

Quotes from Sripad Aindra's book "The Heart of Transcendental Book Distribution." He speaks in a way that gets straight to the heart of the matter in a most rhapsodic voice.

His Grace Aindra Prabhu, on the misguided spiritual institution:

The tertiary purpose of all varieties of mundane political wrangling within or without the confines of any religious institution would be to endlessly embroil and entangle those who are externally oriented. The secondary purpose of the trite, gracelessly perpetrated power-politics, diplomacy, espionage, sabotage, backstabbing, subterfuge, intrigue, and managerial baboonery abounding amongst the neophytes would naturally serve to dismay or disgust the disinterested intermediate devotees. These apolitical *madhyama-adhikari* Vaishnavas scrupulously avoid all such social vulgarities, valuing each fleeting moment as if it were their last. Dissociating themselves as far as possible from the *prakrita-bhaktas*, they concertedly focus on their devotional services of hearing and chanting, etc. and remain relatively freed from the time and energy squandering perplexities of institutional strife. P. 24

We, as living vibhinnamsha jivas, are eternally parts and parcels of Lord Caitanya. Part and parcel means "partner." We are meant to act as partners in the "business" of the Lord, having the same shared interests at heart. Suffice to say, more mature "business partners" representing the Lord's sankirtana movement should recognize the gravity of their assigned "business" responsibilities. Following in the Lord's footsteps, we should likewise personally pursue the matchless mellows of love of Godhead (vraja-prema). Similarly, whenever and wherever possible, we should also purposefully preach *raga-marga-bhakti* in the world, showing the highest munificence to the fallen people of this Age of Kali. Mercifully spark the *lobha* or greed for the thing by facilitating an inspired regard for, and attraction to, the *Bhagavata's* essential message, and then, in due course, help to diligently fan that spark of *lobha-maya-shraddha* into a blazing fire of *raga-mayi* spontaneity – not that we should beat about the bush, becloud the

issue, sweep it under the rug, or altogether exterminate the thing. If out of devotional ineptitude, immaturity, oversight, deceitfulness, miserliness, or sheer ignorance, we were to grossly neglect or faithlessly sidestep the forward implementation of this prime, two-fold missionary objective, then how could we, in good conscience, deem ourselves as compliant, competently instrumental, magnanimous agents of *guru* and Gauranga's grace?

Deliberating upon the profoundest precepts of the Gaudiya-sampradaya and the progressive navigation of the Krishna consciousness movement, we might guardedly examine how a number of individuals in key ecclesiastico-administrative positions, due to either inexperience, imprudence, unadorned obtuseness, neglect, or self-aggrandizing, perhaps even diabolical intents, are, as a matter of fact, irresponsibly steering the movement in a direction that may not so closely adhere to the actual course intended by the *sampradaya's* founding *Acaryas*. So, fine! Let them do like that. Whatever nonsense they think to do, let them do it. Because in any case the flow of the *kevala-bhakti* cult, by the decree of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, will be *apratihata*, unobstructed. It will not be checked by any faction's substandard, foolish, materially conceived, watered-down misrepresentation of the *sankirtana* movement's fundamental principles. Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu doesn't really need the help of any individual or any group of individuals to accomplish His missionary goals. They who are internally advanced enough to precisely distinguish and wholly surrender to the Lord's divine loving network undoubtedly inherit the privilege of assisting Him as His authorized *sampradayaic* agents. If we don't act as His instruments to purely propagate the full gamut of essential teachings of the Rupanuga tradition, it is not that no one will come forward to do the needful. Lord Krishna instructed Arjuna, "Even if you do not fight, all the warriors assembled on this battlefield are already put to death by my arrangement. Therefore, relinquish your petty weakness of heart! Acting as My instrument, stand up and fight!" Similarly, Lord Caitanya has enjoined that the Krishna consciousness movement be spread to every town and village throughout the world. And "spread" means to spread in

terms of the afore-mentioned purpose for which the movement is actually meant – to raise people to the path of spontaneous loving devotion, principally by way of congregational chanting of the Holy Name – thus giving them the chance to evolve to the stages of *raganuga-bhava* and *vraja-prema* in this lifetime, not after some future millions of births, who knows how far down the road. Mahaprabhu's purposes will certainly be fulfilled in some way or other by someone; do not think otherwise. It's just a question of who gets the credit.

Neither the territories nor the by-laws nor the treasuries, logos, or various other external accoutrements of an institution necessarily constitute the spiritual essence or sampradayic spirit, any more than the body of an individual constitutes the soul of the individual. Just as an automobile is important in so far as the automobile serves the purposes of its owner, a spiritual institution can be considered important to the extent that it actually serves to further the spiritual objectives of the sampradaya it claims to represent. If the car breaks down or crashes, the owner may want to junk the thing and accept another more reliable conveyance. Often it is moralized that the spiritual master's institution is the "body" of the spiritual master. But the body of the spiritual master may become diseased. If some part of the spiritual master's body becomes gangrenous, then it may become necessary to amputate that part of the body. In other words, the body may become at least partially if not wholly dysfunctional in the matter of serving the purposes of the spiritual master. That is not impossible. It is not that the body of the spiritual master, either in a healthy condition or in a diseased condition, is the spiritual master proper. The institution is his body, the printing press is the heart of that body, his magazine is the backbone of that body, his disciples are his bodily limbs, the collected hoards of money are that body's precious blood, but what constitutes the consciousness, the essential supra-cognitive aspect of the acarya's eternal spiritual existence? One might proffer that his consciousness is tantamount to his teachings, his personal ecstasies expressed in the purports of his books. Who would disagree? But then we should ask whether or

