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Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Time and space. The idea of time and space we're acquainted with. That comes from mind, a form of thought, production of mind, as we may say. Universal mind and then from there the personal mind.

The plane of *līlā*, that is no beginning, no end, and nothing can oppose it, irresistible. It is there and who have got that eye, that particular special eye to trace it, then you can find it. It is there, to be read by the experts of that department.

So Narottama Ṭhākura's coming and going, that is there and his activities and it was known to that quarter. So Mahāprabhu before Narottama Ṭhākura's appearance He took the name of Narottama.

Anyhow, Narottama was born in Malda [?] District, Kheturi is the place. And he was the son of a rich family. In his childhood he was indifferent to the worldly life. His elder brother, Krishnananda, Krishna, he was a big *zamīndār*, so much so that they're called the kings of the locality, Raja Krishnananda.

Narottama Ṭhākura he was a bachelor. Younger days, about fourteen or so we find Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Narottama they came to Navadvīpa. Inner attraction, hearing the Name of Śrī Caitanyadeva they surrendered. So that type of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, that was inborn in them, they could appreciate.

"That this is our own soil, our own friends, our own relatives, our own destination."

Their internal heart could have recognition of the plane Śrī Caitanyadeva came to give us, or show us.

So Śrī Caitanyadeva He was at that time in Purī, Puruṣottama Kṣetra, Jagannātha Kṣetra.

They came and the second circumambulation of the *Dhāma* took place. First Nityānanda Prabhu along with Jīva Goswāmī, He began *Dhāma parikramā*, Navadvīpa *Dhāma parikramā*, _____ [?] The different parts of *līlā*, to see and to show, to appreciate, understand, every part of Mahāprabhu's *līlā*. First Nityānanda Prabhu began with Jīva Goswāmī, and the second with Narottama and Śrīnivāsa. One old *brāhmaṇa*, he took them, travelled through the different parts of *līlā* of Mahāprabhu.

Young then, and Narottama was grown up by this time Mahāprabhu disappeared. Anyhow he managed to got to Vṛndāvana accompanied by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. And Śyāmānanda Prabhu he went to Vṛndāvana. When going on the way they heard Sanātana Goswāmī disappeared. Broken-hearted they wandered on towards Vṛndāvana. When they reached Mathurā they heard 'Rūpa Goswāmī disappeared yesterday.' They considered themselves to be very unfortunate, and anyhow reached Vṛndāvana in the evening. At that time with great pomp and splendour the *ārati* of Govindaji temple of Rūpa Goswāmī continuing at that time. And specially because Rūpa Goswāmī disappeared, so great gathering.

And if you have visited Vṛndāvana, that old temple of Rūpa Goswāmī is a grand structure. The upper part broken by Aurangzeb. Still, we can guess how grand and beautiful a temple. Beautiful and grand, such combination is very rare. Grand is in the Vaikuṅṭha grandness, and beauty is Goloka, specially. Beauty harmonising the *aśvarya*, grandeur, or controlled by beauty, that is very specially found.

There they first met the Goswāmīns. Jīva Goswāmī took care of them and they remained nearly a year in Vṛndāvana. At that time without Rūpa and Sanātana, other Goswāmīns they were still appeared there. And gradually Śrīnivāsa took initiation from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Śyāmānanda from Jīva Goswāmī and Narottama Ṭhākura took initiation from Lokanātha Goswāmī.

And there is also a tale, story. Lokanātha Goswāmī, he was very friendly and also devoted to Śrī Caitanyadeva from his early life. He was born in Yashohara, next to Nadia District, of the east, a *brāhmaṇa*. And he went to Vṛndāvana to live with the Goswāmīns there. Very strict man, his abnegation, his *vairāgya*, indifference to the world was so much conspicuous.

It is told he did not keep a glass of water within his quarter. Because if anyone comes and begs for some water it cannot be avoided, so he did not store any water. If anyone comes and seeks for some water, begs, then it cannot be avoided. So in order to avoid any outsider to enter his compound he behaved in such a way, no obligation, cut off from the society. Always taking the Name, and some *mādhukarī* going on. Won't make any disciples, that was his determination.

