as “Spiritual Master.” This is an egregious situation. There have been some very nasty fall downs and those who have been impacted by those disgraces have every reason to be angry and start questioning the veracity of the way things have been implemented.

But many marriages end in divorce too yet we do not discard the institution of marriage in order to correct the problem. Similarly automobiles, computers, and airplanes have the propensity to crash despite our efforts to prevent it yet we do not discard these things because of this potential problem. In all these cases the proper way to proceed is cautiously, slowly and towards correction.

The resistance that the RtVik moment faces is founded in the fact that there are still many that are quite satisfied with their spiritual master. To be anxiously waiting for that relationship to crumble, as many Pro-RtVik individuals are apparently doing, is a wicked frame of mind that no in the line of Lord Caitanya would ever have.

But the fact that there have been difficulties and that some are struggling with *the “once bitten twice shy”* reality, is a legitimate reason why ISKCON management should seriously consider adopting some type of *“Alternative Initiation Method”* (AIM) to run side by side the Guru system. That is where I agree with those who are campaigning for reform. I do not support a 100% RtVik solution but do support the idea of INSERTING something like that into ISKCON for all the reasons I have been giving. In this regard our goals are the same albeit our reasons for doing so are quite different. My suggestions are strictly practical. (*Phalena Paricityate*) and based on the liberties authorized in the *Pancaratriki-vidhi*.

Reform based on a faulty foundation will only be equally problematic in the end. What will our orthodox RtVik friends say when the local Siksa Guru starts selfishly manipulating his authority, position and influence over new devotees for personal gain? The core of reform must be based on cleaning up the relationship we all have with paramatma, which is also how Srila Prabhupada has continued to guide us since 1977. The solution is not RtVik or Guru. The solution is purity of heart. If we focus on that Krishna will guide us through the mess we currently face.

So for practical reasons, based on the liberties provided in the *Pancaratriki-vidhi*, ISKCON leadership should seriously explore integrating a form of the AIM proposal for the same reasons Srila Prabhupada performed marriages and initiated western sudra class disciples. Doing so will make the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness more accessible to a larger community and that is consistent with Srila Prabhupada’s mission. Later, when things settle down, if an AIM devotee wishes to move into the more intimate form of participation and enter into a Guru/Disicple relationship they should be welcome to do so. The process is transition, which leads to integration, which culminates in Krishna Consciousness.

### **Call Me A Fool? Please Do...**

I am sorry if anyone is offended or disappointed by what I am writing. But I believe it is healthy for us all to speak our realizations. That is instagosti, the same thing the RtViks are demanding. But what is interesting is since I revealed that I do not find the Final Order convincing they have removed me from their cyber instagosti mailing list! In essence I have been blacklisted by some of them now. Isn’t that interesting? It seems to be the exact same thing they are so fond of complaining about when the GBC does it.

I admit that I do tease a lot and lampoon some of the suggestions in the Final Order but I do so only to drive my points home to all those who are still evaluating it. There are many still straddling the fence and they should be given all the information they can to help them decide what they believe Srila Prabhupada really wanted. Many are just confused and not convinced about the conclusions of the Final Order but they can’t quite figure out why that is so. The intent of this work is to help point out some of the reasons why they have every reason to feel skeptical about this controversial document despite all the propaganda, enthusiasm and motives others have for supporting it.

As for my dear friends, (and I am not being cynical here), who are completely sold out on the Final Order, I am very sorry if what I am saying sounds insulting to you but I am bound to speak my convictions as strongly as you all are. If it makes any of you feel better to call me a fool then I accept the accusation.

I am certainly a fool who is drowning in the misery of material illusions and the more I am reminded of that the less likely I will be deluded by it. If serving Srila Prabhupada the best way I know how in this issue earns me the title of fool then I will take that title willingly and accept my position as Prabhupada's fool if that's the reward he wants for me. All I can do is request that those who disagree with my observations please have mercy on this old fool and grant me the satisfaction of speaking what little realization I have on this subject. If I am just a fool then nobody intelligent will listen to me anyway and your cause will not be disturbed. By indulging me in this way at least I can go to my grave knowing that I did all I could to try and carry out the instructions of my Spiritual Master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the way I understood them to be. Thank you.

### **Authors Note:**

My previous paper, (Accepting the Challenge) has been criticized for not quoting the Final Order. But actually the original document had nine footnotes attached which directly referenced the exact words used by the Final Order authors. Apparently VNN was not able to reproduce those footnotes the way they presented the editorial on their web site. Anyone interested in receiving the full document in a Microsoft Word 97 format is invited to contact me directly by E-Mail and I will be glad to send you the original text with the footnotes for further study. ([robertswg@phdncswc.navy.mil](mailto:robertswg@phdncswc.navy.mil))

To prevent the same problem again I have handled the footnotes in this article a little differently so the readers can have full access to them.

### **How To Contact The Author**

mayerasvara dasa  
AKA: William G. Roberts MBA/IS, CDP  
687 Villanova Road  
Ojai, California 93023  
United States Of America  
(805) 640-0405 Home  
mdjagdasa @ gmail.com

**NOTE:** Readers of this article are invited to copy it in order to share it with whomever you think might benefit most. You are also invited to contact the author with your comments using any media that is appropriate.

### **Other Articles by This Author**

**(Available on VNN under "USA" & "Editorial" Archives Button)**

<i>Guru Crisis</i> – Personal Letter to GBC	(October 15, 1998 - Two Pages)
<i>The Process of Vaishnava Initiation and ISKCON</i>	(October 3, 1998 - 28 pages)
<i>Drop the Bomb and End the War</i>	(December 1, 1998 - 5 Pages)
<i>Whoever Thinks They Can Manage ISKCON is Disqualified</i>	(December 15, 1998 - 4 Pages)
<i>Put The Extremists Where They Belong</i>	(December 27, 1998 - 6 Pages)
<i>"The Art Of War" in ISKCON</i>	(January 7, 1999 – 7 pages)
<i>Fail to Plan is a Plan to Fail</i>	(January 13, 1999 – 5 pages)
<i>Petition for Sanity and Maturity (Powerpoint Presentation)</i>	(January 16, 1999 – 17 slides)
<i>"12 Points Toward Unity &amp; Respect" (Mission Statement)</i>	(January 16, 1999 – 2 Pages)
<i>The LA January 16 Reform Show</i>	(January 29, 1999 – 5 Pages)
<i>He Who Knows Has No Need To Shout</i>	(February 22, 1999 – 7 Pages)
<i>Accepting the Challenge</i>	(March 15, 1999 – 10 Pages)
<i>Who Is Changing What</i>	(March 22, 1999 – 13 Pages)

***Who's Changing What? March 1999 Page 13.***

***c/o mayesvara dasa Ojai, California (805) 640-0405***