not we have even begun to understand the most basic of those teachings – that we are not this body. The body of the spiritual master is not the eternal cognizant essence of the spiritual master proper. The spiritual master is not his body anymore than we are our bodies. To say that the spiritual master’s institution is the body of the spiritual master does not imply that the spiritual master’s institution is the quintessence of the spiritual master’s existence. *So the conclusion should be that the institutional “body” of the acarya is not to be equated with the acarya’s cognitive, essential spirit – the eternal sampradayic truths.* Rather, the body is to be seen as merely the chariot of the soul. The institution is a body through which the realizations of the *sampradayic* soul are to be expressed. *Service to the acarya’s real self interest* is not merely a bodily (institutional) affair; *it is to recognize, embrace, uphold, and disseminate the tenets of his sampradaya’s highest ideology, an ideology expected to be embodied by his institution.*

From another angle, we may say that the body of the *acarya* is factually identical with the *acarya’s* soul, at least in a qualitative sense, in that the *acarya’s* body is fully absorbed in *yajna*, sacrifice. *Bramarpanam brahma havir, brahmagnau brahmana hutam / brahmaiva tena gantavyam, brahma-karma-samadhina (Bg. 4.24).* All things connected with the performance of sacrifice – the firewood, the fire, the ghee, the offered grains, the officiating priest, the performer of sacrifice, and the sacrifice itself – become merged in transcendence. They become one in purpose, one in quality, as constituents of Brahman via pure devotional *yajna* for the satisfaction of Visnu. Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. So in that sense the body of the spiritual master is respected on the same level as the spiritual master’s soul. Even if his body becomes diseased or a portion of it becomes gangrenous, he may still remain fully determined to engage the body in acts of sacrifice. However, the spiritual master may observe that the disease of his body is such that it unremittingly obstructs the body’s reasonable absorption in *yajna*, by which it could viably stand as a useful Brahman constituent of his existence, so much so that he may blamelessly opt to discard his body as useless for all

practical purposes. If the body becomes in some way contemptuous toward the spiritual master's real pure devotional ideal, or if the body becomes contemptible in the eyes of the spiritual master, then what's the use of such a body? In other words, if the institutional "body" of the *acarya* becomes deviated from its true purpose, in terms of the function intended by the *acarya's sampradayaic* "soul," then that body becomes rejectable. We would have to question whether the institutional body of the *acarya* is, in truth, fully engaged in *yajna*. To the extent that the constituents of the *acarya's* institutional body are fully absorbed in *yajna*, to that extent they are spiritual. Conversely, to the extent that they are deviated toward sundry gross and subtle material pursuits or substandard, conditional spiritual pursuits, to that extent they could hardly be considered spiritually fit – or perhaps their legitimacy as actual constituents should be dismissed. In other words, we should sagaciously question whether the "constituents" that are materially or in other ways conditionally absorbed are at all real constituents of the spiritual master's institutional body, or are only apparent constituents having no genuine relation as parts and parcels of the true form of the *acarya's* institution although seeming to be integrally related. Viewed sanely, they may be deemed as reflections (*pratibimba*) of constituents, shadows (*chaya*) of constituents, partial constituents, or perhaps atrophied constituents.

If we accept the body of the *acarya* as qualitatively identical to the soul within that body, we might analogously conclude that the institutional body of the *acarya* should be seen as identical to the *acarya* himself, the *sampradaya's* pure representative. We would then have to willingly admit that those customarily seen as constituents of the institutional body who are not purely absorbed in unalloyed devotional *yajna* as per the ideals and standards of the *acarya's sampradaya* could hardly be accepted as parts of the *acarya's* institution in the true sense, although claiming to be or masquerading as such. Granting that the *acarya* is a *maha-bhagavata*, an unalloyed devotee of the Lord, the institution purported to be his body would necessarily have to embody his

ideals as a completely spiritual manifestation of the purest *sampradayaic* principles, as an external exemplar of internal devotional substance, qualitatively one with the *acarya*. If that were so, then wherever we would see a dearth of unalloyed devotional substance, we would have to question whether what we are seeing before us is, in fact, the real form of the institution. Otherwise, since the quality of the disciples is said to reflect the quality of the *guru*, someone might wonder whether the institutional anomalies represent impurities or a lack of qualification on the part of the *acarya* himself. Hence, they who, though declaring institutional membership, consciously or ignorantly undermine, either by precept or by personal conduct, the true *sampradayaic* standards and decline to comply with the *sampradaya's* ultimate purpose of facilitating the total range of unalloyed devotional experience in its members, could scarcely themselves be accepted as bona fide representatives of the *acarya's* institution. In other words, we would have to very seriously question what or who actually constitutes the institution of the *acarya*? Once again, we would have to discerningly separate form from substance or spirit.