But anyhow Narottama Ṭhākura's heart was captured by his personality, and he determined that, "I must take initiation from him." He thought, "All the wealth is reserved here, in his store, that store of grace is here, that must be looted, anyhow."

But he was so strict, no door to enter. What did he do? He planed, and found out where he goes in the jungle to pass stools, he began to cleanse that place.

After few days it attracted the attention of Lokanātha Goswāmī. "I come here to pass stools, but nowadays I find that this place is being cleansed by somebody." So after detecting he tried to watch. "Who is the man? How it is so?" One day he caught Narottama, in the later part of the night he caught him red-handed. "Why do you do so?"

Narottama fell flat on his feet. "I want your grace, your blessings. Please forgive me. No other alternative I have got. I can't give my heart anywhere else accept yourself."

Anyhow Lokanātha Goswāmī was moved and accepted him as his only disciple.

After a year or so they thought, and they were requested by the Goswāmīns, "You go back to Bengal and there preach the doctrine of Mahāprabhu. These are the scriptures ready for that. Sanātana, Rūpa, they have left many things in book form. Though that should be preached to every nook and corner of the world, but now suitably you'll have to try in Bengal, because the influence of Śrī Caitanyadeva, and also Advaita Prabhu, Gadādhara. The group, that is more fitting there in Gauda desa. So first you try to make Them accepted there, and gradually from there it will grow."

So all the books at that time, no printing press, so all hand written. Those books very carefully put in a big box, two or three maybe. And Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu went for bullock carts to carry them from Vṛndāvana to Bengal. And those three they were coming with the carts, all those *śāstra*.

Śyāmānanda Prabhu also took initiation from Jīva Goswāmī. That is also a story.

Anyhow, when they reached the district of Vanakara Kura [?] near Vishnupura, there was an *ādivāsī* chief, the *zamīndār* of the Santhal section, aborigines. Their occupation was somewhat looting, to live on looting.

We find when Sanātana Goswāmī was going to Vṛndāvana he also met a chief of those aborigines, the Santhal. He had an astrologer who found out that eight golden coins were with Sanātana and he will be killed and those coins will be taken off.

And here also we find they're taking each wooden box from bullock cart and their astrologer, they had also an astrologer, he foretold that 'there are many jewels and gems in those boxes.' That was his reading. And so the chief ordered them, "Take them in my house." And at night they're sleeping nearby, but anyhow, stealthily, they managed to take those boxes and carried to the house. Chief Birhambir was his name.

Then, early morning they found to their big disappointment the book box missing. They tried their best to enquire all around, but failed, no trace. Then what to do? Śyāmānanda went to his countryside to begin preaching. Narottama Ṭhākura also went away towards _____ [?] But Śrīnivāsa who was supposed to be the leader, he could not go. He began to wander in the locality half mad in search of those gems and diamonds.

Then anyhow one day, that Birhambir he was a type of Vaiṣṇava, he used to hear *Bhāgavata kaṭha*, *Bhāgavata* discourse from one of his guru, or priest, some *brāhmaṇa* whose name was Vyāsa.

And Śrīnivāsa Ācārya he also now and then joined the class. A young man, beautiful figure, half mad, indifferent, he used to join the class. And he tried his best to conceal himself, who is he. But anyhow unconsciously he was caught.

When the Vyāsa was explaining *Bhāgavata* he committed some mistake, and unconsciously Śrīnivāsa he interjected there. "Oh, this is not so, it should be this."

Then he attracted the notice, the attention of the whole audience. "What is this? This half mad boy he has got such deep knowledge in *Bhāgavata*. So much so that he's correcting our *brāhmaṇa's* explanation of Vyāsa." Then he was caught by the audience. "Who are you? You must speak out."

Then he had to give out the whole history _____ [?]

Then Birhambir he was present there, the local chief, and he confessed that, "I have taken, and that is all kept here, with all dignity."

Then Śrīnivāsa went there and saw, and he made some *pūjā, āratī*, all these things.

And Birhambir became his disciple, and that was a good centre for preaching there.

And Narottama Ṭhākura was informed that those books were regained, and they all rejoiced and began to preach. Narottama Ṭhākura anyhow influencing his elder brother, he made arrangement to install Deities in his home in a grand scale. Four or five Śrī Mūrtis were installed there. I forget the Names. And during that installation, a great festival took place. All the Vaiṣṇavas of the time were invited.

