

Kundali Gives Up

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Feb 3, 2000 — In his latest article, [‘*Twitting The Rits Or RittingThe Twits*’](#), Kundali prabhu has decided to bow out of the *ritvik* debate:

"You can have the last word."

He also challenges the idea he has been defeated. Yet out of the three points we left him to answer, he has only tried to defend one. He petulantly conceded the point that we are not proposing entities called *ritvik*-gurus:

"So if (the) term *ritvik*-guru has been struck from the record so what?"

Aside from the fact that, as far as we were concerned, ‘*ritvik*-guru’ was never on the ‘record’ in the first place, it should be noted that Kundali Muni has wasted a great deal of energy attacking this mythical being.

"So what", he says.

If it is such a small point then why waste so many trees by publishing these unscholarly irrelevancies. This man has the cheek to say [‘*The Final Order*’](#) is not worth reading, yet is happy to so readily dismiss one of his own previous main objections to continuing the *ritvik* system within ISKCON. An objection that he went to all the trouble of publishing in a hard bound book.

He also did not [challenge our point](#) regarding our position not resting on one word- [‘*henceforward*’](#)- something he had previously claimed.

So we are left with just one of our three points in contention (admittedly a major one), and this after Kundali has only read one of our replies (now that he is back on line). Just imagine what may have transpired if he had actually read our entire position thoroughly, but alas we shall never know:

"I have not read and do not plan to bother to read the papers expounding your idea of our *parampara* philosophy. I lack this understanding, you got that right."

And because of this lack of understanding Kundali wastes everyone’s time, what to speak of the worlds depleting forestry, attacking mythical beings and armies of straw men. Kundali writes:

"But it strikes me as rather novel that you want to blow me away for taking the "gist" of your previous replies from others, because I was so ‘pathetic’ for being offline..."

We never said Kundali was pathetic merely for being off line, it happens to the best of us. What is pathetic is to use this as an excuse for not properly reading our position before attacking it. As it turns out the ‘gist’ he attacked was far easier to defeat than our real position. We know this since he has backed away from two of the three main points of contention. So to put off conceding defeat he hid behind a pathetic excuse. We are sure most devotees would understand why this excuse was pathetic, but clearly we shall need to spell it out for our great scholar. If Kundali had a friend who could read the article on VNN in order to give him a ‘gist’, how much extra trouble would it have been for him to print Kundali off a

copy, or put it on a disk and send it to him? In order for Kundali to send in his article to VNN he must have been able to get on line at some stage. So would it not have been more sensible for him to have first read what he was attacking? When he logged on he could have thought to himself, 'just before I send this attack which is based on a second hand 'gist', let me first read exactly what my opponents have written'. Would that not be more scholarly, more in the mode of goodness? And to use this as an excuse for not addressing our position directly is certainly pathetic. Now that he is reading what we have written we can see what progress can be made. He has now retreated from two of the three points of contention, points that he had previously considered serious enough to publish in books.

So let us now look to see how Kundali attacks our one last main point of disagreement. To refresh ourselves we shall first repeat our point, and then look at Kundali's responses:

"2) Also Kundali has never actually shown how Srila Prabhupada's continued status as ISKCON's current link to the succession puts him or us 'at odds with the parampara conclusions' of Srila Rupa Goswami. It seems that to Kundali's mind, unless Srila Rupa Goswami directly mentions something, then it must be bogus. Yet he did not directly mention the GBC, nor ISKCON, nor giving gayatri by magnetic tape, nor the BBT, nor pre-samadhi ritvik, nor Sanyasis giving marriage ceremony etc etc. For some peculiar reason Kundali singles out the ritvik system (which Srila Prabhupada personally installed) as something that must be stopped at all cost. Our question is: On what basis has Kundali decided which instructions of Srila Prabhupada not mentioned by Srila Rupa Goswami we can follow, and which we cannot?"

Let us now examine each of the points Kundali makes in relation to question 2 above. For convenience we have changed the order in which he made them:

"For some peculiar reason Adri singles out the *ritvik* system which he believes Prabhupada personally installed as something that must be established at all cost, despite the fact that it flies in the face of philosophy, whereas the extensive list of items above does not fly in the face of any philosophy, but for some peculiar reason, philosophy eludes Adri and his cohorts. Political agendas can and will cause one to filter the philosophy to suit one's notions."

Leaving aside the subjective and wholly irrelevant accusations, all the above states is that the continued application of the *ritvik* system 'flies in the face of philosophy', whereas the other items on our list of things not mentioned by Srila Rupa Goswami do not. What this 'philosophy' that is being disregarded is, and where it is stated, Kundali does not elaborate:

"That is something I only disclose to my most sincere friends, not to the monopolizers of irrelevancy, word jugglery, etc. etc. etc. Absurd inquiries are not worth a reply. They are condemned, actually. Prabhupada said."

So if anyone wants this question answered they will have to become Kundali's most sincere friend. That would seem to leave many people in the world none the wiser. So we shall just have to take Kundali's word for it that he has some bona fide criteria for determining what things taught by Srila Prabhupada and not mentioned by Srila Rupa Goswami we can follow, and what we cannot. This is scholarship is it? All based on becoming Kundali's sincere friend. He continues:

"Well, for one thing I have not understood by logic or philosophy that Prabhupada enjoys continued status as the current link above and beyond the standard role of any predecessor *acarya* in the line of succession from the previous *acarya*."

It is for Kundali to demonstrate how when and by whom Srila Prabhupada has been succeeded. This point he has not even begun to properly address. He talks mockingly about being a direct disciple of Srila Rupa Goswami, yet this is an irrelevant attack since Rupa Goswami did not set up a *ritvik* system, and is not the current link - Srila Prabhupada is. The 'standard role' Kundali refers to above must be explained by him with references, and in detail, otherwise why should anyone (aside from his most sincere friend) accept what he is saying. We see no mention of any 'standard role' that would eliminate *ritvik* in Srila Prabhupada's books.

Kundali writes:

"Prabhupada wrote several volumes of books, and in these books he explains quite a few times how one becomes guru, and since we his disciples were supposed to read these books, then it follows that they ought to know these things, hence there was no need for instructions pertaining to after his *tirobhava*, only the practical considerations had to be made while he was still present."

There is not one single mention in Srila Prabhupada's books regarding his disciples going on to initiate their own disciples after his departure. Nor is this system explained even in principle. We notice that Kundali gives no supporting evidence for this. (The evidence he does give appears to be merely anecdotal, nothing in writing). Furthermore it is for Kundali to prove his assertion that the *ritvik* system was only for the 'practical considerations' for 'while (Srila Prabhupada) was still present'. This is the very issue of contention, and just like the GBC, Kundali assumes things without supporting evidence.

So in summary:

- a. **Kundali has withdrawn from the *ritvik* debate.**
- b. **Kundali has conceded that he was incorrect on 2 out of the 3 points we challenged him on.**
- c. **On the other point he simply offers even more unsubstantiated assertions, to back up the original unsubstantiated assertion.**
- d. **Kundali further very conveniently adds that we have to first become his 'sincere friend' in order for him to answer our objections.**

In light of this, we can understand why it was wise for Kundali to have beaten a hasty retreat and withdrawn from the debate. We hope that in future that he will stick to commenting on subjects that he actually knows something about.