Why say that the institution is the body of the *acarya*? Given that the *acarya* is the representative of Lord Caitanya, we should be able to reasonably conclude that the institution is, in fact, the body of Lord Caitanya. Yet, it is seen that, in the course of His manifested earthly pastimes, Mahaprabhu uncompromisingly dismissed His own devotees who deviated from standard devotional proprieties. Similarly Advaita Acarya openly rejected a few of His own sons due to their preaching erroneous conclusions. A son is considered an expansion of his father's own body. They were His sons; still, He unhesitatingly disowned them. In the same way, if on account of sadly sensing a spiritual impotence, a disciplic incompetence amongst its membership, Mahaprabhu would deem an institution established by any eminent representative of His *acarya-parampara* effectually useless in the matter of practically advancing His intended missionary objectives, He may see fit to altogether discard or perhaps sideline the ineffective community until (if and when) its half-slumbering constituents eventually wake up, wise up, and

actually take up and powerfully preach the progressive path of beatified *vraja-bhakti-bhajana* for the benefit of the world. Meanwhile, the pure broad-minded souls adhering to the path illuminated by the expressed ideals of the Gaudiya *Acaryas*, whether linked to this, that, or any other branch of the Caitanya tree, institution or no institution, will be selected and empowered by Lord Gauranga to do the *sampradaya's* real propagation work. They will be credited with helping the Lord to fully expand His ten-thousand-year golden era of maximum mercy within this darkest nightmare Age of Kali, as the rest remain satisfied with an ongoing mere semblance of the *sampradaya's* legacy.

Sometimes the example is given that the Ganga, even though filled with filthy debris (stool, corpses, factory waste, and other assorted garbage), is still the Ganga. It is always pure, no matter what. So in the same way, the *acarya's* institution is assumed to be always pure, even if it is burdened by many impurities. But the stool floating in the Ganga is not the Ganga. Neither are the dead bodies, the oodles of scattered plastic bags, the laundry soap bubbles, the oil slicks, nor the other abounding ungodly contaminants carried by the Ganga. The Ganga is the Ganga. Whatever is impure or rejectable is brushed aside or disregarded, and then we take our bath in the Ganga. We don't take our bath in the stool. We don't take our bath in the dead bodies. We take our bath in the Ganga. Ganga water itself is pure. But if we were to make the mistake of thinking that the corpses, stool, or other debris are identical with the Ganga, are as venerable or as important as the Ganga, or are parts and parcels of the Ganga, then our thinking would certainly be a grand parade of sheer stupidity. The correct understanding of the analogy should be as follows: The Ganga is analogous to the *sampradayaic* flow, not to the institution. The pure form of the institution corresponds to an obstruction-free stretch of the Ganga's riverbed channeling the river's (*sampradaya's*) powerful current. Superfluous stool, corpses, and garbage represent various petty *anarthas*, while massive sand dunes, crags, and dams correspond to more seriously obstructive misconceptions, philosophical deviations, and exploitative tendencies. The unalloyed

sampradayic flow that is to be channeled by an institution is certainly pure. The institution can also be considered pure and wholesome to the extent that it actually facilitates the free-flowing current of pure and powerful *sampradayic siddhanta*. To that end, the various *apasiddhantic* anomalies or non-devotional absurdities vexing an institution's state of affairs must be diligently circumvented or discarded by a concerted institutional *anartha-nivritti*. At any rate, the bath is not to be taken in the institution or in the various attending *anarthas*. The bath is to be taken in the pure teachings of the *sampradaya* obtained wherever we can fortunately gain the association of genuine, highly enlightened *sadhus*. Then one will make progress, becoming purified not by the institution per se but by availing oneself of, adhering to, and serving the progressive current of the *sampradaya's* unalloyed devotional teachings.

Another example: If there was no water in Radha-kunda, who would be interested to go there for bath? A *kunda* without water would hardly be considered a *kunda*. The steps leading into the *kunda* facilitate our approach to the water, but if we were to slip or trip on a loose stepping stone, we might fall on our butt or break our head before having the chance to take a dip. The idea is to take bath in the water, not in the steps. Similarly, the institution is set up to facilitate our access to the liquid mellows of the *sampradayic* truths. If we get hung up on the institution to the point where we fail to honor the *sampradayic* truths, then what would be the use of all the gorgeous socio-institutional arrangements?

To further illustrate, a shower in a shower-room is called a shower not because there is a nicely tiled shower stall with a nice shower curtain and a first-class shower fixture, soap dish, towel ring, and ingenious drainage system. Unless a shower of water comes forcefully showering out of the shower's shower head, a "shower" would be a shower in name only. The corresponding components of the analogy should be obvious. If there is no water or just a trickle, who in their right mind would sensibly accept it to be a shower? Similarly, regardless of exhaustive institutional sophistication, if at the end of the day we were to dejectedly notice

a scarcity of high-level unalloyed devotional instruction, or barely a dribble from the orifices of the elegant institutional fixtures, how could we realistically infer the presence of a full-force *sampradayaic* flow?