Jāhnava Devī She Herself went there with all the paraphernalia of Nityānanda Prabhu.

And Śrīnivāsa Ācārya he was the leader of the function, this installation ceremony was conducted by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. And other Vaiṣṇavas, Śrī Advaita family, so many others joined.

And such a big *saṅkīrtana* was performed there, that attracted Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu Themselves. And it is told, something like impossible, that both, it is mentioned, both *prakaṭa* and *aprakaṭa*, different groups of *saṅkīrtana* parties took, participated there, participation.

Mahāprabhu with His own group He was also seen singing and dancing. And the then living group also mixed with them, doing, it was seen sometimes like that. So intense invocation of the higher divinity was found there, that it has been described in this way. The original group cannot avoid this chance of *sañkīrtana* as it was done in Śrīvāsa Aṅgan in the time of Mahāprabhu. So that was also taken down, drawn down by these devotees by their combined, the devotional efforts.

Then Narottama Ṭhākura began extensive preaching. And he was very lenient. Went up to Manipur and he was very successful there. Even the king and queen and most of their subjects they accepted Narottama Ṭhākura. But he had to be relative, lenient. In Manipur we see that two kinds of generations reckoned, *ptri tantric* and *matri tantric*. The Āryans here they're *ptri tantric*. The lineage is considered from the father's side. And in Manipur and southern India, some place there is *matri tantric*. The lineage is counted from mother, daughter, in this way, mother's side, this line. The Manipur more or less that was *matri tantric*, mother is the chief, mother's daughter she will keep there in the (body? gaudī?) and the husbands will come and go just like wife as in the Āryans section, from different parts.

So that custom was not taken into account. So he was very liberal in his preaching there, and was very much successful. The whole of northern Bengal extended far east, Manipur that was captured by Narottama Ṭhākura.

Of course he has written also many poems and they're considered as representing *śuddha*, pure devotion. Narottama Ṭhākura. Up to the point, and also too much fervour, sentiment, forceful, and also commenting on the social behaviour of the time. From the outer layer to the highest spiritual realisation we find in Narottama Ṭhākura, all in the form of song.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and our Guru Mahārāja they accepted Narottama Ṭhākura's composition in sum as in toto, but could not accept many ancient literatures, even that *Caitanya-Maṅgāla*, and other things. So many other songs meaning connecting Śrī Caitanya, Nityānanda, could not be accepted. But Narottama Ṭhākura's production fully accepted, *śuddha-bhakti*. Elimination of the, as Rūpa Goswāmī told, *anyābhilāṣa*, *karma*, *jñāna*, will be eliminated. And also awakening of the acme of ones high realisation, realised life, we find that.

Narottama Ṭhākura. He has accepted Nityānanda as Balarāma, as in Kavirāja Goswāmī, and Sanātana also. And not, though this Samaj _____ [?] people claims they're descent from Narottama's line but they did not accept this.

Another thing we find in Narottama Ṭhākura, he accepted Lokanātha Goswāmī, in his strict following the path of *śuddha-bhakti* and faith, *śraddhā*. But still he expressed in his highest realised stage,

kavi lokanatha hatiya buliya _____ rūpa samipe [?] A relative and absolute consideration.

"When the day will come my Gurudeva Lokanātha Goswāmī he will take me by my hand and put me, produce me near Rūpa Goswāmī, *rūpānuga bhajan*, who is the general director to sanction *rūpānuga-bhajan*, give admission. When my Gurudeva will put me there, *rūpānuga*?" That also we find in him.

Forcefully he has made statement.

vidyā-kule ki koribe tār. sei paśu boro durācār
[*Mañḥ-śikṣā* 2] [*Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas*, p 83]

Pleaded for Nityānanda Prabhu. *Jñāna-sunya-bhakti*, knowledge-less devotion, *jñāna-sunya-bhakti*.

Mahāprabhu told, " *eho bāhya āge kaha āra*, ["This is superficial; go further."]
[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 8.59]

Nityānanda Prabhu was not a great scholar. It was easy for the society to accept Śrī Caitanyadeva for His high scholarly life, or expression. But Nityānanda Prabhu was not outwardly a very educated person. But He had His fervour, His deep sentiment for Kṛṣṇa, Vṛndāvana, Mahāprabhu especially.