It is not the institution that makes the *sampradaya*. The *sampradaya* is not the institution. *Sampradaya* means school – a school of thought, an angle of vision or approach to the Absolute to be disseminated through the medium of an *acarya-parampara*. If the institution preserves and aids endowment of the pure teachings of the *Acaryas* to posterity, then the institution, as a facilitator, is a viable instrument in the hands of the *sampradaya*. It's helping the *sampradaya* do its job. But if the institution fails to recognize and responsibly fulfill the ultimate purpose of the *sampradaya's* very existence, the institution becomes more or less worthless in that the *sampradaya's* true or ultimate legacy would be forbidden to flow beyond the barrage of shoddy institutional cerebral misconstructions and auxiliary convolutions thereof. Just as the Ganga naturally seeks the path of least resistance, so also, unsurprisingly, the *sampradaya's* current flows wherever it finds a channel unobstructed by the various categories of spiritual inadequacy and mundane affinity.

Where lives the *sampradaya*? The *sampradaya* is not found in the bricks and buttresses of a bunch of buildings. The *sampradaya* is not recognizable simply by a blazing bodily *tilaka* decoration or an institutionally standardized mode of attire. The *sampradaya* is not the holding of a pompous board of baboons expert at botching the business on behalf of the spiritual master. The *sampradaya* is not a bluffing brigade. ***Actually, the sampradaya remains with anyone who truly adheres to the principles of unalloyed devotion and disseminates the esoteric axioms of the Bhagavata in a way that powerfully transforms the hearts of the conditioned souls so as to inspirationally bring them to the path of unalloyed devotion. A person on the path of unalloyed devotion has no purpose other than to attain the spontaneous loving service of Radha and Krishna in the realm of Vraja and help others do the same.*** Unless and until we wise up and actually embrace this understanding of

the purpose of Lord Caitanya's preaching movement and resolutely help to wholly fulfill that purpose, there will be so much disturbance and distress within the institutional fold.

Very often we hear dreadfully erroneous expositions of *abhidheya-vicara* doggedly presented as if to preclude any prospect of pursuing *raganuga-bhajana*, on the pretext of protecting the *praja* from prying into places where the presumed-to-be poor little fledglings shouldn't venture – explaining away the philosophy instead of explaining the philosophy. Such may appear to be ecclesiastically expedient but hardly satisfies the soul's quest for truth. Of course, it may temporarily ward off inquiries beyond the "preacher's" explanatory power. However, by resorting to such impotent dissertative travesty, one appears to be no better than serve a blundering buffoon to individuals conversant with the *shastric* conclusions. Preaching is the essence. There is no doubt about that. Within the compass of any socially interrelating institutional preaching complex, preaching in some way or other, either by precept or by example, is virtually inescapable. That is the significance of both good and bad association. Atheists also ascend the lecterns to preach their conjectural world view. It is not so much a question whether or not one is preaching. Rather, it is more the matter of what is (or is not) being preached. The intelligent relatively fixed-up disciples can certainly glean the essence of the *Acaryas'* teachings simply by sincerely studying the *shastras*. Unfortunately, they then very often become disappointed and discouraged by the well-intended misguidance of some of their esteemed rather neophyte "authorities" who, miserably misrepresenting the conclusions of the Gaudiya *Acaryas*, confound the affairs, thereby practically retarding the submissive disciples' spiritual growth by disallowing them to make the progress they really need to make to actually achieve the ultimate goal of their rarely attained human life. Time and tide linger for none, life relentlessly slips through their fingers, and hundreds of institutionally committed disciples devoid of any inkling of their eternal constitutional *vraja-svarupa* clamor at death's door.

Sometimes the *sampradaya* appears to broaden its influence, manifesting many concurrent branches within or even beyond the margins of any particular institutional milieu, as a number of pure-hearted, spiritually empowered individuals endeavor to propagate the correct, unadulterated *bhagavata-siddhanta*. At other times, it appears that, due to a dearth of qualified recipients, the *sampradaya* reposes its authority in a singular individual who single-handedly preserves the *sampradaya's* pure spiritual legacy. Such an *acarya* may not be at the helm of a huge institution supporting world-wide missionary activities. Yet because he carries within his heart of hearts the complete-whole manifestation of Lord Krishna along with His *antaranga-shaktis*, he is quite fit to pass on the true *sampradayaic* tradition. Even though his pure teachings might be rightly received by just a single qualified disciple, that one disciple may in turn impress the same upon many. There is ample precedence for this in the history of Gaudiya Vaisnavism. Still, at other times, it may be seen that an *acarya* intentionally establishes a nation-wide or world-wide institution to facilitate large-scale propaganda work, but only a few or even only one among his thousands of initiated disciples actually catch the essential current of the *sampradaya's* teachings and become perfectly qualified to impart the pure esoteric *sampradayaic* principles to subsequent generations. That is also not unheard of. It is understood from *acarya-vani* that upon contacting *sad-guru* a disciple generally requires three lifetimes before coming to the stage of ultimate perfection, *vastu-siddhi*. The spiritual master's different disciples are not on the same rung of *bhakti's* evolutionary ladder. Some of the disciples are in the course of their first acquaintance with *sad-guru*. In this lifetime their attempt to chant the Holy Name will be, more often than not, fraught with offense. Owing to meager devotional fortitude, they will not likely achieve the *adhikara* required to transcend rudimentary devotional practices and so must intelligently submit themselves to the force of stringent *vaidhika* rules and regulations to have any devotional standing at all. Others are in the course of their second attempt. Chanting *namabhasa*, they will gradually gain steadiness and the eligibility to pursue the path of *raga*. A few may progress to the terrace of *bhava* and *prema*

by chanting *shuddha-nama*, having come to their third lifetime of service at the feet of *sad-guru*. After quitting the present *sadhakadeha*, they will be promoted to the *prakata-lilas* of the Lord. The chronological sequence of initiation does not necessarily correspond to the progressive levels of advancement of the different disciples. Though the *acarya's* senior disciples might rightfully claim or demand the junior's customary respect, as per external protocol, the natural esteem offered to first-class *paramahansas* can be genuinely elicited only when devotees of a discerning eye undoubtingly acknowledge appreciable levels of practical renunciation coupled with scripturally sound pure devotional expression. Certainly, those who chant offensively, regardless of disciplic seniority or institutional echelon, can hardly be accepted as bona_fide agents of the *sampradayaic* flow. To be real, only an elevated, spiritually endowed disciple, having achieved the internal standing of a *maha-bhagavata* on the basis of *shuddha-nama-bhajana* is substantially fit to act as an empowered agent of the *bhagavata-sampradaya*. Such a spiritually qualified individual, though not necessarily assuming any earth-shattering external institutional hierarchical status, will, in fact, timely and powerfully manifest the *sampradaya's* profoundest influence. In the interim, many others, institutionally "big" or "small," who are more or less preoccupied with varying degrees of watered-down, exoterically intended philosophy that often verily accommodate their own subtle or gross personal and extended self-aggrandizing concerns and who maintain an apathy toward unalloyed devotional absorption, though perhaps very much institutionally involved, will effectively remain more or less on the factual *sampradaya's* periphery. When these spiritually naive, *siddhantically* unapprised, or materially ambitious "disciples" endeavor to climb the corporate institutional ladder to access and occupy key administrative positions for the purpose of pursuing their sundry ulterior objectives, what institutional anomalous or farcical consequences can we not expect? Would we deem sickly or convalescing in-patients at a hospital to be part of the established medical institution itself? Would it not be more realistic to objectively regard them as clients having the good opportunity to access the

convenient medical facility offered by the hospital? If an in-patient misinterprets or declines to follow the doctor's advice or if a patient without passable medical training and experience decides to do quackery in the hospital's lobby, should we take such to be part of the hospital? Is an attending student at a university to be taken as part of the educational institution, or is the student simply the recipient of the institution's tutelage? Even if we posit the meaninglessness of a university without students, would it be at all proper for an upstart student bereft of adequate erudition and wisdom to pompously profess to be a professor? If a psychiatric patient having no clear recollection of his or her true identity impersonates a psychiatrist, would we behold a pinnacle of sanity? When money talks, everything walks. Bucks – the basis, preaching – the excuse, futility – the principle, and, as one might guess, purity (spiritual sanity) – a farce.

We can scarcely see among us deeply absorbed natural *paramahamsas* possessed of markedly elevated transcendental consciousness evinced by expressed mature spiritual insight and discretion. Nor would we generally expect internally immersed *paramahamsa* Vaishnavas to be very much attentive to the nitty-gritty of direct hands-on institutional management. Unsurprisingly, fate would often have it that by default various less spiritually evolved individuals take the helm, even though they may be unacquainted with – even virtually oblivious to – the *rasika* culture of unalloyed devotion, as per the scientific, systematic exposition of the *vraja-bhakti* paradigm seen in the *Acaryas'* writings. Still others, often owing to their assorted, relatively handy material qualifications, are ceremoniously taken on board as additional digits in the equation, though their perceptions, conceptions, and judgments are relatively impure in that they have yet to rise above the four defects of conditional existence. We could hardly expect the majority of an institution's administrators to be on the highest perfectional platform of Krishna consciousness. As such, canonical or ecclesiastico-managerial decisions arrived at on the basis of majority vote may often be fraught with material conception, *apasiddhanta*, and compromise by dint of confusion, distortion,

mundane wrangling, or agnosticism devoid of *sampradayaic* authority, thus rendering the whole show relatively *asara*, or useless. It is imperative, therefore, that the religio-institutional administration have the integrity, willingness, and intelligence to recognize and accept the salient advice of those impartial few who are actually pure, spiritually elevated, free from false pride, unenvious, and beyond the sway of material influences.