Narottama Ṭhākura appreciated that very much.

I think some of the followers of Advaita School did not like Nityānanda at that time. So in that *śloka*,

sei paśu boro durācār, nitāi nā bolilo mukhe, majilo saṁsāra-sukhe, vidyā-kule ki koribe tār
[*Manah-sīkṣā 2*] [*Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas*, p 83]

"He may have the noble lineage, full, and there may be sufficient education, scholarly life, but those are useless. Still if he should be considered as a member as aloof, nothing more than that." He's strongly pushing, Narottama Ṭhākura. "If they do not have any appreciation for Nityānanda, cannot understand what is love, what is faith, what is devotion. If they cannot appreciate Nityānanda then their scholarship, their lineage has got no value. They should be considered as brutes."

I think he meant a section of the followers of Advaita, they discouraged Nityānanda, did not like His preaching. Nityānanda Prabhu's preaching was to the masses. And so we're told that Mahāprabhu had some private talk in Puruṣottama. None knows what was the subject of the talk, of the private conversation. And Nityānanda Prabhu came and accepted married life. Because He had to move through the masses and He was guest in the ordinary family, used to be guest. So if not married people will say this thing, that thing against Him, so He accepted married life. After long time of renounced life He accepted married life. In order to mix with the ordinary masses He would be guest to any home and every home and began preaching about specially Gaurāṅga.

bhaja gaurāṅga, kaha gaurāṅga [laha gauranger nāma, / yei jana gaurāṅga bhaje sei amāra prāna]

["Worship Gaurāṅga, speak of Gaurāṅga, chant Gaurāṅga's Name. Whoever worships Śrī Gaurāṅga is My life and soul. Come straight to the campaign of Śrī Caitanya and you will safely attain Vṛndāvana."]

"You don't recognise who Gaurāṅga is. What type of highly valuable thing is passing through your door you can't estimate. Accept Gaurāṅga and you'll get the highest thing."

That was the tenor, the nature of the preaching of Nityānanda. "Anyhow you come to the feet of Gaurāṅga. Accept Him and you'll be taken to the highest position you can ever conceive as our

highest destination." That was the tenor of His preaching. And going door to door He approached with fervent appeal. Sometimes He rolled on the door of the parties. thake bhuli nityananda dhumi bhedi jai [?] The appealing was so intense, but not violent, non violent approach, rolling on the outer door. "Accept Gaurāṅga. You can't know what a great thing, noble thing He has come down here to give you." In this way.

And Narottama Ṭhākura supported Him fully. *Nitāi nā bolilo mukhe, majilo saṁsāra-sukhe, vidyā-kule ki koribe tār.* "Your learning and your high lineage has no value if you can't, if you fail to appreciate what Nityānanda Prabhu has come to give you."

And also he says. *Nitāiyer koruṇā habe, braje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe, dharo nitāi-carāṇa du 'khāni* [*Manah-sikṣā*] "Don't venture to approach direct to Vṛndāvana to have entrance into the group of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, that is very, very high. Go through Nityānanda. *Nitāiyer koruṇā habe, braje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe.* If you get the higher education, if you, the students, if they give not much attention in the primary education then they'll have to suffer in the higher education. So you try to get the blessing of Nityānanda, His grace. Get a good foundation, strong, an instant foundation from Nityānanda. Then you approach towards Vṛndāvana. You'll not have to come back, fall back, your progress will be solid and happy and non mistaken, infallible progress. So don't neglect Nityānanda Prabhu."

In this way Narottama Ṭhākura is trying his best to draw our attention towards Nityānanda Prabhu, the very foundation. Nityānanda is Balarāma, and the *vātsalya, sākhyā, dāsya, śanta* under His command, only with the exception of *mādhurya-rasa*. But Narottama Ṭhākura says if you can have a good foundation in these *rasas* that will be highest. And in comparison that is complete, but don't neglect all this service. Service is the first thing necessary, otherwise if you cross them, neglect them and take a jump, you'll have to fall, or you'll have to earn something which is not gaining, constantly you'll have to acquire.

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