The idea that a body of executors dubbed the “ultimate managing authority” of a societal organization be reckoned, heralded, or broadly accepted as head of the socio-bodily infrastructure of such a society is sheer misconstruction and a flight of the imagination – a calamitous contravention of *daivi-varnashrama* principia. Individuals displaying a passion for administrative overlordship may brandish considerable diplomatic dexterity in the matter of cleverly hoodwinking lay practitioners into accepting the alleged legitimacy of various covertly contrived ecclesiastical managerial maneuvers, but mere spectacle of tactical proficiency hardly adds up to an air of brahminical intelligence. Institutional governance is certainly the prerogative of *ksatriya*-spirited devotees. In the scheme of things, these devotees, who do far better when they comport themselves as righteous *rajarsis* rather than as menacing Mafiosi, basically serve as the arms of the institution. Their function is to protect the society’s movable and immovable assets, ensure economic stability, see that the various classes of devotees are peacefully prosecuting their prescribed religious duties, and curb the cheating propensity of the neophytes. A *rajarsi* is considered a saintly administrator, however, on account of his openness to respectfully abide by the good counsel of truthful, qualified *brahmarsis* and advanced unalloyed devotees of the Lord, who are not so managerially encumbered. Any initiate acting in any social capacity may be regarded, on one level or another, as some kind of Vaishnava. Even so, those who are true *brahmanas* and *paramahansa* Vaishnavas by quality and work are undeniably the actual head of an institution’s social set-up. A social body that either doesn’t have or doesn’t recognize its head is like a ship adrift without its rudder.

In an *acarya's* physical presence, those acting as his zonal secretaries, as well as diverse other executive representatives, may easily receive guidance through his direct personal instructions. An *acarya* himself acts as the society's head, directly approving or disapproving the actions of his society's managerial arms as he sees fit. An *acarya* may even see it necessary to totally rescind the managerial authority personally invested in his zonal representatives if the latter deviate from his expressed will. Such a scenario is certainly not unheard-of.

But what happens after an *acarya's* inopportune physical demise? All his disciples may take refuge in his recorded *vani* to gain inspiration and positive direction for advancing the cause of Krishna consciousness. Still, it would be most unreasonable to conclude that those somewhat managerially adept individuals to whom the *acarya* had delegated certain arm-related executive responsibilities should, in the *acarya's* absence, suddenly seek to assume the position of the society's socio-religious head. Likewise with the subsequently deputed new generation of international, zonal, and local managers.

We could hardly think those possessed of supposed executive-class intelligence tilting toward diplomacy, compromise, duplicity, unjustifiable psychological coercion, covert administrative wrangling, connivance, collusion, and conspiracy for the forward march of various "Krishna conscious" managerial agenda or political ambitions, to be having a clearer, more advanced *shastric* perception of reality than those who are impartial, managerially unencumbered, and, in fact, to a much larger extent, brahminically occupied. The attempt of managerially engrossed individuals lacking superior brahminical transparency to administer institutional affairs without respecting genuine brahminical counsel simply perpetuates a socially imbalanced quasi-devotional society of cheaters and cheated – bungling *bhaktas* who brainlessly buy into the burgeoning business of bureaucratic befuddlement. To show due deference to the spiritual needs of the individuals who constitute the society, proper brahminical leadership must always prevail over administrative concerns.

On "Spiritual Institutions"

Deliberating upon the profoundest precepts of the Gaudiya-sampradaya and the progressive navigation of the Krishna consciousness movement, we might guardedly examine how a number of individuals in key ecclesiastico-administrative positions, due to either inexperience, imprudence, unadorned obtusity, neglect, or self-aggrandizing, perhaps even diabolical intents, are, as a matter of fact, irresponsibly steering the movement in a direction that may not so closely adhere to the actual course intended by the *sampradaya's* founding *Acaryas*. So, fine! Let them do like that. Whatever nonsense they think to do, let them do it. Because in any case the flow of the *kevala-bhakti* cult, by the decree of Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, will be *apratihata*, unobstructed. It will not be checked by any faction's substandard, foolish, materially conceived, watered-down misrepresentation of the *sankirtana* movement's fundamental principles. p. 70

The tertiary purpose of all varieties of mundane political wrangling within or without the confines of any religious institution would be to endlessly embroil and entangle those who are externally oriented. The secondary purpose of the trite, gracelessly perpetrated power-politics, diplomacy, espionage, sabotage, back-stabbing, subterfuge, intrigue, and managerial baboonery abounding amongst the neophytes would naturally serve to dismay or disgust the disinterested intermediate devotees. These apolitical *madhyama-adhikari* Vaishnavas scrupulously avoid all such social vulgarities, valuing each fleeting moment as if it were their last. Dissociating themselves as far as possible from the *prakrita-bhaktas*, they concertedly focus on their devotional services of hearing and chanting, etc. and remain relatively freed from the time and energy squandering perplexities of institutional strife. p. 23

Leadership or managerial positions dare not be exploited as incumbencies from which to intimidate or brutishly lord it over the Lord's devotees on the pretext of "getting the job done." The pure devotional service attitude and that which is vitiated by the hostile, egoistically grounded lording propensity smack not of the same tenor. *Guru* is commander-in-chief – not demander-in-chief. *Guru-parampara* is chain of command – not chain of demand. *Guru* and subsequent representatives are not to demand services on behalf of the Lord. Rather, on the basis of visibly ideal character, they are to command or elicit such by openly demonstrating the unalloyed selfless service attitude toward the Lord and the world about. It is not the institution that makes the man; it is the man that makes the institution. p. 24

To be real, earnestly shared sincerity of approach, regardless of expressional form, is at the very wellspring of trustworthiness, far above and beyond the indecorous, stereotypical tactlessness of frequently resorted to blunt, oft-times duplicitous managerial expediencies. Not all knavish administrative prevarication or diplomatic cajolery constitutes pious fraud. Moreover, love in the real sense, though certainly subsuming the substantive principle of service to actual eternal self-interest, in fact never seeks to interfere with, subvert, or squelch the individual's freely volitional application of personal integrity in deciding one's own suitable mode of devotional reciprocation. Hence, mature mutual give-and-take on the spiritual platform had better soberly respect a broader-mindedness, accommodating the significance of unique individual perspective or taste, perhaps even considerably beyond one's own prejudice or preset dogmatic viewpoint – so help us God! p. 24 cont'd

Re: Srila Prabhupada's Statement "ISKCON is my body"

Often it is moralized that the spiritual master's institution is the "body" of the spiritual master. But the body of the spiritual master may become diseased. If some part of the spiritual master's body becomes gangrenous, then it may become necessary to amputate that part of the body. In other words, the body may become at least partially if not wholly dysfunctional in the matter of serving the purposes of the spiritual master. That is not impossible. It is not that the body of the spiritual master, either in a healthy condition or in a diseased condition, is the spiritual master proper. The institution is his body, the printing press is the heart of that body, his magazine is the backbone of that body, his disciples are his bodily limbs, the collected hoards of money are that body's precious blood, **but what constitutes the consciousness, the essential supra-cognitive aspect of the acarya's eternal spiritual existence? One might proffer that his consciousness is tantamount to his teachings, his personal ecstasies expressed in the purports of his books. So the conclusion should be that the institutional "body" of the acarya is not to be equated with the acarya's cognitive, essential spirit – the eternal sampradayaic truths.** Rather, the body is to be seen as merely the chariot of the soul. The institution is a body through which the realizations of the *sampradayaic* soul are to be [should be] expressed. **Service to the acarya's real self interest** is not merely a bodily (institutional) affair; it **is to recognize, embrace, uphold, and disseminate the tenets of his sampradaya's highest ideology**, an ideology expected to be embodied by his institution. p. 71

However, the spiritual master may observe that the disease of his body is such that it unremittingly obstructs the body's reasonable absorption in *yajna*, by which it could viably stand as a useful Brahman constituent of his existence, so much so that he may blamelessly opt to discard his body as useless for all practical purposes. If the body becomes in some way contemptuous toward the spiritual master's real pure devotional ideal, or if the body becomes contemptible in the eyes of the spiritual master, then what's the use of such a body? In other words, if the institutional "body" of the *acarya* becomes deviated from its true purpose, in terms of the function intended by the *acarya's sampradayic* "soul," then that body becomes rejectable. We would have to question whether the institutional body of the *acarya* is, in truth, fully engaged in *yajna*. To the extent that the constituents of the *acarya's* institutional body are fully absorbed in *yajna*, to that extent they are spiritual. Conversely, to the extent that they are deviated toward sundry gross and subtle material pursuits or substandard, conditional spiritual pursuits, to that extent they could hardly be considered spiritually fit – or perhaps their legitimacy as actual constituents should be dismissed. p. 71 cont'd

Granting that the *acarya* is a *maha-bhagavata*, an unalloyed devotee of the Lord, the institution purported to be his body would necessarily have to embody his ideals as a completely spiritual manifestation of the purest *sampradayic* principles, as an external exemplar of internal devotional substance, qualitatively one with the *acarya*. If that were so, then wherever we would see a dearth of unalloyed devotional substance, we would have to question whether what we are seeing before us is, in fact, the real form of the institution. Otherwise, since the quality of the disciples is said to reflect the quality of the *guru*, someone might wonder whether the institutional anomalies represent impurities or a lack of qualification on the part of the *acarya* himself. Hence, they who, though declaring institutional membership, consciously or ignorantly undermine, either by precept or by personal conduct, the true *sampradayic* standards and decline to comply with the *sampradaya's* ultimate purpose of facilitating the total range of unalloyed devotional experience in its members, could scarcely themselves be accepted as bona fide representatives of the *acarya's* institution. In other words, we would have to very seriously question what or who actually constitutes the institution of the *acarya*? Once again, we would have to discerningly separate form from substance or spirit. p. 72

Why say that the institution is the body of the *acarya*? Given that the *acarya* is the representative of Lord Caitanya, we should be able to reasonably conclude

that the institution is, in fact, the body of Lord Caitanya. Yet, it is seen that, in the course of His manifested earthly pastimes, Mahaprabhu uncompromisingly dismissed His own devotees who deviated from standard devotional proprieties. Similarly Advaita Acarya openly rejected a few of His own sons due to their preaching erroneous conclusions. A son is considered an expansion of his father's own body. They were His sons; still, He unhesitatingly disowned them. In the same way, if on account of sadly sensing a spiritual impotence, a disciplic incompetence amongst its membership, Mahaprabhu would deem an institution established by any eminent representative of His *acarya-parampara* effectually useless in the matter of practically advancing His intended missionary objectives, He may see fit to altogether discard or perhaps sideline the ineffective community until (if and when) its half-slumbering constituents eventually wake up, wise up, and actually take up and powerfully preach the progressive path of beatified *vraja-bhakti-bhajana* for the benefit of the world. Meanwhile, the pure broad-minded souls adhering to the path illuminated by the expressed ideals of the Gaudiya *Acaryas*, whether linked to this, that, or any other branch of the Caitanya tree, institution or no institution, will be selected and empowered by Lord Gauranga to do the *sampradaya's* real propagation work. They will be credited with helping the Lord to fully expand His ten-thousand-year golden era of maximum mercy within this darkest nightmare Age of Kali, as the rest remain satisfied with an ongoing mere semblance of the *sampradaya's* legacy. p. 73

It is not the institution that makes the *sampradaya*. The *sampradaya* is not the institution. *Sampradaya* means school – a school of thought, an angle of vision or approach to the Absolute to be disseminated through the medium of an *acarya-parampara*. If the institution preserves and aids endowment of the pure teachings of the *Acaryas* to posterity, then the institution, as a facilitator, is a viable instrument in the hands of the *sampradaya*. It's helping the *sampradaya* do its job. But if the institution fails to recognize and responsibly fulfill the ultimate purpose of the *sampradaya's* very existence, the institution becomes more or less worthless in that the *sampradaya's* true or ultimate legacy would be forbidden to flow beyond the barrage of shoddy institutional cerebral misconstructions and auxiliary convolutions thereof. Just as the Ganga naturally seeks the path of least resistance, so also, unsurprisingly, the *sampradaya's* current flows wherever it finds a channel unobstructed by the various categories of spiritual inadequacy and mundane affinity. p. 74

Where lives the *sampradaya*? The *sampradaya* is not found in the bricks and buttresses of a bunch of buildings. The *sampradaya* is not recognizable simply by a blazing bodily *tilaka* decoration or an institutionally standardized mode of

attire. The *sampradaya* is not the holding of a pompous board of baboons expert at botching the business on behalf of the spiritual master. The *sampradaya* is not a bluffing brigade. ***Actually, the sampradaya remains with anyone who truly adheres to the principles of unalloyed devotion and disseminates the esoteric axioms of the Bhagavata in a way that powerfully transforms the hearts of the conditioned souls so as to inspirationally bring them to the path of unalloyed devotion. A person on the path of unalloyed devotion has no purpose other than to attain the spontaneous loving service of Radha and Krishna in the realm of Vraja and help others do the same.*** p. 75

Certainly, those who chant offensively, regardless of disciplic seniority or institutional echelon, can hardly be accepted as bona fide agents of the *sampradaya* flow. To be real, only an elevated, spiritually endowed disciple, having achieved the internal standing of a *maha-bhagavata* on the basis of *shuddha-nama-bhajana* is substantially fit to act as an empowered agent of the *bhagavata-sampradaya*. Such a spiritually qualified individual, though not necessarily assuming any earth-shattering external institutional hierarchical status, will, in fact, timely and powerfully manifest the *sampradaya's* profoundest influence. In the interim, many others, institutionally “big” or “small,” who are more or less preoccupied with varying degrees of watered-down, exoterically intended philosophy that often verily accommodate their own subtle or gross personal and extended self-aggrandizing concerns and who maintain an apathy toward unalloyed devotional absorption, though perhaps very much institutionally involved, will effectively remain more or less on the factual *sampradaya's* periphery. When these spiritually naive, *siddhantically* unapprised, or materially ambitious “disciples” endeavor to climb the corporate institutional ladder to access and occupy key administrative positions for the purpose of pursuing their sundry ulterior objectives, what institutional anomalous or farcical consequences can we not expect? p. 77

Who will do the work?

We, as living vibhinnamsha jivas, are eternally parts and parcels of Lord Caitanya. Part and parcel means “partner.” We are meant to act as partners in the “business” of the Lord, having the same shared interests at heart. Suffice to say, more mature “business partners” representing the Lord’s sankirtana movement should recognize the gravity of their assigned “business” responsibilities. Following in the Lord’s footsteps, we should likewise

personally pursue the matchless mellows of love of Godhead (vraja-prema). p. 69

Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu doesn't really need the help of any individual or any group of individuals to accomplish His missionary goals. They who are internally advanced enough to precisely distinguish and wholly surrender to the Lord's divine loving network undoubtedly inherit the privilege of assisting Him as His authorized *sampradayic* agents. If we don't act as His instruments to purely propagate the full gamut of essential teachings of the Rupanuga tradition, it is not that no one will come forward to do the needful. p. 70

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What is the work?

Lord Caitanya has enjoined that the Krishna consciousness movement be spread to every town and village throughout the world. And "spread" means to spread in terms of the afore-mentioned purpose for which the movement is actually meant – to raise people to the path of spontaneous loving devotion, principally by way of congregational chanting of the Holy Name – thus giving them the chance to evolve to the stages of *raganuga-bhava* and *vraja-prema* in this lifetime, not after some future millions of births, who knows how far down the road. Mahaprabhu's purposes will certainly be fulfilled in some way or other by someone; do not think otherwise. It's just a question of who gets the credit. P. 70

